

JCU - IRU Academic Calibration Process



Academic Calibration was derived from a need to fulfil legislated requirements designed to ensure ongoing standards in learning and teaching are maintained through quality monitoring, review and improvement, including reference to external comparisons. As an inter-institutional peer-review activity, calibration provides an opportunity for external referencing, contributing to the mitigation of potential risk to the quality of the education provided and to guide possible improvements. The process speaks specifically to Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) relating to:

- monitoring, review and improvement as part of institutional quality assurance at Standards 5.3.1, 5.3.4.b and 5.3.7 and
- the specification of learning outcomes at Standards 1.4.1, 1.4.3 and 1.4.4.

Calibration currently operates at subject/unit level, providing a 'deep dive' report on:

- grades awarded
- the relationship between assessment and learning outcomes
- the relationship and appropriateness of a unit within its designated course structures
- the clarity and appropriateness of assessment design, learning outcomes, and supporting material for a unit
- the comparison of the assessment, learning outcomes and supporting items to that of other institutions.

Calibration is a collegial, transactional, standardised peer-review activity undertaken in collaboration with other Innovative Research Universities (IRU). It involves the selection of units, the nomination of suitable reviewers, the collection of unit materials, the review itself, and the implementation of any recommendations from the review. The process is facilitated by Institutional Calibration Coordinators using a bespoke Calibrate database. Each Calibration Coordinator acts as the conduit via which the transactional steps of calibration occur and helps ensure the process is conducted with integrity, is secure and efficient.

Process

The key components to Academic calibration:

Engagement

Each university selects subjects they would like to calibrate. These are distributed to calibration coordinators at each university to find suitable reviewing academics. The university having the subjects calibrated will select a reviewing academic from the recommendations provided.

Preparation

The course coordinator will select one assessment task from the subject and collate student samples from each grade bracket (six in total). Associated information e.g. subject outline, learning outcomes; de-identified assessments will be forwarded onto the reviewing university

Review

The reviewing academic will have a four (4) to six (6) week window to assess materials provided and complete a short evaluative on-line report.

Please note: reviewing academics do not redesign assessment tasks, remark student work or standardise student grades. The review is retrospective of the grade given and does not influence the grades awarded to students.

Resources

[Higher Education Standards Framework \(Threshold Standards\) 2021](#)

[Coursework Approval, Accreditation and Review Policy](#)

Please refer to the following guides if you are participating, or interested in participating in Academic Calibration:

- [Subject Coordinator Guide](#)
- [Checklist to Subject Coordinator for compiling calibration package](#)

Contact

If you are interested in learning more about academic calibration, having a subject calibrated, or registering your interest in becoming a reviewing academic, please contact the JCU Academic Calibration Coordinator.

Mariana Van Niekerk

T: 07 4781 5420

E: mariana.vanniekerk@jcu.edu.au