



UNIVERSITEIT  
STELLENBOSCH  
UNIVERSITY

## Internal and External Moderation and the Processing of Results

<b>Type of Document:</b>	Regulation
<b>Purpose:</b>	To provide terminology, principles and procedures of internal and external moderation at SU.
<b>Approved by:</b>	SU Council
<b>Date of Approval:</b>	2006/01/04
<b>Date of Implementation:</b>	2006/04/01
<b>Date of Next Revision:</b>	As required
<b>Date of Previous Revision(s):</b>	None
<b>Policy Owner<sup>1</sup>:</b>	Vice-Rector: Learning and Teaching
<b>Policy Curator<sup>2</sup>:</b>	Institutional Research & Planning
<b>Keywords:</b>	Internal Moderation, External Moderation, Results, External Examination, External Evaluators
<b>Validity:</b>	In case of differences in interpretation the English version of this policy will be regarded as the valid version.

SU Policies are available at [www.sun.ac.za/policies](http://www.sun.ac.za/policies)

---

<sup>1</sup> Policy Owner: Head(s) of Responsibility Centre(s) in which the policy functions.

<sup>2</sup> Policy Curator: Administrative head of the division responsible for the implementation and maintenance of the policy

# Stellenbosch University

## Regulation for internal and external moderation and the processing of results

April 2006

### 1. INTRODUCTION

The internal and external moderation of student assessment in exit-level modules in Stellenbosch University's (SU's) *professional programmes* is standard practice at the University. It also meets the requirements of the relevant professional bodies.

External examination of *master's theses and doctoral dissertations* is also standard practice at the University.

Up to and including 1992 the system of annual external examination and moderation also included all *non-professional undergraduate programmes*. However, since 1993 the University's system of five-yearly external departmental evaluation has replaced the general system of external examination of undergraduate modules (Senate resolution, 16 November 1992).<sup>1</sup>

External evaluators of departments frequently criticised the fact that the University has no system of external moderation. Also, the conditions of the Council on Higher Education's Higher Education Quality Committee (HEQC) compel the University to implement a system of comprehensive external moderation (criterion 12 of the auditing criteria, and criteria 5 and 12 of the programme accreditation criteria).

The terminology, principles and procedures of internal and external moderation at SU are set out in this document.

### 2. TERMINOLOGY

#### 2.1 Assessment and assessors

HEQC Definition: **Assessment** – Systematic evaluation of a student's ability to demonstrate the acquisition of the learning goals intended in a curriculum

- a) **Assessment** is the process by which information about students' learning progress and quality of learning is systematically collected, interpreted and disseminated (SU *Strategy for Teaching and Learning 2002-2004*, Senate resolution 19 September 2001).

---

<sup>1</sup> When this system was approved in 1992, it was named "*External Evaluation of Courses and Examinations*". On completion of the first cycle (1993-1997) the system was adapted and expanded, and its name was changed to "*External Evaluation of Departments*".

- b) Assessment includes the evaluation of students' "**assessment products**" (e.g. essays, examination answer papers, oral examinations, reports, etc.) by assessors for formative and summative purposes.
- c) The **assessment process** includes the following:
  - i) Examination questions and other assessment assignments are formulated so that they adhere to the outcomes of the module, and therefore test students' learning according to specified standards.
  - ii) Examination questions and other assessment assignments are formulated clearly and unambiguously, it is reasonable to expect that question papers can be completed within the allotted time, and the question paper in general is correct (including the use of language and mark allocation).
  - iii) Examinations take place under properly regulated conditions.
  - iv) The answer papers are marked by the examiners and are evaluated according to the approved criteria of assessment.
  - v) Marks are correctly calculated and entered into the records.
- b) An **assessor** is a trained member of staff<sup>2</sup> of the University who has been officially appointed by the University to facilitate the examination of a specific module.

## 2.2 Moderation

HEQC Definition: **Moderator** – A person, apart from the examiner, that is appointed by the institution to be responsible for ensuring the standard of the examination and its accompanying marking framework and response exemplars, and for marking a representative sample of examination responses.

- a) **Moderation** is the process during which the reliability, correctness and validity of the examination and marking process and the results of a module are checked and verified.
- b) **Internal moderation** is a process undertaken by trained staff of the University who have been officially appointed by the University to facilitate the (internal) moderation of the examination process of a specific module.
- c) **External moderation** is a process undertaken by competent persons who are not members of staff of the University and who have been officially appointed by the University to facilitate the external moderation of a module.
- d) The **moderation process** (internal and external) includes the following:
  - i) Prior to the examination/assessment:
    - (a) Verify that the assessment assignments (i.e. the examination questions and/or assignments) adhere to the learning outcomes.
    - (b) Verify that the assessment assignments conform to the required standards.

---

<sup>2</sup> Assessor training at SU consists in newly appointed lecturers following the PRONTAK programme, and in all lecturers participating on a continuous basis in discourse and other training opportunities within a departmental and facultative context aimed at the improvement of their assessment literacy. The University's *Institutional Assessment Policy* (Chapter 5) contains details of SU's system of assessor training.

- ii) On completion of the examination/assessment:
  - (a) Verify that all assessment products (answer papers, essays, etc.) have been marked.
  - (b) Verify by means of a sample that the evaluation of the assessment products has been conducted in a fair and reasonable manner – the moderator should mark a sample of at least 10% of the assessment products completely, and conduct a summary review of a further sample of at least 20%.
  - (c) Verify (by means of, amongst other things, a sample) that the system used to calculate and record marks is reliable.
- iii) External moderators submit a report on the moderating process with recommendations, confirmed by his/her signature.

### **3. INFORMATION ON THE UNIVERSITY'S SYSTEM OF ASSESSMENT**

The University has five examinations every year, namely the June examination, followed immediately by the June re-examination, the November examination, followed immediately by the November re-examination, and the January examination, which is meant for honours and masters modules, in cases where departments want to examine these modules in January.

Assessment may take place through a system of examinations or continuous assessment.

Full details of the examination system are available in the University's *General Yearbook* at

<http://www.sun.ac.za/Internet/Academic/programmes/calender/2003/afr/indeks.htm>.

The University's institutional assessment policy is available in the University's *General Yearbook* at

<http://www.sun.ac.za/Internet/Academic/programmes/calender/2003/afr/indeks.htm>.

### **4. POINT OF DEPARTURE REGARDING MODERATION**

Every student should have the assurance that his/her assessment results are reliable and correct.

### **5. EXTENT OF INTERNAL MODERATION**

- a) The summative assessment of all modules presented by the University (i.e. all modules at all levels) is moderated internally.
- b) The entire internal moderation process takes place during all five examinations (June examination, June re-examination, November examination, November re-examination and the January examination).
- c) The assessment assignments (question papers/assignments) as well as the assessment products (answer papers, essays) are moderated internally during all five examinations.

## 6. EXTENT OF EXTERNAL MODERATION

- a) The summative assessment of **exit-level modules** is **externally** moderated as follows:
- i. Modules which make use of an **examination system**:
    - 1) All five examinations: the assessment assignments (the question papers, assignments, etc.) are moderated externally before the examination is undertaken.
    - 2) June examination and June re-examination: the assessment products (answer papers, essays, etc.) are moderated externally immediately after the re-examination and before the marks have been finalised.
    - 3) November examination: the assessment products (answer papers, essays, etc.) are moderated externally immediately after the examination and before the marks have been finalised.
    - 4) November re-examination and January examination: the assessment products (answer papers, essays, etc.) are externally moderated immediately after the relative examination and before the marks have been finalised.
  - ii. Modules which make use of a system of **continuous assessment** (and are therefore required to include four summative assessment opportunities for semester modules, and eight for year modules):
    - 1) The assessment assignments (question papers, assignments, etc.) of assessment that takes place during the June and November examinations are externally modified in advance.
    - 2) The assessment products (answer papers, assignments, etc.) of the June and November examinations are moderated externally immediately after the relevant examination and before the marks have been finalised.

## 7. REQUIREMENTS FOR MODERATORS (INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL)

- a) Moderators usually have a qualification on the same or a higher NQC level than that of the module (or thesis or dissertation) that he/she is moderating.
- b) Moderators possess the requisite competence and academic standing in the field(s) in which they are moderators.
- c) External moderators are not appointed in a fixed capacity or as temporary staff on the staff establishment of SU.

## 8. APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL MODERATORS

- a) The departmental chairperson<sup>3</sup> recommends the internal moderators to the Faculty Board.
- b) Faculty Boards appoint the internal moderators on behalf of the Senate.

---

<sup>3</sup> For modules that are collectively presented by more than one department (e.g. in the Faculty of Health Sciences) the recommendations are made by the module chairpersons.

- c) The name(s) of the internal moderator(s) appear in the module framework which is made available to the students.
- d) The name(s) of the internal moderator(s) are included in the assessment assignments (question papers, assignments, etc.) which are distributed to the students.

**Comment:** The responsibility rests with the departmental chairperson (or, where applicable, module chairpersons) to ensure that these conditions of appointment are met.

## 9. APPOINTMENT OF EXTERNAL MODERATORS

- a) The departmental chairperson<sup>4</sup> recommends the external moderators to the Faculty Board.
- b) Faculty Boards appoint the external moderators on behalf of the Senate.
- c) No person may be a moderator for the same module for longer than three consecutive years.

**Comment:** The responsibility rests with the departmental chairperson (or, where applicable, module chairpersons) to ensure that these conditions of appointment are met.

## 10. DOCUMENTATION SUPPLIED TO EXTERNAL MODERATORS

The following documentation is supplied to external moderators:

- a) a copy of SU's *Regulation for internal and external moderation and the processing of results*;
- b) the module framework, which includes the following:
  - i. name and code of the module;
  - ii. lecturer(s) presenting the module and acting as its assessor, with his/her contact details;
  - iii. name of the internal moderator;
  - iv. aim, rationale and outcomes of the module;
  - v. study resources (e.g. textbooks, articles, internet material, hand-outs, etc.);
  - vi. learning opportunities created by the lecturer (e.g. lectures, group work, excursions, guidelines for self-study, etc.);
  - vii. specific details of the timetable, contact opportunities, target dates, etc.;
  - viii. assessment:
    - (a) methods of assessment;
    - (b) time and place of assessment opportunities;
    - (c) information on the speed and format of feedback to students after assessment opportunities;
    - (d) calculation of class and achievement marks;
    - (e) admission to tests/examinations;
  - ix. any other special conditions (e.g. arrangements concerning aegrotat tests, participation in learning opportunities, etc.);

---

<sup>4</sup> For modules that are collectively presented by more than one department (e.g. in the Faculty of Health Sciences) the recommendations are made by the module chairpersons.

- c) the assessment assignments (e.g. examination question papers, assignments);
- d) the assessment products (e.g. answer papers, essays);
- e) class lists which include the following:
  - i. the names of candidates in the module;
  - ii. indication of candidates who registered, suspended their studies, or undertook the examination;
  - iii. the class marks of the candidates;
  - iv. the examination marks of the candidates;
  - v. the achievement marks of the candidates;
- f) information on the external moderator's commentary following the previous summative assessment opportunity, and, where applicable, information on the steps taken to follow up on such commentary.

## 11. PROCESSING OF RESULTS

- 11.1 The responsibility rests with the departmental chairperson (or, where applicable, the module chairperson) to examine the evidence before the assessor finalises the marks on the central information system, and confirm that:
- a) internal moderation took place;
  - b) external moderation of assessment took place (as and where applicable) and that the reports of the external moderators are being kept on record;
  - c) cognisance has been taken of any adaptations made as well as the recommendations arising from the internal and external processes of moderation;
  - d) follow-up steps have been planned, where applicable; and
  - e) the follow-up steps planned after the previous summative assessment opportunity have been executed.
- 11.2 The departmental chairperson (or, where applicable, the module chairperson) submits to the Dean a report on the moderation and results of all modules which are the responsibility of that department (i.e. not only exit-level modules).
- 11.3 The Dean is responsible, after each examination opportunity and within one week of the marks being finalised on the central system, for the submission of a report – in the format prescribed by the Vice-Rector (Teaching) – in which he/she confirms that:
- a) the assessment of all modules in the faculty adheres to all the prescribed procedures and regulations;
  - b) he/she has taken cognisance of the recommendations of the departmental/module chairpersons;
  - c) follow-up steps are being planned by the department (where applicable); and
  - d) where applicable, the follow-up steps planned after the previous examination opportunity have been executed.
- 11.4 The Vice-Rector (Teaching) has been granted a fixed capacity by the Executive Committee of the Senate to approve all examination results on

behalf of the University after the Dean has submitted a report and before the information for the graduation ceremonies has been finalised.

- 11.5 The Vice-Rektor (Teaching) is responsible for:
- a) examining the reports of the Deans;
  - b) taking cognisance of planned follow-up actions and the Dean's comments on these;
  - c) taking cognisance, where applicable, of the progress of follow-up actions after the previous examination opportunity; and
  - d) approving the results.

## 12. GENERAL

- 12.1 As of 2005, internal moderation of all modules is compulsory for all teaching and learning programmes offered by the University.
- 12.2 As of 2005, external moderation of exit-level modules (as specified in this Regulation) is compulsory for all teaching and learning programmes offered by the University.
- 12.3 Faculties are permitted to institute additional faculty-specific regulations, provided that these comply with the general University requirements as set out in this Regulation.
- 12.4 The current system of re-evaluation of examination answer scripts remains intact.
- 12.5 Time must be made available in the University calendar for internal and external moderation.
- 12.6 Departments are responsible for all practical arrangements related to the external moderation of their exit-level modules. This responsibility includes:
- a. ensuring that security is maintained when assessment assignments (examination question papers, assignments) are presented to external moderators;<sup>5</sup>
  - b. ensuring that security is maintained when assessment products are being externally moderated;<sup>6</sup> and
  - c. ensuring that external moderators are able to meet their obligations in a cost-effective manner.
- 12.7 Departments are responsible for the costs of the external moderation of their exit-level modules. The University's standard tariffs for the remuneration of external moderators are determined annually by the Executive Director (Finance).

---

<sup>5</sup> Special care must be taken concerning the security of question papers sent by e-mail.

<sup>6</sup> In order to comply with point 12.5, it is recommended that, where possible, Departments bring the external examiners/moderators to campus on completion of the examinations, instead of having the answer scripts couriered back and forth.





UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

## REPORT ON THE EXTERNAL MODERATION OF ASSESSMENT ASSIGNMENTS

To be submitted before the June examination, June re-examination,  
November examination, November re-examination and January  
examination

### Request to external moderators:

- Verify that the assessment assignments (examination question papers, assignments, etc.) meet the required standards.
- Verify that the assessment assignments adhere to the learning outcomes.
- Verify that the assessment assignments are appropriate in order to assess the learning outcomes effectively.

The University's assessors and departmental/module chairpersons will consider these comments and execute appropriate follow-up steps.

1.	Name of external moderator	
2.	Qualifications of external moderator	
3.	Employer of external moderator	
4.	SU department whose assessment assignments have been externally moderated	

5. I confirm that I received the following documents before the examination concerned:		√
5.1 a copy of Stellenbosch University's <i>Regulation for internal and external moderation and the processing of results</i> (also available on the University's website at <a href="http://www.sun.ac.za">www.sun.ac.za</a> );		
5.2 module framework(s);		
5.3 assessment assignments (e.g. question papers, assignments);		
5.4 other documents (specify).		

6. Names of the modules of which the assessment assignments (question papers, assignments, etc.) have been externally moderated	Module number


**7. Are you satisfied with the standard of the assessment assignments (question papers, assignments)? If not, please supply comment and make recommendations.**


**8. Are you satisfied that the assessment assignments are appropriate and adequate? If not, please supply comment and make recommendations.**


**9. Observations / matters for attention / suggestions**


**10. I confirm that I have met the responsibilities of external moderators, as specified in this form.**

<b>Signature of the external moderator</b>	
<b>Date</b>	

---

**Comment of lecturer and/or departmental/module chairperson**






UNIVERSITEIT • STELLENBOSCH • UNIVERSITY  
jou kennisvennoot • your knowledge partner

## REPORT OF THE EXTERNAL MODERATOR

(To be submitted on completion of the June examination and re-examination, November examination, November re-examination and January examination)

### Request to external moderators:

- a. Kindly examine 10% of the assessment products (answer scripts, essays, etc.) in full, and conduct a cursory examination of a further sample of at least 20%.
- b. Please focus attention on the positive and negative aspects of the modules which you moderated so that the academic quality of the latter may be identified and continually improved.
- c. Your comments could include the following: module content; organisation of learning opportunities (as contained in the module framework); the quality of the module framework; the extent to which the assessment assignments adhere to the learning outcomes; methods of assessment and the appropriateness of these to the assessment of the learning outcomes; the quality of the candidates; the administration of the assessment (examinations, assignments, etc.); and/or any other matter you may regard as relevant.
- d. Departmental/module chairpersons will consider these comments, take appropriate steps in reaction, and also bring them to the attention of the Dean.

1.	<b>Name of external moderator</b>	
2.	<b>Qualifications of external moderator</b>	
3.	<b>Employer of external moderator</b>	
4.	<b>SU department whose modules have been externally moderated</b>	

<b>5. I confirm that I have received the following documents:</b>		√
5.1 a copy of Stellenbosch University's <i>Regulation for internal and external moderation and the processing of results</i> ;		
5.2 module framework;		
5.3 assessment assignments (e.g. question papers, assignments);		
5.4 assessment products (e.g. answer scripts, essays);		
5.5 class registers (including names and marks);		
5.6 information on the comments of external moderators during previous assessment opportunities and, where applicable, information on any follow-up steps taken;		

5.7 other (supply details).	
-----------------------------	--

6. Names of the modules externally examined	Module numbers

7. Are you satisfied with the standard of the module(s)? If not, please supply comment.


8. Are you satisfied that the appropriate standards of assessment have been maintained? If not, please supply comment.


9. Observations / matters for attention / suggestions


10. I confirm that I have met the responsibilities of external moderators (as specified in the *Regulation for internal and external moderation and the processing of results*).

<b>Signature of the external moderator</b>	
<b>Date</b>	



**Comment of the departmental/module chairperson**




**Comment of the Dean**
