

# Assessment Procedure - Examinations

## Section 1 - Background and Purpose

(1) This Procedure establishes the authority, roles and responsibilities for the conduct and management of coursework examinations.

## Section 2 - Scope

(2) This Procedure applies to examinations in non-thesis coursework subjects regardless of study mode or location. All examinations are invigilated and may include:

- a. on-site examinations administered by Student Administration, a La Trobe school or a third-party provider;
- b. examinations conducted via an online system.

(3) For examination of thesis subjects in coursework degrees refer to the [Assessment Procedure - Validation and Moderation](#).

(4) For provisions in relation to Supplementary and Alternative examinations see [Assessment Procedure - Adjustments to Assessment \(incorporating Special Consideration\)](#).

## Section 3 - Policy Statement

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

## Section 4 - Procedures

### Part A - Overview of Responsibilities

(6) The organisers responsible for the supervision, conduct and administration of examinations are as follows:

- a. the Student Administration Division (SAD) for central examinations for the University;
- b. Subject and Course Coordinators for all school-administered examinations;
- c. delivery partners for La Trobe subjects taught under a third-party arrangement.

### Part B - Scheduling and Publication

#### Central Examinations

(7) The SAD is responsible for:

- a. producing and publishing in the Academic Calendar the timetable for main and Special Examination periods in accordance with scheduling requirements submitted by Schools;
- b. advising students who are awarded a centrally-administered supplementary hurdle or special examination, the date the Supplementary Hurdle/Special Examination timetable will be published on the [Examinations and Results website](#).

## **School-Administered Examinations**

(8) Where examinations are to be administered by Schools, Subject and Course Coordinators or their nominees are responsible for:

- a. scheduling individual subject examinations, ensuring that there is no clash with central or other examinations for the relevant course;
- b. publishing a timetable of school-administered examinations at course level on the LMS;
- c. communicating with affected students via email regarding arrangements for any school-administered Supplementary Hurdle or Special Examinations.

## **Third-Party Examinations**

(9) Under third-party teaching arrangements, delivery partners are responsible for:

- a. scheduling their examinations, in consultation with the Academic Program Director, wherever possible at the same date and time as the La Trobe examination for that subject;
- b. liaising with the Academic Program Director to confirm the use of an alternative examination, where synchronous scheduling is not possible;
- c. publishing the third-party examination timetable and communicating arrangements to students;
- d. communicating with affected students via email regarding arrangements for any Supplementary Hurdle or Special Examination.

## **Considerations in Scheduling - All Examinations**

(10) Examinations for subjects with high enrolment numbers, excluding those which consist entirely of multiple-choice questions, are scheduled early in the examination period where possible to enable marking to be completed by the official date for release of results.

(11) A student may have a maximum of two examinations scheduled for the same day and three in a 48-hour period.

(12) When the responsible organiser becomes aware of a clash of examination schedules for individual students, they will notify students of the required arrangements and alternative examination times by e-mail and SMS, giving as much notice as possible and, in the case of a major change (e.g., day, time, length), at least five working days in advance.

## **Reading Time**

(13) Reading time at the start of all on-site examinations will be either 15 minutes or 30 minutes in duration.

(14) Reading time is included in the total duration of each online examination.

(15) The times listed on the examination timetable will be displayed in 24-hour clock format and denote:

- a. commencement of reading time and duration for on-site examinations;
- b. the commencement time for online examinations.

## Information to Students

(16) General information about all examinations for each subject will be published in the relevant Subject Guide on the LMS at the beginning of the teaching period.

(17) Information concerning whether an on-site examination is an open-book or closed-book examination will be published in the Subject Guide on the LMS, the Examination Timetable and on the examination paper.

(18) In the rare case that the University or third party requires an invigilated online examination, the conditions of that examination will be published to students in the Subject Guide on the LMS or no later than 10 working days prior to the examination time.

## Part C - Examination Preparation

(19) The Subject Coordinator or nominee must prepare two examination papers for each examination which includes a main examination paper and a Special/Supplementary examination paper, with the following exceptions:

- a. supplementary examinations are not required for online examinations utilising randomised question banks;
- b. additional examination papers are required when specific cohorts, such as offshore students, sit an examination at a different time to the main cohort of students.

(20) All examination papers for central on-site exams must be submitted to the Examinations Team by the nominated deadline. Schools are responsible for posting online examinations to the LMS in advance of the scheduled date and facilitating access on the date scheduled for the examination.

(21) Where an examination paper is not submitted by the due date, the examination will be withdrawn from the central examinations timetable and the examination administration and communications to students must then be managed by the relevant school.

(22) Where any students sitting an alternative examination with a third-party provider are subsequently awarded an SPE grade, the Subject Coordinator must provide a new examination for the Special/Supplementary examination period.

## Part D - Security Prior to and During Examinations

(23) Staff involved with any aspect of the examination process must observe the following protocols:

- a. examinations may not be released to unauthorised personnel;
- b. examinations may not be released to students in advance of the scheduled examination time;
- c. strict security protocols must be observed in:
  - i. the writing, collating, assuring and communication of examination questions and solutions, both physically and online;
  - ii. the dispatch and return of examination papers and associated materials between secure areas.

(24) Examination papers must be securely stored whether by central administration, schools or third parties. This requires:

- a. secure processes for handling examination papers while they are in the control of school staff, both on University premises and outside the University;
- b. the provision of secure storage facilities at on-site examination venues, both campus-based and those external to the University, from the time of receipt of materials until the conclusion of the examination period;

- c. transportation by a secure door-to-door courier service approved by the University for examinations held in external locations by La Trobe;
- d. the maintenance of secure archives in schools for all examination papers.

## **Distribution of Papers**

(25) The responsibility for all aspects of the distribution of examination papers and associated materials for school and third-party examinations lies with the respective parties.

## **Central Examinations**

(26) Where examination papers for centrally-run examinations are dispatched off-campus there must be:

- a. systematic recording by the SAD of all materials dispatched;
- b. daily return by the Chief Invigilator of completed examination question papers, answer booklets and related materials to the SAD;
- c. a reconciliation by the SAD of returned documents, including spare or unused examination papers, against dispatch lists, with advice provided to the Deputy Director, Academic Services and the Subject Coordinator of any discrepancy found in the reconciliation.

(27) A collection officer must be named and authorised to collect examination material for specified subjects.

(28) Authorised collection officers will use suitable identification, such as a University Staff Card, before counting and signing for the number of secure packages and examination paper answer booklets.

(29) Examination papers, materials and examination paper answer booklets will only be released to authorised collection officers.

## **Breaches of Security**

(30) Where a staff member of the University or an authorised third party has reason to believe that the security or academic integrity of an examination paper has been compromised, the matter must be reported via the Session Report and escalated to the Deputy Director, Academic Services.

(31) If a security breach has been identified and the examination has not yet taken place, the SAD or the third-party provider may request a replacement paper to be issued by the Subject Coordinator, taking into account:

- a. whether the examination paper has been dispatched to examination locations;
- b. the number of locations at which the examination is scheduled, both on and off campus, nationally and overseas;
- c. the number of students scheduled to sit the examination;
- d. any other relevant matters.

(32) Depending on the nature of the breach, it may be appropriate to replace the paper only at certain locations in which case the Subject Coordinator must carefully monitor comparability in difficulty and student performance.

(33) If a security breach has been identified and the examination has already taken place with no replacement paper issued at any venue:

- a. the Chief Invigilator will advise the Subject Coordinator and the Deputy Director, Academic Services;
- b. the Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching will review the marks and take appropriate action.

(34) When a security breach has been identified the SAD or third parties will advise students of any change to or delay in finalising examination assessment, and the details of any alternate or additional assessment that may be required.

(35) When any alternate or additional assessment has been completed, the University will notify students of their results via the standard results notification process.

(36) Any breach of examination security or any act that jeopardises the integrity of examinations will be dealt with under the relevant University legislation, policies and procedures for staff and/or student misconduct and discipline.

(37) Academic Program Directors are responsible for periodic audit checks on third-party provider examination storage facilities, the access rights applied to the storage facilities, and the examination venues, to ensure adherence to procedures.

## **Part E - On-Site Responsibilities**

### **Invigilation and Academic Support**

(38) An invigilator will normally be appointed for every 50 candidates at an examination venue.

(39) One Chief Invigilator, who is responsible for the set up and administration of the examination(s) within the venue, will be assigned per examination venue.

(40) In addition to these procedures, invigilators must comply with rules detailed in the Examination Invigilator Manual.

(41) Academic staff or current students are not permitted to be Invigilators or Chief Invigilators.

(42) Subject Coordinators and/or nominated academics may attend venues during reading time unless the examination is being held at multiple venues and a suitable academic representative is unable to be in attendance at each venue. Where this is the case the Subject or Instance Coordinator is required to be available by phone to ensure equitable access for all students.

(43) Subject Coordinators and an additional academic, nominated by the Subject Coordinator in the event the Subject Coordinator cannot be reached, must be available by phone for the duration of the examination.

### **Disruptions to Examinations**

(44) Errors discovered in examination papers during reading time will be noted. The Chief Invigilator will contact the Subject Coordinator to determine whether to proceed with the exam, or whether the examination needs to cease and be rescheduled. The Subject Coordinator will ensure the outcome is communicated to other venues and campuses where the same examination is being held.

(45) If an on-site examination is disrupted for 30 minutes or more, the Chief Invigilator and Deputy Director, Academic Services will determine whether the examination may be:

- a. continued, with an adjustment made up to the length of the disruption;
- b. considered completed and examination papers may be marked; or
- c. abandoned and rescheduled, with students notified about new arrangements within 24 hours of the abandoned examination.

(46) If the start time of an on-site examination is delayed for up to 30 minutes, the concluding time of the examination may only be extended by the amount of the delay.

(47) Invigilators will record in the Session Report the time and student ID for any occasion a student enters or leaves the on-site examination venue, including approved and supervised breaks.

## **Concluding Examinations**

(48) Invigilators will give a time warning 15 minutes before the end of the examination.

(49) Authorised staff only are permitted to remove examination papers, materials, and answer booklets from the examination venue.

(50) All unused examination papers are to remain in secure storage in accordance with the [Records Management Policy](#).

## **Part F - Student Responsibilities**

(51) Students are responsible for monitoring the Examination Timetable; knowing the location, time, date and mode of delivery of their examination; and what materials will be allowed in the examination as published on the Examination Timetable. Information about examination arrangements will not be given over the telephone by the SAD or ASK La Trobe.

(52) Students must be available for the entire duration of official examination periods, including supplementary hurdle and special examination periods.

(53) The rules for student conduct during examinations are outlined in the [Assessment Schedule - Examination Rules for Students](#).

(54) Students who attempt to complete an examination and find they are unable to proceed due to disruptions outside their control such as illness, or technical difficulties during an online examination, will need to provide evidence of such when they apply for Special Consideration (see [Assessment Procedure - Adjustments to Assessment \(incorporating Special Consideration\)](#)).

## **Part G - Academic Misconduct**

### **On-Site Examinations**

(55) It is considered an act of academic misconduct to have, possess, access or use any material or item not allowed under the instructions for that examination, whether or not it is with the intention of using it to gain an advantage.

(56) Invigilators will confiscate or record evidence of any unauthorised materials being used in an examination or any article which the invigilator reasonably believes is evidence of academic misconduct.

(57) When items are confiscated the Chief Invigilator will return the items to the student at the end of the exam, unless an item is considered relevant to academic or general misconduct proceedings, in which case the item may be kept until investigations have concluded.

(58) When academic misconduct is suspected, an invigilator:

- a. may take photos of unauthorised materials, electronic screens and notes written on a student's person where appropriate;
- b. must advise the student that the matter will be reported to the University;
- c. must complete an Examination Misconduct Report, which will:
  - i. describe the conduct that the invigilator believes constitutes academic misconduct;
  - ii. include any confiscated items or photos taken of this item or describe the item or conduct;

iii. record if a student refuses to surrender any article or thing which the invigilator reasonably requires.

(59) Incidents of alleged academic misconduct will be referred by the Chief Invigilator and/or the Deputy Director, Academic Services for further action in accordance with the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

## Online Examinations

(60) All students must complete an electronic declaration of academic integrity prior to undertaking an online exam.

(61) Instances of alleged academic misconduct in online examinations, such as unauthorised collusion or submission by someone other than the student, will be managed under the provisions of the [Student Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

## Part H - Quality Assurance and Accuracy

(62) Examinations must be quality-assured for both content and non-content aspects.

(63) Non-content quality assurance includes cross referencing the publication of allowable materials, confirming the correct number of pages and, where relevant, that print quality is acceptable including that of specialised fonts. This is the responsibility of:

- a. Student Administration for centrally-administered examination papers;
- b. the School for school-administered examination papers;
- c. third parties for examinations conducted at their sites.

(64) The Subject Coordinator is responsible for ensuring:

- a. the accuracy of the content and that the examination complies with the [Assessment Policy](#) and all associated procedures;
- b. that school-administered examinations start at the specified time and proceed for the specified duration.

(65) Any proposed changes to examinations following quality assurance by relevant staff must be authorised by the Dean or their nominee.

## Part I - Retention of Examination Material

(66) Assessment records must be retained according to the University's [Records Management Policy](#) and relevant state legislation. In relation to examinations this means that:

- a. the University must retain master sets of examinations for a period of seven years;
- b. Schools must retain the following in a secure repository:
  - i. draft examination material for one year;
  - ii. completed examination papers that have not been through an appeal process for a minimum of six months after completion of the grading process;
  - iii. completed examination papers that have been through an appeals process for a minimum of six months after the conclusion of the appeal process.

## Part J - Review

(67) Students who are dissatisfied with the application of any part of this Procedure should raise their concerns in the first instance through [ASK La Trobe](#).

## Section 5 - Definitions

(68) For the purposes of this Procedure:

- a. examination: a formal, invigilated, time-limited summative assessment task conducted during the official examination period. Examinations may be on-site or online and may be administered by the Student Administration Division, a school, or a third-party teaching partner;
- b. examination paper: physical (paper) document containing instructions and questions and used as a test deployed under examination conditions.

## Section 6 - Related Documents

(69) The following documents are of relevance to this Procedure:

- a. [Assessment Schedule - Examination Rules for Students](#)
- b. Guidelines for students sitting online exams - see <https://www.latrobe.edu.au/students/your-course/exams/sitting/supervised-online-exams>
- c. [Records Management Policy](#)
- d. [Guidelines and templates on the Assessment Policy intranet](#)



## Status and Details

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<b>Author</b>	Julie Larsen
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Quality and Standards