



## **2009 External Audit Summary Moderation of Low Volume Papers for the New Zealand Diploma in Business**

### **Introduction**

The New Zealand Diploma in Business (NZDipBus) has a system for moderating low volume papers. Low volume papers are those offered by few Tertiary Education Organisations (TEOs) or for which there are a small number of results reported. They include papers that are locally endorsed for a particular TEO by the National Advisory Committee for Business Studies and approved by the New Zealand Qualifications Authority (NZQA) for Unspecified Credit for NZDipBus. Papers that are classified as low volume are nominated in a document available on the NZQA website (<http://www.nzqa.govt.nz/qualifications/tertqual/dipbus/moderation.html>).

The low volume moderation process was implemented in 1998. It was reviewed in 2005 and some minor changes were made, although the changes did not significantly affect the operation of the system.

The low volume moderation process requires TEOs accredited to offer NZDipBus papers to moderate each low volume paper they offer each semester in which the paper is offered. Papers must be subject to pre-assessment moderation (checking the assessment task and the marking schedule) and post-assessment moderation (verifying marking of student work). Papers may be moderated internally or externally to the TEO, but with the requirement that every third teaching cycle or within a period of three years, whichever comes first, assessment material for a low volume paper must be moderated externally.

The low volume process contains provision for TEOs to be audited. This report summarises the 2009 audit, which was conducted under this provision. For the audit, TEOs were required to submit copies of moderation reports for all low volume papers delivered in the previous year that had been selected by NZQA for the audit.

Audits were previously conducted in 2001, 2005, 2006, 2007 and 2008.

### **Purposes of the audit**

The purposes of the audit are:

- to verify that TEOs have an internal moderation system in place for low volume papers
- to determine if the system is operating in an effective manner.

## Audit process

All TEOs submitting results to NZQA for low volume papers in 2008 were identified. For each of the 34 TEOs identified, a maximum of three low volume papers were selected for the audit.

The papers were selected on the basis of one or more of the following:

- results were submitted as Unspecified Credit
- of the low volume papers for which results were submitted, the paper(s) selected had the largest number of results
- the paper was included in the 2008 audit but the audit results were either inconclusive or showed a level of non-compliance.

In a letter from NZQA dated 25 September 2009, all 34 TEOs were notified about the material they were required to submit for the audit. TEOs were asked to submit moderation reports for each of the course assessments for 2008. The deadline for submissions was 30 October 2009. Follow-up occurred where TEOs did not submit by the due date.

## Audit findings

- 1 The following table gives a summary of the audit findings. Although 34 TEOs were required to make submissions, the total number of TEOs shown in the table is greater than 34 since 13 TEOs come under more than one category.

<b>Finding</b>	<b>No of TEOs</b>
Moderation processes meet requirements for one or more low volume papers audited	8
Moderation processes do not meet requirements of the low volume moderation process – external moderation requirements was not carried out or was not carried out for all assessments.	3
Moderation processes do not meet requirements of the low volume moderation process – pre-assessment moderation was not carried out or was not carried out for all assessments.	8
Moderation processes do not meet requirements of the low volume moderation process – post-assessment moderation was not carried out or was not carried out for all assessments.	12
Results for low volume papers or for an Unspecified Credit are from credit transfer only.	8
No submission received for one or more selected paper	10
Total	49

- 2 Most TEOs offering low volume papers and who submitted moderation reports are undertaking moderation.
- 3 Eight TEOs are meeting fully the moderation requirements for low volume papers. However, there are few of these, as evaluated by the quality of the moderation documentation, in which the process can confidently be said to be effective. Most reports include criteria for moderators to make judgements against, but several reports had few criteria. Administrative information that should be part of a moderation report was not always present or not always clear, including whether moderation is internal or external. In some cases, even though specific provision was made to give details such as dates, the information had not been entered. Some reports were not validated with a signature.
- 4 Twenty TEOs are not carrying pre-assessment moderation and/or post assessment moderation on at least some of the assessments for a paper.
- 5 Three TEOs did not meet the requirement for moderation to be external to the TEO every third year or every third teaching cycle.
- 6 Ten TEOs did not submit material for at least one of the papers due for submission or provide an explanation.
- 7 Some TEOs submitted material not relevant to the audit, such as course moderation/ approval documentation or assessment material (including marked work).
- 8 Some TEOs did not complete the audit cover sheet as required – for example, the moderation reports submitted did not correspond with the assessments listed on the cover sheet. It was common to find that the "Moderation report" column had not been completed (in this column, TEOs are expected to make an entry that identifies the enclosed moderation report(s) with the course assessment listed – this expectation may not have been clear).

### **Concluding comment**

While five TEOs provided sufficient evidence that moderation occurs according to the requirements specified for all low volume papers audited, many did not. Some TEOs may not be fully aware of the requirements of the low volume moderation process.

NZQA has reviewed the process for national external moderation of low volume prescriptions for the NZDipBus. The low volume paper audit process was part of that review. In 2010 there will be no moderation of low volume prescriptions while changes are made to the existing process. TEOs will be notified mid-2010.