	Assessment Validation, Grading and Moderation Policy and Procedures
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1. Purpose

a. S P Jain School of Global Management (S P Jain) is committed to effective assessment validation, grading and moderation as an integral part of its assessment procedures.

b. The School has designed its procedures to ensure common interpretation of Threshold Standards 2021 in relation to student performance across all campuses.

c. S P Jain moderates the design of assessments and students' performance internally and externally to ensure the validity and reliability of its assessment practices and awarding of grades. Moderation is undertaken each term / semester as part of a continual improvement cycle.

d. The purpose of this Policy is to ensure that assessment tasks are aligned to the unit (subject) and course learning outcomes and marking is valid and reliable.

2. Responsibilities

a. The Director - Examinations is responsible for:
   i. Undertaking ongoing assessment validation and moderation.
   ii. Ensuring, in conjunction with the Examination Board, Course Directors (Deans), Area Heads and Course Managers that all assessments are valid, that they are conducted fairly, that the results are reliable, and declared in a timely manner by the Examination Board.
   iii. Reviewing the papers for adherence to format, avoiding any repetitions and obtaining the necessary approvals from designated Deans / Area Heads.
   iv. Managing and overseeing all assessments (ongoing, mid-term and final examination or alternate final assessment in lieu of final examination).
   v. Consulting with Course Directors (Deans) on any incongruent assessment outcomes and if necessary, convening an Examinations Board meeting to review the same.

b. Campus Course Offices are responsible for:
   i. Documenting and coordinating all assessments and assignments with the assigned academic staff.
   ii. Obtaining two sets of mid-term and final assessment examination papers / assignments from academic staff with supporting assessment rubrics and model answers for each unit and forwarding the same to the Director - Examinations within the stipulated timelines.
   iii. Working in close coordination with the Director - Examinations to manage invigilated mid-term and final examinations and their grading.

c. Course Directors (Deans) / Area Heads are responsible for:
   i. Ensuring pre-assessment validation of assessment briefs for all units for their respective Course(s).
   ii. Reviewing results provided by each faculty, for an adequate spread of results such as to avoid any incongruent outcomes, in consultation with the Director - Examinations, if necessary.

d. Academic Staff are responsible for
   i. Managing and overseeing all ongoing individual and group assessments assignments in their unit(s).
   ii. Demonstrating that all assessment items are aligned to unit learning outcomes.
   iii. Providing the Course Office two sets of mid-term and final assessment examination papers/assignments with supporting assessment rubrics and model answers for their unit(s).
   iv. Generating a spread of results for each assessment item.
   v. Consulting on any incongruent assessment outcomes in the spread of results with the Course Director (Dean) / Director - Examinations and taking necessary corrective measures where required.

3. Principles of assessment

a. All units may include diagnostic, formative and summative assessment.

b. Assessments are designed to be:
   i. Accessible to all students.
   ii. Accommodate diversity.
   iii. Aligned to the unit and course learning outcomes.
   iv. Appropriately weighted, and
   v. Framed in accordance with the level specifications set by the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF).

c. Assessment tasks are constructively aligned to the unit and course content, unit and course learning outcomes.

d. Assessments are structured to promote and safeguard academic integrity regardless of the mode of delivery.

e. Where group work is graded, criteria are set to ensure that all students receive marks that accurately reflect their individual level of academic attainment.

f. Where applicable, the assessment schedule for all units may include early assessments and / or reviews that provide feedback on academic progress and identify students that need additional support.

g. Assessment sheets / rubrics with model answers are available to academic staff to ensure efficient, consistent and reliable marking.

h. Assessment results for any assessment task are released to all students in the class at the same time.

i. Students receive timely feedback for each assessment to assist them in achieving the specified unit learning outcomes. To ensure this the following timeframes need to be adhered to:
    i. Evaluated formative assessments scores are returned to students in class or electronically at the earliest possible timeframe and latest within two weeks from due date of the assessment task.
    ii. Students who have queries or seek additional feedback should approach their course coordinator / course manager immediately within 3 working days of the assessment scores being returned to the students.
    iii. Results of mid- term and final examination or final assessment in lieu of final examination are communicated to the students within three weeks of the final assessment date .
    iv. If there is a delay in not meeting the stated timeframes for release of assessments, students are kept informed of the delay.

4. **Validation of assessment design and moderation of assessment outcomes**

    a. S P Jain encourages its academic staff members to use a diverse range of assessments. Tasks may include, but are not limited to:
        i. Class participation
        ii. Case studies and role plays in either authentic or simulated environments
        iii. Individual and group assignments
        iv. Field work
        v. Student board room discussions and submission
        vi. Quizzes
        vii. Essays and discussion papers
        viii. Verbal and written presentations
        ix. Capstone and research projects
        x. Integrated learning
        xi. Mid- term and final examinations / final assessments in lieu of final examination.

    b. S P Jain academic staff will monitor, assess / co- assess and validate all Work Integrated Learning placements / internships.

c. Validation and moderation methods may include:
   i. Validation of assessment briefs
   ii. Internal and external moderation of assessment tools and activities
   iii. An assessment review panel
   iv. An independent external validator
   v. Benchmarking against evidence from other external providers of units at the same AQF level.

d. Select units from each year of a course will undergo post assessment validation and moderation every year so that all unit within a course undergo assessment validation and moderation over a three-year period.

5. **Assessment Validation and Moderation Procedure**

a. The Director - Examinations develops a schedule to determine which units will be chosen, the timing of assessment reviews, the types of validation and moderation methods, and the timetable for assessment validation and moderation. The schedule may include the use of any other external benchmarking resources available.

b. The assessment validation and moderation process will be implemented in two stages of pre-assessment and post assessment validation as detailed below in 5.c and 5.d

c. **Pre-assessment validation of assessment tasks**

   i. *Unit Outline Review and approval*
   - All unit outlines developed by the academic staff will be reviewed and approved by the Course Directors (Deans) / Area Heads as applicable, to ensure that:
     o Assessment methods and tasks are mapped appropriately and cover all unit learning outcomes
     o Assessment methods and tasks are consistent and gather sufficient evidence of achievement
     o Marking criteria and rubrics meet the unit and threshold learning outcome requirements.

   ii. *Validation of all mid- term and final examination paper / assessment in lieu of final examination*
   - All Mid-term and final assessments are reviewed to ensure:
     o Validity of the questions posed
     o Appropriate weightage is given to questions
     o Appropriate variety of questioning techniques, and
     o Content being assessed links to unit and learning outcomes
     o Questions are not repeated in previous question paper.

d. **Post-assessment moderation of assessment outcomes** prior to declaration of final results/grades

   i. Review of spread of results
   - The Course office will provide to the Director - Examinations Office the raw scores for each assessment item for a unit.
   - If the results appear to be incongruent with prior and / or expected trends, the Director - Examinations will consult the academic staff to review the interpretation of the marking criteria used.
   - Post consultation, if in the opinion of the Director - Examinations, the results still require further review then Director – Examinations will consult the Course Director (Dean) and the Registrar.
   - If post moderation and consultation as detailed above, any results continue to be incongruent with prior and / or expected trends then a report will be prepared by the Director - Examinations and provided to the Examination Board for its consideration. The report will include:
     o Details of assessment processes and tools used
     o Any feedback from academic staff and / or students about assessments
     o Samples of graded assessments by another academic staff for the same / similar unit
   - The Examination Board will assess the report and determine whether further investigation and action required.

   ii. Post declaration of result / grade declaration assessment moderation
   - A series of activities will be undertaken at random to verify the rigour of the assessment processes which include (but are not limited to):
     o Moderation at the margins (final results centred around the specific grade levels – a representative sample of assessments around these borderline grades will be reviewed)
     o Multiple markers in the same unit – the distribution of the marks awarded by the multiple markers is assessed (and if there are multiple questions in the assessment, then the marks for each question) to ascertain whether there are markers who might lie outside the average or general trend
     o Random sampling – review of randomly selected examples of all the assessment types for an entire unit .
     o A review undertaken every year by an external reviewer in accordance with compliances and requirements of various statutory bodies. The report template includes, but is not limited to, comment on academic standards, standards of student performance, course structure and curriculum, the alignment of learning outcomes to the assessment types, teaching methods, assessment criteria and marking, grade distributions, and moderation and sampling methods.

e. The Director - Examinations will six monthly report to the Examinations Board of the post assessment moderation and validation activities as in undertaken with details of:
   o formal reports received
   o areas of improvement / gaps highlighted

- o related improvement activities plan, with assigned responsibilities and completion dates
- o Update on actions undertaken from previous post assessment and moderation activities

6. Grading procedures

a. The Campus Course Office will provide all completed assessments and examination answer scripts to the relevant academic staff for marking.

b. On receipt of the relevant marked assessments and examination scripts the Campus Course Offices will collate all the marks for all assessments for each unit and forward the collated raw mark-sheet to the Director - Examinations Office for grading.

c. Post moderation and validation, the Director - Examinations Office will submit the provisional grades to the Examination Board for approval.

d. On receipt of approval from the Examination Board, the Director - Examinations Office will upload the grades on PeopleSoft / BlackBoard for future reference of Campus Course Offices and Registrar's office.

e. The Director - Examinations Office in conjunction with the Registrar's office will provide final grades and term performance data to the Course Directors (Deans).

7. Grading systems

a. Grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.
   i. The Grade notations used at S P Jain are letter grades A, B, C, D, PC (Pass Conceded) and F letter grades.
   ii. A-C are further divided in to 3 notches – e.g. letter grade A is further divided into 3 notches A+, A and A-.
   iii. A letter grade of PC is awarded in exceptional cases for a performance below that normally required for a pass. It is granted for a unit when the overall performance is considered to warrant such a concession. A PC grade for a unit may be awarded at the joint discretion and decision of the Course Director (Dean) and Registrar subject to a recommendation by the Director- Examinations.
   iv. The letter grade F reflects non-achievement of unit learning outcomes.

b. At the beginning of each unit, lecturers provide a written explanation of grading procedures. In general, a weighted average total of all the evaluation components are generated at the end of each unit for every student. Then students are graded relatively on a bell curve using a weighted average, comparing performance against their peers in the unit.

c. Letter grades denote the following range of performance:

Letter Grade	Percentage of Class
A+ / A / A-	25%
B+ / B / B-	50%
C+ or lower	25%

d. Letter grades denote the following levels of performance:

Letter Grade	Grade Point
A+	4.30
A	4.00
A-	3.70
B+	3.30
B	3.00
B-	2.70
C+	2.30
C	2.00
C-	1.70
D	1.00
PC	0.50
F	0

e. Additional grades apply in the following circumstances:

Letter grade	Definition
Pass	Pass/fail grade only
Fail	Pass/fail grade only
I	Incomplete
E	Exemption
W	Withdrawn

f. Both absolute and relative grading methods may be used as detailed in Section 8.b and 8.c respectively.

g. An F letter grade carries zero credit points. A student needs to clear all F grades through retest (supplementary exams) to graduate.

h. The grading system is detailed in the course student handbook accessible to prospective students before they enrol in a course of study. It is also available to current students before they attempt assessment tasks.

i. All grades appear on academic records.

j. CGPA is the weighted average of all the grade points earned by a student in the course divided by the total number of credits in the course.

k. Units assessed on a pass / fail basis are not included in the CGPA.

l. Students who have not completed all requirements for a unit earn I (Incomplete) grade and may complete the unit later within the specified course completion period and earn appropriate credit.

m. Students who withdraw from a unit for personal reasons are awarded a W (Withdrawn) grade. Subject to approval by the Registrar students with an W grade may complete the respective unit later within the specified course completion period and earn appropriate credit.

n. As detailed in the Credit Transfer and Articulation Policy, credit granted for recognition of learning achieved with other academic institutions will not be included in the S P Jain transcript and will not be considered for the purpose of calculating the cumulative grade point average (CGPA). Details of credit granted will be recorded in the transcript with a grade of E indicating exemption.

8. Grading Methods

a. Both relative and absolute grading methodologies are used.

b. Relative Grading

    i. The relative grading policy consists is applicable for all units (excluding simulation units, student projects, DBA coursework units and DBA thesis) where the class size of the students is 20 or more.

    ii. **Steps to Compute 'A+' to 'F' grade for class size of 20 or more students**

    Step 1: From the raw scores obtained by the students for each unit, construct a normal curve for all units having 20 or more observations.

    Step 2 : All students who have not secured a threshold minimum of 40 percent in the end term examination AND those who do not secure an overall of 40 percent (composite score) will obtain an 'F' Grade.

    Step 3: Using unit-wise average and standard deviation, compute scores corresponding to 2 Standard deviation: Unit-wise Raw Average Score – 2* Unit -wise Standard Deviation.

    Step 4: Compute the bottom 5% of raw scores for each unit to determine the bracket consisting of 'D' and 'F'.

Step 5 : Not withstanding condition for F grade allocation mentioned in Step 2 above, Students obtaining scores 2 and below 2 standard deviation score will be assigned 'F' grade. Students obtaining scores more than 2 standard deviation scores, but falling within the bottom 5% bracket, will be assigned 'D' and 'F' grade.

c. Absolute Grading

i. All DBA course work units , simulation units, student projects and units where class size is 1 to 19 students will use the absolute grading scale as detailed below:

Score range	Letter grade
95–100	A+
90–94	A
85–89	A-
80–84	B+
75–79	B
70–74	B-
65–69	C+
60–64	C
50–59	C-
40–49	D
00–39	F

ii. All students who have not secured a threshold minimum of 40 percent in the end term examination AND those who do not secure an overall of 40 percent (composite score) will obtain an 'F' Grade.

iii. Additionally, for the DBA course work units a threshold minimum 50% of the final examination marks will be a pass minimum.

d. DBA Thesis Assessment

i. DBA thesis will be assessed as per 'Policy and Procedures for Composition and Operation of the Exam Panel for DBA Course Thesis Work'.

9. Re-tests

a. After the results and grades are declared on Blackboard / PeopleSoft and if permissible, students who have not met the rules for course progression may be given the opportunity to apply to the Director - Examinations Office to undertake a 're-test' (i.e. re-sit an examination or re-submit an assessment). When applying for a re-test, students must clearly state the reasons for the re-test.

b. There will be no retest for units not having an end term exam / semester examination   e.g. Projects, Simulations, team-based activities etc. Students would need to redo the unit or take the independent study (explained in point 11 and Appendix A) route to complete the course.

c. Students must pay the requisite fee for taking the retest, complete the Re-test Application Form and submit it to the Director - Examinations Office along-with the fee receipt.

d. The highest grade awarded at a re-test is a C+.

e. A re-test grade is considered final and it is included in the student's CGPA.

f. Re-tests take place on scheduled dates arranged by the Director - Examinations Office.

g. The Campus Course Office, under the oversight of the Director - Examinations, will manage all re-tests and their grading by relevant academic staff.

h. The Campus Course Office will provide re-test scores to the Director - Examinations Office which will submit the revised grade to Examination Board for approval.

i. Following approval by the Examination Board, the Director -Examinations will upload the grades on PeopleSoft / Blackboard for Campus Course Office and Registrar's office reference.

10.   Re-evaluations

a. Students who are dissatisfied with their mid-term or final examination results may submit a Re-evaluation Request Form to the Director - Examinations.

b. There will be no re-evaluation for projects and simulations units .

c. The Director - Examinations will arrange for an independent assessor to re-assess the student's responses. An Independent Assessment template is provided to the independent assessor.

d. Examination scripts may only be re-evaluated once, and the results awarded upon revised assessment will be considered as final.

11. Independent Study

a. In exceptional circumstances where a student is unable to complete a unit successfully for justifiable reasons acceptable to the School, such as absence from class on medical grounds or being awarded an 'F' grade, he / she may apply for Independent Study as detailed in Appendix A.

12. Appeals Process
a. All decisions made by the School in relation to assessment and grading can be appealed through the processes set out under academic grievance in Student Grievance and Mediation Policy and Procedures.

13. Record Keeping

a. The Course Office keeps all assessments, examination papers and answer scripts.

b. The Director - Examinations also retains copies of all mid-term and final examination question papers for all courses.

c. Periodically, on completion of a course and as prescribed by the Registrar's Office, the full set of assessment and answers scripts for each intake will be transferred from the Campus Course Office to the Registrar's Office for centralised storage in accordance with the Records Management Policy.

Related documents
- Course Rules of Progression
- Credit Transfer and Articulation Policy
- Policy and Procedures for Composition and Operation of the Exam Panel for DBA Course Thesis Work
- Records Management Policy
- Student Grievance and Mediation Policy and Procedures
- Student Progression, Exclusion and Course Completion Policy
- Students at Risk Policy

Acknowledgements

The development of this policy and procedure has been informed by sector benchmarking including the Assessment Validation and Moderation Policy and Procedure of the International College of Hospitality and Management available at:
https://www.ichm.edu.au/programs/rules-policies-procedures
https://www.ichm.edu.au/__files/f/17482/Assessment_Validation_and_Moderation.pdf

Appendix A
Guidelines for Independent Studies (IS)

a. If a student is unable to improve the grades or is unable to complete a unit successfully, such a student may give a further opportunity to do an independent study at the discretion of the School, subject to a maximum of:
- Two independent studies for MBA (Global), MGB and MAIB courses during the entire course of study.
- A maximum of 1 independent study for MBA (Executive) course or Diploma in Business course
- A maximum of four independent studies for BBA course
- A maximum of three independent studies for BEC and BBC courses

b. No independent study is permitted for DBA coursework units.

c. A student who proposes to undertake an independent study for a unit must send a formal application to the Registrar's Office expressing intention to do so with an explanation for the request duly supported with documentation for the request.

d. On receipt of an application, the Registrar in consultation with the Course Director (Dean) will decide as to whether the student's request is a valid request and to approve or refuse the request.

e. For eligible students, the Dean will nominate an academic staff who will be the guide and mentor to the student.

f. The nominated academic staff will ensure the following:
   i. Fulfilment of contact hours
   ii. Fulfilment of learning outcomes
   iii. Fulfilment of assessment type

g. Fulfilment of contact hours: The academic staff shall ensure that the contact hours are as prescribed in the course outline and that these are fulfilled by the combination of:
   i. personal contact with the student in chamber or electronically
   ii. OR by a combination of personal contact and regular attendance in the library with in/out attestation by the librarian to authenticate the hours spent studying/researching the unit. The library hours may be documented through a logbook maintained by the student.

h. Fulfilment of learning outcomes: It is of utmost importance that the nominated academic staff ensures that the learning outcomes of the unit are not diluted. Towards this objective the academic staff shall ensure:
   i. Matching of learning outcome with assessment type prescribed in the unit outline.
   ii. Matching of learning outcome with weightage of marks allocated for the assessment type

i. Fulfilment of assessment type: set a further final examination or final assessment in lieu of final examination at same difficulty level.

j. The academic staff will also ensure that the student has acquired adequate knowledge and skills as stated in the unit outline.

k. The final exam paper set by the academic staff shall be vetted as per the procedure laid for normal question papers administered to all students in the normal course.

l. The exam shall be independently invigilated by Course Coordinators.

m. The academic staff would be required to evaluate the assessments and provide a composite statement of marks covering the marks secured in the final examination, tests, quizzes, individual assignments, etc. This should be in line with the assessment type mentioned in the unit outline.

n. The academic staff would also be required to send a declaration through the Course Director (Dean) to the Director - Examinations that all the requirements of the contact hours and the learning outcomes match the assessment type and weightage prescribed in the course outline have been complied with. The declaration needs to be attested to by the Course Director (Dean).

o. The statement of marks and declaration by the academic staff would be sent to the Course coordinators who in turn would forward the same to the Director - Examinations with a request to put forth the same to the Examination Board.

p. On reviewing the papers received, the Director - Examinations would put forth the same to the Examination Board.

q. The Examination Board would follow the usual procedure of grading the student and declaring the results.

r. The minutes of the Examination Board would be the place before the Academic Board for a final approval.

s. If the examination is a second attempt for the student, the highest grade that would be awarded would be a C+.