In developing VCE scored assessment activities, classroom teachers are informed by the study design. Each teacher can develop assessment experiences, which engage their students and provides the best opportunity for performance. As a result in an English SAC – school assessed coursework, the activity developed in school A may be quite different than school B.

Statistical moderation is the process of using a common scale to ensure school-based assessments score are comparable across schools in order that there is fairness and equity for all students.

When travelling overseas, how do we determine “value for money”? For example, the same smart phone is for sale in three different countries. How can you compare prices? Not by using the dollar value, since the prices are all in different currencies. To determine the best price, the buyer will convert into local common currency. The same principle applies to ensure comparability of school-based scores across schools.

In a school where assessment tasks are easier and marking is generous, students would get higher marks for the same standard of work than they would in another school where the assessments and marking are harder.

A mark of 75 out of 80 at one school for a given assessment, is not necessarily greater than a mark of 70 out of 80 at another school. It really depends on the assessment tool being used and the school assessment scale that has been applied.

The only common piece of assessment across a VCE study or VCE VET program is the external assessment. In most instances this is an examination.

It is this assessment common to all students that is used as a benchmark against which the group performance is measured.

Here’s how it’s done. The moderation group is identified. A moderation group is every student enrolled in the study from a single school, or group of partner schools. To ensure the robustness and integrity of the process, any identified irregular scores are removed from the calculation, before the statistical moderation curve is generated.

External assessment, usually an examination and in a smaller number of cases the General Achievement Test, G, A, T, GAT, are used to generate an external reference score, the common scale.

This process places the group’s external assessment score on the same scale as the school-based assessment.

Next, external scores are aligned with the school-based assessment marks from each school.

The next step in the process, aligns the internal scale with the external statewide scale. Five fixed points set at the quarter points are used to align the two scales.

After statistical moderation, students have school-based assessment scores that are comparable across every student enrolled in the study across the state.

To maintain integrity in the process, all irregular scores are reviewed and re-introduced to the process, once the stat mod curve is created.

It’s important to note that where statistical moderation does change the numerical value of a given score. It does not change the level of achievement compared to other students in the class or the rank order.

Statistical moderation is necessary to ensure assessments at one school are comparable to those at another. It is important to ensure fairness and equity throughout the assessment process.

To learn more about statistical moderation, see our other videos.

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