

Assessment Procedure - Validation and Moderation

This Procedure is applicable to all subjects that commence on or after Semester 1, 2024.

Section 1 - Key Information

Policy Type and Approval Body	Academic – Academic Board
Accountable Executive - Policy	Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Responsible Manager - Policy	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
Review Date	15 February 2027

Section 2 - Purpose

(1) The University assures the quality, consistency, and integrity of its courses through a range of measures which include external referencing and calibration of course and subject quality, and the validation and moderation of assessment of student achievement.

(2) The requirements for external referencing and calibration are outlined in the [Course and Subject Management Policy](#) and associated guidelines.

(3) This Procedure sets out the University's approach to:

- a. validation of assessment, where proposed tasks are subject to peer review, for example by an experienced colleague in a related disciplinary area or an external calibration partner, prior to being set. Its purpose is to ensure that assessment is aligned with, and reflects, subject learning outcomes and that the format, content, and criteria for assessment are set at an appropriate level;
- b. moderation, whereby academic staff responsible for assessment in a course or subject reach consensus about levels of student performance in relation to a set of agreed standards. Moderation enables judgements made by different staff involved in assessing student performance to be compared and either confirmed or adjusted. This process supports fairness and consistency in assessment, regardless of whether students are enrolled in different instances of a subject, and whatever the delivery location, method, or mode.

Section 3 - Scope

(4) Refer to the [Assessment Policy](#).

Section 4 - Key Decisions

Key Decisions	Role
Oversight of validation and moderation practice	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning)

Section 5 - Policy Statement

(5) This procedure forms part of the [Assessment Policy](#) suite which governs its application.

Section 6 - Procedures

(6) Where any part of this Procedure is applied to centrally managed courses and subjects the functions specified are to be performed by an equivalent senior academic staff member.

Part A - Key Requirements

(7) Schools must retain evidence of all quality assurance activities for a minimum of four years from the conclusion of an activity. This evidence is normally included with documentation associated with subject reviews completed by Subject Coordinators at the conclusion of each teaching period.

Validation of Assessment

(8) Assessment tasks are validated through the course and subject approval and review processes as outlined in the [Course and Subject Management Policy](#).

(9) The validation of individual assessment activities and tools must ensure that:

- a. assessment tasks align with subject intended learning outcomes;
- b. tasks are underpinned by appropriate expectations in relation to year level, weighting and subject content;
- c. assessment documents are free from ambiguities, grammatical errors, and spelling mistakes;
- d. timeframes set for all assessments are reasonable;
- e. marking criteria, rubrics and guides are clear, and assessment criteria are linked to the grading standards.

Moderation of Assessment

Coursework Subjects

(10) Moderation must be undertaken for assessment tasks that make up at least 60% of the total marks for individual subjects. This may comprise one or more assessment tasks and is normally undertaken prior to grades being returned to individual students.

(11) Moderation may take a variety of forms, dependent upon the nature of the subject and assessment tasks. Guidance on options for moderation is provided by the University's educational service areas including specific guidance for moderating assessment conducted under third party arrangements.

(12) Where panel marking has occurred, further moderation is not required.

(13) Where there is only one assessor, a peer reviewer should be appointed.

Thesis Subjects

(14) A minimum of two examiners is appointed for thesis subjects worth 60 credit points or more.

(15) Where there is a discrepancy of more than 10% between the marks awarded by the original examiners additional moderation is required.

Roles and Responsibilities

(16) Subject Coordinators are responsible for overseeing validation and moderation of subjects by subject teaching teams and will normally be responsible for appointing peer reviewers.

(17) Course Coordinators are responsible for overseeing validation and moderation activities at course level, including any collaboration with other schools where necessary.

(18) Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching are responsible for oversight of all validation and moderation activities within their school.

Part B - Student Requests for Review and Remark

General

(19) All students have the right to request a review of marks for individual pieces of assessment worth 20% or more of the final result for a subject where the work is physically able to be reviewed.

(20) Wherever possible, transient assessment tasks, such as those that are delivered orally or carried out in a clinical or practical setting, should be subject to panel marking or recorded.

Initial Review

(21) Students with queries or concerns about their result for an assessment task should first ask the original marker of the piece of assessment to review their work with them. If the original assessor is not available students should approach the Subject Coordinator. This request must be made as soon as possible and no later than 10 business days of the student receiving the result for the task.

(22) Within 10 business days of the student's request the marker will discuss the student's performance in the assessment task with the student with reference to the marking criteria. They will also check that the result has been calculated correctly but will not re-mark the work.

(23) When reviewing assessment material, such as examination scripts, held by the University:

- a. students may not remove the assessed material from the inspection room when viewing on site;
- b. students may not photograph or keep any electronic record of the material whether viewing it on-site or online;
- c. the marker, or another La Trobe staff member, must be present at all times.

Request for Formal Review or Re-Mark

(24) A student may apply for a more formal review of a result, or re-mark, only on the grounds that the original assessment failed to follow the published assessment criteria or marking scheme for the assessment task, and/or was inherently biased.

(25) An [application for re-mark](#) must be made within 5 business days of the initial review and submitted to the Subject Coordinator. If the Subject Coordinator was the original marker, the application should be submitted to the Head of Department, Discipline Lead, or the Associate Dean, Learning & Teaching.

(26) The formal application must:

- a. include a copy of the original marked assignment where this is not available to the Subject Coordinator or relevant staff member;
- b. include evidence that the assessment task and its mark has been discussed with the original marker;
- c. report the result of the discussion, including feedback provided;
- d. explain the grounds on which the review is sought, as set out above.

(27) A student will receive one of the following, normally within 10 business days of the submission being received:

- a. the outcome of the re-mark, where the request for review has been approved; or
- b. advice that the request has been rejected, where the request does not comply with the above criteria.

(28) When a student has their request for a review approved, the submitted assessment task will be double- or second-marked by an alternate assessor.

(29) The mark given as an outcome of a re-mark replaces the original mark and can be higher or lower than the original mark in most circumstances. A re-mark cannot lead to a lower mark where:

- a. a student's original mark on an assessment task was a Fail;
- b. the new mark would lead to a student failing a task on which the original mark was a pass.

(30) An individual assessment task may only undergo a formal re-mark once under the provisions in this Procedure.

Part C - Assurance of Results

(31) The Student Administration Division provides a schedule for each Progression Period listing tasks and key dates to ensure that results are ratified and formally published to students on or before the last date for release of results.

(32) Subject Coordinators are responsible for ensuring marks for assessment are returned in a timely manner and all grades have been entered into relevant systems within the results deadline.

(33) The Dean is responsible for ensuring that a review of results occurs at the conclusion of each teaching period. As Chief Examiners for the Schools, Associate Deans, Learning and Teaching will ensure that the purposes of this review are met. This means that:

- a. all grades have been lodged and are complete and accurate;
- b. Learning Access Plans have been followed;
- c. moderation has occurred where appropriate;
- d. anomalies in records are identified and resolved;
- e. possible issues in student success are identified and referred to the relevant school committee or leadership team for review.

Section 7 - Definitions

(34) For the purposes of this Policy and Procedure:

- a. assessment criteria: the agreed individual qualities or features that must be demonstrated in an assessment task to measure the extent to which a student has achieved the intended learning outcomes for the subject.
- b. double marking: a re-mark of an assessment piece where the second marker does not have access to the comments and marks awarded by the first marker.
- c. marking scheme: an indication of the expected standards for levels of achievement of the assessment criteria.

- d. moderation: the set of processes aimed at aligning assessor judgements about student performance on assessment tasks (grades, etc).
- e. panel marking: simultaneous marking of a single performance or body of work by more than one marker, with the final mark arrived at either by negotiated consensus among the panel or by averaging the marks of the individual markers.
- f. peer reviewer: an academic, either internal or external to the University, who undertakes peer review of assessment that falls within their area, or related area of expertise.
- g. re-mark: the process by which a piece of assessed work is considered by an academic staff member other than the original marker at the request of a student to determine whether the original result should stand or be amended.
- h. review: the process by which a piece of assessed work is considered again by the original marker to confirm whether the original result was correct.
- i. second marking: a process of marking where a second marker has access to the comments made and marks awarded by the first marker.
- j. validation: the act of ensuring that assessment tasks and outcomes provide reliable and measurable evidence of student achievement.
- k. transient assessment tasks: tasks that are executed at a particular point in time where the major activity is not written. This includes tasks such as those that are delivered orally (presentations, performances, role plays or moot courts) or those carried out in a clinical or practical setting.

Section 8 - Authority and Associated Information

(35) This Procedure is made under the [La Trobe University Act 2009](#).

(36) Associated information includes:

- a. [Course Design Policy](#)
- b. [Course and Subject Management Policy](#)
- c. [Guidelines and templates available on the Assessment Policy intranet](#)

Status and Details

Status	Current
Effective Date	15th February 2024
Review Date	15th February 2027
Approval Authority	Academic Board
Approval Date	15th February 2024
Expiry Date	Not Applicable
Responsible Manager - Policy	Sharna Spittle Pro Vice-Chancellor (Learning and Teaching)
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