

TRINITY LABAN

Assessment Design Guidance and Checklist

This checklist provides a framework for teaching staff designing or reviewing assessment structures. Using this checklist will help ensure that the relevant skills and knowledge are assessed and that the assessment load, criteria and methods are appropriate and consistent.

Assessment methods vs assessment content

Having an overall assessment design that has been agreed as part of a full programme review or validation helps ensure that the assessment load is appropriate throughout the programme. Frequently changing assessment methods for individual modules may lead to too heavy, monotonous, and disjointed assessment over the course of the whole programme.

However, to ensure the assessment remains relevant and up to date, tutors should make sure that the topics, reference points, case studies and assessment instructions for each assessment component are reviewed and updated annually. For example, the assessment method for a module may be set at a 3000-word essay but the topic(s) provided to students for the essay should reflect recent developments within the industry, society or research.

Question	Yes/No	Notes
Does the overall assessment on each module cover each learning outcome of that module? <i>If there is more than one assessment component, not all components should assess all the learning outcomes. This might lead to over-assessment, and it may be that only one assessment component is required in that case, as long as each learning outcome is covered by at least one assessment component.</i>		
Does the assessment across all modules of the programme cover each learning outcome of the programme? <i>There is a mapping table in the (re)validation template to aid with reviewing this.</i>		
Is a variety of assessment types used across all the modules of the programme? <i>Not all assessment types need to be different to one another but if each module is assessed by a written essay and a portfolio, there isn't much variety across the programme.</i>		

<i>The assessment methods should be linked to the programme learning outcomes – if a learning outcome relates to collaborative working, a group project or performance on one or two modules might be an appropriate assessment method.</i>		
Is the assessment load appropriate and comparable across all the modules on the programme? <i>See the guidance on appropriate assessment loads in Appendix 1.</i>		
Is formative assessment specified and appropriate for each module? <i>Formative assessment should be linked to the summative assessment and help the students develop and test their skills and knowledge as well as planning their workload (especially at level 4) before submitting or undertaking the final assessment. A formative assessment linked to a portfolio submission consisting of 5 components, for example, could involve submitting a plan for what the student will cover in each component, with a timeline.</i>		
Do the assessment methods help minimise opportunities for academic misconduct? <i>Plagiarism cannot, or is unlikely to, occur in in-person practical assessments or online portfolios that consist of several, continuously created reflective assignments and other pieces of work. Written assessment, on the other hand, is most likely to provide opportunities for academic misconduct and the risk of this can be minimised through:</i> <i>• Use of formative assessment whereby students are asked to submit parts of their work at certain points of the module before the final submission</i> <i>• 'Evidence the thinking' whereby students are asked to share literature they intend to use for their essay on a Moodle form/Padlet/other online platform.</i> <i>• Reflection – asking students to reflect on what they've learned while writing the essay or how it relates to their personal circumstances/development/learning ("Reflective essay")</i>		
Are the assessment criteria specified and appropriate for each module? <i>The assessment criteria must be linked to the module learning outcomes and be clear and concise. The criteria should also be more challenging for modules at level 6 compared to modules at level 4.</i>		

Appendix 1

Indicative assessment load guidance

This assessment load table assumes a 30-credit module as an example. The assessment load should be decreased or increased proportionally depending on the credit-weighting of the module in question.

	Weighting of all assessment on the module (<i>to be increased/decreased proportionally</i>)		
Assessment type	100%	50%	30%
Dissertation, research project	7,000-10,000 words	3,500-5,000 words	2,000-3,000 words
Written assessment (essay, blog post, learning journal, reflective commentary, project reports etc)	6,000 words	3,000 words	1,800 words
Portfolio (a collection of work on a particular theme, collated over a period of time and submitted for assessment as one piece)	60 hours of work expected	30 hours of work expected	18 hours of work expected
Oral presentations (If a poster or equivalent is also required, the presentation time should be reduced as appropriate. For group presentations the times can be higher. If the presentation is followed by panel questions, the overall length of the assessment component can be higher but the length of the presentation must be shorter. If a bibliography is required to be submitted in writing, the presentation time should be shorter.)	20 minutes	10 minutes	6 minutes
Video or other media recording	15-17 minutes of content	7-9 minutes of content	4-6 minutes of content
Practical assessment (recitals, performances, choreography, technique, rehearsals,	As specified for each individual assessment	Proportionate to the scope of the other assessment component(s).	Proportionate to the scope of the other assessment component(s).

compositions, arrangements, song recordings)	component in the Module Specification	Specified in the Module Specification	Specified in the Module Specification
Oral examination (viva voce examination)	25-30 minutes	13-15 minutes	7-10 minutes
Written examination	3 hours	1.5 hours	1 hour