



POLICY: ASSESSMENT AND MODERATION

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Related documents			
Da Vinci documents (eg. Policies, Regulations, Guidelines, Contracts) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy: Curriculum Design and the Development of Learning and Assessment Resources • Procedure for Moderation Practices • Guidelines for Assessment Practice 		Other (eg Legislation, DHET and CHE directives and guidelines) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of the Republic of South Africa: 1996 • Higher Education Act (Act 101 of 1997) • NQF Act, No. 67 of 2008 • SAQA - National Policy and Criteria for Designing and Implementing Assessment for NQF Qualifications and Part-Qualifications and Professional Designations in South Africa • CHE: Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) Criteria for Programme Accreditation: November, 2004 • Labour Relations Act (Act 66 of 1995) as amended • CHE: Distance Higher Education Programmes in a Digital Era: Good Practice Guide 	
Website address of this document:		www.davinci.ac.za/da-vinci-policies-and-procedures/	

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1 Preamble

This policy forms part of the set of quality management policies of The Da Vinci Institute for Technology Management.

Da Vinci offers outcomes based, distance education opportunities. This policy details the principles and processes that will ensure that learning programme offerings are aligned to the principles of a Mode 2 higher education institution, whilst adhering to the required academic standards and empowering students with the knowledge, skills and values to contribute to their communities, society and economy of the future.

2 Scope

The policy applies to all assessments and moderation pertaining to the registered qualifications and short learning programmes (or part qualifications, as defined in the NQF Act, No 67 of 2008) of The Da Vinci Institute.

3 Purpose

The purpose of this Assessment and Moderation policy is to:

- ☞ Ensure that The Institute adheres to the national regulatory criteria and requirements for effective assessment and moderation management
- ☞ Clarify The Institute's assessment and moderation principles
- ☞ Establish a common understanding of the processes and responsibilities of all role-players
- ☞ Disseminate the principles and guidelines of assessment and moderation to curriculum and learning material developers and faculty
- ☞ Ensure continuous improvement of curricula, supporting material, and assessments.

4 Assessment and Moderation Purpose

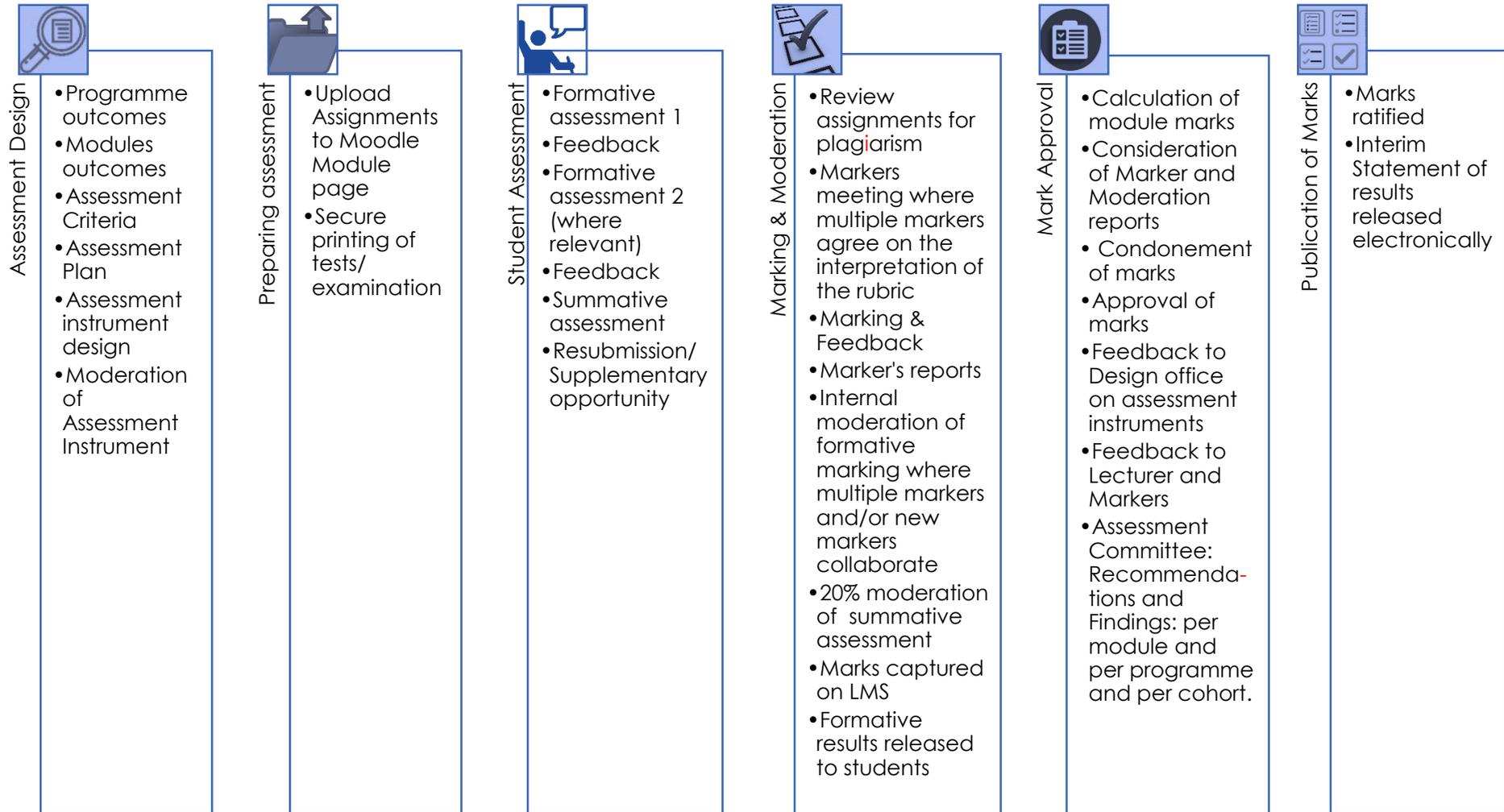
The purpose of assessment is to measure competence against learning outcomes and form the basis of certification and progression.

The purpose of moderation is to quality assure assessment before and after assessment.

5 Assessment and Moderation Processes

Figure 1 illustrates the steps in The Institute's assessment and internal/external moderation processes as informed by the legislative and programme contexts.

(See overleaf: Figure 1: Assessment and Moderation Process)



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6 Principles for Assessment

The Institute views assessment and moderation as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. As a distance learning institution, the assessment practice of The Institute is based on the following principles:

6.1 Assessment as Learning

The Institute has embraced the principle of 'assessment as learning' and as such, uses all assessment as learning opportunities, positioning assessment as an essential part of the learning process, encouraging active engagement from students (Earl & Katz, 2006). Students are prepared for their assessment and receive comprehensive feedback to improve their learning from formative assessments. Assessments are designed to improve development of knowledge, skills and attitudes.

6.2 Authentic Assessment

In line with adult learning principles, The Institute has applied authentic assessment basing its assessment within 'real life' contexts (Sambell, 2016). This aspires to increase student engagement and to promote the assessment of meaningful, complex, real-world problems and tasks (Frey, Schmitt & Allen, 2012). Therefore the assessment process acknowledges that assessment should integrate theory and practice whilst assessing applied competence.

6.3 Fairness and Validity of Assessment

Assessments should be fair in that they do not allow any unfair advantage or hindrance (SAQA, 2008, 2013-2014). The Institute ensures the fairness and validity of assessment in the following manner:

- ☞ The assessment requirements are outlined in the programme framework, which is made available to all students at the onset of the programme. These are aligned to the learning outcomes of the particular programme and/or module as well as the Level Descriptors at the relevant level of the NQF
- ☞ The level descriptors are used to ensure that assessment is pitched at the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- ☞ Assessments are conducted using rubrics and marking memoranda to ensure consistency in terms of achieving assessment criteria as well as enabling specific, detailed feedback to students on their performance
- ☞ For Exit Level Modules summative assessment instruments are moderated by an independent external subject matter expert/s against the learning outcomes, prior to implementation, to ensure that these are fair and valid.

- ☞ Summative assessments are moderated to ensure fairness and validity of the assessment process and marking outcomes
- ☞ Module results are reviewed by the Examination and Assessment Committee prior to release to students
- ☞ An appeals process is available to students if required.

6.4 Mode 2 Assessment

In a Mode 2 environment, knowledge production is undertaken in the context of application. However, application is never one-dimensional and thus, trans-disciplinarity is a hallmark of applied situations. Furthermore, a Mode 2 approach seeks to solve real-life problems and consequently, has to be cognisant of organisational diversity and heterogeneities in a socially accountable manner.

Mode 2 assessment therefore suggests that problem-based approaches are used that evaluate the extent to which students apply their theory and knowledge by using multiple disciplinary lenses in socially-responsible and accountable ways.

6.5 Programme Assessment

All programmes have at least 2 different assessment types: formative assessments and summative assessments. Where modules include formative assessments, these will be weighted at 30% of the module mark and the summative assessments will constitute the remainder of the module mark to be achieved.

Formative assessments are designed to allow for conceptual and cognitive development and align to summative assessments, outcomes and the relevant level descriptors.

Summative assessments are designed to be conducted at the end of sections of learning or at the end of a whole learning programme, to evaluate learning achievements.

These assessments serve the following purposes of assessment: formative, summative, integrated and diagnostic.

Integrated Assessments are designed to assess knowledge and skills application across several modules within a programme.

Diagnostic assessments are conducted before teaching starts to identify student strengths and weaknesses in order to use gathered information to create suitable learning environments. All assessments can be used diagnostically to inform or review curriculum, supporting materials and teaching and learning activities.

For further information regarding types of assessment please consult the *Guidelines for Assessment Practice document*.

6.6 Recognition of Prior Learning

Prior learning is recognised at The Institute as described in the Policy for Recognition of Prior Learning.

7 Feedback

Students receive detailed, constructive and timely feedback from the assessor, in line with The Institute's philosophy of 'assessment as learning' as discussed in Paragraph 6.1.

8 Principles for Moderation

'Moderation' in assessment means internal and external verification that an assessment system is credible and that assessors and learners behave in an ethical way; and that assessments are fair, valid, reliable and practicable (SAQA, 2014:11).

8.1 Condonement of Marks

In circumstances where the outcome of a summative assessment, dissertation or module is within one or two percent of a pass mark or a distinction, the Dean of Teaching and Learning or the Registrar will review the mark/s awarded and may recommend a condonement to the Examination and Assessment Committee. The committee could condone:

-  A summative assessment or modular mark of 48% and 49% to 50% (pass mark)
-  A modular mark of 73% and 74% to 75% (distinction mark)
-  A programme/qualification mark of 73% and 74% to 75% (Cum Laude).

9 Record Keeping

Students' records, including a database of assessment outcomes and results, are maintained in a secure manner as required by the HEQCIS, CHE and SAQA requirements and applicable legislation.

10 Responsibilities

In this section the roles and responsibilities of the main role-players are described.

10.1 Executive Dean: Economics and Management Sciences

The Executive Dean: Economics and Management Sciences serves as line manager for the Deans of Design, Teaching & Learning, and Research, and takes ultimate responsibility for the governance and quality assurance of all academic activities.

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10.2 Dean: Design

The Dean: Design, is responsible for leadership and quality assurance of the design of the assessment plan and instruments.

The Dean is responsible for ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements as well as alignment with The Institute's Mission and Vision and relevant programme and module outcomes.

10.3 Dean: Teaching and Learning

The Dean: Teaching and Learning, is responsible for leadership and quality assurance of the implementation of the teaching and learning, assessment and moderation processes.

The Dean is responsible for ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements as well as alignment with The Institute's Mission and Vision and relevant programme and module outcomes.

10.4 Dean: Research

The Dean: Research is responsible for leadership and quality assurance of research-based assessments, dissertations and theses.

The Dean is responsible for ensuring compliance with regulatory requirements as well as alignment with The Institute's Mission and Vision and relevant programme and module outcomes.

10.5 Programme Co-ordinator/s

The Programme Co-ordinator/s of The Institute are responsible for the following:

- ☞ Implementation of assessment and moderation process by faculty
- ☞ Monitoring the quality, validity and fairness of all assessment processes
- ☞ Provision of feedback to students, faculty (lecturers) and the Deans
- ☞ Making of recommendations to the Examination and Assessment Committee pertaining to the continuous improvement of the assessment instruments and process which may be used to inform policy.

10.6 Registrar

The Registrar is responsible for the following:

- ☞ Chairing the Examination and Assessment Committee
- ☞ Overseeing the fairness, validity and regulatory compliance of The Institute's policies, processes and procedures
- ☞ Quality assurance of all data capturing processes

10.7 Lecturer

The Lecturer is responsible for preparing students for assessments and assisting and implementing the assessment process.

10.8 Assessor

The Assessor is responsible for assessing student submissions against assessment criteria and learning outcomes.

10.9 Internal Moderator

The internal moderator is responsible for consistency of marking per module. The internal moderator also provides the assessor with formal structured guidelines regarding his/her assessment practice and ensures that assessment takes place in accordance with the assessment plan. The internal moderator provides feedback in respect of the assessment instrument.

10.10 External Moderator

The external moderator quality assures the design of assessment and provides judgements on outcomes of assessment. The external moderator thus ensures that the assessment meets the requirements of the discipline in terms of depth, breadth and level. The external moderator provides input in respect of the veracity, validity and reliability of assessment instruments.

11 References

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- ☞ Earl, L.M. and Katz, M.S., 2006. Rethinking classroom assessment with purpose in mind: Assessment for learning, assessment as learning, assessment of learning. Manitoba Education, Citizenship & Youth.
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12 Version Control

Author	Revision
Registrar: Mrs Carin Stoltz-Urban	2015/01/23
Manager: Teaching and Learning: Mrs Carin Stoltz-Urban	2017/05/25
Dean: Teaching and Learning: Dr Carin Stoltz-Urban	2017/11/30
Dean: Teaching and Learning: Ms Heather Goode	2018/01/26
Executive Dean: Prof Niel Viljoen	2018/06/14