Moderation Guidelines

‘Moderation enables teachers to be sure, make sure and assure others’

What is moderation?

Moderation is the process of teachers sharing their expectations and understanding of standards with each other in order to improve the consistency and quality of their decisions about student learning. The two underpinning purposes for moderation are accountability and improvement of student outcomes.

Moderation is designed to increase the competence and confidence of all stakeholders in the accuracy and reliability of judgments made and reported through teacher assessment (quality assurance) and to support teachers to improve the quality of teaching and learning programs (quality enhancement).

The TCEO advocates that moderation be undertaken both internally (intra-school) and externally (interschool). Further information on intra-school and interschool moderation can be found on page 3 & 4.

Quality Assurance:

Through shared understanding, expectations and language, quality assurance helps to raise standards and levels of consistency across teachers and schools. Moderation discussions, referencing student work samples, assist teachers to build a common understanding of the depth of knowledge, skills and understanding implicit in the Australian Curriculum achievement standards. Moderation by groups of teachers both within and between schools promotes consistency and reliability in assessing student work against achievements standards.

Quality enhancement:

A powerful aspect of teacher moderation is the discussion involved in assessing student work and the collective sharing of effective strategies in planning next steps for instruction. The school community benefits when teacher moderation becomes an integral aspect of professional learning. School teams support each other in improving teacher quality through the sharing of high-yield teaching and assessment strategies.

Related documents:

- Assessment, Reporting & Moderation
- Assessment & Reporting Principles
- A-E Matrix
The Moderation Process

Moderation leads to interpreting and applying standards in equivalent ways, confirming teachers’ judgments about their students’ work and improving teaching practice.

Benefits
- Develops a common understanding of achievement standards
- Brings together collective wisdom, resulting in greater consistency of judgment, and focused teaching.
- Provides greater confidence in teacher judgments and assurance that judgments are consistent with other professionals within schools and across schools.
- Leads to shared expectations of learning and understandings of standards and progression of learning.
- Deepens understandings about content and progressions of learning.
- Aligns expectations and judgments with standards or progressions, and hence improved teaching and learning.
- Improves quality of assessment
- Informs teaching and learning programs
- Assurance to parents and others that interpretation of students’ achievements is consistent with other professionals.

The moderation cycle

Intra-school moderation is an ongoing process that is an integral component of quality assessment cycles. While intra-school moderation is a school-by-school responsibility there is an expectation that structured moderation would occur at least twice during the school year. Schools are asked to develop a moderation protocol that suits the needs of their school.

Education Officers from the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office will facilitate inter-school moderation through regional networks in the primary years, and statewide subject networks dedicated to moderation in the secondary years. A standard protocol will be used across all inter-school moderation sessions and will be distributed to participants prior to moderation sessions.

The intra and inter-school moderation processes described are based on moderating to the validated Australian Curriculum standards and the TCEO R.E Standards. Interschool moderation will be in the Australian Curriculum learning areas that have been implemented by the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office.

A purpose of moderation is to ensure that teachers are making consistent judgments about standards. In order to do this, they have to have a shared understanding about the expectations for a particular standard... UTAS
The Moderation Process

Moderation in Tasmanian Catholic schools occurs at two levels:

- within schools (intra-school moderation) and
- between schools (interschool moderation)

Assessing to an achievement standard requires teachers to make overall judgments about student learning. To make an overall judgment involves many forms of assessment evidence. When teachers draw together evidence to form an overall teacher judgment there is a need to ensure consistency of those judgments between teachers.

To accomplish this, schools need to establish a moderation process within their assessment programme. The process needs to consider how teachers interpret National Standards, as well as how they make their judgments from the assessment information they have gathered.

The moderation process begins with the planning of teaching, learning and assessment aligned to achievement standards.

Moderation sessions involve groups of teachers coming together to discuss evidence of student learning and to seek consistency in their overall judgment. Assessments of the evidence are made using specific shared criteria, which exemplify the achievement standard.

Intra-School Moderation

Intra-school moderation enables a shared understanding between teachers in the same school about what is being assessed, why, and to what level of achievement.

The most powerful aspect of intra school moderation is the discussion involved in assessing student work and the collective responsibility for student learning through the sharing of effective strategies in planning next steps for instruction and improving assessment practices.

While quality assurance is integral to any moderation experience, the opportunity for quality enhancement is a key strength of the intra-school moderation process.

Interschool Moderation

Interschool moderation involves teachers from different schools working together to reach agreement on assessment decisions ensuring consistency of teacher judgment across schools and ultimately across jurisdictions, states and territories.

Quality assurance is a key focus of interschool moderation. For this to be effective participants need to share the outcomes of interschool moderation with their school teaching community.
Facilitating Moderation

Intra-school (internal)

Schools design their moderation processes to suit their situation and needs. They consider factors such as:

- The purpose, learning area and context of the moderation
- The size of the school
- Who will lead moderation
- The number of student samples to be included
- The timing of moderation over the school year
- How the school will document their moderation processes as part of their assessment procedure.

Interschool (external)

- Education Officers (EOs) from the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office will facilitate the inter-school moderation process.
- For the primary years (P-6) classroom teachers will have the opportunity to engage in the moderation process at the regional level through primary network meetings.
- For the secondary years (7-10), moderation will be facilitated through the statewide subject network meetings. Nominated representatives from each school will attend.

Senior Secondary Moderation

Senior Secondary moderation occurs cross sector and is facilitated externally to the Tasmanian Catholic Education Office.

Building a moderation culture

- Schools may need to review their assessment cycles to incorporate regular moderation.
- Schools need to provide regular opportunities for teachers to share their interpretations and understandings of achievement standards.
- School leaders need to actively support moderation processes.
- Schools should ensure their assessment practices and moderation processes are recorded in sufficient detail.
- Schools need to develop consistent and cohesive policies and procedures for moderation and ensure sustainability of practice.