

Project Title: **Developing consensus moderation practices to support comprehensive Quality Assurance of Assessment Standards**

Project Leadership: **Duncan D. Nulty¹ and Kevin Ashford Rowe²**

Funding: **\$240,000 over two years.**

Source and scope: **Griffith Grants for Learning and Teaching. (Strategic, Level 1, Institution-wide)**

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Project Outcomes and Rationale

Aim:

The aim of this project is to advance the university's ability to implement a systematic process for quality assurance of assessment (QAA), with a particular focus on assessment standards. The project is best conceptualised as a blend of "scoping" what is required, combined with developing, testing and implementing particular components of QAA processes.

Fulfilling that aim involves several inter-connected developments, some happening in sequence, others in parallel, each informing the others. As such the project is a complex one.

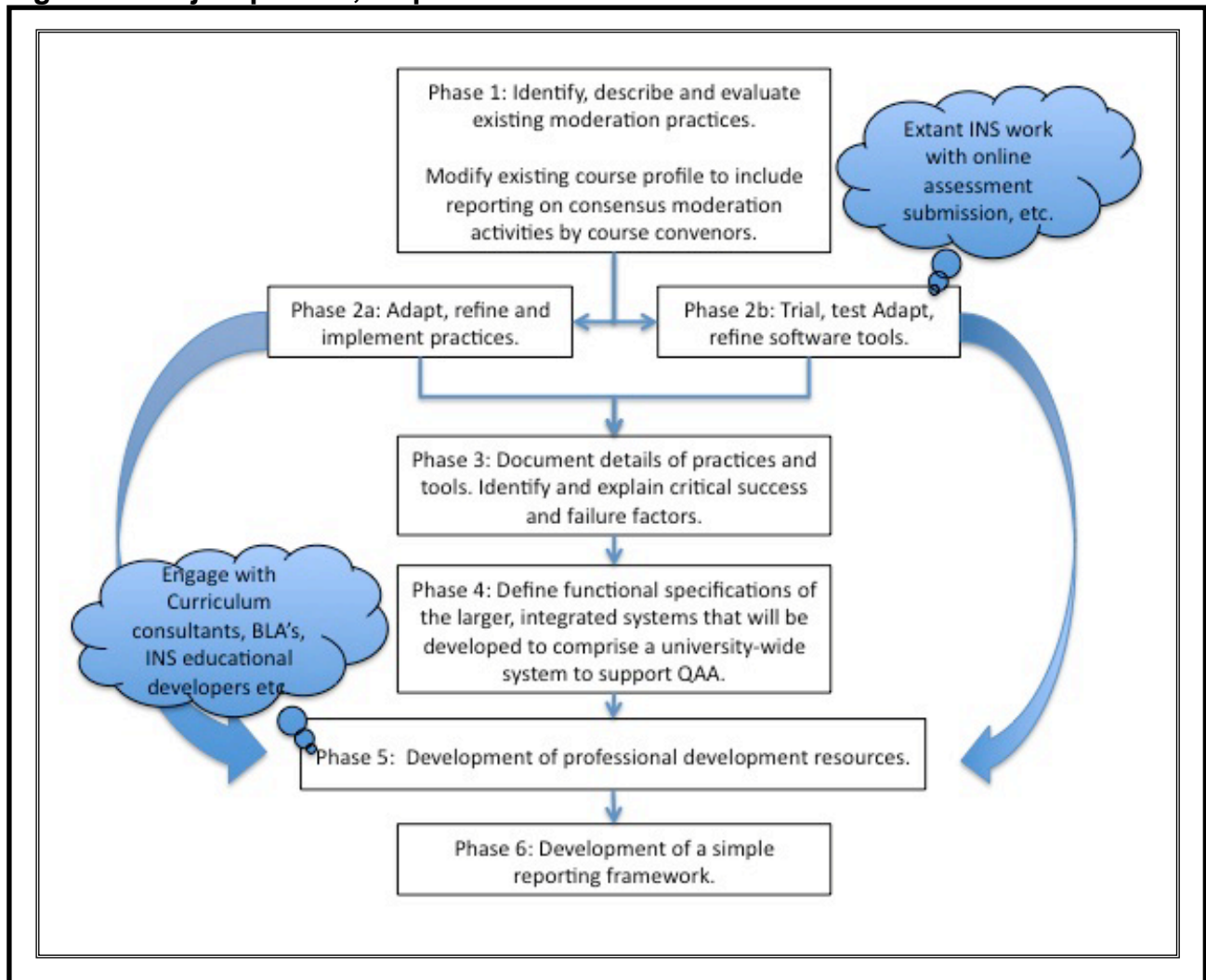
Outcomes and Deliverables:

In this project two GIHE staff members (Dr Duncan Nulty and Nicola Shapland) will work with the convenors of selected courses. These courses will be drawn from volunteer schools covering all discipline Groups of the University. In these schools, and for the identified courses only, Quality Assurance of Assessment processes will be:

1. Identified and explicated.
2. Evaluated for adequacy (with particular attention paid to the philosophy and ideals outlined in the Assuring Academic Standards discussion paper).
3. Improved and/or adapted to improve adequacy and sustainability (if required).
4. Implemented in a more systematic and sustainable way (if required).
5. Documented in ways that allow others unfamiliar with these processes to consider them, adapt and adopt them in ways appropriate to their disciplinary and organisational contexts, and to sustain them.
6. Supported by on-line professional development resources.
7. Supported by pilot versions of some components of computer systems designed (ultimately) to work seamlessly together – with a view to producing a functional specification for the eventual systems design and development (Under leadership of Dr Kevin Ashford-Rowe).
8. Monitored through a modification of the course profile system that will require course convenors to indicate both if they are using consensus moderation approaches and the specific ways in which they are achieving this outcome. This modification will allow the university to demonstrate the extent to which consensus moderation is undertaken, to promote greater participation, and to monitor rates of participation.
9. Reported against a simple framework that provides the university with a way to demonstrate to stakeholders that such processes have been used.

This sequence, and the inter-connections between components, is illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Project phases, sequence and connections.



The academic staff associated with this developmental effort will themselves also have learned about the ways in which the quality of assessment practices can be effectively assured. In consequence, the marks and grades awarded to the students studying the identified courses will be more *demonstrably* justified. Evidence for this will be available in the form of samples of students' assessed work, annotated to illustrate the reasoning for the examiners' judgements of those pieces of work. It will be possible to use these annotated samples of work to (a) inform the judgements of other examiners who may be unfamiliar with the standards applied and (b) inform the judgements (and learning) of future students of these courses about the standards applied to their work.

Significance

The project is significant because it is a significant and tangible contribution to assist international efforts to improve on the ways universities set, maintain and demonstrate the appropriateness of their academic standards. Nationally, the project contributes to the ways the new Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency (TEQSA) operates. This project helps to ensure that Griffith University is at the forefront, leading these developments.