

BEST PRACTICE PRINCIPLES OF MODERATION:

This document is currently under review. The following document is the current NZQA Board policy on National Qualifications Framework Moderation and can be used to provide best practice guidelines in the interim.

National Qualifications Framework Moderation

- **The purpose of moderation is to achieve valid and consistent assessment.**
- **All unit standards will be supported by moderation systems.**
- **Moderation systems will be derived from moderation action plans prepared and endorsed by standards setting bodies.**
- **Moderation will be consistent with National Qualifications Framework principles.**
- **Moderation will be affordable and manageable.**
- **Moderation will be compatible with good education and training programmes and will contribute to continuous improvement of assessor practices.**

NQF Moderation Policy: Explanatory Notes

- **The purpose of moderation is to achieve valid and consistent assessment.**

Moderation is a quality assurance process. In combination with other quality assurance processes such as registration of standards, accreditation and audit, its aim is valid assessment decisions.

- **All unit standards will be supported by moderation systems.**

Users of unit standards need to have confidence that assessment decisions are valid, fair and consistent. The purpose of provider-based and national moderation systems is to assure this.

- **Moderation systems will be derived from moderation action plans prepared and endorsed by standards setting bodies.**

Moderation action plans prepared and endorsed by standards setting bodies must be attached to unit standards before registration can occur. The plans give moderation specifications to providers and those implementing moderation systems. Plans must fulfil the purpose of moderation and be easy to understand. Systems must be effective, manageable and affordable. Moderation action plans will be reviewed at the same time as unit standards.

- **Moderation will be consistent with National Qualifications Framework principles.**

Moderation will be consistent with National Qualifications Framework principles such as

- *flexibility*
- *accessibility*
- *partnership*
- *quality*

Flexibility: moderation allows different pathways to meet the needs of different learners and different ways of providing education and training.

Accessibility: moderation allows for assessment to take place in a variety of places and times (including workplace assessment and prior learning). The plan is fair from the viewpoints of gender, ethnicity, age and location.

Partnership: moderation enables the use of culturally appropriate assessment practices. Development of the plan and operation of the moderation system involves a partnership of industry, profession, providers, the Qualifications Authority and other stakeholders as appropriate for the standards involved.

Quality: moderation systems will ensure appropriate assessment procedures, and consistency of standards sufficient for the purposes for which the results are to be used. They will assure confidence among stakeholders and users of unit standards.

- **Moderation will be affordable and manageable.**

Costs of moderation will be within reasonable contributions made by those receiving benefit from the process. Demands on time and resources (e.g. expert personnel) must not be excessive.

Intensity of moderation will take account of the stakes associated with unit standards, the expertise of assessors, and the income available to operate the moderation system. A balance is required between intensity of moderation and intensity of accreditation.

- **Moderation will be compatible with good education and training programmes and will contribute to continuous improvement of assessor practices.**

Moderation procedures will enable and encourage good practices in assessment, teaching and learning.

Moderation aims to achieve assessment decisions which are *right first time*. Thus, although verification will remain an important part of moderation, action plans will emphasise processes which precede assessment judgments: improving the quality of assessor procedures and judgements through

- raising assessor skills
- signalling standards
- calibration of judgements.

While calibration and verification inevitably have a certain influence on assessment and learning, any negative or restrictive effects must be held to a minimum.