

SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM

How can we best support assessment? Re-thinking our options at Massey University

1.0 Purpose

1.1 This paper seeks an SLT decision on the preferred option for assessment delivery at Massey University.

1.2 It is recommended that the Massey University Senior Leadership Team:

- **Note** the information within this paper.
- **Discuss** the three options for assessment delivery.
- **Communicate** to the university the preferred option for assessment delivery.
- **Approve** 'in-principle' funding to support the implementation of the preferred option.¹

2.0 Introduction

2.1 In April this year, the SLT considered a paper regarding the future provision of 'Online Supervised Exams', or 'OSEs' (**SLT 25/04/28**) which included a request to fund OSEs for two colleges: the Massey Business School and the College of Sciences. The SLT rejected the request for funding for the OSE solution. This paper seeks to reposition the issue of OSEs, placing this particular solution in a wider context considering the changing nature of assessment and the need for the University to provision for 'secured assessment'. Ensuring that our assessment modes and platforms are secure is vital to the quality of our assessment and the University's reputation; especially in an operating environment where there have been and continue to be challenges to the probity and quality of online teaching and assessment which includes remote proctoring.²

2.2 Background

Since the 'pivot to online' in 2020 precipitated by the COVID-19 pandemic, Massey University has made use of remotely proctored online exams (Online Supervised Exams, or OSEs) to provide secured assessments to students. The delivery of these was restricted largely to courses in the College of Sciences and Massey Business School, with a modest number also being offered in some College of Health courses. Many qualifications (and all courses offered by the College of Humanities and Social Sciences) have moved away entirely from examinations as a means of assessing student work, with an increasing emphasis being placed on approaches regarded as more authentic to the discipline, such as reports, case studies and groupwork assignments.

¹ Pending confirmation of actual costs

² See TEQSA's 'provocation' to higher education providers regarding online assessment in February 2025, reported here <https://futurecampus.com.au/2025/02/13/life-support-for-online-degrees/>

2.3 Between 2020 and 2024, the delivery of exams for courses requiring secured assessment was via RPNOW/PSI. The public failure of the PSI platform in June last year and the consequent disruption of the Semester 1, 2024 online examination period triggered an extensive review of the University's approaches to assessment led by Academic Committee. The Future Examinations Requirements Working Group found that, notwithstanding widespread assumptions that we had moved beyond 'peak exam phase', there was still a pedagogical case for examinations in some disciplines, and an associated need for ongoing online proctoring provision. Accordingly, the CET, under guidance of the Academic Committee and in consultation with ITS and college stakeholders, prepared a first-stage business case to ensure a robust OSE platform would be in place for the commencement of the 2026 academic year. This business case, proposed to fund a new platform for the provision of Online Supervised Examinations (OSEs), was declined by the Senior Leadership Team at its meeting in April 2025.

2.4 Following the suspension of OSEs in 2024, those colleges who have been reliant on OSEs and who will require examinations for the foreseeable future (i.e., College of Sciences and Massey Business School) agreed to make other arrangements for the 2025 academic year. This 'hiatus' was endorsed by the Academic Committee on the basis that this was a temporary measure. Currently, expectations are that the University will have a solution in place for 2026.

3.0 Discussion

3.1 The rapid proliferation of GenAI tools which can now do much, if not most, of the writing and research associated with many assessment types has fundamentally undermined our ability as a university to rely on the authenticity of work submitted by students. The level of 'false positives' generated by detection tools such as Turnitin AI Detection means that we cannot simply rely on these detection tools in an age when student use of GenAI is increasing.³ Moreover, studies indicate that human judgement is an extremely poor means of detecting GenAI use. This is in a rapidly changing assessment context, especially given GenAI challenges.⁴

3.2 At Massey, concerns about the impact of GenAI on academic integrity was initially mitigated through the increased use of online supervised exams (OSEs), and by so called 'AI-proof' assessment types (such as reflective writing, oral presentations and case

³ See, for example, <https://www.theguardian.com/australia-news/2023/apr/16/australian-universities-split-on-using-new-tool-to-detect-ai-plagiarism> and https://www.theguardian.com/education/2025/jun/15/thousands-of-uk-university-students-caught-cheating-using-ai-artificial-intelligence-survey?CMP=Share_iOSApp_Other

⁴ See further Thomas Corbin, Phillip Dawson & Danny Liu (15 May 2025): Talk is cheap: why structural assessment changes are needed for a time of GenAI, Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education, DOI: 10.1080/02602938.2025.2503964

studies). However, the loss of access to online proctoring due to the system failure in June 2024 has coincided with significant advances in the capabilities of GenAI, with the result that many of the assessment types that were regarded as ‘AI-proof’ in 2023 can no longer be viewed as such (even version tracking, traditionally a reliable method of detecting cheating behaviours, can now be ‘faked’ by GenAI). Currently, then, to put it bluntly: there is no foolproof method of preventing AI use in assessments other than in-person supervision in some form.

3.3 This challenge is not unique to Massey. Ellis & Dollinger (2025)⁵ note the following: *“The key concern lies specifically with degrees conducted entirely online without any supervised verification of student learning. While online learning and the assessment of it can be an excellent complement to traditional education or even comprise almost all of a degree program, allowing completely unsupervised assessment of online learning necessarily compromises the integrity of that award. This presents as a significant problem.”*

3.4 While the College of Sciences and Massey Business School have been (and remain) the primary users of OSEs and thus perceived to be most in need of an online assessment platform, the challenge of verifying the qualifications we offer by distance or fully online is one that faces all colleges offering programmes by distance. *At present, we have no reliable means of authenticating online students’ work at any point during their study.* While the public is not yet asking questions about the value of these qualifications, it is only a matter of time before they do. A mechanism for in-person supervision of every student at key points in their studies therefore seems essential.

3.5 The technologies currently available mean that at present, Massey has three options available (see flowchart in Appendix One):

- 1 Require all distance and fully online students to attend in-person assessments (these could be a range of assessment types including written assignments and tests, orals or practicals, as well as final examinations where these are required for pedagogical or professional accreditation reasons), either on-campus or at a regional ‘exam centre’ at key points in their studies.
- 2 Offer secured assessment through an online assessment platform.
- 3 Continue with the status quo and accept the potential devaluing of our online qualifications.

3.6 A return to in-person assessment represents challenges for Massey University. Having focussed on the delivery of online assessment for the past five years, we have disassembled the systems and resourcing necessary for the delivery of different forms

⁵ Ellis, C., & Dollinger, M. (2025). The Real Cost of Convenience: Online Learning’s Moment of Truth. Future Campus. <https://futurecampus.com.au/2025/02/18/the-real-cost-of-convenience-online->

of invigilated in-person assessments. If we do decide that this is the preferred option, then we need to decide whether we want to return to pen-and-paper for written assessments, or if we would prefer to deliver these digitally. If the latter, we may still need an online assessment platform. It should be noted that a return to pen-and-paper assessments is unlikely to be significantly cheaper than digital delivery and will disadvantage many students who are unaccustomed to writing by hand. However, it would be fair to say that there is considerable support among teaching staff for a return to 'pen and paper' and other New Zealand universities have been moving in this direction too. There are risks in Massey remaining an 'outlier' in this landscape and so this needs to be taken into consideration in assessing the risks and costs below.

3.7 A comparison of costs is available in the table below. However please note:

- that historic numbers of paper-based assessments are higher than is anticipated should we require this functionality in the future (given that in the future we expect to have fewer exams due to assessment changes).
- the costs are estimated for OSE as we will not know these until we go to market for a new platform. The business case costs for a new OSE platform are showing in section 5.1.
- the costs for paper-based examinations are an estimated annual cost. This does not include the set-up costs to reestablish the infrastructure to support paper-based exams (which include costs for reestablishing process, staff, and capabilities to support paper-based exams). These establishment costs have not yet been determined.

Paper-based costs (CPI adjusted for 2024)		Estimated OSE costs 2024	
Actual average paper-based costs for 2016-2019	Actual costs	Assumes most sittings (80%+) are OSEs not TCAs	Estimated costs
Domestic venues	\$326,018	Remote proctoring	\$ 300,000
Overseas venues	\$362,023	Stream (during exam periods, platform general \$1m/pa)	\$ 211,538
Script printing	\$205,826	Stream (exam support - catalyst)	\$ 10,000
Postage	\$118,464	Staff costs (Stream, during exam periods)	\$ 100,692
Staff Costs (Perm & F/T) Student Admin	\$546,034	Staff costs (Assessment Services, annual)	\$ 492,000
Staff Costs Distance (Supervisors & Invigilators)	\$206,630	Staff costs (Supervisors & Invigilators)	\$ 10,000
		On-campus logistics	\$ 25,000
		Contingency	\$ 100,000
Paper costs (actual)	\$ 1,764,995	Online/OSE costs (estimated)	\$ 1,249,231

3.8 We have created an expectation in our distance students of 'any time, any place' delivery of assessment to align with our 'any time, any place' flexible teaching delivery. A permanent shift away from OSEs is likely to be welcomed by some students, but a return to 'fixed time and place', in-person assessment will create significant challenges for others, especially our part-time and remote students for whom attendance at such assessments will incur costs for travel, accommodation, childcare, and time away.

4.0 Consultation

- 4.1 Paper was shared prior to the SLT meeting with Professor Ray Geor (PVC College of Sciences) and Professor Jonathan Elms (PVC Massey Business School).

5.0 Implications of Decision:

5.1 Financial Implications and Treasury Comment

Financial Implications Yes ~~No~~

Financial implications of **option 1**. In person assessments

- SLT would need to advise how in-person assessments would need to run i.e. (1) paper-based with pen and paper responses only or (2) digital responses only. Each option would have different costs associated with them.
 - 100% paper based with hand-written responses.
 - It is proposed that the costs associated with in-person assessment are managed through the Provost Reporting Line. Due to the nature of the costs involved it is proposed that a budget margin adjustment is made to the current support BAF Provost margin equivalent to \$1.2m (\$1.8M less the existing Assessment Services staff salaries) on an annual basis. It is yet to be determined the costs for re-establishing the infrastructure to support this.
 - 100% online with students using laptops to completed locked-down exams while being invigilated in an exam venue
 - Yet to be determined

If SLT determine that in-person assessments is the preferred mechanism for securing assessment, a further paper will be provided to SLT with accurate cost estimates for their preferred method of in-person assessment (pen and paper OR digital OR mixed). It is anticipated that each of these options will be more expensive than option 2 or option 3 below.

Financial implications of **option 2**. Online OSE costs as the business case for OSE

Financial Case							
Budget Type (Select one option)	☐ Externally – cost neutral						
	☐ Transfer current internal resource – cost neutral (<u>i.e.</u> transfer between existing divisional budgets)						
	☒ Funding required – on merits of the initiative						
Financial Summary							
\$ (thousands)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Preferred Way Forward:							
Implementation (OPEX)	440						
Platform (OPEX)	75 - 125	150 - 200	150 - 200	150 - 200	150 - 200	150 - 200	
Proctoring (OPEX)	70	130	155	155	155	155	
Total Operating	585 - 635	280 - 330	305 - 355	305 – 355	305 – 355	305 - 355	
Existing OPEX	50	50	50	50	50	50	
Existing Capital							
Extra Operating	535 – 585	230 - 280	255 - 305	255 – 305	255 – 305	255 - 305	
Extra Capital							
Total	585 - 635	280 - 330	305 - 355	305 – 355	305 – 355	305 - 355	
Depreciation							

Notes

- A range for each year is provided as costings are indicative and based on historical vendor provided estimates and not recent formal quotations.
- Pricing is indicative and based on a phased implementation during Year 1 and Year 2. All years are based on anticipated levels of examinations both TCA (open-book/open-web) and OSEs using 2023 and 2024 figures as a guide. Year 1 = 5,000 students and 5,000 remotely proctored sittings., Year 2 = 10,000 students, 10,000 remotely proctored sittings, Year 3+ = 10,000 students, 17,500 remotely proctored sittings.
- Platform pricing is typically per student per year and includes all TCA and OSEs students. Platform pricing includes standard support. Some vendors offer extended or premium support at extra cost. This has not been factored into the pricing.
- Proctoring (OSE) pricing is typically per sitting. Some vendors offer per student models which can become cost-effective when students take several exams per year.
- Costings do not take into consideration the potential for a reduction in authenticated (proctored) assessment because of implementing different assessment approaches in response to generative artificial intelligence.
- Proposed funding source - expensed to budget centre 414 and recovered via the IT Infrastructure charge.

Financial implications of **option 3**. Status quo

- As this will have no financial impact on current operations, no funding source or budget adjustments are required. There is, however, risk associated with this option which may result in lower student enrolments due to the devaluing of our qualifications.

Comment from CFO

FIN# 25-08

Note the costs included in the paper are estimates and will need to be refined. However, SLT firstly need to agree on an approach to supporting assessments at Massey which this paper seeks to address.

This paper is seeking additional funding to BC 19344 (Provost BC) for option 1 and a transfer to the IT infrastructure charge for option 2.

For Option 1, given we are not proposing any changes to the current budget model, this would need to be an adjustment to the Provost's margin and offset in Central thus either increasing the deficit for the university or allocated out across RLs through a savings charge. Note previously OSEs were funded from the Provost's budget so it would be reasonable to suggest that only additional costs over and above inflation be provided as a budget adjustment.

While this is technically not a cost that meets the definition of an IT infrastructure cost, an alternative would be for the cost to be added to that cost pool and allocated out through this charge and the Provost margin would remain unchanged. Given that OSEs were previously funded from the Provost office we would likely need to make a budget adjustment to remove that original cost from the Provost office if transferring to IT infrastructure charges. Note this is the proposed funding source for Option 2.

Comment from paper sponsor

As this paper notes, we must for pedagogical reasons, still plan for as examinations and we must support students who are studying in distance/online or hybrid modes. We must also consider the ongoing value of our qualifications. We need a solution to support the delivery of secured assessments. This paper seeks to contextualise the solution of OSEs, noting that this is but one option. We could return to in-person invigilation, and this comes with costs too. But the point is that while we have 'workarounds' in place for 2025, we cannot hold this position indefinitely without devaluing our qualifications. The University community is seeking direction on how Massey will support online assessment from 2026 onwards. All options require new investment.

5.2 Treaty of Waitangi Implications

Treaty of Waitangi Implications	~~Yes~~	No

5.3 Equity and Operational Implications

People Implications (Staff/Student/Other)	Yes	~~No~~
Cultural & Ethnic Implications (Māori/Pasifika/Other)	~~Yes~~	No
Equity Implications	Yes	~~No~~
Gender Implications	~~Yes~~	No
Disability Implications	Yes	~~No~~
Information Technology Implications	Yes	~~No~~
Library Implications	~~Yes~~	No
International Implications	~~Yes~~	No
Teaching Implications	~~Yes~~	No
Research Implications	~~Yes~~	No

6.0 Recommendations

6.1 It is recommended that the Massey University Senior Leadership Team:

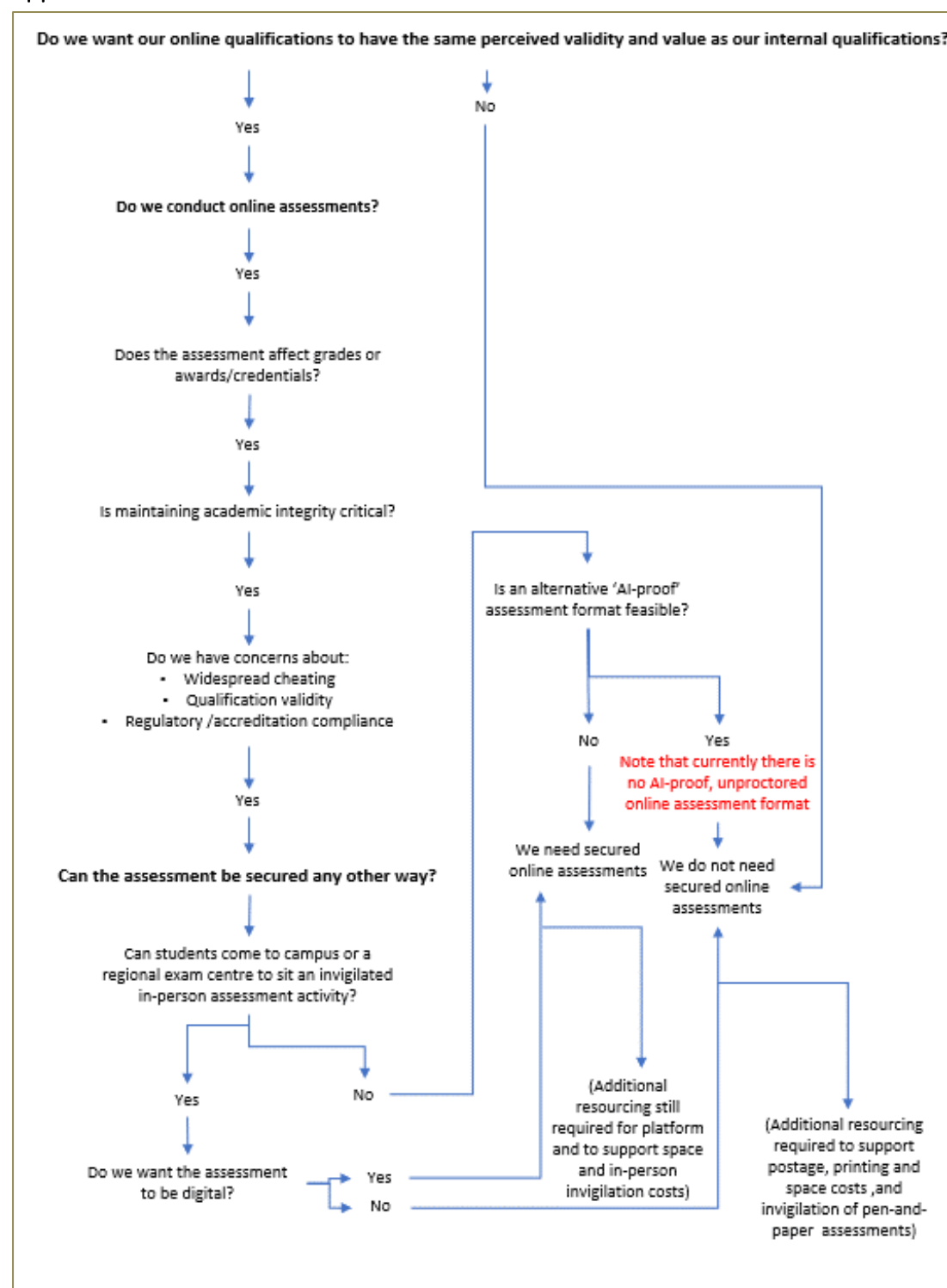
- **Note** the information within this paper.
- **Discuss** the three options for the securing of assessment.
- **Communicate** to the university the preferred option for securing assessment.
- **Approve** 'in-principle' funding to support the implementation of the preferred option.

Professor Giselle Byrnes

Provost

16 June 2025

Appendix One





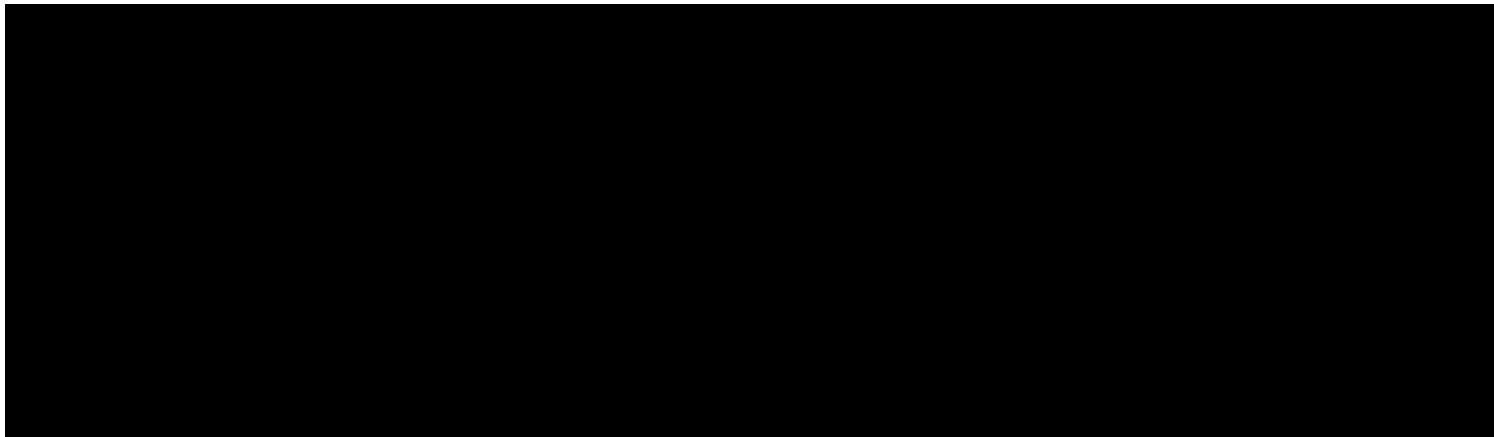
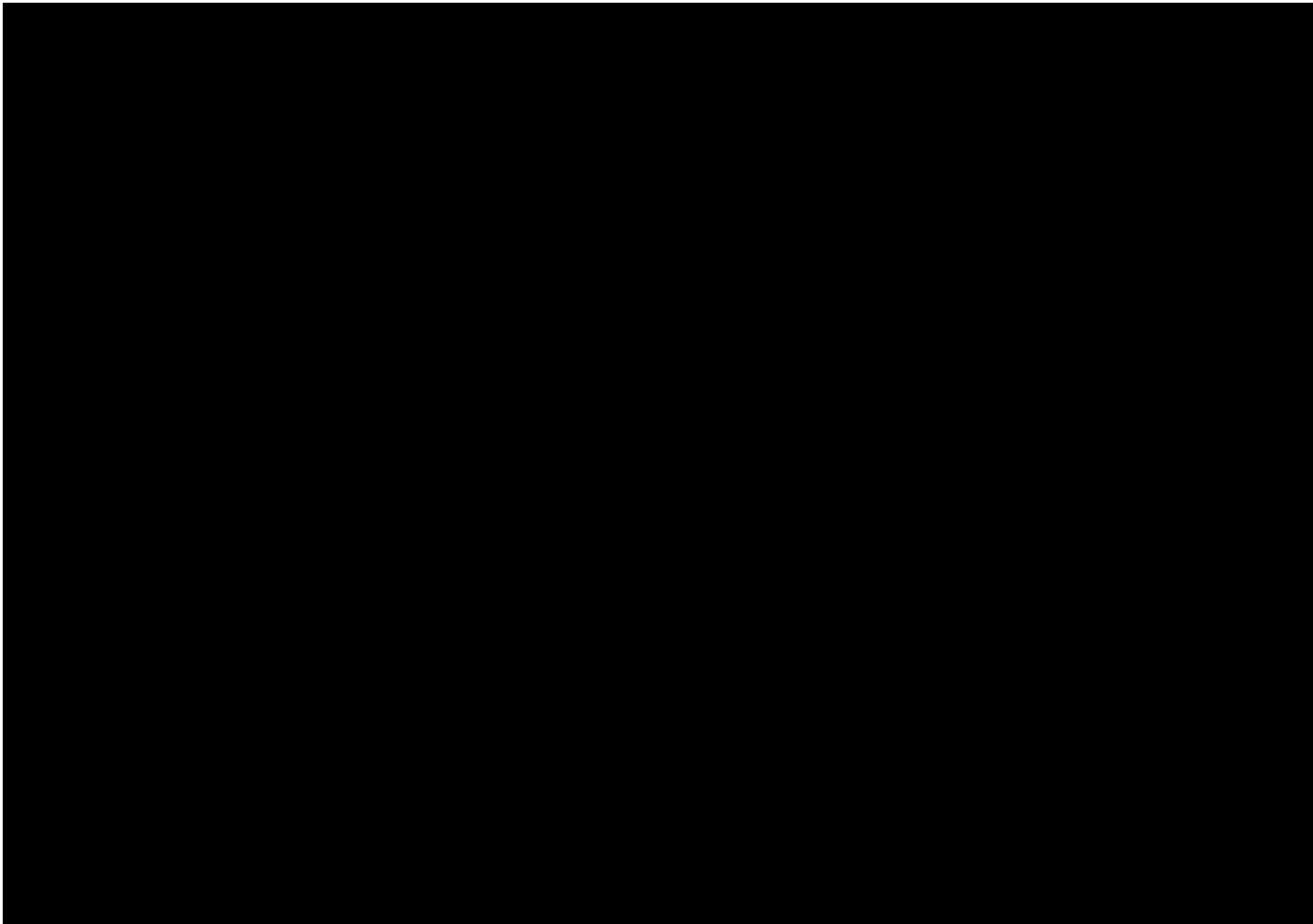
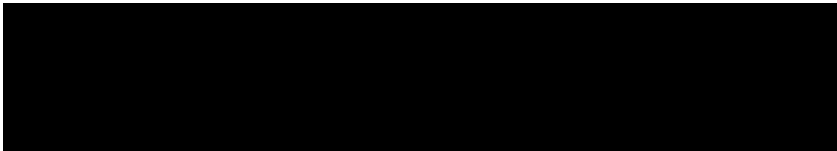
Senior Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details

Day & Date	Wednesday, 2 July 2025
Time	9am – 12pm
Location	Microsoft Teams
Concierge	Prof Cynthia White
Karakia	Prof Jonathan Elms
Meeting Chair	Prof Jan Thomas
Attendees	Prof Cynthia White, Prof Giselle Byrnes, Prof Jill McCutcheon, Prof Jonathan Elms, Prof Margaret Maile, Mr Paora Ammunson, Prof Ray Geor, Ms Shelley Turner, Dr Tere McGonagle-Daly, [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED]
Apologies	None
Minutes	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



8. Strategic Items

8.1. Assessments [SLT 25 07 57](#)

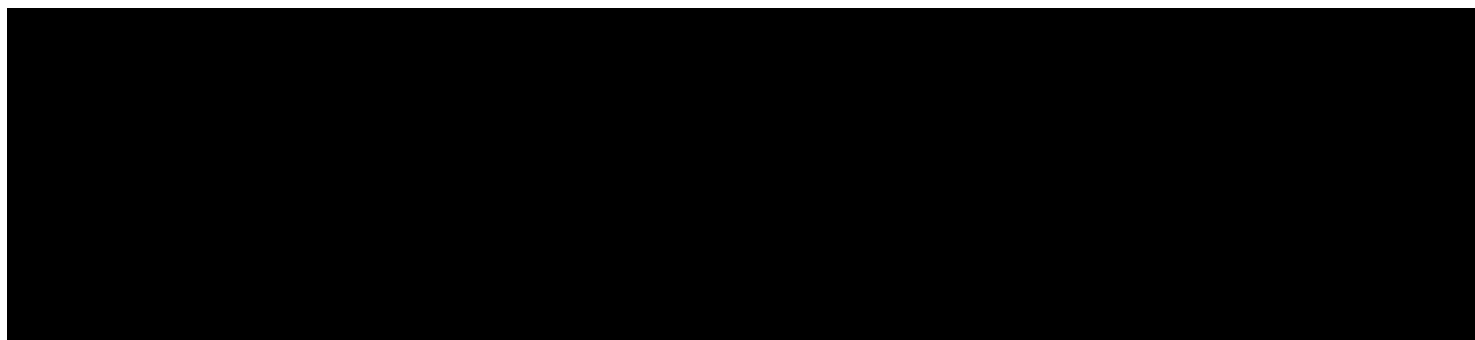
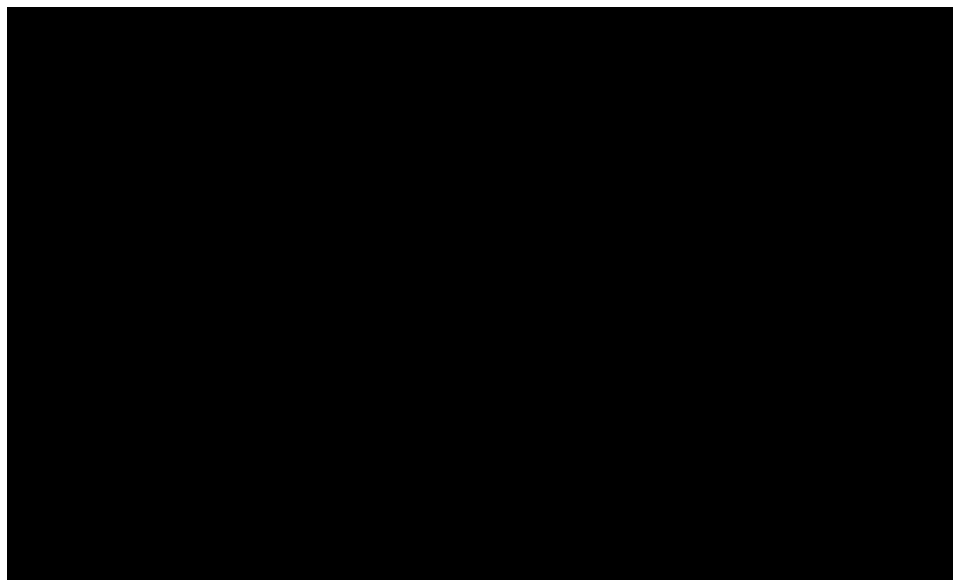
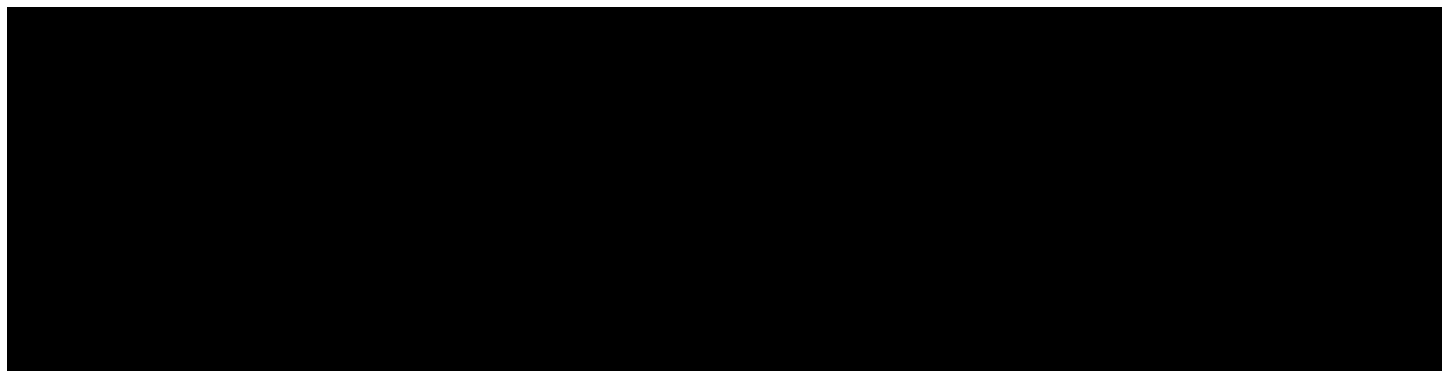
Prof Giselle Byrnes

Giselle provided an overview of the paper including the rapidly changing nature of assessment and outlined three options for assessment delivery, noting that we may need a blend of options. SLT

discussed the options, what other universities in New Zealand and overseas are doing, what is suitable for an online/distance learning provider, the importance of protecting and maintaining Massey's credibility/reputation in terms of distance education, Māori preference for kanohi ki te kanohi, use of Gen AI, regional engagement, and the need to have an option for students who can't attend in-person assessments.

SLT agreed that option three is not suitable and expressed their desire for a hybrid approach, with preference for in-person assessments this does not necessarily mean pen and paper, but use of digital tools) either on-campus or in regional exam locations, while also allowing choice for students who wish to have an OSE to choose that option. SLT noted that aspects including financial implications will need to be considered. SLT further noted the need to provide staff with a clear steer on approach for the short-term (2 – 3 years) and the need to reimagine assessment for the future (2028/2029 onwards).

ACTION: Giselle to provide SLT with updated options for assessments



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DATE:	30 July 2025
SLT SPONSOR:	Provost, Professor Giselle Byrnes
SUBJECT:	Update on securing assessment at Massey University

Recommendations

The SLT is asked to:

- Note the information in this paper.
- Approve the OSE business case as per paper “Approval of the OSE business case” (SLT 25/04/28).
- Request that PVCs support the assessment mapping exercise in 2025 within their college.
- Approve the establishment of the assessment reform project.

Purpose

This paper provides the SLT with a further update on re-establishing processes for secured assessments at Massey University, as per the request from the 2 July SLT meeting, and formally seek SLT approval for the business case for online supervised exams (OSEs).

Link to strategy and annual priorities

We must, for pedagogical and reputational protection reasons, plan for secured examinations for some disciplines. Moreover, we must support students who are studying in distance/online or hybrid modes to ensure the ongoing value of our qualifications. As has been noted via earlier papers, while we have ‘workarounds’ in place for 2025, we cannot hold this position indefinitely without risking a devaluing of our quality assurance. The University community is seeking direction on how Massey will support secured assessment from 2026 onwards.

The Massey University Strategy 2022-2027 states:

- Our goal is to provide all students with an excellent, contemporary and equitable learning experience, regardless of their location in Aotearoa New Zealand or globally, or their study mode, face to face or online.
- Providing digital and physical infrastructures that support student experiences

Introduction & background

In April this year, the SLT considered a paper regarding the future provision of ‘Online Supervised Exams’, or ‘OSEs’ (SLT 25/04/28) which included a request to fund OSEs for just two colleges: the Massey Business School and the College of Sciences. The SLT rejected the request for funding for the OSE solution at that time. Subsequently, a further more nuanced paper was provided to SLT in early July entitled “How can we best support assessment? Re-thinking our options at Massey University” (SLT 25/07/57). That paper sought to place the OSE solution within a broader context whereby the university needed to plan for both OSE delivery (with pen and paper and with devices) as well as plan for ‘in person’ exam invigilation. The draft minutes of this meeting state that the SLT expressed their desire for a hybrid approach, with preference for in-person assessments either on-campus or in regional exam locations, while also allowing choice for students who wish to have an OSE to be able to choose that option. At this meeting, the SLT also requested an update on assessment options. This paper seeks to respond to that request, noting that the university community is seeking guidance on future plans.

There are a few assumptions that need to be noted here:

1. An online assessment platform will still be necessary, not only for 'OSE' type exams, but also for in-person invigilated digital exams. Therefore, a business case for an online assessment platform is vital to support online and in-person exams.
2. In reinstating in-person, on-campus (or exam centre) invigilated assessments, there will be demand for 'pen-and-paper' for some disciplines (e.g., mathematics, chemistry, and construction) while digital will suffice for many others. This will require establishing systems and processes for management of the exam setup (paper management, QA, etc.) and delivery process, room management, as well as the reinstatement of invigilation teams. Because of the significant changes that the Centre for Education Transformation and the wider university have undergone since the last time Massey ran exams in 2019, this is in essence establishing a new university process, which is a significant undertaking and cannot be done as BAU.

These assumptions should be considered in the light of the feedback provided from the colleges on the 'validity of assessment' discussion paper circulated recently; namely, the following:

- Academic staff have widespread concerns about the practical challenges of reintroducing secured assessments, including significant resourcing requirements, the impact on distance students, and the increased staff workload. Notably, individual staff cannot be expected to manage these changes alone without proper resources and support. Staff must have confidence in the support services' ability to execute.
- Staff have also expressed a clear requirement for diverse secure assessment approaches, ranging from traditional pen-and-paper exams to broader forms of secure assessment, including oral examinations, contact workshops, field trips, and project-based learning. A clear theme that has come through the consultation with the colleges has been that different disciplines require tailored solutions. This adds to the complexity of hybrid delivery across campus and regional locations.

OSE platform

The draft minutes for "How can we best support assessment? Re-thinking our options at Massey University" (SLT 25/07/57) did not expressly state that SLT approved the business case: this approval is now being sought. Anticipating the need to get this progressing, my team has already started working with Massey's Procurement team to progress this piece of work (the Procurement team is aware that this is contingent on funding being secured).

Given where we are in the year, a 'best-case' timeline is that we will have an approved vendor signed by the end of this year, with implementation and piloting taking place through 2026, with full launch ready in 2027.

In-person assessments

A project needs to be commenced with the colleges to determine the quantum of demand for in-person secured assessments. We will, however, need to balance the desire of some areas of the university to have a secured assessment option in every course, versus the desire to not have any in-person assessment, and consider just what the University can afford to deliver. Therefore, the assessment mapping process will be essential here.

Once this information is known, we will be able to work out the internal processes, administrative requirements and personnel, to then determine costs. If colleges start assessment mapping now, they are likely to have the process completed by the end of the year. This means that we will spend 2026 re-establishing the processes, possibly with a very limited pilot in S2, with a view to a full launch in 2027.

This timing means that we will know the costs for the 2027 budget.

There is also an option for limited support for online assessment in 2026 using an interim proctoring solution. My team are currently meeting with MBS and CoS to determine their interest in this option. I have the budget to cover this for 2026, so there is no need for additional resourcing at this stage.

A proposal for SLT consideration: Assessment reform project

Investigate whether Professor Ian Solomonides (or, another expert external to Massey) could run an assessment reform project, alongside a Massey assessment expert from within a college, as well as two project support staff. This could address not only the shift back to offering secured assessments as a 'standard option', but could also address the assessment quality issues.

My budget currently has \$250k allocated for exam support that has not yet been spent because of the current hiatus. I propose using these funds to top up the funds already allocated to the Curriculum Transformation project (for 2025) from the FSP budget to turn this into a fully-fledged, 18-month project (assuming I have the same amount in our budget for 2026). Given the need for all qualifications to do the assessment mapping exercise, folding this into a wider 'assessment reform' initiative makes sense.

Resource requirements and implications

Financial Implications

FIN# 25-08

Online OSE costs as the business case for OSE

Financial Case							
Budget Type (Select one option)	☐ Externally – cost neutral						
	☐ Transfer current internal resource – cost neutral (<u>i.e.</u> transfer between existing divisional budgets)						
	☒ Funding required – on merits of the initiative						
Financial Summary							
\$ (thousands)	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Total
Preferred Way Forward:							
Implementation (OPEX)	440						
Platform (OPEX)	75 - 125	150 - 200	150 - 200	150 - 200	150 - 200	150 - 200	
Proctoring (OPEX)	70	130	155	155	155	155	
Total Operating	585 - 635	280 - 330	305 - 355	305 – 355	305 – 355	305 - 355	
Existing OPEX	50	50	50	50	50	50	
Existing Capital							
Extra Operating	535 – 585	230 - 280	255 - 305	255 – 305	255 – 305	255 - 305	
Extra Capital							
Total	585 - 635	280 - 330	305 - 355	305 – 355	305 – 355	305 - 355	
Depreciation							

Notes

- A range for each year is provided as costings are indicative and based on historical vendor provided estimates and not recent formal quotations.
- Pricing is indicative and based on a phased implementation during Year 1 and Year 2. All years are based on anticipated levels of examinations both TCA (open-book/open-web) and OSEs using 2023 and 2024 figures as a guide. Year 1 = 5,000 students and 5,000 remotely

proctored sittings., Year 2 = 10,000 students, 10,000 remotely proctored sittings, Year 3+ = 10,000 students, 17,500 remotely proctored sittings.

- Platform pricing is typically per student per year and includes all TCA and OSEs students. Platform pricing includes standard support. Some vendors offer extended or premium support at extra cost. This has not been factored into the pricing.
- Proctoring (OSE) pricing is typically per sitting. Some vendors offer per student models which can become cost-effective when students take several exams per year.
- Costings do not take into consideration the potential for a reduction in authenticated (proctored) assessment because of implementing different assessment approaches in response to generative artificial intelligence.
- Proposed funding source - expensed to budget centre 414 and recovered via the IT Infrastructure charge.

There are no financial implications for in-person assessments for 2026. A business case will be provided in 2026 to secure funding for the 2027 budget round.

Impact

- **Who and what will be impacted by this proposal**

Academic staff
Students

- **Consultation undertaken for this proposal**

■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Education Futures
■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ Learning Ecosystems and Operations

Implementation

- **Who/what entities will implement this, and how?**

■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■■ will be the lead on this piece of work and will work with the Colleges.

- **Who else needs to be advised of this decision and how this will occur?**

With SLT approval, academic staff and students will need to be advised. I will manage this via staff updates and will work with DVC SaGE on communications to students. I will also update Te Tira Ahu Pae.



Senior Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details

Day & Date	Wednesday, 30 July 2025
Time	9am – 12pm
Location	Teams
Concierge	Mr Paora Ammunson
Karakia	Ms Shelley Turner
Meeting Chair	Prof Jan Thomas
Attendees	Prof Cynthia White, Prof Giselle Byrnes, Prof Jill McCutcheon, Prof Jonathan Elms, Prof Margaret Maile, Mr Paora Ammunson, Prof Ray Geor, Ms Shelley Turner, [REDACTED]
Apologies	Dr Tere McGonagle-Daly
Minutes	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

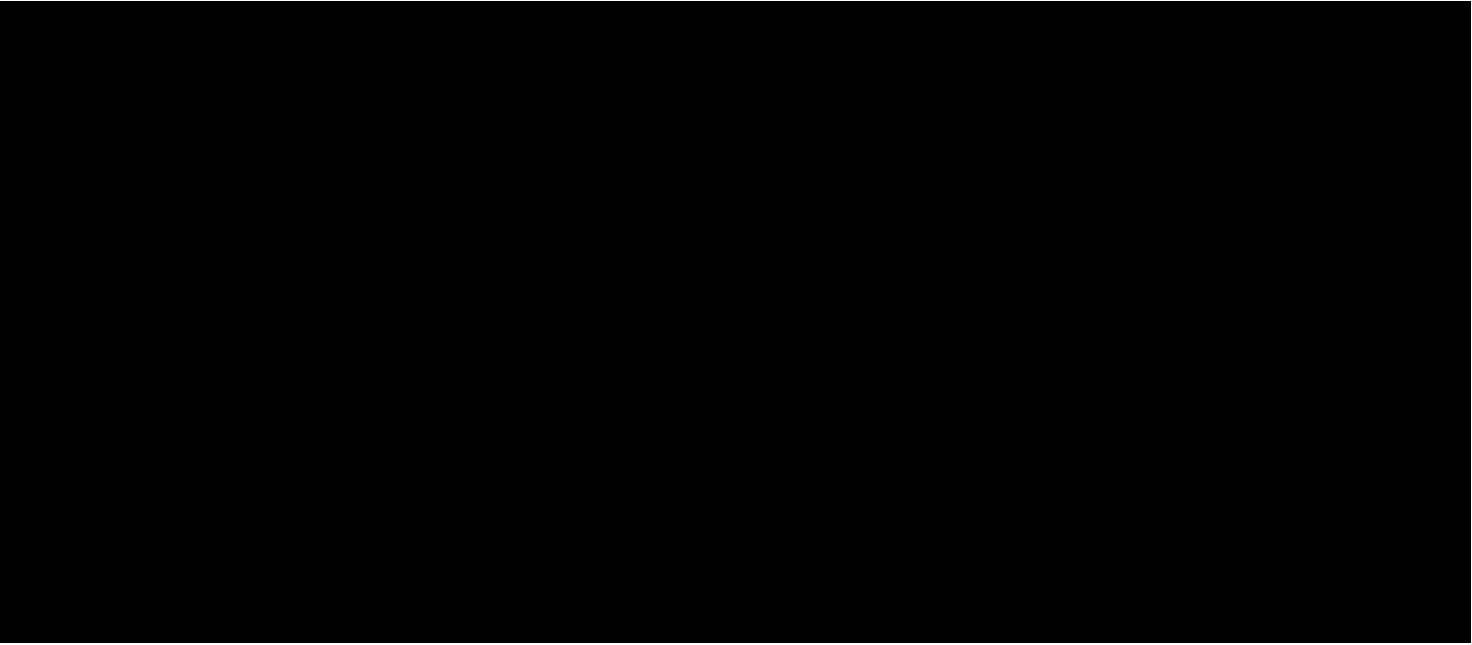
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

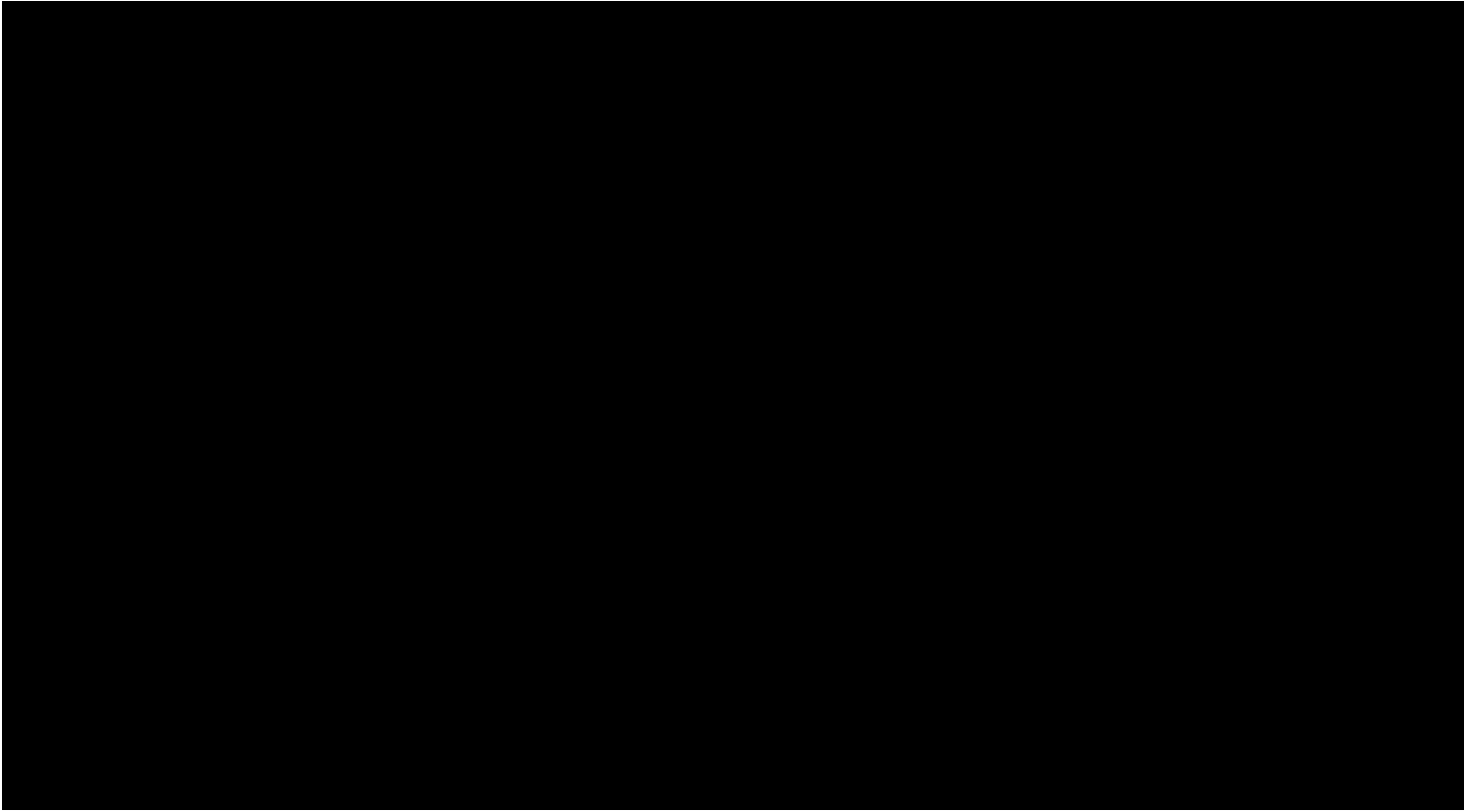


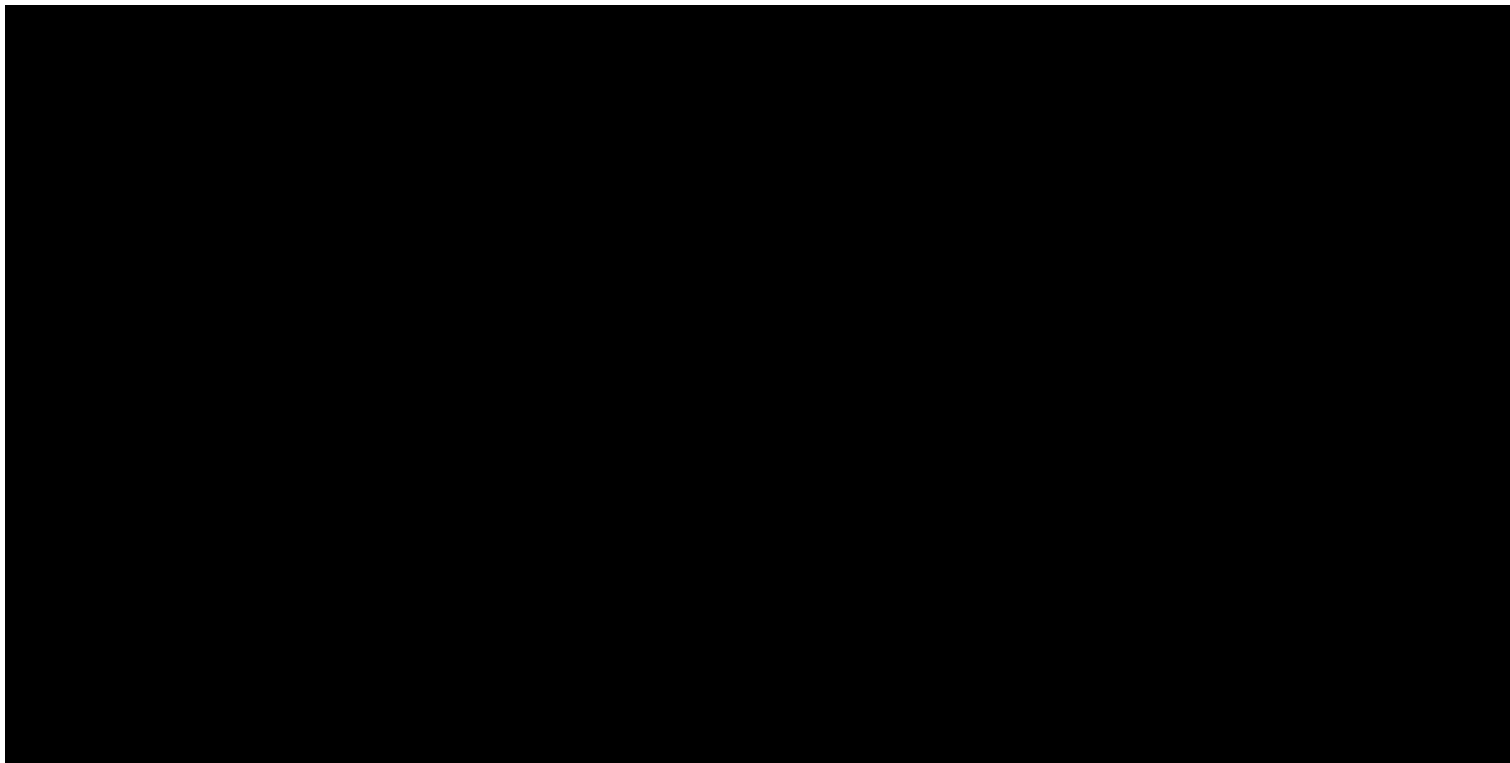
8.3. Assessments [SLT 25 07 63](#)

Prof Giselle Byrnes

Giselle provided background to the paper noting two previous versions already considered by SLT. Giselle noted the advantages of having an external expert with vast experience to contribute and lead a new assessment reform project.

SLT approved a hybrid model approach (in-person and OSE) and the OSE business case ([SLT 25 04 28](#)) up to \$635k in 2026 and up to \$355k per annum thereafter, expensed to budget centre 414 and recovered via the IT infrastructure charge. SLT also approved the establishment of the assessment reform project, funded by \$250k redirected from Provost operating budget in 2025.





DATE:	8 October 2025
SLT SPONSOR:	Provost, Professor Giselle Byrnes
SUBJECT:	Secured Assessment

Recommendations

SLT are asked to:

- **Consider** the feedback received
- **Advise on** the revised approach and timeline.

Purpose

This paper seeks SLT advice on a revised approach and timeline relating to secured assessments for Massey University.

Introduction & background

Introduction

At its meeting of 7 October, the Academic Committee is being presented with a summary of feedback (as is included with this paper) and their advice is being sought. By way of background, a draft plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments was approved for consultation at the August meeting of Academic Committee. Substantial feedback (see summary in Appendix 1 and raw feedback in Appendix 2) was received from a wide range of academic staff, as well as school groups, and college committees.

While there is unanimous and emphatic support for the principle of reintroducing secured assessment, the feedback reveals equally strong opposition to the proposed implementation plan, particularly its extended timeline. The overwhelming sentiment, especially from the College of Sciences which provided most responses, is that the current approach is too slow and fails to address risks to the University's reputation and the credibility of its qualifications by the unchecked use of Generative AI.

A significant number of submissions demand an accelerated programme, noting that many staff are already implementing unsustainable "ad hoc" solutions and call for a comprehensive return to secured, primarily in-person, assessment by the start of the 2026 academic year at the latest.

Apart from disagreement with the proposed timeline, there were also differences of opinion regarding the methods of implementation, and the degree of standardisation across the university.

Returning to secured assessment

Successfully reintroducing an acceptable level of secured assessment in all our qualifications will require a culture shift, updates to our technical systems, policies, and business processes, and additional resourcing. These factors limit what we will be able to achieve quickly.

Although several respondents note that examinations are only one means of securing assessments, it is clear from the feedback that this is the preferred solution for many. In addition, it is clear from the feedback that a reintroduction of pen-and-paper assessment is seen as the most pragmatic short-term solution.

However, as signalled above, resourcing and capacity issues necessitate a phased approach to the reintroduction of secured assessment. Whereas the original plan proposed an interim digital solution for OSEs in 2026, with a pilot of new secured assessment approaches in 2027, the revised approach prioritises the re-introduction of pen-and-paper (PP) examinations in 2026 (delivered as they were in 2019 (i.e., paper question script and answer booklets, and on-paper marking), expanding to the delivery of broader forms of secured assessment such as digital in-person and OSEs from 2027.

In short, we do not have the capacity to simultaneously reintroduce PP examinations and support an interim digital solution for OSEs.

Risks and considerations

1. The reputational risk posed by the current lack of security must be balanced against the potential reputational risks of a rushed approach, potentially leading to further system failures.
2. Space consolidation may reduce the number of large venues, restricting the number of sittings available during the exam period.
3. Information about course assessments in 2026 will be visible on the web from 1 October 2025. Reintroducing examinations may require changes to the advertised information.
4. Systems to deliver PP examinations have been dismantled. Reinstating the process requires reinstatement of the exam management processes, including printing, distribution to exam centres, collection distribution for marking, recruitment and training of invigilators, setup of exam centres for our remote and overseas students, and alternative arrangements and reader-writers. PP exams will require significantly longer lead-in times.
5. Students are unaccustomed to handwriting and this is likely to affect performance. This, combined with the requirement to travel to a physical location, may result in negative feedback from students.
6. Depending on the outcome and noting that no decisions have yet been made, the Printery Proposal for Change may impact on the ability to print exam scripts at scale – outsourcing this work may have an impact on deadlines.

A Revised Plan

This revised plan is based on the following assumptions:

1. We are reinstating in-person, on-campus (or exam centre) invigilated assessments, with a focus on pen-and-paper delivery for 2026.
2. An online assessment platform is still necessary, not only for 'OSE' type exams, but also for in-person invigilated digital exams. The RFI for digital assessment platforms planned for October will continue, enabling the phased reintroduction of digital examinations from 2027.
3. A 'secured' assessment is one in which the student's performance on a task is directly observed. Examinations are only one form of secured assessment.
4. The CET, via Assessment Services, will prioritise and oversee the reintroduction of PP final examinations. Other forms of secured assessment, such as observations, studios, contact workshops, etc., will be managed by the colleges.
5. No student should be granted a qualification without their performance having at some point in the qualification been validated by a secured assessment.
6. Colleges will determine the number of secured assessments required in a qualification. There must be consistency within programmes (e.g., all majors within the BA or the BSc should follow the same approach.)
7. This will be a significant change for many students, in particular, our distance cohort, and alternative arrangements and accommodations must be communicated carefully.

Phase 1 – Planning: October – January 2026

1. Colleges determine their approach to the requirements for secured assessments in qualifications (i.e., every course, every level, every learning outcome, etc.).
2. The RFI for digital assessment platforms is completed.
3. Assessment Services works with timetables to determine the number of PP examination sittings possible over the S1 examination period.
4. Assessment Services works with colleges to determine which courses will have invigilated PP examinations in S1 2026.
5. Colleges update assessment information in CM to indicate where invigilated exams will be used and communicate with students.
6. CET oversees building of systems and processes for secured assessment management.

Phase 2 – RFP and Implementation – Jan-Sept

7. Reinstatement of PP examinations alongside TCAs for all semesters in 2026.
8. The RFP for the digital solution is completed (Jan-Mar).
9. Vendor supported implementation of solution/s (Apr-Sept).

Phase 2 – Mapping and assessment (re)design: April – November 2026

10. Colleges apply decisions made in step 1, above, to qualifications, producing a clear map of each qualification to demonstrate where student work is ‘authenticated’ and ensuring that there is no pathway through a programme without some form of authentication at key stages. As part of the mapping process, attention is paid to assessment design, with consideration of scaffolding of skills, alternative arrangements, etc
11. Colleges identify limited number of courses for pilot of digital examinations OSEs in Semester 1 2027.

Phase 3 – Digital Examinations Pilot: February – June 2027

12. Colleges continue assessment mapping and redesign work, supported by CET where requested.
13. Courses in digital examinations pilot follow proposed processes for secured assessment, including a limited offering of secured examinations at the end of Semester 1.

Phase 4 – Evaluation and second Digital Examinations Pilot – June – November 2027

14. Evaluation of Semester 1 pilot and adjustment of processes as required.
15. Limited offering of secured examinations at the end of Semester 2.
16. Evaluation of second pilot, and adjustment of processes as required.

Phase 5- Rollout and transition to BAU: Feb – June 2028

17. Full rollout of secured assessments including secured examinations.

Resource requirements and implications

- **Financial Implications**
 - To be confirmed once colleges have determined preferred way forward and quantum of courses requiring exams.
- **Other resource requirements/implications**
 - To be confirmed as above

Implementation

- To be managed by the Centre for Education Transformation, reporting progress regularly to SLT.

Appendices

- Summary of Feedback
- Raw feedback

Appendix 1: Summary of feedback

Support for the Principle of Secured Assessment

Across all submissions, there is unanimous and emphatic support for reintroducing secured assessment. The primary driver for this support is the perceived existential threat to Massey University's reputation and the credibility of its qualifications. Many respondents, particularly from the College of Sciences, state that without reliable methods to authenticate student work, the university's "main saleable product" — the certification of knowledge — is fatally undermined.

Key arguments in favour of secured assessment include:

- **Maintaining Public Trust:** Several submissions note that public trust in the university's qualifications is a "social licence to operate". These responses argue that the failure to ensure student work is authentic is a catastrophic risk that could lead to public outcry and permanent reputational damage.
- **Combating Generative AI:** The rise of generative AI is cited as a fundamental change to the assessment landscape, making unsupervised assessments untenable.
- **Ensuring Fairness for Students:** Many respondents state that secured assessment is crucial for ensuring fairness, and that currently, honest students are being disadvantaged by those who cheat. Students themselves are reported to support in-person exams because they value the "level-playing field".
- **Meeting Professional Standards:** For some accredited programmes, secured assessment is a "non-negotiable requirement" to meet international standards and ensure graduates are competent.

Opposition to the Proposed Timeline

The most consistent and forceful point of feedback is the rejection of the proposed 2028 timeline for full implementation. The timeline is widely described as "too slow," "woefully inadequate," and dangerously out of step with the urgency of the reputational risk.

Respondents argue that immediate action is required, with many demanding an accelerated work programme to have a comprehensive system in place by the 2026 academic year. In support of this argument, several respondents note that staff are already implementing "ad hoc arrangements" and interim solutions like Zoom-invigilated and in-person paper exams but these efforts are seen as unsustainable and reliant on staff goodwill.

Respondents also argue that delay exacerbates risk. Every semester that passes without secured assessment compounds the reputational damage, with entire cohorts graduating without their learning ever being authenticated in the "GenAI era".

Only a few submissions express a different view. One respondent from Psychology finds the timeline realistically fast, while the Massey Business School (MBS) notes that student feedback supports taking sufficient time to "get it right," although they still advocate for an interim solution in 2026.

Diverging Views on Implementation: In-Person vs. Online and Standardisation

While the why and when are areas of broad agreement, the how and what reveal more diverse perspectives.

Prioritising In-Person Assessment

There is a very strong push, primarily from the College of Sciences, to prioritise a return to traditional, in-person, invigilated assessments. Many respondents advocate for handwritten exams as the most secure, reliable, and practical option, citing recent failures of Massey's IT infrastructure as an argument against computer-based exams. Respondents also argue that handwritten exams are a "known challenge" that the university has successfully managed for years, unlike the "unknowns" of online solutions, and that online proctoring is seen as insecure, vulnerable to AI workarounds, and an ongoing reputational risk. It is also described as intrusive and unpopular with students.

However, this view is not universal. Some advocate for a dual system of both in-person and online options to cater for different student needs. Others argue for investing in technology and innovative remote solutions to avoid "backward moves to old ways" and to accommodate distance students who cannot travel.

Standardisation vs. Disciplinary Flexibility

There is a clear divide on whether a minimum standard for secured assessment should apply across all programmes.

- For a Uniform Standard: Many respondents, particularly from the College of Sciences, insist on a single high standard for all qualifications. They argue that varying standards would devalue certain qualifications and that "Massey University is the 'brand' on the graduation scrolls, not the Colleges".
- For Disciplinary Autonomy: Feedback from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CoHSS) and others argues strongly for flexibility. They contend that a "one-size-fits-all" approach is inappropriate, as the need for and form of secured assessment varies by discipline. For example, in Creative Writing, AI is a minor issue, and a formal exam would be pedagogically unsound. There are calls for specialisations or majors to decide for themselves how to manage assessment integrity.

Many submissions propose a compromise: a university-wide baseline principle of authentication, but with flexibility for disciplines to choose the most appropriate methods.

Resourcing and Support

A recurring theme is that the reintroduction of secured assessment must be properly resourced as a strategic priority. Respondents argue that the cost of inaction (reputational collapse) far outweighs the cost of implementation. Current "ad hoc" solutions are shifting the resource burden onto academic staff, which is unsustainable. Key resourcing challenges identified include recruiting and training invigilators, timetabling space, and upgrading IT infrastructure.

Summary of College Positions

- College of Sciences: Provides the most numerous and forceful submissions. They advocate for an urgent (by 2026), university-wide return to a high proportion (e.g., ≥80%) of secured, primarily in-person, invigilated assessment in every course. The College Board passed a motion of "no confidence" in the current plan.
- College of Humanities and Social Sciences: While supporting the initiative, the CoHSS Teaching and Learning Committee strongly cautions against a mandated, uniform approach. They emphasise the need for flexibility, respect for pedagogical reasons for moving away from exams, and disciplinary autonomy.

- Massey Business School: Supports the reintroduction and feels a sense of urgency but also acknowledges student concerns about a rushed rollout. They propose a staged approach with an interim online solution in 2026 and a flexible model that allows for disciplinary needs.
- The College of Creative Arts supports the proposal and is keen to engage.
- The College of Health: Acknowledges the need for secured assessment but also argues that the approach should be less binary, recognising that securing can take place on a continuum of high, medium and low security. They also argue that the proposed timeline is too long.

Appendix 2 Raw feedback

Note: respondents names have been included collated feedback where they have requested to be identified; where their submissions are referred to elsewhere; or where they are submitting on behalf of a committee or group.

1

Response to Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

Liz Norman, Director of Teaching and Learning, College of Sciences, Massey University
August 2025

This submission is endorsed by

☐ Ray Geor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences

☐ Simon Hall, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences Liz Norman endorses Ray Geor and Simon Hall's submission

Summary

While I have provided answers to these questions as requested below, there is a fundamental problem with this plan. This roll out is way way too slow, and I am very worried that the reputation of the university and ALL its qualifications is on the brink of a fatal collapse. I am worried that this risk is not being given the weight it deserves.

Our main saleable product is assessment. These days knowledge is freely available – what we offer that you can't get elsewhere is certification of that knowledge by a reputable institution. The value proposition of a university education is the certification of achievement that we provide in the form of grades, awards such as honours, qualifications and postnominals. These are the tickets to social licence and responsibility and to all that goes with that, such as earnings and prestige.

The value of our certification is critically dependent on the public perception of our reputation as an institution and that our claims (that a student has particular skills and knowledge) are credible. It stretches all credibility if we cannot provide assurance that the student we are certifying has done the work we are assessing. There is public concern about these things because the public has such a large stake in this. Assessment issues can easily become a public outcry – just look at the issues around high school level qualifications in the UK in the early 2000s where there were headlines such as [GCSE coursework to be curtailed to stop internet cheats | The Guardian](#), [GCSE maths coursework scrapped | Politics.co.uk](#), [GCSE home coursework is scrapped | BBC NEWS](#) stemming from concerns, amongst others, of internet cheating and students getting help from parents. Parliament ordered a [GCSE Coursework Review Report 2006 | gov.uk](#) and the eventual outcome was as system of teacher-supervised coursework called controlled assessment Improving [GCSE: internal and controlled assessment | QCA 2007](#) to ensure there is “sufficient supervision of every candidate to enable work to be authenticated” and that “the work that an individual candidate submits for assessment is his/her own” ([Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments | JCQ UK](#)).

We have been failing to attend to this risk at our university and the reputation of its qualifications since 2020 after we had to make emergency changes to assessment during COVID. Society understood the urgent need for mitigations during COVID but also had an expectation that there would be a return to normal. We have not returned to normal. This current plan would not provide even a partial return to normal until 2028. In my mind the risk of a public outcry and effect on our reputation as a university is enormous.

Neglecting assessment is an existential threat to the university. Good assessment should be our number one strategic priority and deserves proper resourcing. SLT and Council should be considering

how we strategically invest in resources to support assessment – we can't austerify ourselves out of this.

This feedback needs to be brought to the attention of SLT and Council so they are aware of the critical nature of this risk, and the need for an accelerated work programme to enable provision of secured assessments (targeting the 2026 academic year).

Answers to specific questions asked

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

1. The purpose of securing assessment has been stated as being ensuring the validity of our qualifications (AC25/05/139 Ensuring the validity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI).
2. To ensure the validity of our qualifications we need to assure the validity of all course grades. This means that all or at least the majority of course summative assessment should be secured. This is for the following reasons:
3. If any of our grades are not credible then all are not credible. Course level grades are publicly visible but the public will have no way of knowing which has good evidence of student authenticity and which does not. Therefore the credibility of all grades will be questionable, seriously undermining the reputation of the qualification and university.
4. We make claims based on individual course grades that need to be credible such as that the student concerned (i) meets the requirements to progress in a qualification; (ii) has the prerequisite knowledge to take a particular course; (iii) can receive credit at other universities for course completions. Decisions around progression and course enrolment can have substantial downstream economic effects within the university (in terms of student support needs and costs of teaching) if not well grounded.
5. An enormous amount of curriculum mapping and potentially restructuring of our qualifications would be needed to ensure that students cannot graduate without sitting a minimum amount of secured assessment and likely beyond our capacity in a reasonable time. This work is not adequately resourced.
6. Any reduction in the number of secured assessments necessarily means each of the remaining ones becomes higher stakes.
 - a. The higher the stakes the more consequential the decision based on the grade such as whether a student can progress or be awarded a qualification. As decisions become more consequential they need higher quality evidence to support the validity of the decision. High stakes assessments therefore require greater attention to all other quality assurance measures such as, moderation of design and marking, standard setting, review of marking by external examiners. This significantly increases the costs of administering them and will consequently reduce anticipated cost savings.
 - b. In addition to the higher costs of running higher stakes assessments, we will need robust methods of supporting students with temporary impairment that prevents them from completing the assessment under the secured conditions. It would undermine credibility to use non-secured assessments to determine a grade for students unable to complete secured assessment. Unless we are prepared to simply fail students with temporary impairments we will need to introduce scheduled, deferred opportunities for every secured assessment; essentially doubling the costs of them. As well as the obvious costs involved, this will have repercussions for the speed at which decisions about things such as progression and eligibility for graduation can be made.

c. Higher stakes assessments are higher stress for students. This causes significant negative effects on performance, and on student well being.

d. Higher stakes assessments are subject to more challenges of grades. We need to be prepared to defend not awarding a qualification to a student after years of study because of failure at a secured assessment. Challenges to these decisions are likely to be more aggressive than they may be otherwise, requiring significant time and effort to hear grievances and appeals. Such grievances are also more likely to reach the public ear and lead to reputational impacts.

e. In short, the less secured assessment we do, the more important it is and therefore the more costly. This may well completely offset any savings gained by not securing assessment in every course in the first place as we used to do.

7. If the work is not the student's work, no claims about the knowledge and skills possessed by the student can be made at all and therefore the purpose and use of a grade can be questioned. Arguably, assessments where identity is not reasonably assured should only be used formatively or not used at all (ie they are worthless).

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

1. No this should not vary by discipline.

2. Doing so would devalue some qualifications in relation to others by suggesting that some qualifications are more important than others. Graduates from any qualification can have a role that carries significant societal responsibility and the public would expect nothing less than we know that the student we are awarding a qualification to is the one who did the work.

3. The reputation of the university is not qualification specific. The reputation of graduates from one discipline could affect the value of all qualifications from Massey University. We should hold each to a high standard of expectation of validity of claims made about graduates.

4. A significant proportion of our qualifications allow courses to be taken from a variety of disciplines. How would it work for students to have different levels of assurance in different courses?

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

For the reasons outlined under the next question, I do not feel that online proctoring solutions provide sufficient security. Distance students will need to have some sort of in-person supervised assessment in each of their courses. This will likely require travel to campus at some point in their course. Where cohorts are large enough this may be able to be offered at sites other than one of our campuses.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

Online proctoring solutions do not provide the assurance we need of student identity, therefore we should prioritise in- person assessment. Online proctoring does not prevent use of other devices or communication with others as this can still be done outside the view of the camera. I accept that online proctoring is better than no proctoring and may be needed as a stop gap. However, we should be aware that although online proctoring may currently be seen as a credible authentication by some stakeholders, this is likely to change over time as cases of fraud become more widely known. For example a recent Threat Intelligence Report from Anthropic¹ documented an employment scam

¹ Remote worker fraud: how North Korean IT workers are scaling fraudulent employment with

whereby operators without technical training were able to pass technical interviews at reputable technology companies and then maintain their positions through the use of generative AI technology. Thus relying on remote proctoring would remain a reputational risk for our university.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

There are resourcing challenges to a return to secured assessment but it needs to be recognised that

1. The idea that a university has not allocated sufficient resources to offer secured assessment is a really bad look and if it became widely known may cause significant public concern and reputational damage. The reputational risk is high. There was a public outcry about school level qualifications in the UK – there could easily be a public outcry about university level qualifications here. We look like a third rate university if we cannot offer this basic assurance to our students.

2. The current situation of not centrally offering secured assessment is causing resourcing issues to be shifted to academic staff who are having to resource this themselves and to dealing with ancillary issues such as integrity investigations and appeals. The cost is still being borne even now.

3. There were, in the past, mechanisms to recover some of the cost from students in the form of non-tuition fees. Although students may not like this, it is something we should consider reinstating.

I think there needs to be serious consideration of the relative importance of this issue compared to others we are a resourcing so that there can be proper allocation of resource.

Are the proposed timelines (full rollout by 2028) realistic?

They are realistic with current resourcing but are too slow. A slow pace amplifies the reputational risk. We need to resource this properly so we can have secured assessment in 2026.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

I don't think this will be seen as a transition but instead a return to normal – at least in our College.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

We need to support assessment design better than we have done given that it is our main saleable product but I see that as a business as usual thing we have neglected rather than something special about the current circumstance.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I think we already have that culture but have been neglecting to communicate it. Students want assessment to be fair and valid. They are worried about other student's cheating and they want to be able to compete fairly. We need to communicate this straightforwardly and in terms of the reputation of their qualification for them and all other students. The public needs to know it was them who we assessed and therefore we need to secure the assessment to provide this assurance. Plain and simple.

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

The College of Sciences College Board (CSB) received the Academic Committee Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments (AC25/08/308Rev1) and discussed it at the CSB meeting held on Thursday, 21 August 2025. Simon Hall chaired that meeting in Ray Geor's absence in his role as Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor for the College of Sciences. CSB members were encouraged to respond individually with their own feedback. This submission is Simon Hall's and Ray Geor's feedback and views.

Summary

We are disappointed with the plan. It is too little, too late, and we believe too risky for our institution to follow. We implore the Senior Leadership Team to recognise that our institution is facing an existential issue and, with urgency, ensure the allocation of sufficient resources and efforts to enable the implementation of secured assessments (for the 2026 academic year).

Simon Hall, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences

Ray Geor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences

11 September 2025

Endorsed by Liz Norman, Director of Teaching and Learning, College of Sciences

Simon Hall and Ray Geor endorse Liz Norman's submission

Observations and Views

It is implicit that society, legislation, our funders, and our students have the view and expectation that our institution has a high level of assurance that the qualifications and course grades we award are those earned by the individual students (i.e. we have authentication processes throughout our students' studies).

This is the 'who' in the 'who, what, how, where, when and to what extent' in our assessments, i.e. we need to unambiguously link each student to course assessments to the extent that is sufficient to assure the 'who' in a student's qualification/academic transcript.

We are of the view that the plan does not adequately address the critical requirement for authentication. In particular, the inclusion of 'some' and 'key stages' in the statement "...ensuring that there is no pathway through a programme without some form of authentication at key stages" may lead to the public perception that not all grades will be authentic because student verification may only be required at a few so-called 'key stages'. We are of the view that whenever a grade for a course is reported that there should be authentication for the majority of courses assessments (we suggest $\geq 80\%$, and that all of these be compulsory assessments). We are not suggesting all of these assessments are by examination; authenticated assessments can be achieved through laboratories, workshops, field trips and examinations.

Much of the discussion paper is focused on addressing the challenges of providing authentication for our Distance students, and with the proposition that 'Digital' underpins any modern assessment infrastructure'. The 'Distance Campus' represents a high proportion of Massey's EFTS and so is clearly worthy of extensive consideration. However, much of the proposed lengthy timescale and relatively low authentication rate is to allow for the procurement and pilot evaluation of authentication software for remote and on-campus online secure assessments.

An alternative approach is to return to in-person ('analog') secure assessments for our Distance students, as well as for our Internal students. This was the approach pre-2020. COVID changed our approach, but we did not seem to entertain a return to in-person assessments. Rather, we have

focused on the expectation that online/digital approaches will be the foundation for all future assessments. This approach has been seriously compromised by the rise of generative artificial intelligence and, in the near term, we think it is high-risk to assume there will be viable solutions to counter the impacts of Gen AI in the context of online assessments. For this reason, we strongly advocate a return to analog assessment.

Students, staff, our funders and society understood that there was a need for an abrupt change in the face of the COVID pandemic, but we are of the view that there was also an expectation of a return to sound assessment practice once the peak of the health crises had passed. We have not done this, while many institutions internationally have done this (and, in fact, strengthened authentication practices to ensure academic integrity),

A thought experiment might also be considered; had COVID not appeared in 2020 would we have substantially changed our pre-2020 approach to authenticated assessments? We are of the view the answer would have been 'no'. Further, we are of the view that in the absence of COVID, but now with AI being ubiquitous, we would be hearing calls for a strengthening of authentication methodology rather than approaches that weaken this critical element in assessment. This issue was a strong theme in the written comments from staff in the 2025 Staff Engagement Survey; they are very concerned about the integrity of our courses and qualifications, and are highly critical of what they perceive as ineffectual University leadership in working towards viable solutions.

While a return to handwritten tests and oral exams (for example) does offer an immediate solution to the overall challenge, we do see these as interim measures whilst we consider and debate longer-term strategies. However, this will take time, time that we simply do not have in the face of our current crisis.

We have undertaken an analysis of Massey University's undergraduate student enrolments by Distance in 2024 with respect to students' Term Address Region as reported in RAPID (as at 1 September 2025). Of the 11,930 individuals who enrolled in 2024 undergraduate Distance courses, 9,176 (77%) have identifiable NZ Term Address Regions, 1,935 (16%) do not have Term Address Regions loaded in RAPID, and 819 (7%) are identified as having overseas addresses.

On average, each student enrolled in 3.8 courses.

In Table 1 below we have mapped the Term Address Regions with potential onsite locations for in-person authenticated assessments:

4,216 (35%) of students are within road travel distance (0-5 hours travel) of our Auckland campus (and the majority are in the Auckland region);

3,801 (32%) of students are within road travel distance (0-5 hours travel) of our Manawātū campus (and just under half are in the Manawātū-Whanganui region; and

1,159 (10%) of students are in the South Island. If a single South Island location were to be selected then Christchurch would be a viable option, but extensive road travel times (>5 hours) would be required. Consideration could be given to a second site in Dunedin.

It is likely that many of the 16% of students in the 'Unknown' category will have Term Time Addresses that would map to either the potential Auckland or Manawātū assessment locations. Additional sites could be considered using a financial return on cost approach.

This would suggest to us that rather than undertake a process for evaluating, selecting and implementing tools for online assessment over an extended time period, and for only a rationed number of assessments, that it would be more readily achievable over a shorter timeframe and for a higher number of courses to return to onsite secured assessments.

While this would reduce a potential convenience factor for our Distance students, it will mitigate the reputational risks of their qualifications and grades being perceived by others as less than worthy.

We acknowledge that this may mean we will lose some Distance EFTS.

We also acknowledge that the re-establishment of large-scale in-person secured assessment and process after 5 years of abeyance will be a challenge. However, this could be described as a 'known' challenge; the aims, objectives and resources are identifiable, and some staff and former staff who were involved in those processes will be able to advise.

This is in contrast with the proposed online plan which is a mix of (at the risk of quoting Donald Rumsfeld) 'known knowns', 'known unknowns' and 'unknown unknowns'.

There will be a cost, and we see there should be a cost associated with authenticated assessment. This should be part of our business as usual, and we suspect our funders (students and TEC) are working on the assumption that we are including this in our expenditure. If we don't, then we run the risk of being asked for discounted fees as we:

aren't incurring those expenditures, and

we wouldn't be offering an assured product.

We recognise our views might be seen as Luddite, and wanting to turn back the clock. However, we are of the view that further years of inaction will further exacerbate reputational risk to Massey. We also need to be sure that our staff and alumni can speak with confidence and pride on our approach to assessment – we fear that the current plan does not meet that need.

Response to questions posed in the Discussion Paper

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

All compulsory assessments that contribute to the final grade for all courses. Secured assessments should comprise at least 80% of all assessments in a course.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

As above, all compulsory assessments that contribute to the final grade for all courses, and these should comprise at least 80% of all assessments.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

The need for authenticated assessments should be the same across all qualifications. Massey University cannot afford to have any perceptions that some or any the institution's qualifications (and contributing courses) have a lesser level of authenticity. Massey University is the 'brand' on the graduation scrolls, not the Colleges.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

As detailed in our submission above, we advocate for a return to in-person onsite authenticated assessments for Distance students. We must not use cost as an argument. We are of the view that we are funded to undertake this activity.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

As detailed in our submission above, we advocate prioritising onsite/in-person authenticated assessments. The methodologies are known. In contrast online proctoring solutions fall into the unknown category, including the rapid and ongoing evolution of AI 'work arounds' that will assuredly impact the validity and suitability of available online proctoring tools.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Setting up a project team to rediscover/re-establish the range of pre-2020 authenticated onsite assessments.

Scoping the required spend for the University (putting aside for the moment the debates about which budget line(s) will 'own' the costs), together with any return to onsite assessment costs being charged to Distance students.

Recruiting and training of invigilators.

Timetabling of space.

Messaging to staff, students, funders and the public.

Realistic evaluation of the capability to operate onsite/in-person bring your own device and Massey supplied computers for computer-based assessments. We note with considerable concern two recent failures of our systems, specifically on two separate occasions there was an inability to cope with the simultaneous computer-based assessment of 146 BVSc year 4 students across four main computer labs. These computers were hard-wired to the network and yet numerous students lost connectivity. In a review of this situation, it was asked whether a bring your own device approach using wifi connectivity would be better option but ITS advised there would likely be similar issues.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

(Re)training, particularly of more recently appointed academic staff on design of authenticated in-person assessments.

(Re)training, particularly of more recently appointed administration staff to support delivery and post-delivery of authenticated in-person assessments.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

As above, but also quality time. To reflect on what worked and what didn't work in the past, what is actually needed in the assessment.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Clear communications to students and prospective students on what it means to be evaluated and why.

Table 1 Mapping of Term Time Addresses to potential onsite assessment locations for all Massey University undergraduate students enrolled in Distance courses in 2024. On average each student enrolled in 3.8 courses.

Term Address Region	Potential on-site assessment location	Student count	% of total student count
Northland Region	Auckland Campus	259	2%
Auckland Region		3,069	26%
Waikato Region		498	4%
Bay of Plenty Region		390	3%
Sub-total Auckland Campus		4,216	35%
Manawatu-Whanganui Region	Manawatū Campus	1,710	14%
Hawke's Bay Region		275	2%
Taranaki Region		276	2%
Gisborne Region		81	1%
Wellington Region		1,459	12%
Sub-total Manawatū Campus		3,801	32%
Marlborough Region	Location in Christchurch	61	1%
Tasman Region		63	1%
Nelson Region		83	1%
Canterbury Region		604	5%
West Coast Region		42	0%
Otago Region		216	2%
Southland Region		90	1%
Sub-total Location in Christchurch		1,159	10%
Unknown	Undefined	1,935	16%
Overseas		819	7%
Total		11,930	100%

3

I would like to send feedback on the discussion paper that recommends reintroduction of secured assessments.

I am 100% in support of getting back to secured invigilated assessments but the timeframe for proposal is far too long (beginning in 2028). In semester 1 this year, I mobilized my teaching team to invigilate a semester test and final exam for Cell Biology (162101), which had 350 internal and another 40-50 distance students. For internals, we did paper-based tests and our school paid for postgrad assistance with marking. I organized rooms and fellow staff members to invigilate in person. For the distance students we did zoom invigilation with the students taking the test via stream and sitting with a teacher from the course. Several colleagues are now implementing this same strategy for other science courses. The challenge for this mode is that we're limited to ~10 students at one time in a zoom session so that the supervisor can see the students and their screens and monitor the chat, etc.

It is possible to have interim solutions while developing longer-term plans. It's not rocket science – we've done this before. Computer-based exams work when there is solid infrastructure, which Massey does not have. I would suggest that this needs to be part of longer-term planning to increase tech capabilities and support for online exams (internal or distance). I think distance students really do not like having to install third party software on their devices. Having distance students travel to a central

location for exams would be great, but also presents challenges for the students (financial, work-related, family-related, etc.). Thus, an interim solution like the zoom invigilation works.

In the Sciences, we need formal exams to demonstrate that the students know things and aren't just attending Google University. We need more admin/professional staff to help with logistics, test layout/formatting, etc. These administrative tasks used to be done by our internal admin staff, which we no longer have of course. Colleges could assemble professional staff to focus on tests/exams as it will be a big job that would overburden the professional staff on hand.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Ngā mihi,

CoS

4

Advise on the recommended approach.

The implementation of the plan is too slow (2028 - really?)– the University can not afford to lose more credibility. Improved assessment should be put in place immediately at least for internal/New Zealand based students. Do what can be done now, don't wait and review.

Particular consideration of the following questions would be welcomed: o What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

It is unlikely there will be one universal solution. However, I am against online invigilated assessment for NZ based students. Online invigilation software is expensive and will need to be continuously upgraded to deal with AI. Students should be examined on course content and not on their capacity to cope with the online examination environment.

o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

In the undergraduate Science courses I teach it should be one hand written assessment and one short oral presentation.

A hand written assessment can evaluate understanding of course content, and within a few minutes of face to face meeting it can be determined whether a student can think critically has engaged well with the course material. The lack of engagement we currently have with distance students is a problem for rigorous assessment.

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Differ across programmes and the standard is best determined by course coordinators and school programme directors.

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost? o

For my courses, distance students living in New Zealand should do hand written exams at centres in Auckland, PN and Christchurch if needed. Overseas students might have online examination, but Massey should evaluate the expense and scale of this.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

The costs for staffing in person assessments are known and reliable. The cost of procurement for online invigilation is unknown, and unreliable.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

For in person assessment, the support required should already be understood. In person exams have continued for vet students at least until recently using computer labs, but future exams for my students can be designed so that excessive writing (essays) is not required, so computers are not necessary.

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

I think this is the wrong question - Academic staff need support, especially within their schools to navigate Massey eforms and IT systems, production of online materials – quality videos etc

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Do in person assessment – move away from online invigilated assessment of written exams. Don't all employers already value secured assessment? Wont all students value it once they understand employers only employ students whose capabilities have been fairly and properly assessed? I think it is a problem for Science disciplines, and the credibility of Massey, if there is not secured in person examination.

CoS

5

I am really pleased to see in-person exams returning, as this will help maintain the credibility of our qualifications. I understand the pilot will initially cover only a limited number of courses, but waiting until 2028 for full invigilation seems a bit long. Overall, the phased plan looks sensible, and I support the focus on digital systems and staff/student engagement in planning and mapping.

Ngā mihi,

School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

6

One comment from me regarding:

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I recommend the latter; all students, whether internals or distance could take online exams. In that way, we avoid having two different processes.

Kind regards

School of Humanities, Media and Creative Communication

7

I wanted to add my voice to those calling for reinstatement of secured assessment at Massey University.

Within the College of Sciences there are many courses taught where it is essential that some of the assessments are in person (or invigilated online for distance students). I teach into eight zoology and ecology courses where a range of tools are used to assess students and some form of secure assessment is an important element in the majority. I would welcome support from Massey allowing teaching staff to match the best form of assessment for each subject that suit their students – to facilitate quality education.

Ray has asked us to supply answers to the questions posed in the discussion paper regarding the reintroduction of secured assessments to Massey University. So, in addition to my earlier comment attached are answers to the specific questions

Great, yes, let us return to the normal method of assessment by having in person exams for the majority of courses at Massey University.

I think that it is interesting that the plan proposed has so many steps and stages over three years. As an academic teaching 1st and 2nd semester undergraduate courses within the College of Science I have been given different rules and regulations about assessments every semester since 2020. The word we are now all familiar with is “pivot” because we have altered our teaching assessments every semester for five years. As a staff member I can cope with a return to in-person exams within a single semester.

A rapid return to secured assessments is required should Massey wish to maintain credibility as providing a valuable qualification.

Your questions in blue my answers in black

o What assessment types should be considered ‘secured’?

In person with photographic identification (student ID)

o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

50% or more per course

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline? Yes, 50% across all programmes

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

Distance student could have online assessments and be awarded a “distance” qualification.

o Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

Massey University should spend more money on the return to in-person exams.

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Students require a bit more flexibility with timing (for example; not going to an exam when they have COVID, but sitting the exam in person a week later), so staff and space needs to be resourced to allow for flexibility.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Keep the lecture theatres warm during exam periods

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

No more than offered over the last five years

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Building flexibility into the exam schedule

Ngā mihi

CoS

8

I have read the document CSB25/8/163 AC25/08/308Rev1.

I support the objective that thorough strategies need to be put back in place to ensure we assess understanding and cognition of our students.

I disagree with the statement that the problems arose only through the expansion of generative multi-modal Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). The problem began during COVID lockdowns that encouraged Massey university take alternative routes to teaching and assessment, and which resulted in an unhealthy emphasis on so-called digital learning. This was driven from the Provost's office with a very strong push for the 'Digital+' strategy, that picked up on a populist idea that 'technological innovation' is a universal panacea.

That said, the push to use digital learning more extensively converged with the rise of Large Language Models routinely referred to as AI. Massey policy should take a lead in not referring to these models as 'artificial intelligence', and confusing students and public alike by encouraging the belief that these tools have potential to improve human thinking. Rather, these tools add to the resources that capable humans can use to do their work, and provide effortless gratification for the weak-minded or lazy.

For undergraduate learning, whatever the future development of digital tools, it is essential that we focus on improving the cognitive and communicative ability of our students. If we do not do that we fail our students, the country and the planet. Inappropriate use of 'AI' in the hands of the naïve circumvents learning rather than enhancing it, and that is not education. The students deserve better and we can give them that by making it clear from the start of every course, what we expect from them and by providing assessment methods that block the use of 'AI' or detect it.

The decision to allow students to use 'AI' for all assessments without providing any security was an error.

Online assessment tools need to have some security tools attached to them. Better still in person (what the document calls PP) assessments are definitely better and easier to oversee even if does require more real humans to be involved in the process (surely to be preferred to allowing AI drones to rule our lives).

Submitted assessments are a problem as the current process requiring students to state how they used 'AI' creates extra workload for staff, and follow-up solutions for dealing with students that cheat lack teeth. If this approach is to continue then students need to be told very clearly that any evidence of undisclosed or inappropriate 'AI' use will result in zero marks for the assessment, at least. Currently good students are being taken advantage of by cheaters.

I look forward to being given proper support to assess student learning in the future, and remind that 'AI' comes with many costs including an unsustainable carbon footprint.

Regards

9

My personal position is that going back to secured assessment (or at least a proportion of assessments being secured i.e. the final exam) is the correct move.

However, the timeline proposed in the attached is far too long – we need to have secured examination (at least) by semester one 2027 for all courses (not a few in a trial). So, the trialling needs to be semester 1 and 2 in 2026.

Further I would suggest that the ‘size’ of the value of the overall mark for an examination needs to be reduced (i.e. no more than 30 to 40% of the overall mark) to lessen the potential impact of examination fraud on overall grade – this type of rule could easily be brought in for 2026.

Kind regards

CoS

10

I write in response to the discussion paper on the reintroduction of secured assessments and appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback.

First, I would like to acknowledge the significant challenges in this area and the costs associated with identifying and implementing a solution. However, I must express my very serious concern about the proposed timeline for full implementation.

As a university, one of the pillars of our social licence to operate is predicated on public trust in the validity of the assessment processes which underpin the qualifications we award. Ubiquitous access to generative AI has fundamentally changed the assessment landscape. In science disciplines, the validity of our unsecured assessment methods—and hence the trust in our qualifications—is already being questioned. I believe our qualifications will lose credibility if we wait until 2028 for full implementation.

I strongly recommend that we need a solution fully implemented by the end of the 2026 academic year at the very latest, and ideally by the end of Semester 1 2026. If the university maintains the proposed timeline, I am concerned this paper will become irrelevant in the College of Sciences. Colleagues will instead take matters into their own hands (as they are already doing this academic year) and implement ad hoc arrangements of secured and semi-secured assessments in an attempt to ensure the validity of the qualifications for which they are responsible.

Ngā mihi,

CoS

11

Below is an excerpt from the drafted (unapproved) minutes of the discussion regarding the Initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments at the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting on 12 August 2025, to allow you to progress with the work required.

3.2 An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments [LTC25-08-103]

Feedback received from Academic Committee on this discussion document ensuring the validity of our qualifications received strong support from many parts of the university, with staff arguing in favour of various models, ranging from a return to traditional pen-and-paper (PP) examinations and in-person digital exams to the reintroduction of Online Supervised Examinations (OSEs). Several respondents also noted that ‘securing’ assessment did not have to mean examinations – in-person and studio teaching, contact workshops, field trips and placements all provide mechanisms for lecturers to ascertain that the work their students produce is authentically their own.

Successfully reintroducing an acceptable level of secured assessment in all our qualifications will require a culture and capability shift as well as updates to our technical systems, policies, and business processes. Decisions need to be made about the number of secured assessments required to effectively validate the qualifications we award, and what constitutes ‘secured’. This discussion paper outlines a proposed approach to the reintroduction of secured assessments in all qualifications in 2027 and seeks the committee’s consideration and advice on the recommended approach.

The committee is requested to consider and advise on the recommended approach and questions proposed in the memorandum and endorse the wider dissemination of this document to colleges, students and service units for feedback. Feedback is to be sent to Fiona Coote by the 19th of September 2025.

The following points were noted as part of a general discussion:

Concern was raised about how long the implementation may take, with the view that this could affect the reputation of the University’s qualifications. It was also noted that taking too long might give the impression that the University cannot quickly reinstate something that was previously run effectively.

It was observed that the proposal requires all Massey qualifications to identify points of verified assessment. This would affect some qualifications that currently have no verified assessment points, for example those that removed examinations after COVID and the introduction of online supervised exams.

It was suggested that the number and placement of verified assessment points should be determined by discipline or subject, rather than applying a fixed rule across all qualifications. Guidelines could be developed to support this approach.

It was proposed that both in-person and non-in-person online verification options be provided, to accommodate distance students, students with disabilities, and those with personal circumstances. The challenge of determining eligibility for each option was acknowledged.

One possible approach noted was requiring in-person verification for students in New Zealand and non-in-person online verification for those overseas, though potential difficulties with this division were acknowledged.

Resourcing and support for the design of in-person oral assessments was identified as important, ensuring they are fit for purpose, appropriate for students, and balanced in expectations.

The student representative has discussed this with the student association and has expressed support for moving forward with Online Supervised Exams (OSEs), noting a shift from previous opposition. It was suggested to explore technology options, such as Respondus, while ensuring accessibility for all students. The importance of fostering a culture that values assessment and communicating its benefits to students early was emphasised, to avoid resistance to OSEs. An external meeting will be arranged between the student representative and CET to discuss this further. It was clarified to the committee that the procurement process for a platform is only now being initiated.

It was suggested that, if the decision is not primarily driven by assessment design requirements, student views should be sought. The potential implications for students of requiring in-person exams were noted, along with recognition that there are strong views regarding online proctoring

approaches. It was also noted for consideration whether an online platform meets the purpose for doing secured assessments to assure the identity of the person doing the exam. If this cannot be assured, the question of preference becomes moot. It was clarified that even if assessments are conducted in person, there may still be a digital element, and therefore an online platform would still be required.

Clarification was requested regarding the use of the terms “programme” and “qualification,” which appear to be used interchangeably in the document. This caused some confusion, particularly in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, where a Bachelor of Arts (BA) comprises multiple majors and minors rather than a single, unified qualification.

It was noted that for the BA, key assessment points would need to be applied to each major and minor, rather than just at the overall qualification level, to meaningfully authenticate student learning. In response, it was noted that determining where assessment points are required is a matter for the individual colleges, as they are best placed to decide how to verify that students have completed the work for each major or minor within the qualification.

Concern was raised about equity in oral assessments, particularly for international students and students with social anxiety or on the autism spectrum. It was suggested that expertise from Disability Services or similar support services should be incorporated in designing these assessments. It was noted that equity considerations apply to all forms of formal assessment, and processes should be in place to provide alternative formats where needed.

The discussion highlighted that limiting the number of secured assessments increases the stakes for each, potentially raising student anxiety and placing greater demands on assessment design and scrutiny. A balance must be struck between securing all assessments and targeting only certain points.

Resource implications were noted, particularly for oral presentations and assessments in disciplines where process-focused evaluation is resource intensive.

It was emphasised that a shift to securing only certain points of assessments may require robust deferred and supplementary assessment systems/processes, similar to existing frameworks in some colleges, to manage impaired performance and appeal applications.

Support was expressed for the initiative overall, with recognition that having a concrete plan with timeframes for securing assessment validity is a positive development and is likely to be welcomed across the University. Accolades were given to Simin Littschwager and Graeme Sequeira from the Curriculum Transformation Unit within CET for their work on this.

■

12

6.2 [COSTL250018 LTC25-08-103 - An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments](#)

This is a plan for reintroduction of secured assessments which has been reviewed by the Academic Committee and Learning and Teaching Committee. It will be coming to Colleges for feedback.

Concerns were raised about the approach being too slow, and the lack of resourcing to support a faster roll out was disappointing.

A significant risk to the reputation of the university and to our qualifications is perceived from a slow return to secured assessment.

Experience in CoS, where staff have been organising and managing in-person assessments themselves for internal students, indicates that these are seen as fairer by students, reducing concerns about

cheating. Anecdotal feedback from internal students indicates strong support for in-person, paper-based exams. There is concern that there is insufficient recognition of this important student voice compared to the voice of distance students who wish to continue with more flexible (and therefore unsecured) assessment approaches.

Concerns were raised about the feasibility of conducting two pilots (Semester 1 and Semester 2) with insufficient time to incorporate feedback between them.

There was concern that this slow rollout would be very disappointing to staff. Morale is already reportedly low, with many feeling overburdened and unsupported. Temporary solutions are being used, often relying on staff goodwill, which is unsustainable long-term. There is a risk that staff may disengage further if the situation does not improve.

One advantage pointed out was that having a definite plan was helpful as staff have been anticipating return of service semester after semester and therefore have been making temporary changes only. However there was some concern that the current proposal could easily hit bumps that slowed down roll out even further.

Suggestions included exploring oral examinations and adopting controlled assessments models such as used for some UK GCSE subjects (e.g., supervised assignment work during tutorials). These models could offer more secure assessment options without relying heavily on central systems. However the effects on staff morale are limiting how much energy staff have to do this replanning.

Committee members were encouraged to reflect further and discuss with their heads of school ahead of College Board meetings.

College of Sciences Learning and Teaching Committee.

13

Overall, the plan sounds solid. I put some comments/answers on the questions below

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programs, or should this vary by discipline?

I think it should be by discipline. I would aim for one per year. Due to the enormous variability among careers if one global plan wants to be achieved, maybe a mentor could be assigned to each student to follow throughout their studies, but that is something that should be carefully considered in terms of workload.

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

As long as a video chat can be guaranteed to be real, an interview/presentation of a project, for example, is an option. Even recording in video of the presentation to be uploaded. We are asking for an AI declaration already and that should cover for any suspicious upload.

o Should we prioritize on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I think that human contact is essential. Modern ways are changing, so it is important to accommodate. In terms of assessment I would say invest in technology, but I would equally invest in preserve human contact in other spheres of academic social life.

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Extra workload to assess integrity.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)? All of the mentioned and consider a clear transition plan.

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Access to popular AIs to check putative answers. Model assessments for inspiration.

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasizing surveillance?

Integrating AI as a tool and teaching how to use it responsibly. May be it can be developed a course on this as an introductory one for all new students.

Hope it helps, let me know if you have any questions.

Department of statistics

14

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

Summary

While I am relieved to see that Massey has a plan to reintroduce secured assessments, I am highly concerned at the proposed timeline and scope.

Spending next year (2026) simply talking about secured assessments with a view to trial them the following year (2027) and hopefully introduce them for key courses in 2028 is too little too late and the risk of major reputational damage is too great.

In-person secured assessments should be brought back as standard with the utmost urgency.

Vital Importance of Secured Assessments

When Massey University awards a degree or diploma, we are making a public assertion that the recipient has completed their course of study and met the learning objectives and graduate profile of that qualification. The reputation of our university and the qualifications it awards is tied to the quality of the graduates we produce.

Without secured assessments, we are making these assertions without any reliable evidence. Many students will graduate from Massey this year having never completed a single assessment that confirmed the work submitted was their own. When graduates from Massey reach the workforce without any of the skills or knowledge that we say they have, industry and society may reach the conclusion that a Massey degree is worth nothing.

A lot of current discussion focuses on Generative AI tools in assessments (this does represent a significant challenge to all Universities) but at Massey we don't even identify the person sitting an exam or test. We also allow students to sit exams whenever they like in a 24-hour period, it would be naive to think that students aren't discussing questions between themselves during this time. In my view it is pointless to address whether someone has used Gen AI in an exam or not when we make no attempt at all to identify the person sitting said exam.

I would also be unhappy with the idea that we only offer secured assessments in a few, key courses. This sends the message that only some material is important to learn and would introduce a two-tier

system where it's ok to cheat in some courses but not others. For flexible degrees where students can choose from a variety of courses, there is also the practical problem that almost all courses would need to be secured to prevent students completing a degree by just selecting the unsecured courses.

In general, society accepted that during COVID lockdowns then usual processes had to be bypassed and extra accommodations had to be made. Even then, the term COVID degree appeared with concerns that open-book exams would make a degree obtained during this period worthless. Without secured assessments, Massey is continuing to confer COVID degrees to our graduates in 2025 and plans to continue through to 2028.

Increasing risk of major reputational damage

The reputational damage Massey University suffered from the failure of the OSE system in 2024 is not something we want to repeat. However, the risk of doing nothing is far greater. \

It is likely that the other Universities (and New Zealand society as a whole) are simply unaware of the complete lack of integrity of our assessments. The revelation that Massey does not have secured assessments in our courses (since 2020 and continuing to 2028) would cause widespread damage to our reputation, our graduates, and our viability as a university.

The longer Massey refuses to address this issue, the worse the potential fallout will be.

Solution

The simple solution to this is to return to on-campus, in-person examinations as standard. This is the model that Massey successfully used for many years without issue. The common arguments against this are - cost and distance students.

Requiring New Zealand distance students to travel to an examination location for the examination period is not overly onerous. Many NZ distance students do not live that far from one of our campuses and setting up an examination location in Christchurch or Dunedin would cover a lot of the South Island.

Just over 4% of our students EFTS are recorded as offshore in RAPID. It is difficult to determine exact numbers for Massey as a whole, but in our school, most of these offshore students are studying at a partner institution (who do secure their examinations). It is a sad state of affairs that we can trust the results of examinations at partner institutions more than our own.

Recommendations

- Return to On-Campus, In-Person invigilated assessments as standard.
- Offer hand-written examinations as the most practical option due to the lack of computer labs and the technical challenges of bring your own device exams. The courses I teach are in Computer Science and I would much prefer a secured hand-written exam to a completely open and unsecured digital exam.

College of Sciences

15

Feedback on “An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments”

Author: Dr Teo Susnjak

Role: Associate Professor, Computer Science and IT

Executive position

We must re-establish secured, invigilated assessments at pace. The primary risk is not cost or logistics but rather the continued erosion of credibility of our qualifications. Every semester that passes without some form authentication increases that risk. At the very least, we need in-person invigilated assessments at key progression points, with high-assurance alternatives for distance learners. We should treat this as core business restoration, not discretionary change. Teaching staff also need support and guidance for implementing interim solutions for securing our assessment beginning 2026 as we cannot wait until 2028.

To the Academic Committee,

I write in strong support of the proposal to reintroduce secured assessments across our programmes. In my opinion, the urgency of this work cannot be overstated. While the staged plan in the document outlines a pragmatic pathway for a rollout in 2028, I must emphasise that the risks we face are immediate and ought rather to be accelerated. Our credibility as a university depends on whether we can guarantee that the knowledge and skills our graduates claim to hold are genuinely their own. Currently we are not fulfilling this, at least not in the qualifications with which I am familiar.

1. The Reputational Risk We Face

The current reality is that widespread, undetectable use of GenAI has fundamentally compromised the integrity of unsupervised assessments. In my own teaching I see clear evidence of its misuse, even if it is difficult to provide objective evidence for it and to quantify it formally. If the public, employers, professional bodies, or the media were to scrutinise how far we have lost control of the authenticity of student work in some of our qualifications, the damage to our reputation could be permanent. Once credibility in the integrity of our qualifications is lost, it cannot easily be restored. It is also critical to recognise that other New Zealand universities, as well as many international counterparts, have retained in-person invigilated examinations. If Massey diverges too far from sector norms, we risk being perceived as offering a weaker and less credible degree. That perception could directly affect graduate employability, postgraduate opportunities, and even the legitimacy of our right to award qualifications. Our enrolments have been on a downward trend and failure to address this issue adequately may accelerate it further.

2. Risks of Delay, Over-Caution and Lack of Agility

The phased plan defers full implementation of secured assessments until 2028. In my opinion this pace of change is not in line with the level of risk we face and thus requires more urgency. Every year that passes under current assessment conditions, risks further erosion of our credibility. Large language models (like ChatGPT) began to be publicly released from the end of 2022. Since then, students have had access to GenAI for their assessments in all of 2023, 2024 and now in 2025. This means that at least one full cohort of all Massey bachelor graduates is about to enter the workforce without ever sitting a properly invigilated exam during the GenAI era. By the end of next year, a second cohort will follow. By 2027 when only a pilot phase is proposed, a third cohort will graduate under the same conditions. In effect, thousands of bachelor's degree holders, along with graduates of other smaller programmes, will have completed their qualifications without any secured assessment, despite the widespread availability of ever more capable AI tools that make academic misconduct largely undetectable. This reality magnifies the reputational risk year on year. Each cohort released without credible authentication of learning compounds the problem and the risk to our institution, and by the time the current phased plan is enacted, the damage to confidence in our qualifications may already be entrenched. Therefore, I maintain that we need to accelerate the pilot and full rollout phases so that secured assessments are in place well before current proposals. A three-year delay risks leaving us exposed at the very moment when the sector, employers, and regulators are scrutinising the role of AI in education.

Targeted commentary on the discussion paper

“Massey faces additional challenges: balancing costs and logistics against current student expectations of distance study.”

Comment: Cost and logistics matter, yet they are not determinative when the core product is at stake. The integrity of awards defines institutional value. We must be prepared to fund exam centres, invigilation teams, and a digital assessment platform because the alternative is devaluation of degrees and long-term brand damage. The cost of re-establishing secure assessment is visible and finite. The cost of lost credibility is diffuse and ongoing.

“General change fatigue are key considerations, as is the fact that some staff and students do not perceive a need for secured assessment at all.”

Comment: Change fatigue is real in many areas at Massey right now, yet this is not that kind of change. This is a return to core academic practice. It restores shared standards and will likely lift morale among staff who want to feel that their work is not in vain and that our graduates’ qualifications have value. In my unit there is overwhelming support for secured assessment because colleagues have watched the value of our qualifications slide. The claim that “some do not perceive a need” is likely a minority view and is often tied to contexts where authentication is easier or stakes are lower.

Final position I support the proposed direction and disagree with the perceived urgency of this challenge and pace for devising solutions. The scale of the risk we face requires action beginning in 2026 with interim and practical solutions, not 2028. We need firm minimum standards, earlier pilots, and secured checkpoints embedded in programmes well before the planned rollout. The restoration of in-person invigilation and high-assurance alternatives for distance students must be treated as core business, not optional reform. Integrity of our qualifications is non-negotiable, and every additional cohort graduating without secured assessment deepens the reputational damage which we cannot afford.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Computer Science and IT

16

Response to Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

Author: Naomi Cogger, Strategic Lead – Generative AI Engagement

Date: 15 September 2025

Endorsements: I endorse the submissions from Liz Norman, Simon Hall, and Ray Geor. My position is substantively aligned with theirs.

Summary

Universities exist to award qualifications that truly reflect what students have learned and can do. If we cannot be sure the graduates who cross our stage have met the learning outcome then our qualification lose all value, and so does the institution.

The challenge of assessment integrity is not new; issues of authorship have always been with us, but previously we could look away. Generative AI has removed all plausible deniability and the public is watching. In the current environment, we can no longer expect the public, employers, or professional bodies to trust our credentials if we cannot clearly demonstrate that grades are based on students' own work.

Assessment is not a peripheral matter; it is the university's core business and its most important responsibility. To maintain trust in our qualifications, we must validate students' learning via secure assessment. While distance education is part of Massey's DNA and must remain so, 'distance' cannot mean 'unsupervised'. Remote proctoring simply cannot anchor our strategy while AI-enabled circumvention remains so easy and undetectable.

The costs associated with rebuilding the infrastructure for secured assessment are substantial and should not be underestimated. However, the potential consequences of inaction are catastrophic. If we fail to invest in these essential measures, the integrity and value of our degrees will be compromised. It is difficult to comprehend not prioritizing action in response to the most significant risk facing our core mission. As such, we have a responsibility to respond decisively and safeguard the credibility of our qualifications for our students, staff, and broader community.

Answers to specific questions asked

1) What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

Rather than a numerical threshold, course teams should map each learning outcome to an authenticated assessment task and ensure that, by the end of the course, every student's achievement of those outcomes has been validated in a secure manner.

2) Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Absolutely, a uniform standard should apply across all programs. While the specific processes and types of assessment may differ to reflect the unique requirements of each discipline, the expectation for rigorous, secure validation of learning outcomes must remain consistent throughout the university.

At its heart, this is a matter of validity: Can we confidently affirm that every student who passes has genuinely met the learning outcomes? That assurance must not shift according to subject area. It would be indefensible to imply that the credibility of a Massey qualification depends on the discipline studied. Students, employers, and the wider public expect a Massey degree to signify the same high level of authentic achievement in every field.

3) What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

Acceptable options for distance students must ensure we can credibly validate identity and authorship to the same standard applied to on-campus students. In practice, this means:

Re-establishing regional exam centres (e.g., Auckland, Manawatū, Christchurch as a minimum; additional sites based on cohort density).

Conducting in-person vivas, practicals, and oral assessments at certified centers or supervised locations.

Providing scheduled deferred sittings for students with temporary impairments, and supervised alternatives at approved venues only in exceptional circumstances (including overseas centres).

Online/remote proctoring should not be considered part of our assessment arsenal at this time given its vulnerabilities; credibility requires certified, in-person supervision.

4) Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should prioritise in-person, secure assessment. I do not believe that online proctoring is a viable option for Massey given current and foreseeable risks, particularly in the context of generative AI. The integrity of our assessments depends on confidently verifying identity and authorship; certified exam centers are the only option that provides the level of assurance required.

5) What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Reintroducing secured assessment at scale presents real resourcing challenges, including people, places, systems, and student support. However, the risks of not resourcing this work are far greater: if we fail to invest, we risk losing our credibility as an issuer of degrees—an existential risk to the institution. These challenges must be worked through. Key areas include:

Recruitment, training, and scheduling of invigilators; re-establishing exam operations capability.

Venue booking and timetabling across campuses and regional hubs; accessibility planning.

Paper and/or controlled-digital workflows, chain-of-custody, moderation, standard-setting, and external examining for consequential decisions.

Student communications, preparation resources, and equitable deferral processes.

Technical readiness for controlled digital assessments where appropriate (without making digital platforms a blocker to in-person delivery).

6) Are the proposed timelines (full rollout by 2028) realistic?

Yes, they are realistic given what resources are currently being given to the project. However, the timeline is too slow. However, waiting two years for a full roll out is strategically unacceptable. Each additional cohort assessed without adequate authentication widens the credibility gap around our grades and awards, the core product of the University. We should re-prioritise and re-resource to deliver materially expanded in-person secured assessment in 2026.

7) What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Comments align with those from Liz Norman, Ray Geor and Simon Hall.

8) What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Comments align with those from Liz Norman, Ray Geor and Simon Hall.

9) How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Turning to secured assessment is not a sign that we do not trust students. In fact, it is the opposite: by setting out clear, transparent expectations and applying the same standards to everyone, we create fairness and consistency. Secured assessments are designed to protect the value of students' work and qualifications. When students know exactly what is expected and how their work will be assessed, trust is strengthened, not undermined.

What does risk trust, however, are unclear systems that rely on opaque monitoring or unreliable detection tools. These approaches single out individuals unfairly and can create anxiety without improving learning outcomes. By contrast, a secured and transparent system makes the process predictable, proportionate, and explainable. Students can then focus on showing their knowledge and skills, confident that they are being assessed in a fair and equitable way.

17

Feedback on Discussion Document AC25-08-308Rev1 Discussion Paper Reintroduction of Secured Assessment revised.

Here is my feedback regarding the discussion above discussion paper.

The paper claims to be about secured assessment, but it is not defined what secured assessment is, it may be exams it may not.

I think the issue with current assessments is there is little to no academic integrity – why not call it that. Online exams were forced onto us by COVID overnight with no discussion or debate of the impacts on academic integrity, it is what we had to do. If it was discussed my feedback would be there is no academic integrity with online time constrained assessment for examinations. Online proctoring appears to have some integrity, but I would have been concerned about reliability. Also, online proctoring was not useable during COVID and was adopted after the threat of COVID.

My concerns were proven to be correct as the use of online proctoring of exams was found to be unreliable and problematic. In my opinion once the COVID threat was over – i.e. we went back to campus-based lectures, examinations should have returned to their pre COVID protocols.

Really COVID was used as an excuse to force changes in examinations that should never have happened without robust consideration of Academic discussion. It was a change forced by senior management without proper consultation and should be immediately reversed. What we did in 2019 for exams should be the basis of what is done in 2026. I do concede if we had a robust discussion with feedback, the changes may have happened anyway as Massey Senior Leadership has a record of taking feedback, ignoring it and doing what they want anyway.

Here is my experience with online TCA's, one started as an online proctored exam but had to change to TCA. I have had issues huge with use of AI, some was proven, a lot I had to accept as there was insufficient evidence to prove what was clearly obvious. On top of that students probably googled many answers, I have no idea. For one exam I had enough evidence and two students admitted to breaking exam rules with online text generation. This was resolved by two students doing a pen and paper exam. It took me 10 hours to sort out and 2 hours of supervision of an exam. It would have been far easier for me to spend three hours proctoring a pen and paper exam in the first place. So, if money is the issue, I would be saving money by proctoring my own face to face exams. For distance I concede this may be trickier, but what we did for distance in 2019, should be the starting point of what we do in 2026. Anything less is proving Massey does not believe in academic integrity.

Food Technology

18

I strongly endorse the comments from Ray Geor, Simon Hall and Liz Norman. It is essential the Massey has widespread invigilated assessments as soon as possible. The proposed timeline means that a student starting their degree this year could finish in 2027 without ever doing an assessment for which we know that the person who did it was the person enrolled in the course. This is unacceptable, and if made public, would make Massey a laughing stock.

Massey switched teaching and assessment formats within a few weeks when covid struck. Surely we can return to something we know how to do, and did up until 5 years ago, in less than 2.5 years?

CoS

First, I endorse and agree with entirely the feedback on this document (AC25-08-308Rev1 Discussion Paper Reintroduction of Secured Assessment) provided by Ray Geor, Simon Hall, and Liz Norman. I have attached that feedback.

Second, just some of my own thoughts on the document and the feedback I have read:

I also believe the timeframes are far too long. Massey's reputation is currently being tarnished and faster action is required to halt this. Specifically related to exams, I believe a return to paper based, invigilated in-person exams are the gold standard solution. Student's identities can be verified and it is not possible to use AI in this exam setting. Two major issues would be resolved.

The document, AC25-08-308Rev1, states that such a return would be "in essence, establishing a new university process, which is a significant undertaking and cannot be done as BAU". I don't agree with the perspective stated in the quoted sentence. It would be a return to business as we have done before and I believe would be significantly faster and easier to implement with much less risk than an unknown digital solution. The reputational damage, national news etc, from the previous attempt at a digital solution is still being felt.

I believe a major justification for trying to persist with a digital invigilation solution is cost i.e. trying to reduce costs. While cost reduction is important for any organisation there are times when other factors are more important. As I have seen before working in industry, intangible costs such as Massey's reputational damage and a degradation of the perceived robustness of a Massey degree do not seem to be highlighted or discussed very much. There are real financial costs associated with reputational damage to an institution and its products. I believe re-instituting in person, paper based exams, would go a long way in mitigating these risks and costs. I also see a lack of any cost/benefit analysis. If this has been carried out, I believe this should be shared.

AC25-08-308Rev1 also mentions consideration of "change fatigue" as a potential impediment. I don't believe this would be such a large issue as I believe most of those involved are well intentioned and motivated to protect Massey's reputation and the quality of qualifications that Massey awards. Also, how much more resource and change intensive is implementing an unknown, and new digital solution, than something that a lot of staff already have experience with i.e. in-person, paper based exams?

Last, a response to some of the questions in AC25-08-308Rev1:

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should prioritise on-campus/in-person assessments. I would go further, especially keeping in mind the issues encountered with the "simultaneous computer-based assessment of 146 BVSc year 4 students across four main computer labs" mentioned in Ray Geor's feedback, and say that the in-person assessments should be paper based.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Massey should move back to on-campus/in-person assessment. If this was the case then the rooms are still there, not much technology is actually required e.g. just clocks on the wall, staff will still be around who know how this should work, and students are well used to taking paper based exams e.g. they do this at secondary school.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I don't believe there is any more secured assessment than an in-person, paper based exam. Again, I am only referring to exams. I think most students would see this as a serious approach to exams, signifying that Massey takes student assessment very seriously. This would show that Massey does have a culture that values secured assessments. Placing students together in a room shows the students that all are treated equally and rules are applied to all. With students taking digitally based assessments, individually wherever they are, students may feel that others are not playing by the same rules that they are.

If thinking about overemphasising surveillance, I can't think of anything that would make students feel more overly surveilled than online digital assessment with online proctoring. For this the student needs to install software on their personal system, be video recorded during the entire assessment, and have the installed software essentially take control of their machine. The student does not know what will happen to any recordings, which are likely to be recordings in their home setting.

Apologies for the very long email.

CoS

20

In my capacity as the Chair of the Selection Committee for the Veterinary Programme, I felt it important to provide some feedback. Unfortunately, since I am heading overseas tomorrow, my comments will have to be brief, and perhaps a little less well-formed than they otherwise should be.

The default position of vet selection has always been to trust the validity of the course grades for the four CoS pre-requisite courses sat by the majority of those students applying each year to Vet. That position was challenged this year by the release of the University position on use of AI in assessments. This led to the rapid adoption of the Science Selection Test in 2025.

With respect to the return to secured assessments, I would strongly support this be done as early as possible echoing Liz Norman's comments that this be as early as possible, even 2026.

A return to secured assessments would allow the Selection committee to again have faith in the validity of course grades and would obviate the need for Science Selection Test in the future – a test that added significant additional stress to students and staff in 2025.

The added advantage is that secured assessment is still an important part of the assessment strategy in the Vet Course and so we can have greater certainty that those who enter Vet are well set up to succeed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback

Nga mihi

CoS

21

I am of the view that every course MUST have at least one physical assessment, let it be an exam or a face-to-face interview. I cannot think of any other way of authenticating a student's work. This way, students would really see the need to achieve the intended learning outcomes, rather than simply using Gen AI to do their assignments. Having said that, we should not entirely discourage the use of Gen AI tools, because they are a great learning tool. Rather, we should make sure students use those

tools for learning, rather than simply to pass the assessments. In my courses where computer programming is involved, I would really like to have face-to-face interviews. However, such assessments are challenging in large classes. Therefore, you will need to invest of more human resources.

Before implementing anything, Massey can collect information from individual lecturers on how they run assessments currently, how they would like to change the assessment structure to increase authenticity, what challenges they foresee and what additional resources they might need.

Regards

School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

22

I have read the Discussion paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments. I was rather concerned at the timetable proposed. In Science and Specifically in Mathematics, we really miss having closed book examinations. Surely we can go back to pen and paper examinations next year as an interim measure?

Most of my colleagues in other universities restarted examinations soon after the pandemic.

Apart from the issue of ensuring the validity of our qualifications, cognitive science research indicates that closed book examinations and tests can play an important role in learning in science. We should be trying to improve our learning environment to be as good as we can make it, even if this just means going back to what we did before the pandemic in the first instance. We want to teach our graduates to be as good as they can apart from validating their qualification.

I would also be surprised if moving back to our old system was not cheaper for the university as the present system is very costly in academic staff time apart from the other issues.

Massey took 4 years to attempt to produce a secured (online) assessment. I don't think it should be another 4 years before we try again. Our response should be more agile. It is too late for the current semester but we should be starting next year. Setting up a committees and working groups may be helpful, but in the mean time we should re-establish what worked prior to the pandemic. There certainly would be value in having the capacity to run secure closed book class tests online even before they reach a level appropriate for a final examination.

There is still expertise among academic staff in writing Tests and Examinations. If there is not expertise within the university for administration of this, then there is plenty of expertise to call upon around us in other universities, colleges and schools.

Best regards

CoS

23

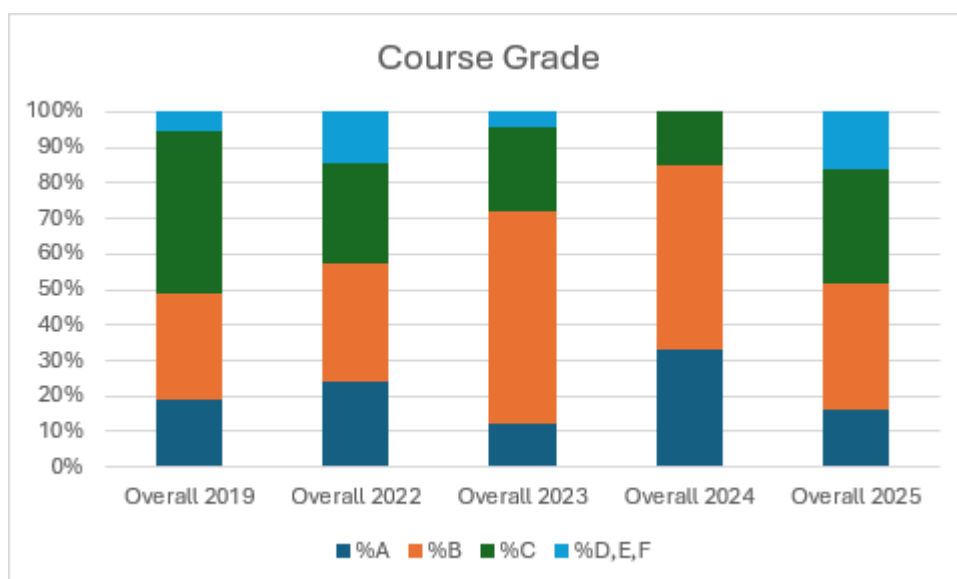
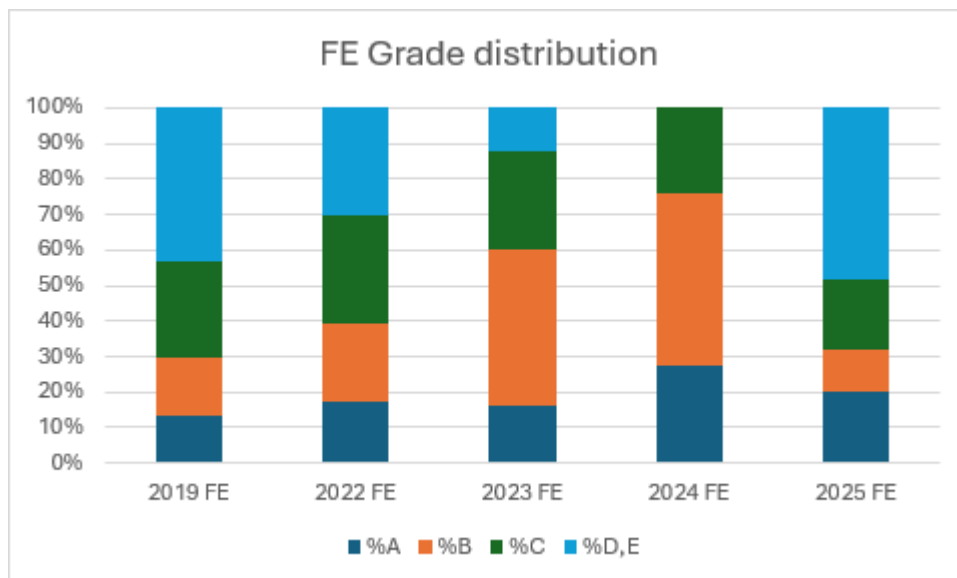
I'm writing to offer my support for the feedback submitted by the College of Sciences regarding the reintroduction of secured assessments. My observations and data are in full alignment with the College of Sciences' formal response, and I hope they will help strengthen the case for urgent action. As the course coordinator of 123.271 Molecules to Materials, I've observed firsthand the impact that assessment modality has on both academic integrity and student equity. From an evidence-based and pedagogical standpoint, I believe the most pragmatic and equitable approach is to return to in-person, paper-based examinations wherever feasible.

Online proctoring systems have proven unreliable, often adding stress to an already high-pressure environment. Students are required to log in early to troubleshoot technical issues, and disparities in home environments (ranging from quiet studies with stable internet to noisy kitchens with limited connectivity) create an uneven playing field. Meanwhile, un-proctored, online assessments make it difficult to confidently detect or deter academic dishonesty. The threshold for accusing a student of cheating is necessarily high, given the potential legal and relational consequences. This creates an environment where cheating can go undetected, encouraging behaviour that disadvantages honest students and contributes to grade inflation.

To illustrate this, I've attached two grade distribution graphs from the 123.271 course:

Final Exam Grades — 2019 and 2025 (in-person, paper-based) show balanced distributions, while 2022–2024 (online, un-proctored) show inflated A/B grades and a near disappearance of D/E grades.

Overall Course Grades — A similar inflationary trend appears across all assessment components, indicating the issue is systemic, not confined to exams.



These grade distribution graphs show a marked shift during the years when online, un-proctored assessments were used, with higher proportions of A grades and fewer lower grades. While there may be multiple factors influencing this pattern, it is consistent with the risks to academic integrity identified in the College of Sciences' feedback and the discussion paper. This reinforces the need for robust, authenticated assessment methods.

I strongly support the College recommendation that $\geq 80\%$ of course assessments be authenticated and compulsory. Reinstating in-person assessments is a necessary step to restore trust, fairness, and academic rigour.

School of Food Technology and Natural Sciences

24

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

Mathematics

1. [Name] endorses Ray Geor and Simon Hall's submission.
2. [Name] endorses Liz Norman's submission.
3. Summary of this submission: The proposal to reintroduce in-person invigilated assessments in 2028 is too slow and puts the reputation of Massey and all its qualifications on the brink of a fatal collapse.

The credibility of Massey's qualifications is being put at risk by the university having no means of forming trustworthy judgements of student learning.

As such, most grades and/or qualifications from Massey University for work done during almost a decade in the 2020s will be essentially worthless as there is no way to authenticate who did the work for the qualification, because no trustworthy judgements of student learning have been in place.

Given the lack of secured assessments, how can Massey vouch that a student has any of the attributes in its "Graduate Profiles"?

The "Future of Examination Requirements Working Group" has had more than 12 months since the failure of Online Supervised Examinations to address Massey's absence of in-person, on-campus (or exam centre) invigilated assessments. Why has there been so little progress to date? This work should have been done urgently in Semester 2, 2024, and in-person invigilated assessments should have been ready to go in Semester 1, 2025. The fact that this core feature of operating a university is now regarded as "cannot be done as BAU" is a significant failure of SLT Massey needs to ensure that the team in charge of this process can implement it. The lack of progress to date poses an urgent threat to the authenticity of Massey University as a whole.

Answers to the questions at the end of the Discussion Paper:

(i) For most courses, the cheapest and most practical assessment type is an in-person invigilated exam. Once this is up and running, then the university can take up the luxury of looking into other types of assessments and consider this question again.

(ii) Every course on a student's academic transcript should have some type of secured assessment, and those assessments should typically make up approximately 80% of the weight for the course. Otherwise, there is no way that students can claim they have reached the learning outcomes for the course. Nor can the university vouch that its graduates meet any of the attributes in its graduate profiles.

- (iii) I am not sure what is meant by “minimum standard”. This question appears to be a red herring in the context of the urgent crisis the university is facing by not having invigilated in-person exams.
- (iv) Distance students should have the option of attending exams at one of Massey’s campuses, or perhaps at an exam centre (e.g., in Christchurch).
- (v) Massey has had more than 12 months to investigate online proctoring since the failure in Semester 1, 2024. Why is this question still being asked?
- (vi) Why is the question of resourcing even being asked? Has the “Future of Examination Requirements Working Group” not even thought about resourcing in the last 12 months? If that’s true, then a check should be done to ensure there are enough classrooms on the Albany Campus to schedule exams, before the proposed leasing arrangements go ahead.
- (vii) The “additional supports needed for this transition” are whatever it takes to restore secured in-person exams as business as usual.
- (viii) The question about support for academic staff is disingenuous. Academic staff need a competent administration that can deliver secured, in-person exams as a matter of business as usual.
- (ix) The present culture of open-book, open-AI, open-friends “assessment”, i.e., no trustworthy judgements of student learning, is the worst possible culture and continues to put Massey’s credibility at risk.

25

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this document and the proposed plan. I am responding personally and also in my role as the Chemistry Group Lead in SFTNS.

As you may know, Ray Geor circulated a response to CoS staff from himself and dpVC Prof Simon Hall and also from CoS DTL A/Prof Liz Norman. I’ll start my feedback by giving my strongest endorsement to the responses given by Ray, Simon and Liz. Ray, Simon and Liz’s responses have captured the key issues and have highlighted the significant risks to University associated with the proposed plan contained in AC25-08-308.

The Chemistry Group has already recognised the issues outlined in the document and have already implemented changes to our assessments, more or less as described in the plan. And we have done this in less than 12 months (i.e. following the OSE debacle in Semester 1 2024). So I am struggling to understand why it will take until 2028 (!) to fully implement any proposed changes. The plan seems to imply that we will be starting from scratch with in-person assessments – this is clearly not the case, in the chemistry group at least, it was simply a return to a mode of assessment that nearly all of us had been running for many years prior to 2020. My guess is this is true for the rest of the University (including key academic support staff who were involved in the preparation of in-person examinations prior to Covid).

Please find below my responses to the questions:

- o What assessment types should be considered ‘secured’?

Any type of assessment where the examiner (or invigilator) and student are physically present in the same space e.g. in-person examination, oral interview, assessment of practical work and skills

- o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

I would allow some formative assessment to be unsecured, but to have any confidence in the validity of the total course grade, I would suggest a minimum of 80% of the assessment of every course should be secured assessment

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Minimum standard across all disciplines. And see the response above as to what the minimum standard should be. And the minimum standard needs to meet the criterion of validating student achievement in every course.

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

Without authentication and validation our qualifications are worthless. Cost should not be a consideration because we should be prepared to spend whatever it takes to protect our qualifications. Please see the Ray Geor / Simon Hall analysis regarding accessibility, I fully their conclusions regarding accessibility for distance students

o Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should be doing both – I cannot understand why this question being framed as a choice – all of our assessments need to be robust and secure

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

1). In-person assessments. As noted above, the chemistry group have returned to in-person assessments. This includes in-person assessments for large pre-vet courses. The staffing issue was easily handled. And again as noted above, the University has successfully managed in-person assessments for many years prior to Covid, so I see no new challenges for running them again. For student support, our 100-level students have done only in-person assessment this year and we have had no issues with student support. Our 200-level and 300-level students have also adapted to a return to in-person assessments.

2). Distance. This is clearly more challenging. One innovative solution that we also introduced in one of the pre-vet courses was online oral examinations. We are aware that technology does exist to defeat the oral examination format but the protocols that we designed made it very challenging for students to implement these technologies. Having a reliable online proctoring system would be a good step forward here.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Once again, this question seems to be based on the assumption that we are starting in-person assessments from scratch. We have years of experience and knowledge base (and we would be more than happy to share this experience and expertise with CET if requested), and our former (very experienced) academic administrative support staff can provide the necessary admin support. Regarding workload allocation, our experience that moving from online to in-person assessments is cost-neutral regarding workload.

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

The chemistry staff regularly read chemical education literature and attend meetings of chemistry professional bodies where assessment best practice and new developments are regularly discussed i.e. the chemistry staff develop their own disciplinary literacies and assessment skills (it is part of our job description) . The University could support this effort by dispersing the generalist approach offered by CET and embedding the learning specialists in the teaching units across the University.

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

As noted by Liz Norman, the trust culture is largely driven by the students themselves. It is up to the teaching staff to provide the teaching and assessment environments that support the student's trust culture. An approach to avoid the feeling of surveillance is to focus on the entire educational process (teaching and assessing) rather than the assessment process alone. The same tools that can be used for surveillance can be used to provide detailed feedback and support for learning. If teaching staff provide students with feedback at various steps throughout an assessment, the teaching staff can survey the students progress (and use of AI for instance), provide feedback (which builds trust) and the overall outcome is a win-win for both students and teaching staff.

CoS

26

I'm writing with some brief feedback on the secure assessment discussion document.

I strongly support a return to secure assessments as a matter of urgency, to protect the credibility of our qualifications. For courses in my discipline (mathematics) I would like a return to in-person pen-and-paper supervised examinations, by the 2026 academic year if at all possible. The cost of this should be understood as simply part of the cost of carrying out our core function.

All courses should have a secured assessment component, comprising 60% or more of the total assessment. There should be a common standard required across all programmes. We should concentrate on in-person assessments, not online proctoring: I see online proctoring as unproven technology, that will be subject to ongoing efforts to circumvent it.

At present the courses I teach have no secured assessments whatsoever. I've caught more students teaching since we made the move to unsecured assessments (on what we understood to be a temporary emergency basis!) five years ago, than in my 13 years at Massey prior to that - and I know I'm not catching everyone. I have doubts that all of the grades I award are correct, and I'm increasingly feeling that I will be unable to write meaningful letters of recommendation for students who request one. A return to secured assessment is urgently needed to restore our own faith in what we're doing.

Thank you and best wishes,

CoS

27

Please find below my comments on the Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment:

The plan outlined in the discussion paper woefully under addresses this enormous issue. A "possible" 2028 implementation is completely inadequate. We need secured assessment in some form (written, online, oral), available to every course by the end of semester 1 2026. The academic integrity of our courses and programmes have been undermined for many years now, with multiple cohorts of graduates completing without adequate levels of secured assessment. Whilst staff have strived to be creative in an attempt to make assessment as effective as possible given the multitude of limitations, the continued failures, delays and lack of investment and action in this area undermine our reputation as a quality University. The longer this is delayed the more students are increasingly losing sight of the fundamental purpose of secure assessments—as safeguards that uphold academic integrity, ensure fairness, and validate genuine learning within higher education.

Kind regards,

CoS

28

I support the reintroduction of secured assessments.

- There must be a secure component in every course. Otherwise an unacceptable proportion of students will advance to a subsequent course without having reached the required standard.
- The proposed timeline should be accelerated as the University faces a critical risk if news about the non-security of our courses and qualifications, and the widespread unauthorised use of AI, were to become public knowledge.

At present the situation in mathematics is that AI-based solutions are undetectable; its use provides a huge incentive to students to use AI without declaration and a corresponding unfairness to students who do not do this.

CoS

29

College of Sciences Board passed unanimously.

This board has no confidence in, and does not support the discussion paper, “An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessment”.

The board is of the view that unless the proposed volume of secured assessment is significantly increased to include availability for every course, and the delivery timeline is urgently revisited (aiming for complete roll out of secured assessments by the end of Semester 1 2026), the reputation of the College of Sciences and University more generally will be irreparably damaged by the loss of public trust in the veracity of our qualifications.

30

CoCA supports the proposal and looks forward to the working group discussions indicated in the proposal. Although CoCA has less immediate concern than other Colleges in terms of defining and prescribing secured assessment, we are keen to engage in the work.

31

I thoroughly agree with the comments that Liz Norman has made in her response (and with the comments of Ray Geor and Simon Hall, but I think Liz has hit the nail on the head). A prompt return to assessments is essential for Massey's reputation and hence survival. While I accept that a return to a full exam schedule is not business as usual, conducting exams is one the most fundamental operations that a university does, so a delay until 2028 is unwelcome. Upfront costs running large numbers of exams and setting this up quickly will easily be off-set by the costs of other issues as explained by Liz.

CoS

32

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: Reintroducing Secured Assessments

I welcome the plan to reintroduce secured assessments, but I am very concerned about the proposed timeline. Spending 2026 in discussion, trialing in 2027, and introducing them in some courses in 2028 is far too slow. Massey needs to act more quickly—secured, in-person assessments should return as standard much sooner.

Secured assessments are essential to the credibility of our qualifications. Without them, we cannot reliably claim that graduates have achieved the learning outcomes of their degrees. Many current students will finish their studies having never sat a single secure assessment. Employers and society may begin to question the value of a Massey degree.

The issue is not only about AI. At present, we do not verify the identity of students in exams, and we allow them to sit within 24-hour windows, which makes question-sharing inevitable. Limiting secured assessments to only some courses would also undermine integrity, as students could complete degrees by avoiding the secured ones.

The reputational damage from the OSE system failure in 2024 should not be repeated. But the

greater risk is continuing with our current approach. If it became widely known that Massey has had no secure assessments since 2020, and plans none until 2028, the impact on our reputation and graduates would be severe.

The solution is to return to on-campus, invigilated examinations, which Massey successfully managed for many years. Distance students can reasonably be asked to attend exam centres, and most offshore students are already assessed securely through partner institutions.

Recommendations

- Reinstate in-person, invigilated assessments as standard.
- Use handwritten exams as the practical default, given the lack of computer labs and difficulties with bring-your-own-device setups.

33

Professor Jenny Weston – Academic Lead, Veterinary Science

And on behalf of:

Professor Eloise Jillings – Associate Academic Dean, Admissions and Students

Professor Wendi Roe – Deputy Head of School

Associate Professor Dani Aberdein – Associate Academic Dean, Clinical Training Hayley Hunt – BVSc3 Year Coordinator

Introduction

We fully endorse the submissions made by College of Sciences Leaders – that by Professors Geor and Hall (PVC and DPVC) and that by Associate Professor Liz Norman (DTL). Specifically:

The assessment of learning outcomes is critical for the public and other stakeholders to have faith in the qualifications that are bestowed on our graduates.

Verification of the identity of who has completed an assessment is critical to signing off on the adequacy of training in professional programmes.

The reduced capability to provide secured assessments is a critical issue that must be addressed urgently (i.e. for the 2026 academic year).

All compulsory assessments that contribute to the final grade for a course should be secured and secured assessments should comprise at least 80% of the assessment in any course. This should be standard across all qualifications.

The university should prioritise investing in resources to provide onsite / in-person authenticated assessments rather than online proctoring solutions.

The remainder of this submission focuses on assessment in the Bachelor of Veterinary Science programme.

BVSc Programme Overview

This flagship qualification is internationally accredited by:

- The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council
- The American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education
- The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

The BVSc is currently ranked 19th globally for Veterinary Science in the QS Rankings 2025, making it the highest-ranked veterinary programme in Australasia and South-East Asia. It is also the second highest ranked programme across all New Zealand universities.

Assessment in the BVSc

The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council accreditation standards explicitly outline expectations for assessment:

11.1 The Veterinary School has a comprehensive, coherent and robust assessment strategy. The validity, reliability and educational impact of assessments are appropriate to their purpose and evidenced through relevant evaluation data and processes

11.3 Progressive development of each student towards entry-level competence across the program can be demonstrated. Only students who have fully met Programme Learning outcomes and Day One Competencies are permitted to graduate

11.6 Assessment must be planned and managed to evidence achievement

Assessment in the BVSc is multi-faceted including assignments, group-work, skills sign-offs and performance on clinical rotations, with in-person, invigilated exams a critical component. These assessments ensure that graduates meet international standards and are eligible to register as veterinarians in multiple jurisdictions without further licensing. Ongoing accreditation provides assurance to students, employers, and the public that Massey is producing competent, practice-ready graduates.

Over the past ten years we have progressively moved from invigilated exams where the students handwrite their answers to online platforms where the students are invigilated in the computer labs on the Manawātū campus. This has been necessary as class size has increased from 100 to 175 students as it became impossible to have exams marked in a timely fashion with handwritten answer books. Online exams also had the benefit of incorporating some auto-mark questions, negated the need to decipher student handwriting, were easier to assess for plagiarism and were better accepted by students who no longer spend much time making handwritten notes.

Changes since 2020

Except for the most stringent periods of COVID restrictions, we have continued to run in-person, invigilated, online examinations. The fact that most of the rest of the university was using online remote proctoring or Time Constrained Assessments (TCAs) meant that we mostly did not have to compete with other programmes for access to the computer labs on campus.

Selection for the BVSc involves students meeting a specific GPA requirement in Massey university science courses and it has been concerning that the grades used to derive this GPA have not relied on in-person, invigilated assessment since 2020.

Recent Infrastructure Failures

The release of the August discussion paper AC25/08/308Rev1: An Initial Plan for the Reintroduction of Secured Assessments was initially encouraging. However, subsequent events have highlighted serious infrastructure limitations:

- 25 August: A mid-semester exam for BVSc4 (146 students) was abandoned due to apparent 'network failure'.
- 10 September: The same cohort experienced another failure, revealing that Massey's Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI) can only support ~200 students across Manawātū and Auckland campuses at any one time.

This marks a regression from 2024 and even mid-year 2025, when exams ran successfully. These failures have caused significant stress for students and placed undue burden on staff, who had to rapidly convert exams to Time-Constrained Assessments (TCAs) which involved changing some content and setting the exam up on a different platform and accepting that the open-book format and lack of verification of identity could compromised the integrity of the results.

The remaining semester two tests/exams prior to the end-of-year exam period have been changed to 'bring your own device' using wifi in some of the large lecture theatres. The students and staff are understandably concerned about the end-of-year final exams running from 28th October to 13th November where we will again be using the computer labs.

Limitations of Current Computer Lab Facilities

Even when functional, the Manawatū computer labs present challenges with cramped seating and close proximity of desktops meaning that it is difficult to avoid seeing the screens of other students. The desktop machines in the rooms are old, slow and a proportion do not work on any given day. Using lecture theatres for invigilated assessments is also problematic as the tiered seating compromises exam integrity. Aside from assessment, most current teaching spaces have limited power outlets which hinders device use in a blended learning environment.

Summary

Given the current limitations, Massey must urgently explore alternative solutions for secured assessment. Options may include:

- Investment in upgraded IT infrastructure and exam facilities
- A temporary return to printed, handwritten exams (not preferred due to declining handwriting legibility and stamina)
- Avoiding reductions in Massey Printery capacity
- Enhanced IT support and services

Reliable IT infrastructure is essential to uphold the integrity of in-person, invigilated assessments - ideally delivered online with lock-down browsers. Valid, verifiable assessment is not only a cornerstone of academic quality but a non-negotiable requirement for BVSc accreditation.

34

Feedback on "Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments"

School of Psychology

I strongly support the reintroduction of secured assessments. I've organised my feedback according to the questions in the discussion document.

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

I think the document already identifies the most obvious candidates and I don't really have any other great options to suggest. One point I'd make is that I don't think videoconference interviews or presentations should count, since it's pretty easy for students to surreptitiously use AI in those contexts.

By the way: It's great that you're considering a broad range of secured assessments, but most of these are only feasible in a small subset of courses; invigilated exams clearly need to be a major part of the plan.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

It's hard to put a number on this, but it should be something substantial enough that students who put in enough hard work to succeed even without AI are meaningfully rewarded. 20%?

As a sidenote, I would suggest that secured assessments carry percentage weights (not just pass/fail) but also that it is only possible to pass a course with a secured assessment if you pass the secured assessment. We need the former so there's a meaningful reward for very good students over average ones who over-rely on AI. We need the latter so there isn't a pathway to passing qualifications relying solely on AI.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Typically, I would say it's best to leave it up to disciplines, but I think that could produce some problematic incentives (i.e., disciplines that offer less/no secured assessments might temporarily pull in more students despite incurring substantial costs for integrity and reputation of the university in the long term). So a minimum standard seems a good idea.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

I'd prefer reinstating our old system of external examination centres available globally. It was pretty amazing. No doubt it would be costly, yes – but we would surely be running much fewer exams than we did in the past, so we'd already be applying some relative cost savings there.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I would suggest investing most heavily in-person assessment. Yes, it is costly. But it comes with a stronger assurance of integrity, and less risk of unpredictable technical failures. It's also generally perceived by students and the public as something that's stressful and challenging but a conventional part of university life. In contrast, online proctored examinations don't offer the same assurance of integrity while simultaneously having a worse public image: People hate the intrusive software and unreliability.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

I think the question of how much to lean into pen and paper vs. in-person invigilated examinations with computers is an interesting one and I don't know the right answers here. In my discipline, probably like a lot of others, using a computer would be more convenient for both students (and for us when marking!), but arguably not essential.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Unsure

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

I think a big part of what needs to happen is the central university taking care of the "secured" part for a substantial majority of secured assessments (e.g., with invigilated assessments). There'd still be assessment construction challenges even then, but they'd arguably be "business as usual" ones that might not require a ton of extra resourcing.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I think a big part of this is emphasising the benefits to students. Secured assessment is fairer for those students who are actually doing the work rather than using AI ways that breach the rules (and we still do have many such honest students!) Secured assessments also help protect the reputations of our qualifications and their signalling value to employers.

Any other comments as appropriate.

I think you're probably on the same page here, but I definitely think that secured assessment should occur within individual courses (even if we are applying some qualification-level thinking to the reintroduction as a whole). In contrast, trying to set up individual assessments that apply to multiple courses within a qualification would be a logistical nightmare.

I think one of the main challenges to solve will be Aegrotats and Impaired Performance applications. In the past, we essentially treated internal assessments and secured exams as interchangeable, such that if a student missed an exam we would happily just predict their mark based on their internal assessments. This obviously wouldn't work now since it'd be an easy "out" for students relying purely on AI to get by (especially when we don't currently require evidence for AGs or IPs). Yet at the same time, we do need backup plans for students who genuinely can't attend a secured assessment due to illness/injury/etc. So unlike the old system, I think we probably need a method for re-sitting/extending secured assessments.

I imagine you'll get some feedback suggesting we need this done faster, but the draft timeline seems realistically about as fast as this can possibly be done.

Yet at the same time, it worries me that we have almost no method for protecting the integrity of our qualifications until this is done. I don't know what the solution to this is, but we probably need to do something about that (however imperfect) while we (re)build a secured assessment system.

35

Feedback on the Initial Plan for the Reintroduction of Secured Assessment from CoHSS Teaching and Learning Committee.

The CoHSS Teaching and Learning Committee would like to thank Academic Committee for the opportunity to provide feedback on this consultation document. The committee would also like to acknowledge the work being undertaken on this project by Education Futures, and Jean Jacoby in particular. The committee recognises the importance of this proposal and is highly appreciative of the careful work that underpins it.

The committee was joined for this meeting by Professor Bryan Walpert, who has particular concerns for the implications of the reintroduction of secured assessments for the Creative Writing programme. Below is a summary of key points raised by members of the committee in our August meeting.

The possibilities for secure assessment will look different for different disciplines, so whatever solution comes out of this process will need to be flexible.

AI is a bigger issue for some disciplines than it is for others. In Creative Writing, for example, it is a relatively minor problem. Occasionally a student will panic and use AI, but those students can be

helped. Most students are engaged in what they are doing because they like what they are doing. In this context, an imposition of secured assessments may be addressing a problem which does not exist.

It would be difficult to create a legitimate exam which tested a student on writing creatively within a fixed timeframe, and it would displace more useful assessments.

Exams may be a useful form of assessment in some contexts, but the linear writing required for exams no longer reflects how people write or think. As a college, we have moved a long way from reliance on examinations, and for sound pedagogical reasons. There is a danger that in moving back to formal exams, we will cease to measure learning and instead measure simply the student's ability to pass exams – these two are not the same thing.

The implementation plan for the secure assessments is over three years, but that is a long time in the current technological environment. What is finally implemented may look very different from what is now proposed. How responsive will the proposed plan be to developments which may occur within the three years leading up to roll-out 2028?

It is not clear in some contexts if the term programme means a subject area within a qualification (e.g. Creative Writing), or if it means the qualification itself (e.g. BA).

If students have to pass secure assessments at specified points in their study to be awarded a degree, will those assessments will have to be in core/compulsory courses?

There are some media production courses where there is no issue about students using AI.

A suggestion endorsed by several members was that specialisations/majors decide for themselves how they want to deal with this issue. The secured assessments/exams would not be mandated, but be available if needed. The programmes would work with the College to produce a reasonable solution.

Dr Tony Fisher

Chair, College of Humanities and Social Sciences Teaching and Learning Committee.

36

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

Overall, I agree with the need to ensure our assessments can be validated and authenticated and the need to do this as quickly and effectively as possible. I am concerned that the plan laid out moves too slowly when the issues we face around assessment are very real and happening now. A delay in making change in the order of years could cost Massey University in terms of its credibility and frustrate staff in terms of their ability to address increasing concerns about the authentic nature of assessments being submitted. We need to move at pace to ensure that the degrees that we award are credible and the knowledge that students leave with can be validated as being developed and applied based on their own merit and deep and critical learning. This is important for our students, so they know their degrees are respected and for employers to know that our students have achieved necessary learning outcomes themselves and personally achieved high standards in their discipline. The issue we face with assessment is pressing and is escalating and so needs an emergency type response. We might not be able to do it all at once in a timely manner to keep pace with the need, but we need a phased plan of action that starts as early as next year whilst ensuring that in the long term we are future proofing our education base.

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

A broad range of assessments should be considered secured – the key should be associated with validation and authentication but within that the scope should be as broad as possible and not just move back to the exam as the main form of secure assessment. The danger with a move towards secured assessment is that the emphasis switches back to in person paper examinations. In many disciplines however there has been a move away from examinations because there are pedagogical reasons why exams aren't the most effective way to assess student learning. For example, exams can often reward rote learning and memorisation rather than critical thinking and problem solving with students cramming facts rather than really understanding concepts and application. Exams are also incredibly stressful for some students, so not all perform well under this time of situation, so performance doesn't always equate to actual understanding. Exams also favour certain learning styles whilst disadvantaging others and can have limited real-world relevance. It will be important therefore to explore innovative ways of assessing students in a secure way that still support creativity, collaboration and application of knowledge to real world problems. This potentially means exploring oral presentations, validated group work, field and lab-based activities that can be authenticated as well as new methods of assessment that can be authenticated in an AI world. The concept of the 'sandwich programme' as practiced in the UK might be something worth considering for some disciplines. This could take the form of what is known as a thick sandwich- this being the idea of spending a one continuous year on placement or work experience in between other years of study or a thin sandwich where multiple shorter periods of work experience are interspersed throughout the degree.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

Most assessments in a course of programme should be secured in some way otherwise the validity of the students' achievements in a given course might not be able to be achieved.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Standards should be similar across all programmes. If this doesn't occur, then some programmes will be seen to weaker or less credible than others. All Massey programmes should aim for higher than a minimum standard and be recognised for high standards.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

I am a firm believer that distance students should be able to complete their studies totally via distance i.e. not have to come on campus at all if they don't want to. Students studying via distance often have big constraints on their time that make travel difficult. Cost is a factor if they have to travel but I would imagine that time is the biggest limiting factor. We also need to validate distance students' assessments as much as internal students, so I think we need solutions where we try to validate remotely as much as possible. So, if students have to sit exams they do so in close proximity to their place of residence. But I think exploring innovative ways of assessing remotely should be explored as well as considering collaborations with local relevant industry or local government where distance students could connect, gain valuable relevant experience and be validated in the practical application of what they do.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I think we need to think outside the box. This is a good opportunity to rethink assessments for the future. What ever we do should be trying to future proof the institution so investment should be in innovative solutions not quick fixes or backward moves to old ways of doing things. The future should hold a mixture of assessment types as it currently does so we shouldn't put all our eggs in one basket.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

The main resourcing challenges are probably mostly to do with staffing. To do this quickly and effectively it will be important to cost the change and roll out appropriate and allocated additional support to staff.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

There will inevitably need to be some training when introducing new ways of doing thing. Also, workload allocations need to be calculated to accommodate the changes needed so staff don't become more overloaded. Technical support is also probably necessary depending on the type of changes being implemented.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Time is important. So often staff have to develop courses and make changes without being given adequate time to do this and space in their workload. This means that important changes and developments shouldn't just be an add on to existing workload. Compensation in terms of freeing up time needs to be given to staff to allow change to be made appropriately and implemented effectively. Hence this might need additional staffing to help roll out more innovative options. Alongside this access to educational designers who can advise on appropriate assessment types that assess against learning outcomes and cover different ways of learning and applying knowledge in an authentic and valid way.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I think we already have this culture. What needs to happen is a change in what is normal in terms of assessments. It is a transition and one that is happening globally as other institutions grapple with this so I think it will be some thing that is progressive and that students will recognise as important to validate their degrees.

CoS

37

Response to: Discussion paper An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

Assoc. Prof. Tammy Lynch, Academic Group Lead – Mathematics, Deputy Head School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the initial plan. Having said that, I am disappointed with the stated plan and believe we must move toward secured assessment in all courses with urgency (for the 2026 academic year). This will require ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources as any University worldwide must do. It is the cost of providing reputable qualifications.

Employers, funders, students, staff all have the right to expect that each course grade we award is earned by the student it is attributed to. While most would be understanding that authentication processes were necessarily suspended during COVID isolations, there is little excuse for the lack of return to authenticated assessment this many years later. The rest of New Zealand, and the world, has moved on

and are now not only returning to many of the secured authentication processes of pre-COVID, but are in fact strengthening these processes in the time of AI. Allowing any course to have no secured assessment should no longer be allowed.

The statement that “ensuring that there is no pathway through a programme without some form of authentication at key stages” is not strong enough. It implies that there will be courses where grades are not authenticated and this will in turn lead to reasonable scepticism about the value of any grade awarded. It also leads to the reasonable question: How can we ensure a student has the pre-requisite knowledge required when entering a course if the pre-requisite course was not authenticated? Mathematics, and I am sure many subjects, requires a building up of layers of understanding often visualized as a brick wall of concepts. When concepts are not understood (bricks are missing) the understanding (wall) falls down. If we have whole courses (many bricks) in our programme (wall) that are not authenticated (structurally sound), the whole programme (wall) collapses.

It is my strong view that there should be authentication for the majority of course assessments and that these assessments should be compulsory. Authenticated assessments can take many forms including invigilated tests and exams, laboratories, practicals, presentations, and field trips, as examples.

I am strongly in favour of the return to in-person invigilated assessments, such as exams, for distance as well as internal students. We did this for many years pre-COVID and I do not see any reasonable reason why we cannot return to this. Digital assessment is seriously compromised in the age of AI making in-person invigilation even more important. As an Academic Group Lead in touch with other Mathematics Heads of Department, I am not aware of any other New Zealand University offering a Mathematics degree that has not already done this as they recognize the risk to their programme reputation if they were not to do so. I appreciate there is both an inconvenience and added cost for distance students in this return to in-person assessment, but this was managed for many years pre-COVID and the reputational

risks to the perceived validity of course grades and qualifications of not doing so are too high and offset any cost and inconvenience. For mathematics, I would argue that the return to in-person exams would also eliminate many student concerns in working with scanned hand-written solutions submitted through timed online systems with AI statement requirements all of which have created anxiety. It would certainly be welcomed over the many issues with the online invigilated systems employed post- COVID.

Response to questions

What assessment types should be considered ‘secured’?

In science obvious options are in-person invigilated tests and exams, practicals, field trips, labs, and presentations. But there will be others. The key here is that the assessment ensures it is the identified student sitting the assessment and that they only have access to the allowed resources. It is also extremely important that Massey provides a return to in-person invigilated exams as an available option. This is the authenticated assessment type that best meets the requirements in many subject areas.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

The number is likely course dependent. A lab based subject may have many labs, for example. What is more important is that all courses have a majority of assessment as secured assessment and that this assessment is compulsory. An amount of 75% or greater would seem reasonable.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Authenticated assessment standards in terms of amount of secured assessment should be the same across all qualifications to ensure that a Massey degree is seen as a reputable degree. The types and number of authenticated assessment should vary according to their subject relevance.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

We achieved in-person onsite invigilated assessments for distance students for many years pre-COVID and there is no reason we cannot return to this. It is the cost of gaining (for the student) and providing (for the University) a reputable University degree.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

In-person must be prioritized. Online has significantly more risks from the risks associated with the reliability of software/systems used and their associated support to the management of AI use. As a mathematician I believe hand-written in-person assessment works best and causes the least anxiety for our students. This will be true in other subjects as well. I understand that there may also be subjects that want an in-person solution that involves, for example, bringing your own device, and that this will likely require verifiable lockdown software.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

As I am proposing the return to in-person invigilated exams, the resourcing

“challenges” should be largely known. We did this as recently as 2019 and it should be possible to put together a Team to manage putting much of the old system back in place. This will require providing a venue, trained staff to do the invigilation, and staff to manage the process and distribution of exams. It may also require a bring your own device and associated lockdown of device solution for subjects that wish to continue digital exam options. Again for mathematics, handwritten student work and handwritten staff marking is what is required. Digitising student work only involves extra work on both the student and staff members part.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

There will be significantly less staff needs in any return to in-person invigilation than there would be in any digital solution. And time is always one of the things staff need the most when it comes to designing and moderating assessment.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I believe when we do not invigilate assessments we create more undermining of trust. More questions arise about what is the students work, what is AI being presented as student work, and what is being shared amongst students over the 24 hours online TCAs are open for. Student have easy access to many online communication platforms where they can share any number of things while completing these assessments. Students also share information about how or if they have used AI or other methods of “cheating”. This all undermines trust. By returning to in-person invigilated assessments, it is clear who has done the work on the assessment. It is clear to “competitive” students that they are being judged and compared on a fair playing ground. It also decreases their temptation to use circulated assessment information or AI. And it provides boundaries on when it is appropriate to work collaboratively and when you must show your own work.

As a University we should be able to provide clear communication to students regarding the need for authenticated assessment to ensure the quality of the degree. This is not “overemphasising surveillance”. It was an expected and almost unquestioned standard until 2019 and in fact still is at the many universities worldwide that have returned to authenticated assessment.

38

FROM: Associate Professor Elizabeth Gray, on behalf of Massey Business School

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposal. The proposal was discussed at MBS Teaching and Learning Committee, at College of Business Academic Programmes Committee, and at College of Business Board, and was also discussed at the School of Management and Marketing conference. Our feedback is summarised below.

Overall response

It is heartening to see the university planning specific action in response to the need to ensure the validity of our qualifications. In MBS we feel keenly the need to secure assessments in order to protect the reputation of our university and safeguard the valuable international and national partnerships we have, partnerships to which the continuation of all-non-secured assessments poses the gravest risk. We emphatically feel the university has no choice but to proceed to reinstitute secured assessments wherever they are required.

Additionally, a sense of urgency was articulated by a large number of staff, who note that the timeline for fully introducing a university-wide system for secured assessment seems overly cautious, and exposes the university to further risk.

On the other hand, student feedback strongly supported that the university take sufficient time to ensure any solution is sound and stress-tested before full implementation, and we appreciate the importance of ‘getting it right’. Thus the idea of staging the solution seems sensible, but to respond to the urgency of the need for at least some verified assessments, MBS feels an interim solution for a select number of courses should be provided in 2026: this would almost definitely need to be an online invigilated system.

We note and support the proposal’s requirement that all qualifications – including those that may have for various pedagogical reasons moved away from invigilated exams – include well-planned and staged secured assessment.

Collated feedback on specific questions

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

We note and endorse that secured assessment may take a number of forms, including in-person invigilated exams (both computer- and paper-based); online invigilated exams using a suitable tool; practica, demonstrations, labwork etc; oral exams; and the completion of an in-person placement or contact course. Suggestions included:

In person, invigilated written exams; oral interviews. Exams are sometimes easier for ESOL students who may be more comfortable writing than speaking.

To be considered 'secured', we must be able to see the student completing the assignment without technological or human help. It is difficult to imagine how any form of online or take-home assessment could be considered 'secured'.

Traditional proctored hand-written exams, with a requirement to pass the exam to pass the course.

Authentic assessments such as problem-based, case-based, workplace-related, etc. Use of proctoring software for large first year course test/exams. Oral synchronous tests/exams.

Applied in-class tasks – short, open-book case analyses or problem-solving exercises, submitted under time constraints.

Assignments undertaken in dedicated assignment rooms, with restrictions on Internet access, blocking of mobile and wi-fi, bookable for students to complete their assignments. This would be a problem with distance. Oral assessments, but this would be a problem with distance (they can get an AI to listen and provide answers to read out).

Online supervised exams with robust proctoring

In-person practical assessments, labs, workshops, placements, and oral examinations.

Secured assessment should have significant weighting and carry a subminima (e.g. must achieve a minimum "pass" in the secured assessment to pass the paper overall).

It was suggested that not secured/verified assessments be compulsory and receive feedback, but not count heavily towards the final course grade. That would include any out-of-class essay, case study, take home test, etc – anything that can be delegated to AI or a human helper.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

While there was a diversity of views, it was felt secured assessment may not necessarily be indicated for all courses, and not for all assessments. There was a diversity of views on how many points of verification were needed with a programme. Views included:

For programmes like BBus, all 100-level core courses that have final exams should be run as secured assessments. This is the gateway into the programme, where we can set expectations and standards (and secured assessment settings that will be very familiar to school leavers in any case).

Students should have a minimum of one secured assessment at each major level (e.g., 200- 300-level) across all programmes. If there is no compulsory 200 or 300 level courses in a major (but must take X or Y options at 200-, 300- level), then multiple courses will need to have secured assessments. Some programmes may need more, depending on the subject (e.g. professional programmes may require a higher frequency of secured assessments for industry credibility).

From second year onward, every course should include at least one secured assessment component that can determine whether a student passes that course, focused on short, practical demonstrations of applied knowledge. This approach balances assurance of learning with feasibility, discipline-specific flexibility, and student fairness. This would ensure that students demonstrate mastery of key concepts, not just their ability to submit polished written work (which may be supported by AI or others).

30-40 percent of assessments, over a programme.

At least one per course and only the secured ones count substantially toward the grade.

Verification should relate to (most) courses rather than just qualifications, which would equate to a reasonable portion of the qualification as a whole.

In general, most courses should have one exam or oral although there are some courses like Consultancy/Professional Practice that are done via groups and are very hands on – they don't need to have a proctored exam as they are relatively secure as they are.

I believe there should be one worth 50% for each paper. My view is that this creates incentive to engage with the material rather than being assessment-oriented

Having enforced exams would increase engagement as students would need to engage across the board. This would also increase student satisfaction because they feel like they have engaged and it will generate a deeper understanding of the topics that they have engaged in. This would further ensure students are better placed for work, and institute an understanding of the workplace and academic environment, which is not necessarily about getting automatic answers, but sometimes having to work your way through ideas.

It was noted that secured assessments will cause some students considerable pressure and stress; aegrotat arrangements would need to be carefully considered. It was suggested no individual assessment be so heavily weighted as to doom students who don't perform well in that given format.

Should there be a minimum standard (ie number of verified assessment points) across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

We do not support a blanket requirement that a stipulated number of secured assessment points be applied to all qualifications across the university: rather, we think that should be decided by the particular subject group, subsequent to a careful mapping process.

There was almost unanimous agreement that, while a minimum baseline should apply across all programmes and all Colleges, there should be allowed flexibility for discipline specific needs (e.g., performance-based, lab-based, written). i.e. some degrees may rely more on one type of secured assessment than others.

Yes, a minimum of 30 percent verified assessment across a programme.

While a common principle is important, secured assessments should not be "one size fits all." Each discipline should have flexibility to choose the format that best aligns with its pedagogical needs

It was noted that disciplines such as aviation and accountancy would have their own minimum standards according to their specific professional bodies' requirements.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

It was broadly supported that regional exam centres should be instituted (along with campus-based exam centres).

We recognise that having to travel to an exam centre will cause challenges for a number of students.

NZ-based students with compelling reasons for not being able to travel to an exam centre should have to apply for permission to sit online. Reasons might include accessibility, cost, family or work commitments, etc. Assessment Services would make a judgment on these in the first instance, with difficult cases referred to the College to adjudicate.

Students overseas may have to participate in online invigilation.

Below are a range of expressed views:

Regional exam centres (national/international), with invigilation, and secure online proctoring for those unable to physically attend an exam centre.

Have a centre where students can sit proctored exams or use proctoring software.

Expand use of oral component in assessment.

If distance is treated differently to internal (and assuming a process is put in place for internal student work that does enable verification), then we should simply accept that distance qualifications are not verified.

I would assume some kind of secure server would achieve this. The overall cost would presumably be worth it in Massey's ongoing reputation as an educational leader and good source of degrees.

There are difficulties with two-tier system between internal and distance; would need really good online invigilation system and even then some inequity; it was noted that rural broadband is actually quite bad in some areas of New Zealand

Students outside NZ must sit their exams using online invigilation.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

Both – there will always be some students who CANNOT do an in-person – there would need to be arrangements for exceptional circumstances

Both are required. Underinvestment in the name of cost saving in the recent past has led to the current situation.

First priority should be on bringing back in-person assessment. On-campus AND regional hubs would need to be set up to examine NZ-based students

I think on-campus assessment for people internal is a great idea because it also works to build a sense of shared experience for students, even though they may not like it. For those with anxiety, it means they can see and experience people who are in the same boat rather than being online.

Requiring in-person examination may help with the current challenge, that many students are unengaged and producing poor work due to the convenience of automated answers.

Internal students should ideally be examined in-person.

We should do both of these. In-person assessment most immediately, and invest in proctoring solutions over the medium and long term.

Given my experience looking at student work produced using an online proctoring system, we should prioritise on-campus/in person assessment.

Invest in reliable/user friendly online proctoring due to dispersed cohorts, noting the majority of our students study via distance and will have particular access needs. Having said that, there should be an equivalent alternative for students with privacy concerns, disability etc.

An unanswered question: What about students who are outside of NZ or who can't travel to an exam centre AND who object to online invigilation?

In MBS, where we have instituted a replacement exam situation, we note that all replacement exams must continue to be offered online only. We recognise that there would be a risk that some students

might deliberately miss an in-person invigilated examination, in order to be offered an online replacement examination. The implications would need to be carefully considered.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

The biggest challenges are space and staff.

We would need to hire people to proctor, and find spaces. Student support would probably remain about the same.

Technology.

For in-person invigilated exams, it will be necessary to continue to administer these in a digital format ie students must be able to complete on a computer. Not all students have suitable devices – how will they access them?

Supplying laptops to students who can't make in-person exams and who don't have suitable equipment

If sitting examinations in-venue means BYOD, browsers must be able to be locked down.

Online invigilation must be provided by a trustworthy provider; this will need to be thoroughly piloted and tested, with associated costs

More in-person assessment for on-campus students costs us nothing other than class time and staff time (eg, for oral assessments). Technological solutions for the distance students are more costly.

\$\$\$ to support an acceptable process, staffing to implement it, space to enable it, technology to support it, and student support. All will be challenges. Added to that is a willingness across all levels to really to be prepared to stand by a process.

Boosting Assessment Services capacity to administer a dual system – in-person and online invigilation

Setting up a system to manage exemptions/special exam circumstances

Enhancing technical support availability for students sitting online invigilated exams (ie not in regular business hours)

Costs of setting up sufficient spaces on campus for hundreds of students to sit secured exams simultaneously; we don't presently have the computer lab facilities to enable this.

Costs of setting up at least two South Island exam centres

Hardship grant to enable students to travel to exam centres

Costs to students – travel, parking, childcare, broadband; digital divide and would we need to supply laptops; computing and broadband costs; how could pen and paper be sustained for three hours, if handwritten exams are required...

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Some updates on best practice would be good.

Work allocation, training, and technical support

Depends what is implemented.

Most needed is IMMEDIATE acceptance/permission for staff to change assessments rather than going through a 1-2 year process to get assessments changed. Then put resource into technical solutions to allow a broader range of assessments.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Once decisions are made on what's allowed, some meetings explaining options and alternatives.

Training in designing robust but efficient secured tasks

Clear marking rubrics and moderation processes

Workload allocation and technical support to handle scaling challenges

Teaching and learning training modules. But it shouldn't be too hard to get up to speed as we are all heavily invested in creating authentic assessments.

Again, depends on what is implemented. If, for example, there was a return to face-to-face exams, then staff would design assessments in accordance with the support that used to be available. If any form of online / open book type assessments is used, we know that most (all?) assessment including Zoom orals, multi-choice, short answer etc can be prepared with AI.

We DO need help to redesign assessments that test what we want to test; more resourcing for CET staff members to help us; benchmark to global standards; differentiate assessing between what doesn't and does require securing...

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Communication with students will be vital. We will need to frame the reintroduction of secured assessments as essential to protecting degree credibility and fairness. And we need to have positive messaging in terms of ensuring the credibility of students' degree(s), enhancing employability of students, and retaining professional recognition.

"It's in your benefit to have a robust qualification that people can rely on"; culture change with staff as to what we're assessing and why; "why this is relevant to what workplaces need and how this will support your own goals"; this move supports the international reputation of our qualifications – secure qualifications are WORTH more.

Managing expectations is key – being very clear about what this is will mean for students in terms of travel, technological requirements, etc

Ensure everyone, including staff and students, knows what's happening, and they should expect invigilation. We know 'trust' doesn't work. Requirements need to be rock-solid.

It will be important to frame secured assessment as a professional standard, not a punitive measure. Students should see these assessments as akin to client presentations or job interviews — authentic demonstrations of their competence.

This 'culture' used to exist. For instance, staff knew why there was an exam and students knew why too. Maybe it needs to be turned around and instead phrase the question as "how we build a culture that does not value insecure assessment that undermines the value of our qualifications".

This should not be about surveillance or mistrust but about validating student achievement in ways that reflect professional practice.

At the moment we have some students getting annoyed with other students for lack of effort. Reintroducing secured assessment does not undermine trust; it builds trust by showing there is an equal playing field. The idea that this is more surveillance than putting one's personal details and thoughts into an ongoing digital trail that cannot be deleted is really not a private option - AI is not private; it is less secure than other platforms; it frequently leaks.

Through communication of why we are doing this. Emphasising the benefits to learning and analytical skills. Scaffolding all assessment to ensure that secured assessment is not viewed as an insurmountable obstacle but rather the culmination of a learning journey.

Include different students' voices, especially our priority students in this important conversation, and employers maybe. Feedback through the MOST survey for continuous review.

Ensure students with disabilities are listened to in the consultation phase, in relation to their particular needs.

39

I wish to endorse and agree with the feedback stated in Associate Professor Liz Norman and Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Simon Hall's letters as attached. I agree with the points stated and the importance of secured assessment within the university and its programs.

CoS

40

Formal response to the discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

The School of Built Environment (SBE) has considered the discussion paper through its forums and committees. There is strong support for strengthening assessment integrity, provided the approach is practical to deliver, equitable for distance and disabled learners, and properly resourced. The prevailing concern is that prolonged ambiguity and an extended schedule will absorb effort without delivering the necessary assurance for students, employers, accreditors, and external reviewers. Immediate decisions are required; each semester of inaction heightens the risk of inconsistent practice, increased integrity incidents, and erosion of confidence among students, employers, and external reviewers. Prolonged uncertainty also jeopardises accreditation readiness and may force costly, reactive remediation under external scrutiny.

Secured assessment is urgently required to protect the University's credibility, uphold academic integrity, and meet professional accreditation and best-practice expectations. While authenticated checkpoints at early, mid, and capstone stages are a sound feature already embedded in well-structured, accredited programmes they are not, on their own, a substitute for secured assessments in courses where identity and authorship must be verifiably assured. As drafted, the working definition of "secured assessment" remains too loose, inviting uneven application and confusion. The proposed timeline is also excessively long; this work should be completed in the shortest practicable timeframe, not over multiple years.

Accordingly, SBE recommends immediate, decisive steps. First, approve a precise definition and typology of secured assessment explicitly in scope: invigilated in-person (paper or locked-down digital), supervised online, viva/oral examinations, verified practica/studios/placements, and authenticated coursework coupled with oral verification each with minimum controls for identity checking, authorship assurance, accessibility, and auditable records. Secondly, mandate secured assessments (in addition to existing authenticated checkpoints) where learning outcomes warrant them and set a clear compliance deadline within the current academic planning cycle. Thirdly, compress the timeline: complete definition, policy changes, and equity safeguards; establish a technology sandbox and conduct mock sittings immediately thereafter; and pilot at scale in the next available semester with firm phase-gate criteria (platform reliability, accessibility incident rates, student fairness ratings, invigilator capacity). Finally, resource the work explicitly named owners for rooming and timetabling, platform operations, accessibility services, and academic development with workload allocation and CET support.

SBE recognises the University's procurement processes and statutory requirements. However, the risk profile here justifies a compressed timetable and greater urgency in actions and decisions. Within policy, this can be achieved through early market engagement, the use of pre-qualified panels where available, adoption of other organisations' best practices, and clear identification of appropriate processes, tools, and platforms, with staged contract milestones tied to pilot readiness. The goal is not to bypass controls but to run them in parallel so that essential capability is available for pilot use at the earliest opportunity.

Accreditation note (SBE). For SBE programmes, secured assessment is not optional. Accrediting bodies expect clear definitions, consistent application, transparent student communications, and auditable evidence of identity and authorship assurance, implemented equitably. Acting now on an accelerated timetable is essential to protect accreditation status, credibility and graduate standing.

41

Feedback on the discussion paper:

An Initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

AC25/08/308Rev1

Overview:

I support the reintroduction of secure verifiable assessments as soon as possible. This is essential for protecting both the actual and perceived value of Massey University qualifications. The value of unsecured online degrees has already been in question for a number of years now. China has not recognised online/distance degrees from international universities since the start of 2023

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20230131132149728>
and with the widespread availability of AI this is an even more significant issue.

At the centre of a University's core mission is in teaching and learning. Assessment is the mechanism by which staff and students can measure learner progress against the learning outcomes that define a program of study program. Assessment provides the accountability that is both expected and required by students, staff, other

stakeholders (funders employers) and society of a teaching institution. The value (perceived and actual) of Massey University is linked to its quality of teaching and assessment is a measure of that; this value is at risk if student learning cannot be verified.

Non-secure assessment has always been a part of university assessment and will continue to do so. Any piece of work that is a take-home assignment, project or test not performed under supervision could have been written/created by an individual who is not the student (distance or internal) that submits it as their work. This was the case before AI, but AI now makes it so much easier for students to cheat. We can verify student achievement against learning outcomes in person by various assessment types including exams, test, practical tests/experiences, presentations, oral test/quizzes/exams

Response to Assumptions (top of page 2):

1. Assumption 1 is an incorrect assumption and statement. Digital does not, and does not need to, underpin all operational workflows, quality assurance and student support. This takes a very narrow view of learning and assessment across the diverse disciplines at Massey University.

2. The demand for secure assessment amongst staff is not an assumption, it is genuine. This demand is evidenced by secure assessments already having been incorporated, as staff teaching and learning initiatives, in some CoS courses including large 100 level courses with distance offerings.

Massey has not operated under any kind of business as usual mode since 2020, so this is not a justification for slow action. The impact of AI on higher education has been devastatingly fast, an equally fast response is required.

3. This is an incorrect assumption (if it is one). There is no correlation between implementation of increased secure assessment and the amount of assessment, so this is not a risk. The resourcing limitations mentioned will more likely limit the amount of assessment employed. Resources are only as limited as decided in the budgetary process; to address this huge problem urgently and effectively, resources

must be made available.

Response to The Plan (pages 2-3).

The plan is much too slow over too long a time frame. In 2025 we have (semester 1) and will run (semester 2) secure invigilated in-person exams and semester tests including 100 level courses with many hundreds of students. The distance offering test and exam assessments were online-proctored via Zoom (in real time, no recording, no ITS involvement) requiring significant cooperation from students and academic staff. All involved appreciated the benefit of secured assessment despite the increased workload. Zoom proctoring of distance students by academic staff is not a sustainable long-term mechanism for off-campus student invigilation as it is too workload intensive for staff but as a 'pilot' it shows that with a free software product, staff ingenuity and student cooperation it can be done. In future years invigilators must be recruited and trained for this process. Our experience shows that the pilot phase of the plan can be brought forward; our teaching staff are happy to share their experience and the student cohort can be readily surveyed. The students appreciated the level-playing field offered by a secure assessment and there were no complaints (to my knowledge) of them feeling over-surveilled, although we haven't asked students directly yet.

A major concern for students regarding their assessment is that other students in their course are/maybe cheating so they feel they may be disadvantaged, which increases the motivation otherwise honest students to cheat. Using secure assessment removes this concern even at the expensive of increased staff time and other resources.

For internal only courses, which are the majority in our area, moving to in-person Invigilated exams and tests from TCAs is not difficult, we are doing it now and this transition shouldn't be held up by the slow-moving plan detailed in the document. I acknowledge that finding a long-term solution for those disciplines that teach in distance-only mode or mixed mode will take longer. This may include an improved software solution or in-person testing centres for distance students. I don't know whether there is / will be a completely effective exam-proctoring software solution, but the second option of testing centres is certainly achievable, it requires organisation

and resourcing.

This problem we are dealing with is largely a technical and a logistical one, so requires a technical and logistical solution around the implementation of secured assessment. Too much of the stated plan is pedagogical resulting in the overly long timeframe. The

continued improvement of assessment is important, but that is not the fundamental issue under consideration here. If the current assessments for a course are pedagogically sound, but unsecure, then there is no reason for redesign during the process of securing them.

I support the joint submission of Ray Geor PVC and Simon Hall DPVC, as well as the submission of Liz Norman Director of Teaching & Learning, College of Sciences.

CoS

42

Feedback on the Reintroduction of Secured Assessment

This feedback is in my capacity as Academic Lead for the School of Food Technology and Natural Sciences.

I fully support the submissions made by Liz Norman, (Director of Teaching and Learning, College of Sciences), Simon Hall (Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for the College of Sciences) and Ray Geor (Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences).

My main message is we need secured assessment to be reinstated, and the proposed timeline is far too slow. We need university-level support for secured assessment for 2026, not for 2028 at earliest.

In my school, course coordinators have been innovative in providing secured assessments for students in 2025, including for distance students, but they are doing this on goodwill and the understanding that it is a temporary solution. The additional workload on academic staff is not sustainable long term, and support must be provided by the University to maintain secured assessment.

All courses must include secured assessment. Grades in different courses must be equivalent; some cannot be seen as less than others otherwise our reputation will suffer.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

All Course grades must be credible. Therefore there should be sufficient secured assessment within each course to justify the grade and the learning outcomes. Grades are publicly available and are used as recognition of prior learning. If other Universities cannot be confident some of our grades are credible, they will assume all grades are not credible and will not accept our students into their programmes, whether that is when moving during a degree or for subsequent postgraduate study.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

There should be the same standard across all disciplines. We cannot have some programmes cheapened by the perception they have a lower standard than others. It is not good for individual programmes nor for the reputation of Massey as a whole.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication /validation with accessibility and cost?

In SFTNS this year we have managed to use zoom invigilation for distance cohorts, where up to 12 students share both their camera and screen while doing the assessment at the same time. This does require time management to fit students into slots in larger distance cohorts. In our school these are up to 80 students per course. While it works successfully for now, we do not know what products out there in the future may invalidate this form of secured assessment.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I have no confidence in Massey's ability to consistently deliver online proctored exams, as evidenced by the repeated failure of the system in the vet school assessments this month. In addition, I have no confidence that online proctored systems can confidently be secured. AI is moving at such a pace that every time we think a proctoring method is secure, by the next semester AI can get around this. There is no reason to think this advancement wouldn't continue, and above all we need confidence any system chosen will work for a significant period of time. Therefore, the university should prioritise in-person assessment. For at least some assessments, this would likely require distances students to travel to another location for assessment.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

We already know the resource challenges of in-person assessment. Currently much of that cost is borne by academic staff and the schools as they manage assessments themselves. This is not a good allocation of resourcing and will lead to inequitable assessment between courses as staff come up with their own methods of assessment. The costs are still there; they have just been moved.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Academic staff will always need support for this, regardless of the assessment type or new challenges. This should be business as usual.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Our staff and students already value secured assessment. Feedback from students in our school since the return of in-person on-paper tests and exams has been positive. They value the knowledge that everyone is in the same situation and that the resulting grades are fair. Students dislike the idea that classmates may have achieved higher grades through presenting work that is not their own and this creates greater stress and distrust.



Memo To: Fiona Coote, Director, Office of Academic Quality, Reporting and Assurance
From: Professor Jill McCutcheon, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chair of College of Health Board
Date: 16 September 2025
Subject: Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment

At the College of Health Board meeting held on 19 August 2025, the Board discussed the Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment.

A discussion was held with the following feedback and comments:

Recognise that we will reconsider secure assessments, like oral assessments, but we should not exclude proctored online assessments. For example, we can't do oral assessments for a large number of distance students.

Resourcing limitations – what does this mean, what is the support going to be?

There needs to be checkpoints in regard to students having the required knowledge. Good to see that on-campus exams will return – will this be on all three campuses? What support will be given and how will it work. The downside to handwritten exam answers is that it can be difficult to read.

Glad that we are being asked for ideas about what we can do, but don't want resourcing to be a limitation.

We operate in a binary of secure/ unsecure. It is instead a continuum across a degree – of high, medium, low security. Plagiarism tools and different ways of securing and mapping assessments all contribute to the level of security.

High levels of secure online assessment, for example the state exams for Nursing Council, would like to see students sitting this at home in the future. Every institute will need to look at this. Concern with assessing clinical skills and the difficulty for people to go out to assess. We have had issues and complaints for not providing that level of assessment and support to students, it is a major issue. We can make assessments as secure as we can, but we can't keep giving multiple opportunities to allow to re-sit, especially with large cohorts.

Not explicit about GenAI – idea of secure assessment, controlled use of AI, allow particular tools to be used as part of assessment, will be more important than an uncontrolled space where people use it.

When students use AI to write their essays, then it becomes evident that the student is lacking the knowledge when going into placements. Competencies that are required for each profession need to be met.

Postgraduate nursing has a wide variety of clinical assessment, simulation, and placements. We expect people to use AI but own it, failure in clinical vs passing assignments clearly shows.

How much do people know about clinical assessing, what is the minimum core knowledge they must have. They can use AI but when it comes to assessing on placement they can't do this in remote places all around the world. Repeat experience and observations. Need to use it as a good source of info, rethink professions and what the core knowledge is needed.

Need certain expectation of training for staff and also to students what we expect of them.

Need to expand on academic integrity. Alongside secure assessment, we need to look at and align with the academic integrity policy. Students can use genAI in one course and receive a warning, but we don't know what the student is doing in other courses. Need to be able to look across courses otherwise the student will do the same thing in the next year, and their knowledge is not at the level it should be.

Communication and clarity about what students are allowed or not allowed to do is key, especially as this can, differ between certain courses.

Students find it hard to navigate the use of AI and it can cause a lot stress wondering if they are doing the wrong thing.

AI is the future in workplaces and research; it can revolution some tasks. We want researchers to use AI well, but the challenge is detecting cheating. There needs to be more education about AI usage and navigation around adding AI.

So evident in the news these days, with the use of AI how things are developing. If we are mapping what is the process, what is the intent, we assume there is a level of AI engagement. Having assessments in the programme reflect on what we are doing. We should ask the students what we can do.

At a recent demonstration of AI use in Singapore, there was a robot that helped students learn empathy and there was a grading tool that went with it. Students who were inexperienced with interacting with clients were able to use this alongside assessment. Use of AI in this profession is great.

Phases and timeline – seem to be a very drawn-out process, February-June 2028? Staff want more security around what we are doing now – genAI is continually changing, we need to offer confidence to staff now.

Extended nature of timeline – longer it takes more challenging it will be to decide what tool to use. Things are rapidly moving in this space, procurement process takes a long time and then the best tool might not be the right one.

Recognising resourcing imitations – previously when there were person exams, we would contract people (often retirees) to come in and invigilate exams. As we have moved into distance space this is no longer requires, so that cost should be available to reinvest the money into more modern ways. Could we have those people sit in zoom rooms and monitor the process?

Limitations on how many large classrooms and computer labs that students could use, as we have recently lost a lot of space. Resourcing is also looking at space and equipment. Accommodation in our resources needs to be looked at. Overseas students are another issue.

44

Feedback from the School of Health Sciences on the Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment – 16 September 2025

Overarching comments

Overwhelming support for the document and the school acknowledges that Massey requires a means of securing assessments and this is a matter of urgency. Also agree that secured assessment and “exam” are not synonymous and secured assessment(s) includes a wide range: wānanga, oral presentations, fieldwork etc.

It is difficult to lead the document with concerns around resourcing, as it immediately implies restraint. The issue of “secured assessment” is not new (predates the advent of AI), but one that has become prominent following the enforcement of the digital plus strategy. Therefore, the onus is on Massey to implement strategies and resources to ensure that assessments are secure. Appropriate and rigorous assessment is a core function of the university to uphold the value of awarded qualifications. Thus, providing methods of securing assessment is urgent. Phase 1 should be starting now, not in March 2026. Phase 2 - Colleges should start to look at their programmes now and have a greater sense by April 2026 of which courses need secure assessment or what secure assessments they already have. Colleges will already have in-person and online exams that could be set up for Sm2 2026. Assessment mapping of programmes completed by December 2026 and those courses needing online secure assessment can be identified for Sm1 2027

As a school with a large distance, and part-time cohort, this document does raise several questions regarding operationalisation:

Defining what secure assessment means for our distance delivery. This includes balancing costs and logistics against current student expectations of distance study.

Maintaining the perceived/actual value of a Massey distance degree in a context where online delivery may not be perceived as sufficiently secure.

Procurement of an online assessment platform to support modern online assessment practices.

Re-establishing large-scale in-person secured assessment infrastructure and processes after more than 5 years in abeyance. Including how this will be managed for international students.

And

“Recognition of resourcing limitations and the risk of over assessment (Pg 2 of the document)”.

What do other universities do in this space? Is there fit-for-purpose software that can provide a reliable proctoring service for distance secured assessment – is it currently possible for an online secured assessment?

If secured assessment are implemented there would need to transparency and clear communication with students as to why we are securing assessment(s) i.e. framing secured assessment around manaakitanga and trust, whilst protecting student mana and ensuring qualification integrity. It should be clear that this is not about surveillance. Furthermore, it is important for students to understand what academic integrity is, and the current ease in which academic integrity can be breached (use of AI and/or third-party assistance), whether this be intentional or not. As mentioned above, these are not new issues, but the ease at which plagiarism can occur is “new”. Further education may be required here.

Exam centres on campuses, around the country and overseas that will support digital online assessment will be invaluable.

45

Feedback on the initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments and the draft teaching foundations framework Submitted from:

CoHSS-Institute of Education

- BA (Ed) Programme
- BSLT Programme
- EdPsych Programme
- Counselling & Guidance Programme
- MEd Programme
- Specialist Teaching Programme

Regarding secured assessments, we comment and ask:

- What would the enactment of secured assessment look like at postgraduate level?
- What would the enactment of secured assessment look like for our Distance students?
- What would the enactment of secured assessment look like for our Distance students who are located internationally? Where is the equity?
- What would the enactment of secured assessments look like for professional programmes and practicum?
- How would secure assessments work in courses where there is a strong link between research/literature and practices, especially for students who are teachers or psychology interns, and where assignments are competency-based and applied?
- How would secured assessments meet the work-integrated learning requirements of including sector partners in assessment validations?
- How would secured assessment ensure that students feel safe and affirmed to express their unique cultural identities?
- How would secured assessments be resourced?
- Do personalised portfolio-based assessment with videos of students, recorded discussions and artefacts of evidence of practical work in context not already ensure AI is not being incorrectly used?
- How can staff be supported with resources to design and enact creative and authentic approaches to assessment that will address the issues identified by the university?
- Can assessments be designed to enable and upskill students to use AI (which is ubiquitous) in a critical, purposeful, and beneficial way-more advanced assessments?
- Has Universal Design for Learning been considered?
- Can this not be more holistic? Considering questions such as: “What assessment types should be considered ‘secured’?” or even “Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?” misses the point on the fundamental role of assessment. There needs to be a discussion of assessment and if we are truly Te Tiriti led to embrace ideas from Aromatawai that emphasises a holistic approach to assessment. We have the opportunity to be more innovative at this juncture, let’s look beyond the status quo to reimagine how our assessment practices might truly be innovative.
- The ITE programme Capstone project of Oral examination, the resources needed are huge. Seeing glass as half full, there are huge opportunities here to do something creative.
- It seems to be a step backwards to consider face-to-face large-scale exams. The more fundamental issue is what are the kinds of knowledge, skillsets and values we need our students to develop and how might assessment practices support this. Will going back to large scale face-to-face physically secured exams address this?

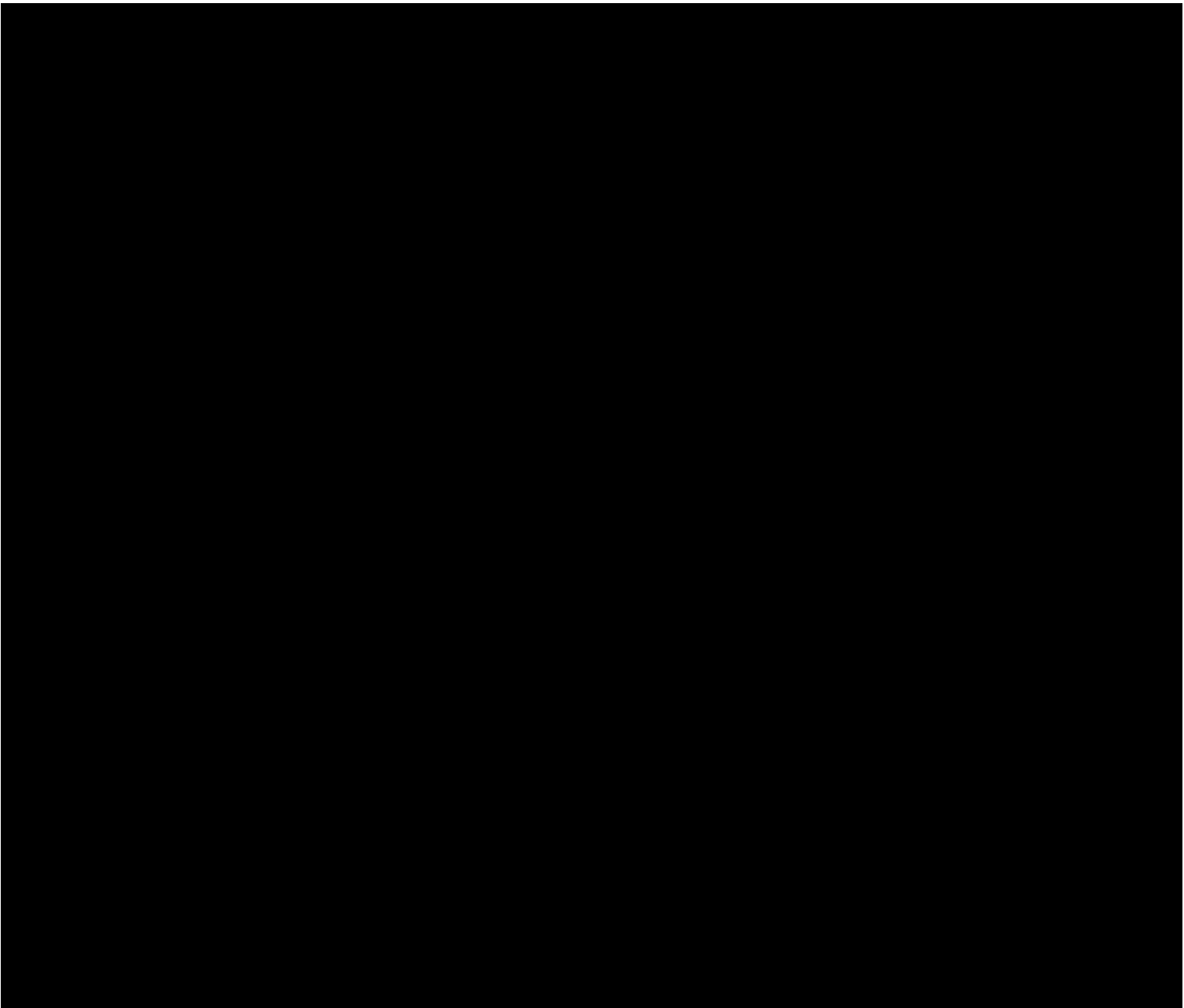
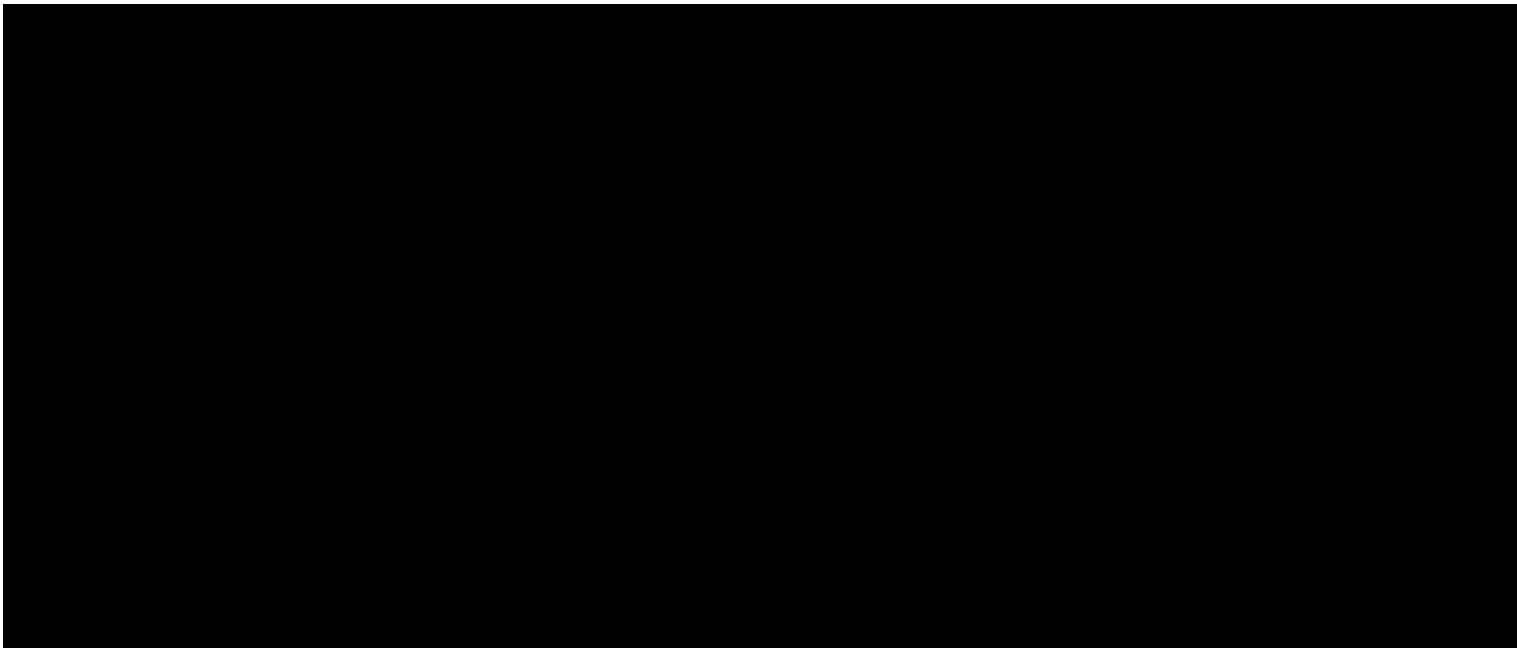
1.
 - Having a degree of ‘base level’ of expectation across the university is important, but how this plays out within schools and programmes will ‘look’ differently. Therefore, it is important that staff are enabled to continue to have creativity to work with these guidelines, rather than a one s



Senior Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details

Day & Date	Wednesday, 8 October 2025
Time	9 am – 12 pm
Location	Manawatū Campus, Refectory Building
Concierge	Dr Tere McGonagle-Daly
Karakia	Prof Giselle Byrnes
Meeting Chair	Prof Jan Thomas
Attendees	Prof Cynthia White, Prof Giselle Byrnes, Prof Jonathan Elms, Prof Jill McCutcheon, Prof Margaret Maile, Prof Ray Geor, Mr Paora Ammunson, Ms Shelley Turner, Dr Tere McGonagle-Daly, [REDACTED]
Apologies	Nil
Minutes	[REDACTED]



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

8.2. Secured Assessment [SLT 25 10 113](#)

Prof. Giselle Byrnes

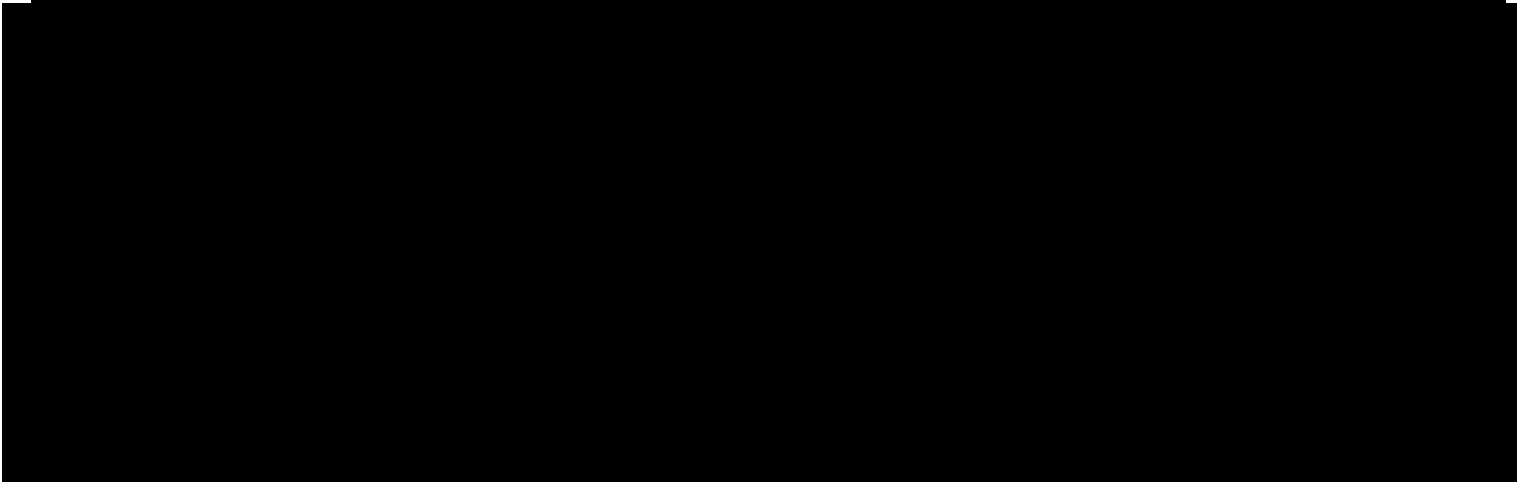
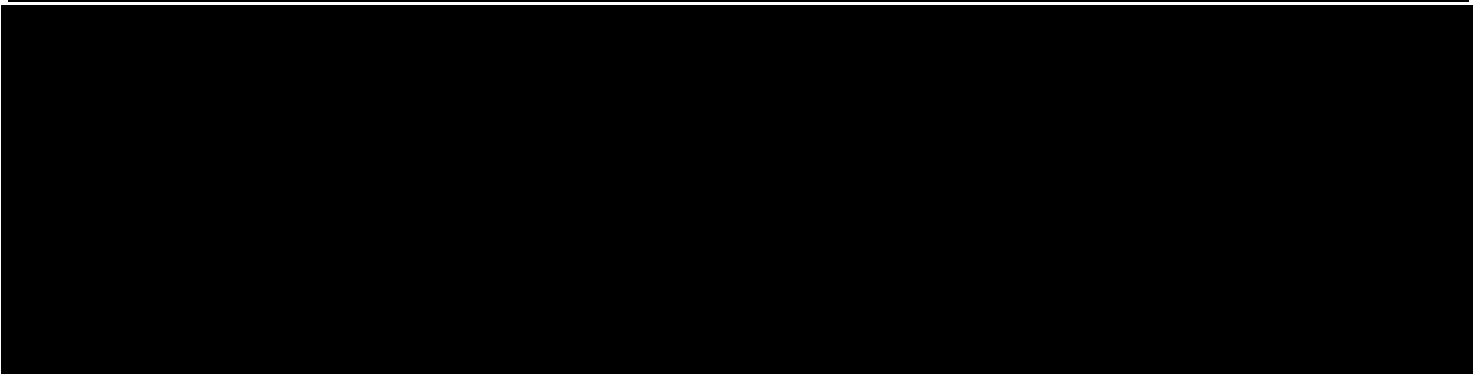
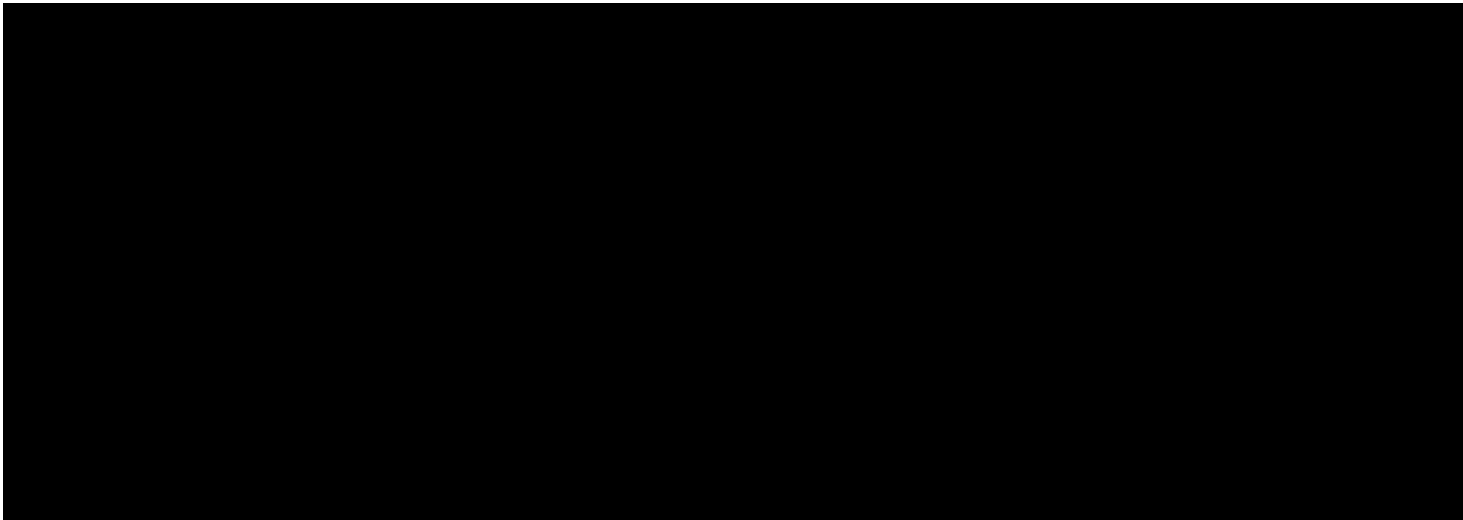
Giselle provided a brief overview of the paper.

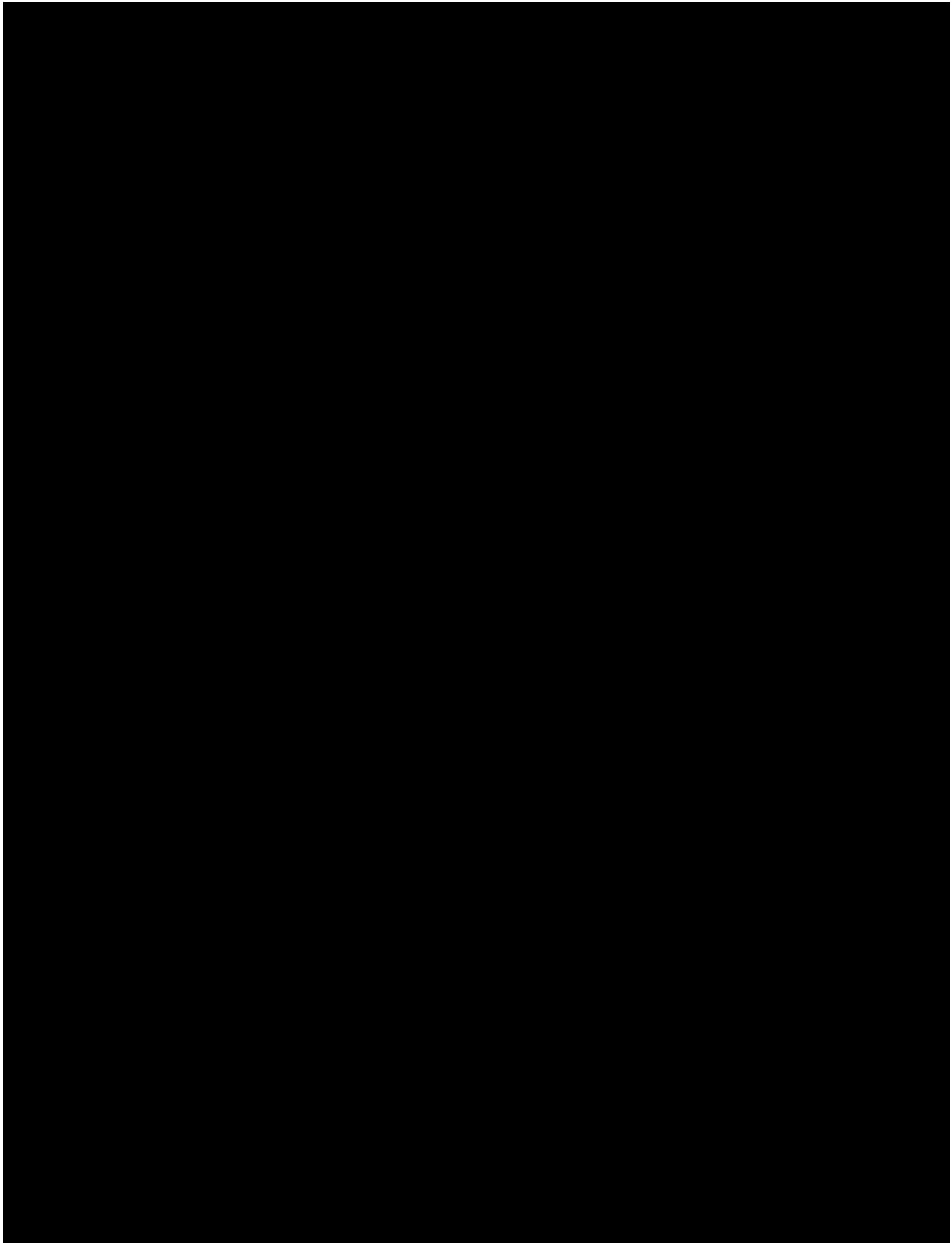
SLT noted the paper and update and discussed the following:

- It is possible that Aspeq, as a provider to the sector, may be able to support a solution in 2026. If Aspeq can facilitate venue-based and lockdown-style exams, we can proceed accordingly. If this is not feasible, we will need to coordinate with the Bookings team to identify suitable venue options.

- Pen and Paper exam, if it is the option, we need to move fast. Forward planning will need time to plan with the associated costs.
- Lockdown computers, does this include hardware? Giselle will find out more on this.
- Need infrastructure support and noted constraints on resources.
- There are other options to consider, for example, students to bring their own laptops.
- Noted the proposal for change with Printery, so we need to consider this - printed materials: How does this work with Printery?
- Noted the impact on Distance students.

Action: Lockdown computers, does this include hardware? Giselle will find out more on this and update PVCs.





[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

DATE:	28 January 2026
SLT SPONSOR:	Provost, Professor Giselle Byrnes
SUBJECT:	Interim secure exam solution for 2026-2027

Recommendations

- SLT are asked to:
 - **Note** that SLT have approved the transition to in-person invigilated secured assessments (both digital and pen and paper) (refer **SLT 25/10/113**) and have approved a Business Case to create a platform for centrally administered Online Supervised Examinations (RFP to commence in 2026).
 - **Note** that a two-year interim solution has been requested to commence in Semester One 2026. A two-year timeframe provides stability and continuity for staff and students while allowing the time needed for evaluation, procurement, planning, and the phased rollout required to implement the long-term solution. The long-term solution may involve a complex configuration of internal services, third-party services, and specialist digital assessment platforms, with the associated integration and change management, which cannot be compressed into a shorter timeframe.
 - **Note** that the interim solution and the business case for a long-term solution are two different processes and that funding received via the Business Case cannot be used to implement the interim solution.
 - **Note** that the interim solution is that Aspeq will deliver in-person invigilated secured exams throughout New Zealand for Massey Business School and College of Sciences, commencing semester one, 2026. It is important to note that an exception to the university's procurement process has not yet been completed and PCGB approval has not been obtained.
 - **Approve** ¹(up to) \$1,518,680 OPEX (plus 5% contingency) for 2026 to engage Aspeq to deliver secure (invigilated) exams while a longer-term solution is developed and implemented.
 - **Approve in principle** indicative funding of (up to) approximately \$1,550,000 OPEX for 2027 (plus 5% contingency), subject to confirmation following Labour Cost Index adjustments and updated sitting estimates.
 - **Agree** on how this initiative will be funded from the four options proposed in this paper (1) funded centrally with savings allocated to all SLT portfolio lines, (2) funded by ITS infrastructure charges (also resulting in increased charges to all portfolio lines), (3) user-pays costings to those colleges that wish to undertake secured examinations, and/or a combination of (relevant) college and central funding.

Purpose

This paper provides SLT with progress on the interim solution for secured (invigilated) examinations for 2026 and 2027 while the business case to deliver a long-term solution is being implemented. Massey has not coordinated in-person invigilated exams at scale since 2019, and the infrastructure, processes, and personnel required to do so have since been disestablished. Rebuilding this capability internally is not feasible for Semester 1, 2026. Aspeq, a New Zealand-based assessment provider with over 30 years' experience in secure exam delivery, offers a viable interim pathway.

¹ Cos and MBS have indicated in principle that they will contribute towards the costs of secured assessments for their college. The figures showing in this paper are the total amount required, less Provost budget contribution.

This paper seeks approval for \$1,518,680 to engage Aspeq to deliver secure (invigilated) Massey Business School (MBS) and College of Sciences (CoS) examinations for 2026, and approval in principle for indicative funding of approximately \$1,550,000 for 2027 (2027 costs to be confirmed following Labour Cost Index adjustments and updated sitting estimates). Additional cost and therefore funding will be required if other colleges opt into this interim secure examination solution.

This paper is seeking funding in addition to the \$635,000 funding for the development of a long term solution as previously approved by SLT and included in the 2026 budget.

Link to strategy and annual priorities

The credibility of our qualifications underpins Massey's reputation, our social licence to operate, and our ability to deliver on the University Graduate Profile. As feedback to Academic Committee made clear, assessment is "our main saleable product" - the mechanism by which we certify that graduates possess the knowledge, skills, and attributes we claim they do. Without robust authentication, we cannot credibly make those claims.

Inaction puts at risk valuable international and national partnerships where the continuation of unsecured assessments has been identified as posing "the gravest risk." It jeopardises accreditation for regulated professions, where external bodies expect verified evidence of graduate competence. And it ignores widespread staff concern, evidenced in Academic Committee consultation and the 2025 Staff Engagement Survey, that current assessment arrangements undermine confidence in the qualifications we award.

The urgent reintroduction of secured assessment at scale addresses a critical gap, especially for those qualifications where secure assessment cannot be achieved via practical's or similar to ensure the credibility of Massey qualification.

Introduction

The rapid advancement and widespread adoption of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools have posed substantial challenges for higher education institutions worldwide (refer Appendix 1: Assurance of Learning in Fully Online Credentialed Programs: A briefing paper for the Australian Higher Education Sector). The ability of these tools to replicate the outputs of traditional assessments to an increasingly high standard compromises educators' ability to verify genuine student achievement and is consequently a significant threat to the University's reputation and the credibility of its qualifications.

While the University recognises that working with AI is rapidly becoming a critical capability for graduates in their everyday professional life and has a responsibility to foster responsible and ethical use of AI in ways that are authentic to both task and discipline, we still need to assure that graduating students have independently developed the skills, knowledge, and understanding embedded in our learning outcomes and University Graduate Profile.

Across the sector, assessment reform has been proposed as a response to a world where AI is ubiquitous. Suggested approaches include transitioning to process-centric (rather than product-centric) assessment, using portfolio-based evidence of learning, Vivas and interactive orals, and placing greater emphasis on programmatic assessment, including securing assessments at meaningful points across a programme. Alongside these structural changes, there is also the emerging imperative to integrate authentic, collaborative engagement with AI into assessment design.

However, it is widely acknowledged that these approaches represent a significant paradigm shift with many challenges, including viability (time, cost, workload, scalability), the practicalities of

implementation within complex degree structures, resistance from academics concerned about course-level autonomy, and potential impacts on students' ability to customise their learning journeys.

Consequently, it is acknowledged that assuring learning through secured ("observed") assessments at the *course level* is a practical pathway and can serve as an interim measure while developing more comprehensive assessment reform strategies.

Context

At Massey, the failure of OSEs and the fallback to open (unsecured) exams or small-scale College-managed secured exams (with some high-profile failures) has prompted considerable discussion about the reintroduction of centrally supported secured assessments.

In April 2025, a business case proposing the introduction of a digital assessment platform with online supervised capability was presented and rejected by SLT. Subsequently, SLT approved the business case in July 2025 to support a hybrid (pen-and-paper and digital) exam approach. This was followed by a wide discussion of a proposed three-year plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments, with full implementation by 2028.

While some respondents appreciated the phased implementation, the overwhelming sentiment was that "traditional" in-person, course-level secure exams need to be implemented for 2026 and at scale, especially within Massey Business School and College of Sciences.

Discussion

Massey has not coordinated in-person, invigilated exams at scale since 2019. In the intervening period, teams that led or supported that function have been disestablished or re-skilled. On-site physical facilities for printing of exam papers, collation and distribution have been decommissioned or downsized. Logistic processes, including exam management, invigilator recruitment and training, and the setup of exam centres, have been dismantled. The network of exam centres across NZ and overseas, and the pool of invigilators, is outdated. Reestablishing a core University service of this complexity would require considerable time and investment, making delivery by Semester 1, 2026, unfeasible. It would also risk locking the University into significant capital expenditure (e.g., outfitting additional computer labs or purchasing laptop fleets²) that could prove unnecessary once our long-term assessment model (determined by implementing the business case) is established.

Given the urgency, existing market knowledge was utilised, and, through discussions with Aspeq, a viable interim pathway was identified. Headquartered in Petone, [Aspeq](#) is a global assessment technology provider with over 30 years of experience delivering secure, customisable examination platforms across regulated sectors (aviation, health, emergency services, finance) that offers end-to-end digital and in-person testing solutions with flexible proctoring options, supported by a network of over 65 exam centres and 120+ trained invigilators across the Asia-Pacific region and the UK.

In summary, Aspeq can (refer appendix 2):

- Conduct in-person, supervised, fixed-time and place exams in **both pen-and-paper and digital formats**.

² Laptop costs are estimated to be at least \$500,000.

- Deliver them on campus in our teaching spaces using Aspeq-provided hardware, at Aspeq Exam Centres, as well as mobile locations as required.
- Use their proprietary platform “Quadrant” or Stream along with a secure browser to deliver the exam with paper-based (if required) answer scripts bundled and then couriered to academics.
- Provide a 1:1 remote proctoring solution for students outside of venue coverage, with approved alternative arrangement considerations, or at the discretion of the College.
- Manage standard alternative arrangements.
- Operate with our exam rules and regulations as appropriate.
- Provide a tailored solution for MIAN/NUFE³ (China) utilising on-campus facilities, Aspeq delivery platform, and University-contracted invigilators, trained and supported by Aspeq.

Additionally, Aspeq will:

- Provide a full-time Project Manager to work in partnership with Massey on requirements gathering, delivery coordination, capacity planning, and schedule design.
- Conduct a comprehensive test of the exam delivery system in April 2026 using 150 Aspeq laptops, Aspeq invigilators, in a Massey Venue and a live examination.

Quadrant is Aspeq’s secure exam platform explicitly designed for high-stakes, high-volume environments. Crucially, it minimises several risks with using Stream and provides added resilience and robustness to the exam sitting process, including features to:

- Download the entire exam before the session begins, eliminating reliance on live connectivity and reducing disruptions.
- Preserve student responses locally during any connectivity interruption and upload automatically when connectivity is restored.
- Comprehensively prevent access to internal and external resources, including AI tools, through a locked-down environment.

By contrast, Stream is a general-purpose learning management system. While it has performed adequately for remote exam delivery with distributed load across an extended period (i.e., 24-hour window), it is not a dedicated digital assessment platform and has not been engineered and robustly tested for simultaneous fixed-time sittings. During exam periods, Stream would be performing “double-duty”—simultaneously delivering high-stakes examinations while also supporting student revision and study activity. We have experienced near-misses where this concurrent usage has negatively impacted exam delivery. If Stream is selected as the delivery platform, additional investment in infrastructure and capacity will be required to mitigate this risk.

Both Stream and Quadrant delivery options use Aspeq's secure lockdown browser. However, Quadrant restricts students to the exam and permitted materials only. With Stream, even within the lockdown browser, students can navigate outside the exam activity into the broader course site and interact with other areas of Stream, including other courses.

Do nothing option

Continuing without an interim solution would mean courses identified as requiring secured assessment remain as unsecured open-book, open-web exams throughout 2026 and 2027. International partnerships and professional accreditations would remain exposed, and staff concerns about the inability to verify genuine student achievement would persist. Without a centrally supported pathway, staff can be expected to implement their own ad hoc, unsecured assessments. Arrangements that lack central oversight, consistent standards, and alignment with good practice. The do-nothing option leaves

³ Our presence in Nanjing is internally called “MIAN” which is short for “Massey Institute at Nanjing University of Finance and Economics”. Nanjing University of Finance and Economics = (“NUFE”)

the University reliant on unsecured assessment until at least 2028, which is untenable given sector-wide scrutiny of assessment integrity in the era of generative AI.

Recommendation

Given Quadrant's purpose-built design for high-stakes assessment, its offline capability, local response preservation, and comprehensive lockdown features, Quadrant (Option A below) is recommended. While this option carries a higher cost—approximately \$3.3m over two years compared with approximately \$2.1m for the Stream-based alternative—it significantly reduces delivery risk during intensive exam periods and avoids the need for additional Stream infrastructure investment⁴.

Risks/Considerations

While Aspeq delivers tens of thousands of exams annually, their volume isn't concentrated in intensive periods like ours. Given this is an interim solution, we need to be targeted rather than risk overextending both Aspeq's capacity and our own infrastructure.

Resource requirements and implications

• Financial Implications

Fin #: 26-01

Costs

The College of Sciences and the Massey Business School⁵ have each provided a prioritised list of courses requiring invigilated exams. For 2026, this is an *estimated*⁶ 23,000 sittings for the 2026 academic year.

College	Courses	Sittings	Estimated costs 2026		
			Option A: Quadrant Recommended	Option B: Stream For comparison	Option C: Do nothing
CoS	158	14,798	\$1,000,117	\$607,970	\$0
MBS	21	8,515	\$618,563	\$445,995	\$0
Other: Stream development	-	-	-	\$200,000	-
Total	179	23,313	\$1,618,680	\$1,253,965	\$0

Notes

- The base costs for pen-and-paper and digital exams are the same.
- The total cost provided above factors in *estimates* of approved alternative arrangements and limited use of 1:1 remote proctoring. Both have additional costs beyond the base cost.
- The costs above are for 2026. Indicative 2027 costs of approximately \$1,650,000 are subject to Labour Cost Index adjustments and updated sitting estimates and will be confirmed prior to the 2027 delivery period.
- Stream development covers \$100k implementation plus \$100k operating costs.
- There may be other unquantified costs related to IT and Estates to ensure current facilities can accommodate large numbers of students in exam venues simultaneously.

⁴ Approximately \$100k implementation + \$100k annually.

⁵ Note this initiative is not exclusively for Massey Business School and Colleges of Sciences. The scope reflects current demand—Massey Business School and College of Sciences accounted for 99% of Online Supervised (OSE) sittings in 2024. Other colleges may opt in as needed; the per-sitting costing model accommodates this.

⁶ Estimates are based on historical enrolments of available, otherwise the estimated class size from SMS.

Funding

Contribution	2026	2027
Assessment Services operational budget	\$100,000	\$100,000
MBS contribution	\$tba	\$tba
CoS contribution	\$tba	\$tba
Remainder	\$tba	\$tba
Total	\$1,618,680	\$1,650,000

Professor Ray Geor and Professor Jonathan Elms have agreed, in principle, to contribute towards the costs of secured assessment (amount not yet confirmed). This paper is therefore seeking \$1,518,680 plus 5% contingency costs (less the CoS and MBS contributions) in 2026 and \$1,550,000 *approximately* plus 5% contingency costs (less the CoS and MBS contributions) for 2027.

Costs associated with an interim solution have not been accounted for within 2026 budgets.

Four exclusive options are proposed to fund this in 2026 and 2027. These options are:

1. User Pays - Costs recovered directly from MBS and CoS in line with volume of use. Already agreed in principle by PVC MBS and PVC CoS.
2. ITS Infrastructure - Costs recovered via the existing ITS infrastructure process, allocated to all reporting lines based on ITS users.
3. Saving Allocations to 2026 Budgets - Costs retained centrally with 2026 savings targets allocated to reporting lines proportionate to expenditure budgets (ie consistent with the methodology for allocating savings in the 2026 budget).
4. No Allocation – Costs retained centrally with no adjustments to reporting line 2026 saving targets.

SLT are asked to discuss the four options and agree on the preferred option for funding this initiative. Only Option 4 has a direct impact on the performance of the University.

CFO Comment

The paper presents options for funding an interim solution for secure exams. Finance recommends Option 1 as the preferred as in 2026 those Colleges involved have indicated a willingness to cover at least some of the costs. Both colleges have a level of “contingency” within their budgets which should cover at least some if not all of the costs.

We note a single supplier has been identified for the provision of the secure exam services. However, at this stage no PCGB approval has been provided for an exemption from tender. This approval will need to be sought, and it is recommended in principle approval of the provider is provided by SLT subject to PCGB approvals.

- **Other resource requirements/implications**

ITS: On-campus venue IT infrastructure for high-density usage.

Estates: On-campus venue environmental controls for high-density usage (e.g., HVAC, power).

Impact

Students	
Positive impacts	Negative Impacts
Will benefit from knowing that everyone is assessed under the same conditions, which staff reported students value highly—feedback indicated students appreciate the fairness that comes from a level playing field.	Will lose the flexibility of the current 24-hour exam window, which allows them to manage exams around work, family, and other commitments—fixed-time exams will be particularly challenging for part-time students and those with caregiving responsibilities.
Will experience reduced stress and distrust arising from concerns that classmates may have achieved higher grades by presenting work that is not their own.	May create logistical burdens, including travel, parking, accommodation, and childcare costs to attend an exam venue, with a greater impact on distance students and those in regional or remote locations.
Will hold qualifications with greater credibility in the eyes of employers, accreditors, and professional bodies, strengthening their employment prospects and recognition of their achievements.	May need to adjust to closed-book, time-constrained exam conditions after several years of open-book/open-web assessments, which may increase exam-related stress and require changes to study and preparation approaches.
Will be able to focus on demonstrating their knowledge and skills, confident that they are being assessed in a fair and equitable way with clear, transparent expectations.	
Will graduate with verified competence in the skills, knowledge, and understanding embedded in learning outcomes, which supports their readiness for professional practice—particularly important in regulated disciplines.	
University	
Positive impacts	Negative Impacts
Will protect the credibility and reputation of Massey qualifications, which staff identified as being at risk when the University cannot verify that assessed work is genuinely a student's own.	May face negative student sentiment and potential enrolment impacts, particularly among distance and part-time cohorts who enrolled under an "any time, any place" model. While this is a return to the previous practice of in-person exams, these cohorts may perceive it as a reduction in flexibility.
Will safeguard valuable international and national partnerships—particularly in the Massey Business School and College of Sciences—where the continuation of unsecured assessments was described as posing "the gravest risk."	Will become dependent on an external vendor for a core university function during the interim period, creating risk if Aspeq's capacity is overextended or service delivery falls short during intensive exam periods.
Will be better positioned to meet accreditation and professional body requirements in regulated disciplines such as health, aviation, and business, where external stakeholders expect robust verification of graduate competence.	Will need to manage a further transition in 2027–2028 when the longer-term solution is developed and implemented, meaning staff and students will experience two changes to assessment practice within a relatively short period.
Will address the concern raised by staff that multiple cohorts of graduates have completed	

without adequate levels of secured assessment, restoring confidence in the standard of qualifications awarded.	
Will demonstrate responsiveness to the sector-wide challenge posed by generative AI, showing that Massey is taking meaningful action to ensure the validity of its qualifications in a changing environment.	
Academic Staff	
Positive impacts	Negative Impacts
Will regain confidence that grades awarded accurately reflect genuine student achievement, addressing concerns raised by staff who currently have doubts about the validity of grades they assign.	May need to redesign exam content for closed-book, fixed-time conditions—questions designed for the current open-book/open-web format, where students can access resources, will require rethinking to be appropriate for a secure environment.
Will be better positioned to write meaningful letters of recommendation for students, knowing that assessed work authentically represents student capability.	Will need to familiarise themselves with a changed marking workflow, as short answer and essay responses will be returned from Quadrant rather than within the familiar Stream/Moodle environment.
Will experience a reduction in time spent identifying, investigating, and managing suspected academic misconduct—staff reported catching significantly more students since the move to unsecured assessments than in the years prior.	
Will benefit from clearer boundaries between collaborative and individual work, reducing ambiguity about what constitutes a student's own effort.	
Will no longer carry the burden of designing and managing their own ad-hoc secured assessment arrangements, a responsibility that has fallen unevenly on schools and individual academics since 2019.	
Will have greater confidence in the credibility of qualifications, particularly in disciplines with accreditation requirements or international partnerships where reputational risk has been a concern.	
Will operate within a system where transparent, consistent standards are applied—staff feedback indicated this strengthens rather than undermines trust with students.	
For disciplines such as mathematics, will return to pen-and-paper formats that align with disciplinary norms and reduce the additional workload associated with current digital workflows.	
ITS	

Positive impacts	Neutral Impacts
Will be relieved of supporting ad-hoc secure assessment arrangements that have fallen to the team without dedicated resourcing, allowing them to focus on core service priorities.	Will need to ensure network bandwidth at on-campus exam venues is suitable and robust for high-density usage during exam periods (neutral impact).
Estates Management	
Positive impacts	Neutral Impacts
Will benefit from Aspeq's network of 22 permanent exam centres across New Zealand (plus mobile venues), which may reduce pressure on campus facilities.	Will experience renewed demand for exam venues on campus, as the current open-book/open-web model places very limited requirements on university facilities—students currently sit exams on their own devices in their own spaces.
	Will need to provide suitable exam rooms, lecture theatres, and teaching spaces with adequate power sources, furniture, and internet connectivity for high-density exam delivery during exam periods.
	Will need to coordinate with Aspeq on venue booking and setup and provide secure storage for Aspeq-supplied laptops between trimesters (in partnership with ITS).
Assessment Services	
Positive impacts	Neutral Impacts
Will have a clear operational model with Aspeq managing the logistics of invigilated exam delivery (venues, invigilators, hardware, alternative arrangements), allowing the team to focus on coordination, scheduling, and student support rather than end-to-end delivery.	
Will benefit from Aspeq's dedicated Project Manager working in partnership on requirements gathering, capacity planning, and schedule design—providing additional resourcing without permanent headcount.	
Will continue to deliver TCAs alongside Aspeq-managed exams, with clearer delineation of responsibilities than the current fragmented approach, where schools manage their own ad-hoc secured assessments.	

- **Consultation undertaken for this proposal**

This paper was informed by Academic Committee and Learning and Teaching Committee consultation and feedback rounds on the validity of assessments and reintroduction of secured assessments in 2025. The College of Sciences and Massey Business School were directly consulted on their secure exam requirements and preferences. The Centre for Education Transformation, including Assessment Services, was consulted.

Implementation

- **Who/what entities will implement this, and how?**

A taskforce lead by [REDACTED] [REDACTED] will oversee the implementation of this initiative on behalf of Massey University. The taskforce will include the Aspeq project manager, student representation alongside representatives from Colleges, ITS, Estates, SaGE (including external communications) and the Centre for Education Transformation.

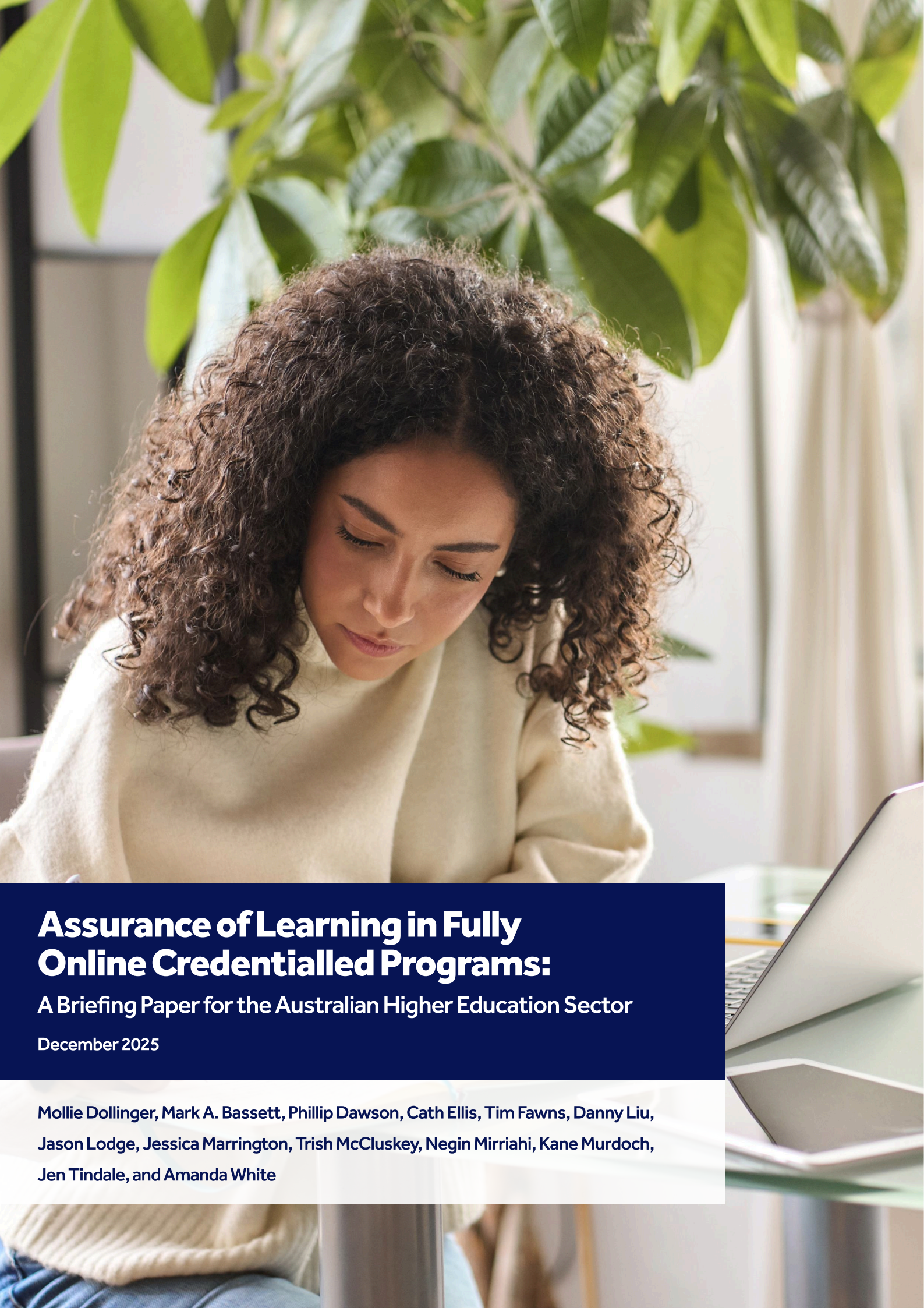
- **Who else needs to be advised of this decision and how this will occur?**

The task force (see above) will be stood up immediately and will be responsible for communication to the relevant stakeholders.

Supporting Documents

Appendix 1: Assurance of Learning in Fully Online Credentialed Programs: A briefing paper for the Australian Higher Education Sector

Appendix 2. Mana Tohu – Restoring Integrity in Assessment. Massey University Secure Examination Delivery Proposal

A woman with dark, curly hair is looking down at a laptop screen. She is wearing a light-colored sweater. In the background, there is a large green plant with broad leaves. The scene is brightly lit, suggesting a window nearby.

Assurance of Learning in Fully Online Credentialed Programs:

A Briefing Paper for the Australian Higher Education Sector

December 2025

Mollie Dollinger, Mark A. Bassett, Phillip Dawson, Cath Ellis, Tim Fawns, Danny Liu,
Jason Lodge, Jessica Marrington, Trish McCluskey, Negin Mirriahi, Kane Murdoch,
Jen Tindale, and Amanda White

Introduction

Fully online credentialled programs have become central to how the Australian higher education sector operates. Yet while the emergence of generative AI has prompted significant work on assessment reform across the sector (Lodge, 2023, 2025), specific guidance for fully online programs has received far less attention. This represents a critical gap in the sector's response to AI.

Addressing this gap is not only a pedagogical priority but also a regulatory necessity. The Higher Education Standards Framework (HESF) requires higher education providers to ensure that students have demonstrated the learning outcomes of their course of study, and to assure this demonstration regardless of the mode of delivery. In parallel, the HESF requires institutional policies and approaches to teaching and learning that accommodate student diversity and create equivalent opportunities for academic success.

HESF Standard	Requirements
1.4.3	Methods of assessment are consistent with the learning outcomes being assessed, are capable of confirming that all specified learning outcomes are achieved and that grades awarded reflect the level of student attainment.
1.4.4	On completion of a course of study, students have demonstrated the learning outcomes specified for the course of study, whether assessed at unit level, course level, or in combination.
5.2.2	Preventative action is taken to mitigate foreseeable risks to academic and research integrity including misrepresentation, fabrication, cheating, plagiarism and misuse of intellectual property, and to prevent recurrences of breaches.

Adapted from The Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021

A recent consultation paper on modernising TEQSA's powers (Australian Government, 2025), coupled with public comments from federal Education Minister Jason Clare (Clare, 2025), signals a strengthened regulatory focus on how providers demonstrate compliance with HESF obligations.

This briefing paper is intended for higher education leaders, quality assurance professionals, and educators involved in the design and oversight of fully online credentialled programs. It addresses the challenges of assuring learning in these contexts with the nuance they deserve. While online learning and assessment occur across all modes of delivery (on-campus, blended, and fully online), fully online programs present distinct challenges where students may study and complete their entire degree remotely without ever attending campus.

This combination of remote study and remote assessment, where educators may never physically interact with students, presents particular assurance challenges that require targeted guidance. The following discussion distinguishes between assuring and securing assessment and explores models that institutions may adapt to support both regulatory compliance and assurance of learning.

Scope and key definitions

Primary focus: This briefing paper focuses specifically on fully online credentialled programs (also known as ‘external’ or ‘distance’ programs)¹.

Broader applicability: While focused on fully online credentialled programs, many of the principles, strategies, and considerations discussed have broader applicability to blended or mixed-mode programs and on-campus or internal programs, where online learning, teaching, and/or assessment may play a significant role.

Why fully online credentialled programs matter

The rise of generative AI has raised legitimate concerns about the assurance of learning across all degree programs. However, these concerns are amplified in fully online credentialled programs where current design approaches often allow students to study and complete assessments both asynchronously and remotely.

These concerns must be weighed carefully against the scale and significance of fully online education in Australia. Approximately one-fifth of all enrolments (over 330,000 students) study fully online (Department of Education, 2024, Table 2.7²). This substantial figure reflects both equity imperatives and broader demand for flexible study arrangements that accommodate professional and personal commitments (Lodge et al., 2022; Stone, 2017).

The equity case for online education is compelling. Students from low socioeconomic backgrounds, regional and remote areas, those with disabilities or caring responsibilities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and mature-age and part-time learners all depend heavily on fully online study (ACSES, 2024; Shalley et al., 2017). These are precisely the groups the 2024 Australian Universities Accord has identified as essential to expanding participation. The Accord's goal of participation parity by 2050 requires these groups to be represented in higher education proportional to their share of the population. Without robust and high-quality online learning, this expansion will not be possible, and Australia will not meet its equity goals for the sector.

The challenge facing institutions is how to provide defensible assurance of learning in fully online programs while preserving the accessibility and flexibility these programs provide.

Part I. Defining assurance of learning

To understand how online programs can provide the necessary assurance of learning, it is critical to first distinguish between assurance and the often-conflated term of assessment security.

Assessment security comprises two key dimensions. The first is authentication, which refers to knowing that the person completing the assessment is the enrolled student.

^[1] Refer to the appendix for detailed definitions of fully online credentialled programs.

^[2] Based on 2023 data. Victorian non-university providers did not publish external enrolment figures so actual fully online enrolments are therefore likely higher.

The second is control of circumstances, which ensures that students demonstrate the learning outcomes under the conditions specified in the assessment. Both features are necessary for an assessment to be considered secure, yet security is never absolute. These features operate along a continuum rather than as a binary, and no assessment can ever be fully secure in every context (Dawson, 2021).

Assurance of learning, however, is more holistic. It encompasses the full system of evidence-gathering, evaluation, and decision-making that allows institutions to warrant that graduates have genuinely achieved the intended learning outcomes of their program, as required by HESF. Examining assessment security and assurance of learning across key dimensions highlights their different purposes, scope, and implications for online program design.

Table 1. Comparing security with assurance

Dimension	Security	Assurance
Timing	Relates to specific assessment event/s	Builds across multiple points in a program and concludes with an institutional judgement supported by credible evidence of learning
Scope	Actions to confirm identity and control the conditions in which students must demonstrate learning	Systematic collection of evidence across a degree program to determine whether students have demonstrated all required learning outcomes
Approach	Tactical, event-focused measures	Strategic, program-level evaluation

In this discussion, it is also important to recognise that assessment does not measure learning directly. Instead, assessment relies on inferences drawn from observable evidence of performance. Educators can never fully know what students have learned; they can only gather evidence of what students can demonstrate and make reasoned judgements about what that evidence suggests about their learning. This inferential nature of assessment highlights why robust foundational elements, including assessment security, are essential for the complex judgements that underpin assurance of learning.

The three foundations of assurance

Assessment security is only one component of assurance of learning. Assurance also relies on a strong culture of academic integrity and on assessment design that generates valid, trustworthy evidence as the basis for judgement. These three interconnected foundations all work together to support credible assurance of learning across a degree program.

Formative and other non-secure assessments are not sufficient on their own to confirm that students have met the required learning outcomes. While these tasks contribute meaningfully to student learning and can provide valuable insight into patterns of development across a program, assurance of learning relies on secure evidence that supports credible program-level judgements of student achievement. This clarifies the distinction between evidence for assurance and the broader activities that support quality education.

1. Robust assessment security

For assessment security to be considered robust, it must operate across an entire degree program rather than at the level of individual tasks. This requires implementing secure assessment practices through a diverse range of assessment types, such as examinations and oral presentations, and ensuring these are scaffolded throughout the program. Reliance on a single assessment mode increases vulnerability, whereas varied assessment methods provide multiple points at which student identity can be confirmed and assessment conditions can be appropriately controlled.

2. A culture of academic integrity

Academic integrity encompasses the academic, ethical, and professional norms that students and educators are expected to uphold. This includes honesty in scholarly work, proper attribution, and engagement with learning. Importantly, academic integrity is not solely the responsibility of students. Educators must model these values through transparent assessment design, clear communication of expectations, and ethical teaching and evaluation practices.

3. Valid and trustworthy assessment design

Assessments should be designed to enable educators to draw the most valid inferences possible about student capability and produce evidence that is sufficiently trustworthy to support program-level assurance of learning. Drawing on Kane's (2013) framework for validity arguments, assessments that allow for greater validity and trustworthiness are:

- **Complete:** They include everything needed to evidence learning and minimise superfluous elements. A complete assessment provides sufficient opportunity for students to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes, while seeking to avoid unnecessary elements that add burden without adding meaningful evidence of the targeted learning.
- **Coherent:** The assessment elements work together logically and consistently. Tasks, criteria, feedback mechanisms, and judgements align with each other and with the stated learning outcomes, creating a unified and sensible whole.
- **Plausible:** The assessment design credibly demonstrates that learning outcomes have been achieved. The connection between what students demonstrate and what we claim they know or can do must be believable and defensible.

Why all three matter

These three foundations are interdependent, and all three are needed to support the assurance of learning. To illustrate:

- Security without valid and trustworthy assessment design provides no meaningful assurance. A highly secure exam that tests only recall rather than application tells us little about whether students can apply their knowledge.
- Valid and trustworthy assessment design without security is equally limited. An assessment that supports strong inferences about capability, but where identity or conditions cannot be confirmed, cannot provide credible evidence of a student's learning.
- Academic integrity alone is insufficient. While institutions must educate students about integrity and create cultures that value it, assurance cannot rest solely on aspirational expectations of conduct.

These foundations are not only interdependent but can also be in tension. Overemphasising one can weaken another, requiring institutions to balance their approach to assurance carefully.

Part II. Models of assurance of learning in online credentialled programs

Several potential models are outlined here for supporting assurance of learning in fully online credentialled programs. These models are not exhaustive, and their suitability will vary according to institutional context, disciplinary requirements, and student needs. Institutions may find that certain elements within each model are more applicable to their circumstances than others and are encouraged to adapt and combine features across models as appropriate. Each model must be grounded in appropriate curriculum and assessment design, while recognising that strong design alone is not sufficient to provide assurance.

Distinguishing higher and lower risk approaches

Before presenting specific models, it is important to distinguish between higher and lower risk approaches to assurance in fully online credentialled programs. Table 2 outlines key distinctions between higher and lower risk approaches across three critical dimensions.

Table 2. Risks for assurance of learning in fully online programs

	Higher risk approaches	Lower risk approaches
Mode	Fully asynchronous learning and assessment with no required synchronous elements	Combination of asynchronous and synchronous elements, with some synchronous elements required for all students
Design	Siloed units with assessments that do not demonstrate progression or integration of learning outcomes	Interconnected, scaffolded, purposeful curriculum with assessment design that enables educators to make credible inferences about students’ capability across the program
Verification	Discrete invigilated online assessments as the sole mechanism for verifying learning	Use of one or more verification models embedded appropriately across the program

Relying solely on online invigilated examinations as the verification mechanism is inadequate. The models outlined in this paper provide more comprehensive approaches that address assurance holistically across the program rather than depending on single-point technological solutions.

Student identity verification

Assurance of learning also requires institutions to confirm not only that learning has been demonstrated, but that it has been demonstrated by the enrolled student. Universities must implement identity verification processes that include verified government-issued photo identification at enrolment, secure and safe storage of verified identity information, and periodic re-verification at strategic points throughout programs. These processes should be designed to accommodate students from diverse backgrounds while maintaining the level of integrity required for credible assurance.

Model 1: Supervised assessments at approved locations

This model incorporates targeted, supervised in-person assessment blocks at key stages throughout a program. Assessments are conducted at approved locations and overseen by trusted, trained individuals who can verify identity and ensure appropriate assessment conditions.

Table 3. Supervised assessments at approved locations

Minimum requirements
• Student physically co-located with a trusted and trained individual who can verify identity and maintain secure assessment conditions • Students attend approved locations such as institutional campuses, Regional University Study Hubs (RUSHs), global campuses, or accredited testing centres at designated points in the program • All requirements are clearly communicated prior to enrolment
Benefits
• High confidence in student identity and assessment conditions through physical co-location with a trusted supervisor • Enables synchronous, supervised demonstration of students’ capability • Particularly suited to disciplines requiring hands-on demonstration or practical skills
Implementation considerations
• All locations require appropriate infrastructure, including trained supervisors, secure facilities, suitable technology, and clear operational protocols • Assessment design must justify the in-person requirement with tasks that genuinely benefit from supervised, synchronous conditions • Coordination across multiple sites requires effective systems and protocols³
Limits or constraints
• Equity barriers: Travel and accommodation costs, work commitments, caring responsibilities, and other factors may disproportionately affect equity students • Geographic limitations: More feasible for programs with concentrated student populations rather than highly distributed cohorts • Third-party provider risks: Use of external testing centres introduces additional risk (e.g., inconsistent supervision standards, variability in rigour) • Perception risks: Without complementary elements from other models, the approach may be viewed as focused solely on securing assessment rather than supporting ongoing learning

^[3] Use of third-party testing centres relates to HESF Standard 5.4 (Delivery with Other Parties). Providers remain responsible for quality, integrity, safety and student support even when external organisations host assessments. Clear agreements and regular quality monitoring are essential.

Enhanced approaches

- Use multiple supervised blocks throughout the program rather than single end-point assessments, allowing co-location to serve as both verification and an opportunity for rich learning experiences
- Integrate supervised blocks with substantial learning experiences such as residential schools, collaborative intensives, or laboratory workshops to add educational value
- Prioritise institutional or RUSH locations over third-party testing centres to strengthen community, reduce cost, and minimise external risks
- Combine supervised blocks with ongoing synchronous engagement between them

Model 2: Accredited workplace supervision and assessment

This model is particularly relevant for professionally oriented programs in which students learn through practice within workplace settings. It relies on trained or professionally accredited supervisors in students' local areas who can observe, support, and assess performance in person. Assessment is embedded within authentic professional practice, with supervision conducted by individuals who meet defined institutional or professional accreditation requirements.

Table 4. Accredited workplace supervision and assessment

Minimum requirements

- In-person supervised workplace experiences and assessments as mandatory program components
- Professionally accredited or institution-trained supervisors who physically observe students' performance
- Clear protocols for supervisor-institution collaboration
- Regular communication between workplace supervisors and institutional staff

Benefits

- Assessment in professional contexts where students can demonstrate applied learning
- Leverages existing professional networks and accreditation systems
- Well-suited to professionally oriented programs with established industry or community partnerships

Implementation considerations

- Supervisor accreditation systems must be sound, whether administered through professional registration bodies or institutional training processes
- Collaboration protocols must be explicit and include assessment task specifications, rubrics, expectations for check-ins between supervisors and academic staff, structured reporting processes, and clarity about decision-making authority
- Workplace assessments typically address only a subset of program learning outcomes. Institutions must ensure that complementary assessment approaches verify all required outcomes across the program
- Quality assurance mechanisms are needed to ensure consistency across diverse workplace settings
- Placement coordination infrastructure is required to match students with appropriate supervisors and support students when suitable local opportunities are limited

Limits or constraints

- **Equity barriers:** Availability of appropriate placements varies by location (e.g., rural and remote); students with disabilities may face workplace discrimination; unpaid placements create financial hardship for economically vulnerable students
- **Geographic concentration:** Depends on sufficient density of qualified supervisors and appropriate workplaces in students' local areas
- **Supervisor capacity:** Requires ongoing investment in supervisor training, support, and recognition; quality depends on supervisor availability and commitment

Enhanced approaches

- Multiple placement experiences throughout the program rather than single placement
- Paid placements to reduce financial and equity barriers⁴
- Enhanced supervisor training and recognition programs

^[4]The Universities Accord (2024) advocates for paid professional placements, particularly in fields such as teaching, nursing and social work, as a matter of both equity and quality. Institutions implementing Model 2 should prioritise remunerated placements wherever possible to reduce financial barriers for students and recognise the professional contribution students make during workplace learning.

Model 3: Longitudinal synchronous learning partnerships

This model attracts more scepticism than the previous two because it relies on educator judgement developed through sustained interaction over time. Unlike the previous models, which verify capability at specific assessment checkpoints, this approach builds assurance through ongoing synchronous engagement that allows educators to observe students' development across the program.

Table 5. Longitudinal synchronous learning partnerships

Minimum requirements
• A consistent educator assigned to each student for an extended period, such as a semester, a year, or the full program • Regular required synchronous interaction, with flexible frequency such as fortnightly or monthly sessions • All judgements are grounded in documented evidence of student capability collected across the degree program, not subjective impressions or unsubstantiated concerns • Reliable video conferencing technology that supports stable and high-quality synchronous interaction
Benefits
• More equitable for students who cannot travel or access supervised in-person environments • May foster stronger educator–student relationships and deeper insight into students' development over time
Implementation considerations
• Staff-to-student and peer-to-peer ratios must allow relationships to develop in meaningful and sustainable ways • Educators require training in supporting learning relationships, working dialogically, and an understanding of the breadth of content students encounter across the program • Clear protocols are needed for documenting student capability and any concerns to ensure all judgements are evidence-based • Workload models must recognise the time-intensive nature of synchronous interaction, relationship-building, and documentation • Technology infrastructure must reliably support synchronous video engagement • Scheduling must accommodate students and educators across different time zones

Limits or constraints

- **Equity barriers:** Students require reliable internet, private space for video interaction, and flexibility to attend scheduled sessions
- **Procedural fairness challenges:** Educator judgements must be evidence-based and defensible; concerns about student capability must be supported by documented discontinuities or inconsistencies rather than subjective impressions; synchronous formats may advantage verbally confident students and disadvantage those who are not, independent of actual capability
- **Verification limitations:** Capabilities observed through synchronous online environments, even over time, can be forged or misrepresented; risks may be reduced when combined with other verification approaches
- **Staff retention critical:** Losing educators mid-program disrupts the longitudinal verification this model provides
- **Resource-intensive:** Favourable staff-to-student ratios require significant investment; not easily scalable to very large programs without substantial resourcing
- **Pedagogical shift required:** Staff need support to shift from content delivery to relational and dialogic teaching with appropriate disciplinary expertise and evidence-based documentation practices

Enhanced approaches

- Programmatic assessment in which evidence collected by individual educators is systematically reviewed by a program committee or panel, separating evidence collection from final judgement
- Weekly synchronous sessions (rather than fortnightly or monthly) providing richer evidence base
- Small cohort models that enable students to build peer relationships, with peers providing additional verification
- Maintaining the same educator–student relationship across the entire program rather than per semester or year
- Integrating this model with other approaches, such as supervised in-person assessments or workplace placements to triangulate evidence

Part III. Systemic challenges the sector must address

The models outlined in Part II provide institutions with viable approaches for assuring learning in fully online credentialled programs. However, effective implementation depends on the sector's willingness to confront three systemic challenges. These are not assessment problems; they are structural, governance, and resourcing issues that affect the implementation of assurance mechanisms.

Challenge 1: The quality-scale paradox

The Universities Accord calls for both a substantial expansion in student numbers and a marked improvement in educational quality (Australian Government, 2024). Yet massification and scaling pressures often sit in tension with the level of design, staffing, and infrastructure required to sustain credible assurance of learning.

Online education is frequently positioned as a way to resolve this tension. However, online provision requires the same level of quality, expertise, and resourcing as face-to-face delivery. Without this, it risks disadvantaging the very equity cohorts it is intended to support. The verification mechanisms outlined in this briefing paper are resource-intensive, yet they are essential for ensuring that fully online programs remain credible, viable, and respected within the sector.

Challenge 2: Workforce challenges

Recent estimates indicate that 60% of academic staff in Australia are employed on casual or fixed-term contracts (Smithers et al., 2025). As highlighted by the Universities Accord, this workforce structure creates barriers to implementing robust assurance mechanisms. Academic staff frequently inherit pre-designed units with limited scope to adapt them and may lack the program-level knowledge needed to ensure coherence across the degree. Assessment is frequently outsourced to markers who have neither familiarity with the program nor established relationships with students.

Without fundamental workload redesign and investment in secure employment, meeting expectations for robust assurance will be unsustainable. Institutions must balance efficiency objectives with the level of staffing, time, and stability required to uphold credible assurance of learning across fully online programs.

Challenge 3: Governance and pedagogical expertise gaps

Decisions about online education are frequently made by individuals without educational or pedagogical expertise, and in many cases without specialised knowledge of online learning. Choices about platforms, delivery models, curriculum structures, and modes of study are often made at governance or operational levels, with educators positioned as recipients of decisions rather than contributors to them.

Online education requires educator oversight at every stage, including the selection and use of learning tools, the pedagogical approaches adopted, and the continuous evaluation and refinement of curriculum and assessment based on student feedback and evidence. This need is no different from face-to-face programs, yet governance structures often treat online education as primarily a technical or strategic concern rather than an educational one.

Without appropriate educator involvement and pedagogical leadership, institutions will struggle to implement the assurance mechanisms necessary for high-quality, fully online programs.

Conclusion

This briefing paper has outlined the components and considerations of a defensible approach to assuring learning in fully online credential programs through three potential models.

Online learning is essential to Australian higher education's equity mission and to meeting the growing demand for flexible study options that support students' professional and personal commitments. The models presented here offer viable approaches that institutions can adapt to their particular contexts, disciplines, and student cohorts.

Effective implementation will require investment in sustainable workload models, the meaningful integration of pedagogical expertise into decision-making processes, and explicit recognition of the trade-offs inherent in assessment design. While proposed legislative reforms and TEQSA's evolving regulatory strategy provide important context, the more compelling reason for this work is to strengthen institutional self-assurance. Providers that can credibly warrant the capability of their graduates will be well-positioned regardless of how regulatory arrangements develop. The sector now has an opportunity to enhance the quality of online education through purposeful design that maintains both rigour and the flexibility students depend on.

About this document

This briefing paper arose from a two-day symposium hosted in Sydney. All authors contributed to the creation of the work. The authorship team consists of higher education leaders, educators, and researchers with expertise across learning and teaching, assessment design, quality assurance, academic integrity, and online education.

The information provided in this document does not represent the position of any of the organisations that the authors are affiliated with and should not be treated as official or endorsed guidance.

Please cite this resource as: Dollinger, M., Bassett, M.A., Dawson, P., Ellis, C., Fawns, T., Liu, D., Lodge, J. M., Marrington, J.Z., McCluskey, T., Mirriahi, N., Murdoch, K., Tindale, J., & White, A. (2025). Assurance of Learning in Fully Online Credentialed Programs: A Briefing Paper for the Australian Higher Education Sector. Curtin University. <https://doi.org/10.25917/rc4p-9s07>

References

- Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES). (2024). Student Equity Data Guide: Higher education institutions in Australia. Perth: Curtin University. <https://www.acses.edu.au/publication/student-equity-data-guide-higher-education-institutions-in-australia/>
- Australian Government. (2021). Higher Education Standards Framework (Threshold Standards) 2021. <https://www.legislation.gov.au/F2021L00488/latest/text>
- Australian Government. (2024). Australian Universities Accord: Final Report. Department of Education. <https://www.education.gov.au/australian-universities-accord/resources/final-report>
- Australian Government. (2025). Modernising and strengthening TEQSA's powers: Consultation paper. Department of Education. <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education/consultations/modernising-and-strengthening-teqsas-powers>
- Clare, J. (2025). Address to TEQSA Conference 2025 [Speech]. Ministers' Media Centre. <https://ministers.education.gov.au/clare/address-teqsa-conference-2025>
- Dawson, P. (2021). Defending assessment security in a digital world: Preventing e-cheating and supporting academic integrity in higher education. Routledge.
- Department of Education. (2024). Table 2.7: All students by state, higher education institution, mode of attendance, 2024. In Selected higher education statistics – 2024 student data [Data set]. Australian Government. <https://www.education.gov.au/higher-education-statistics/student-data/selected-higher-education-statistics-2024-student-data>
- Kane, M. T. (2013). Validating the interpretations and uses of test scores. *Journal of Educational Measurement*, 50(1), 1-73. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jedem.12000>
- Lodge, J., Matthews, K., Kubler, M., & Johnstone, M. (2022). Final report: Modes of delivery in higher education. Institute for Social Science Research and Institute for Teaching and Learning Innovation, The University of Queensland. Prepared for the Australian Government Department of Education and the Higher Education Standards Panel.
- Lodge, J. M., Bearman, M., Dawson, P., Gniel, H., Harper, R. Liu, D., McLean, J., Ucnik, L. & Associates (2025). Enacting assessment reform in a time of artificial intelligence. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, Australian Government. <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/corporate-publications/enacting-assessment-reform-time-artificial-intelligence>
- Lodge, J. M., Howard, S., Bearman, M., Dawson, P., & Associates. (2023). Assessment reform for the age of artificial intelligence. Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency. <https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/resources/corporate-publications/assessment-reform-age-artificial-intelligence>

- Shalley, F., Smith, J., Wood, D., Fredericks, B., Robertson, K., & Larkin, S. (2017). Understanding completion rates of Indigenous higher education students from two regional universities: A cohort analysis. National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education (NCSEHE), Perth: Curtin University.
- Smithers, K., Harris, J., Heffernan, T., & Gurr, S. (2025). Decasualisation and the universities accord: an examination of university approaches. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 47(3), 282-298. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1360080X.2025.2462128>
- Stone, C. (2017). Opportunity through online learning: Improving student access, participation and success in higher education. National Centre for Student Equity in Higher Education, Curtin University.

Appendix

Definitions

For the purposes of this briefing paper, fully online credentialled programs refers to Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) accredited programs in which students can complete all required learning and assessment without required attendance at a physical campus. This includes undergraduate certificates, diplomas, bachelor degrees, and postgraduate coursework programs delivered entirely online.

This definition typically aligns with programs offered in the Department of Education's 'external' mode of attendance, as defined under the Higher Education Support Act 2003 (HESA).

This briefing paper does not address non-award courses, micro-credentials, professional development modules, or Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) that do not lead to AQF qualifications. While these offerings raise important questions about quality assurance, they operate under different regulatory frameworks and are not subject to the same HESF standards governing credentialled programs.

Mana Tohu - Restoring Integrity in Assessment

17 December 2025

Massey University –
Secure Examination
Delivery Proposal

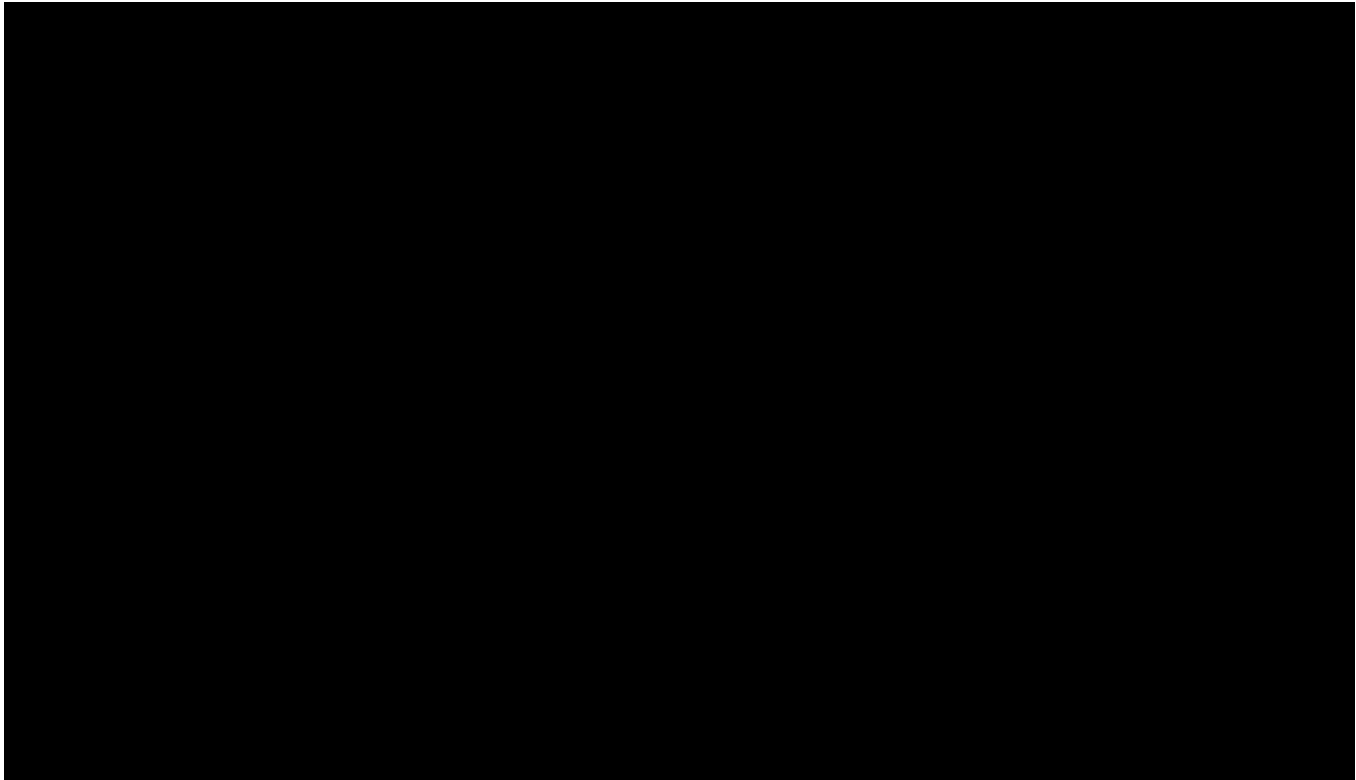
Aspeq



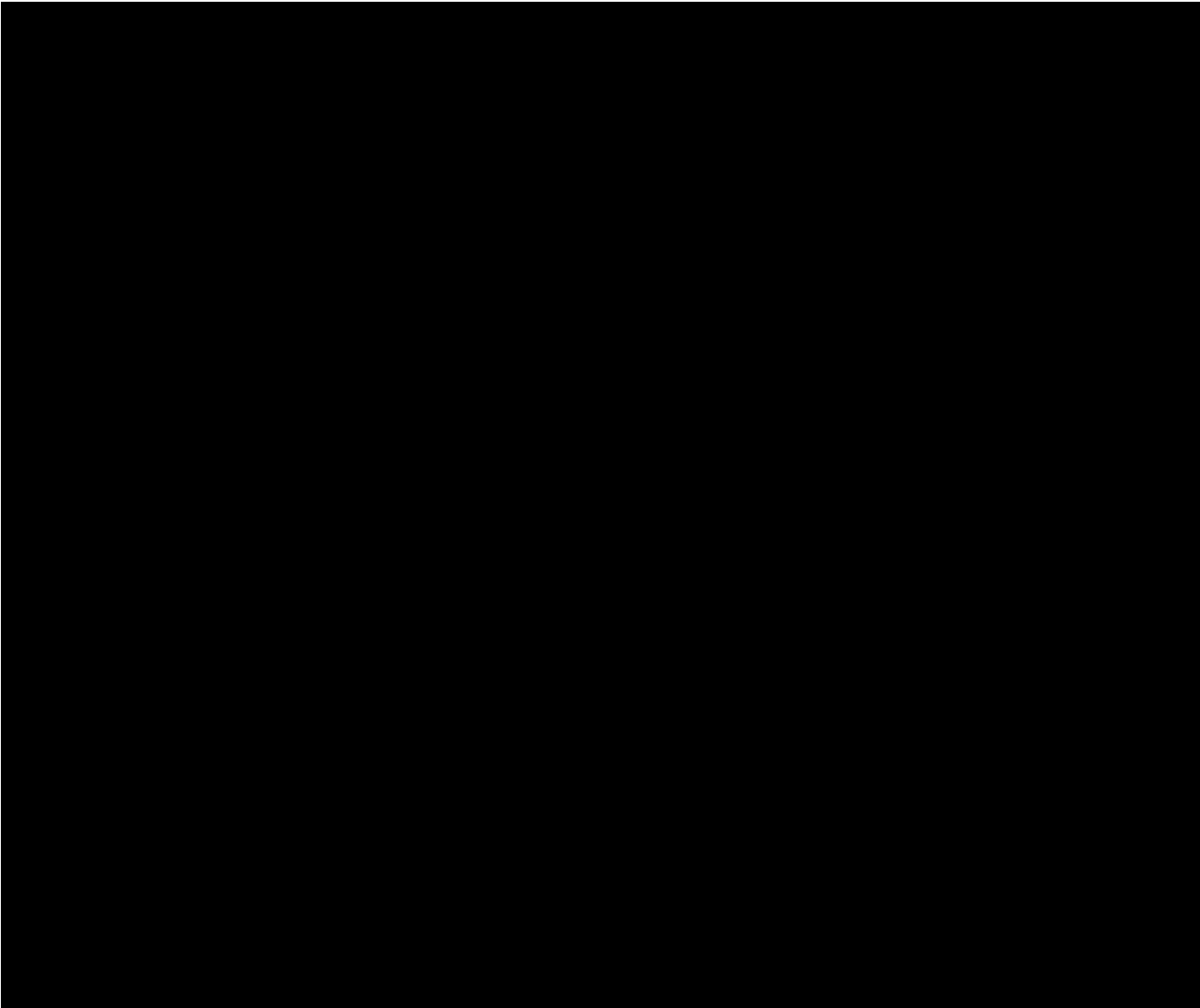
TE KUNENGA | MASSEY
KI PŪREHUROA | UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

CONFIDENTIAL

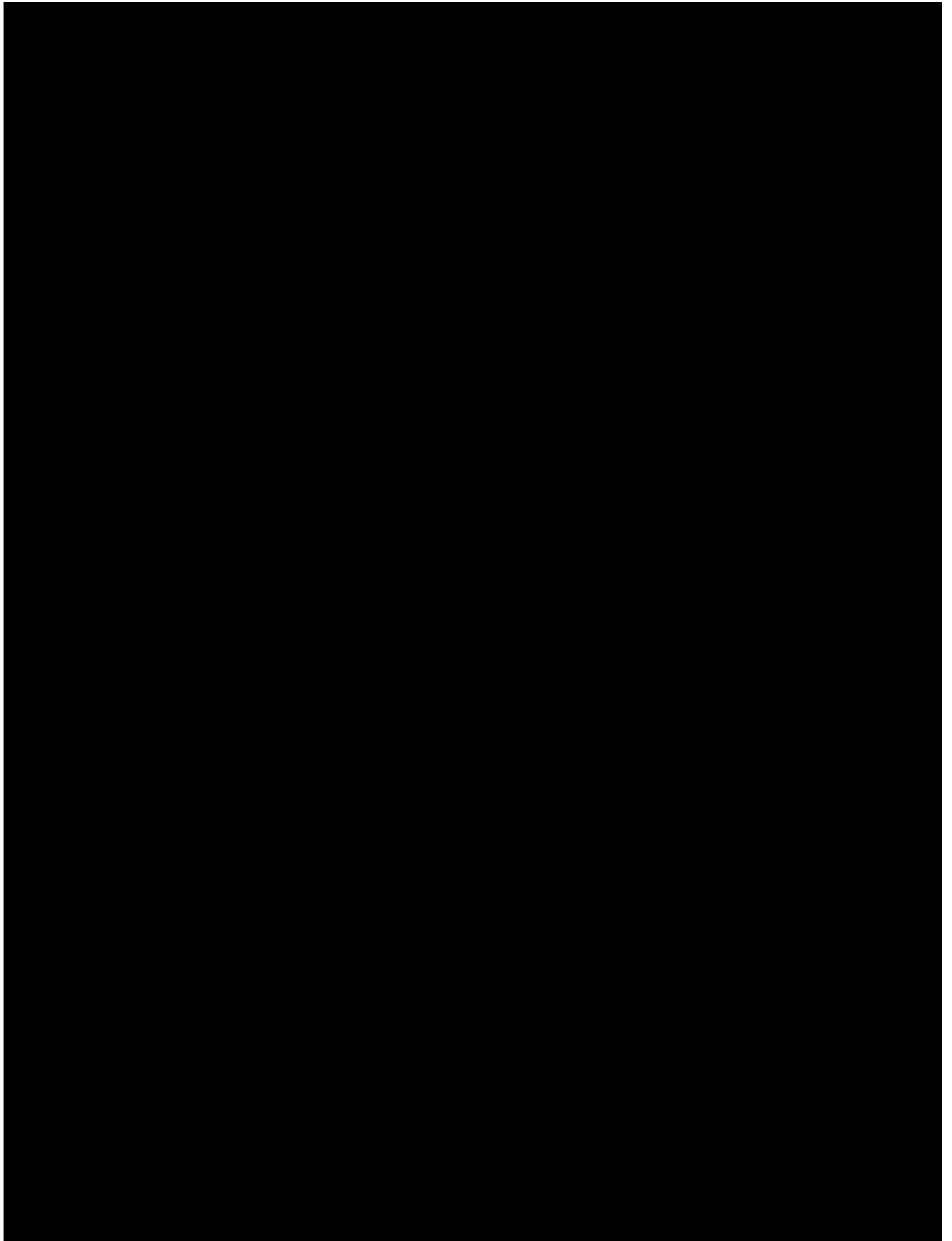


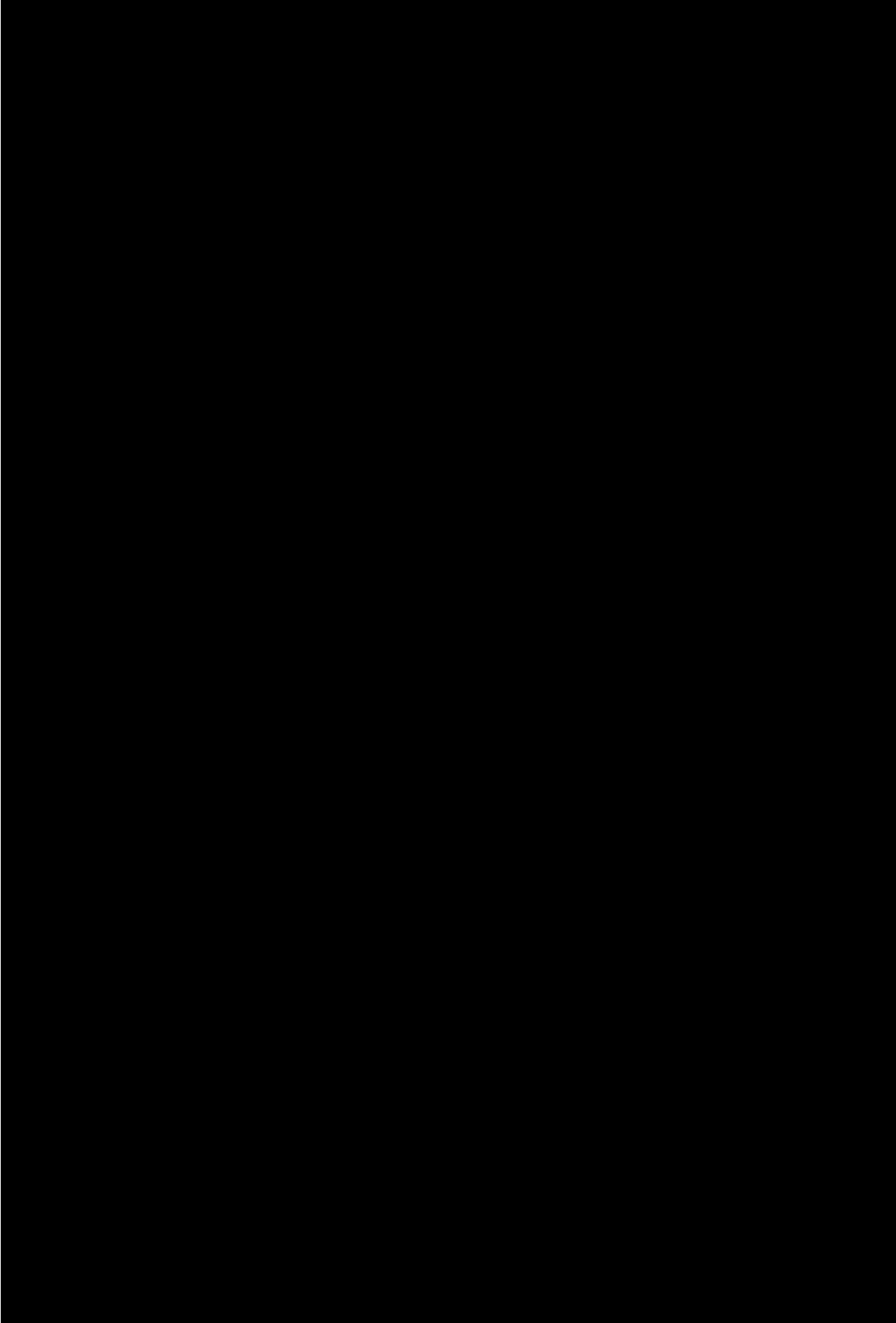


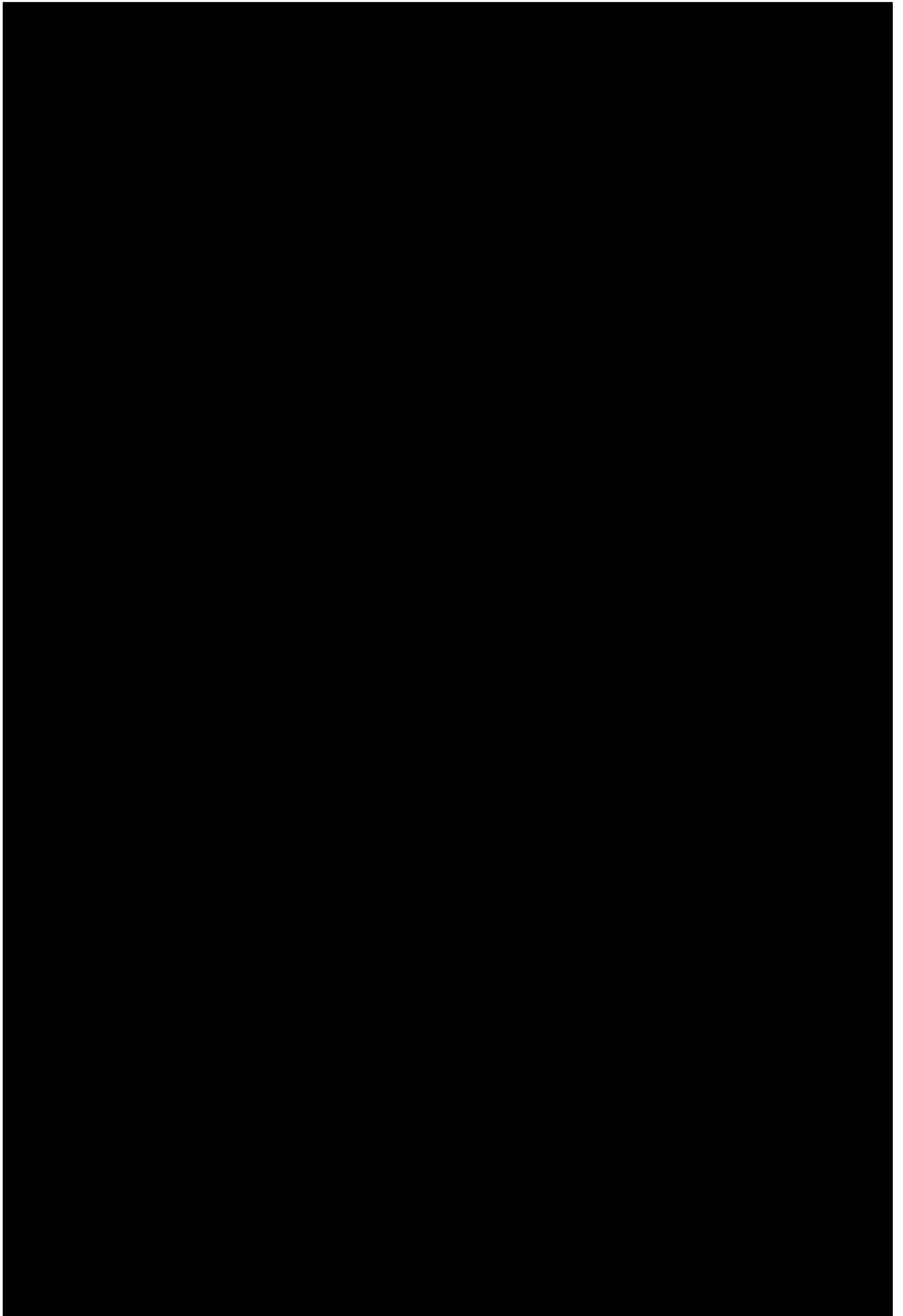
DRAFT

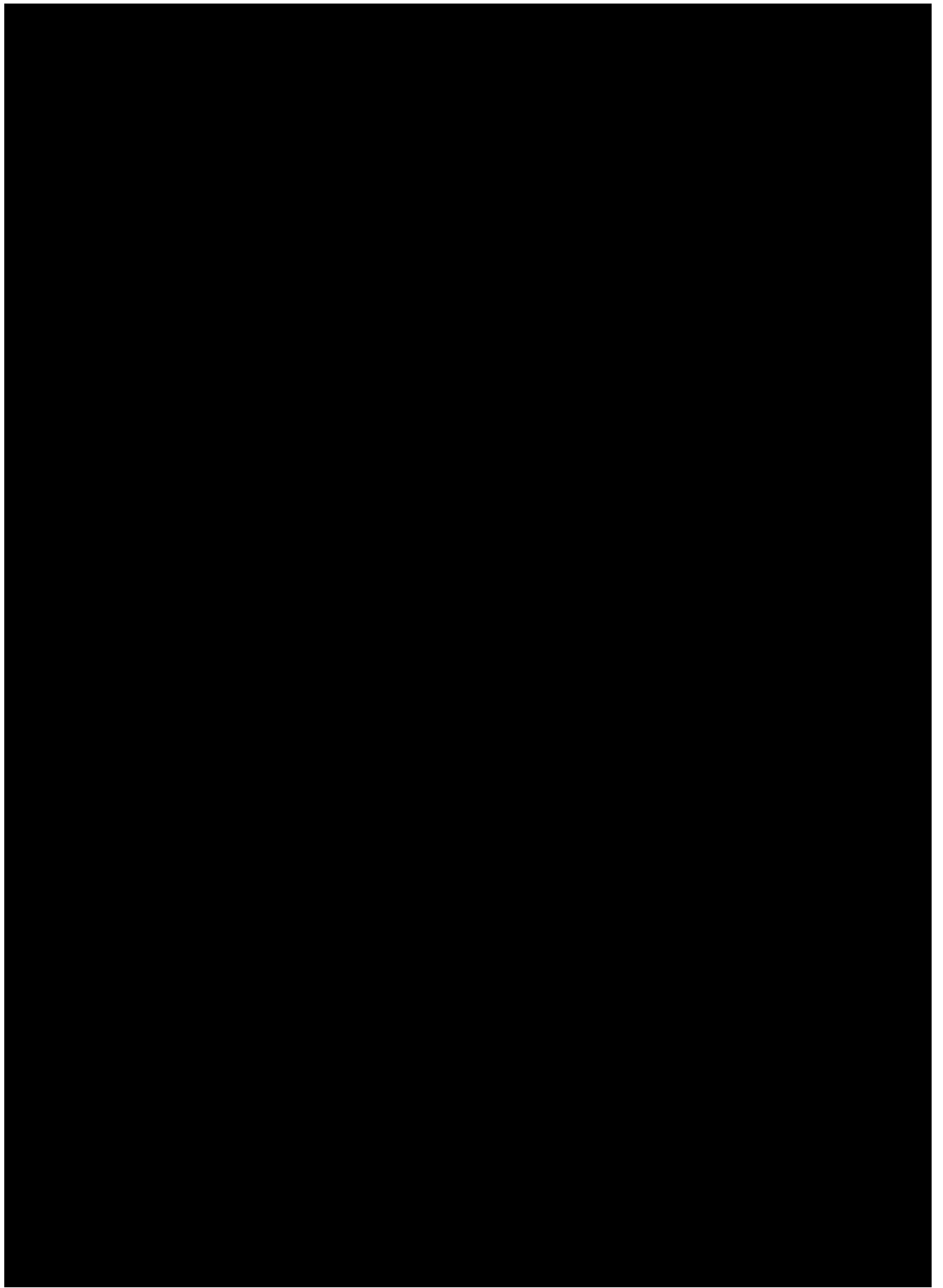


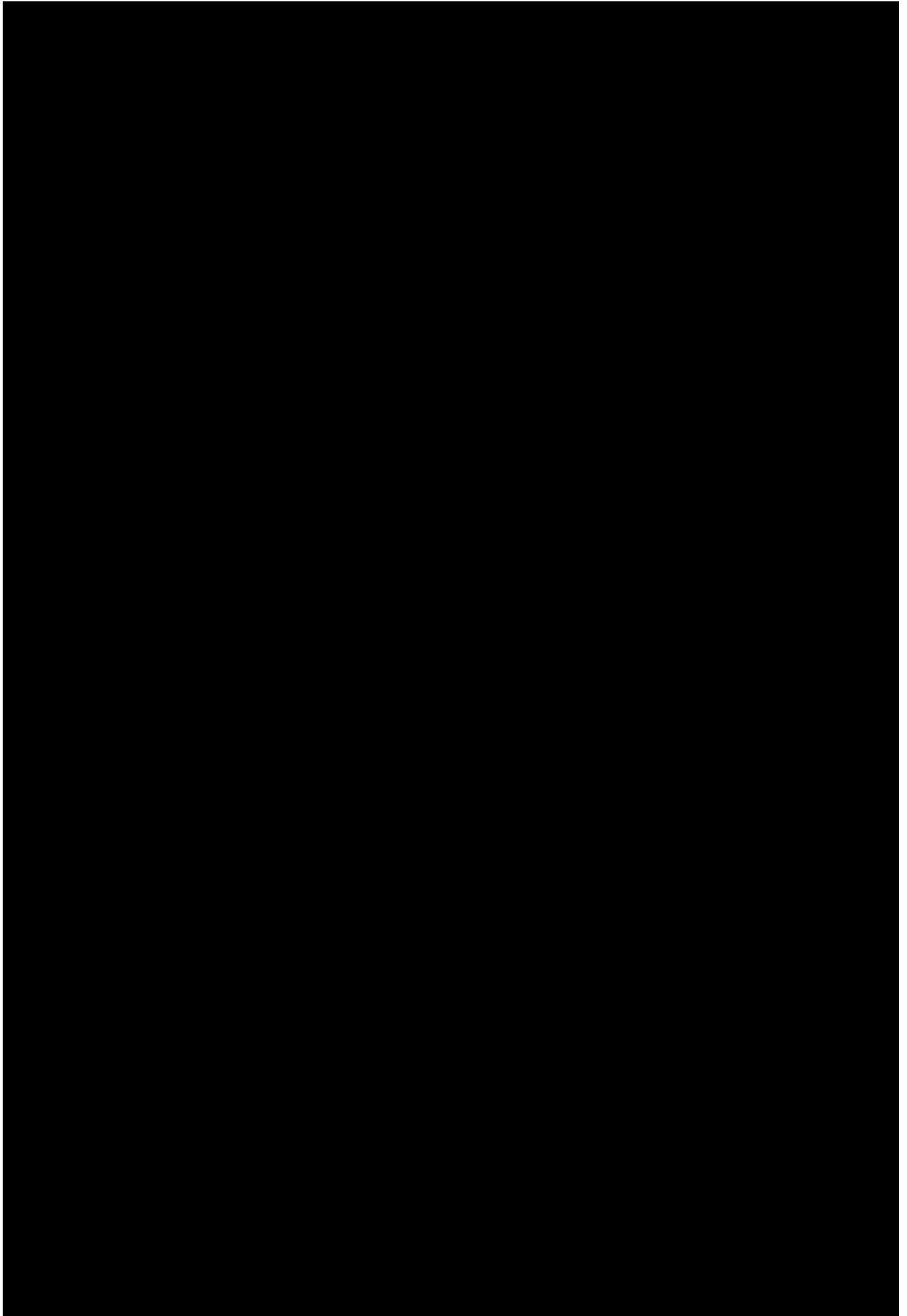
DRAFT

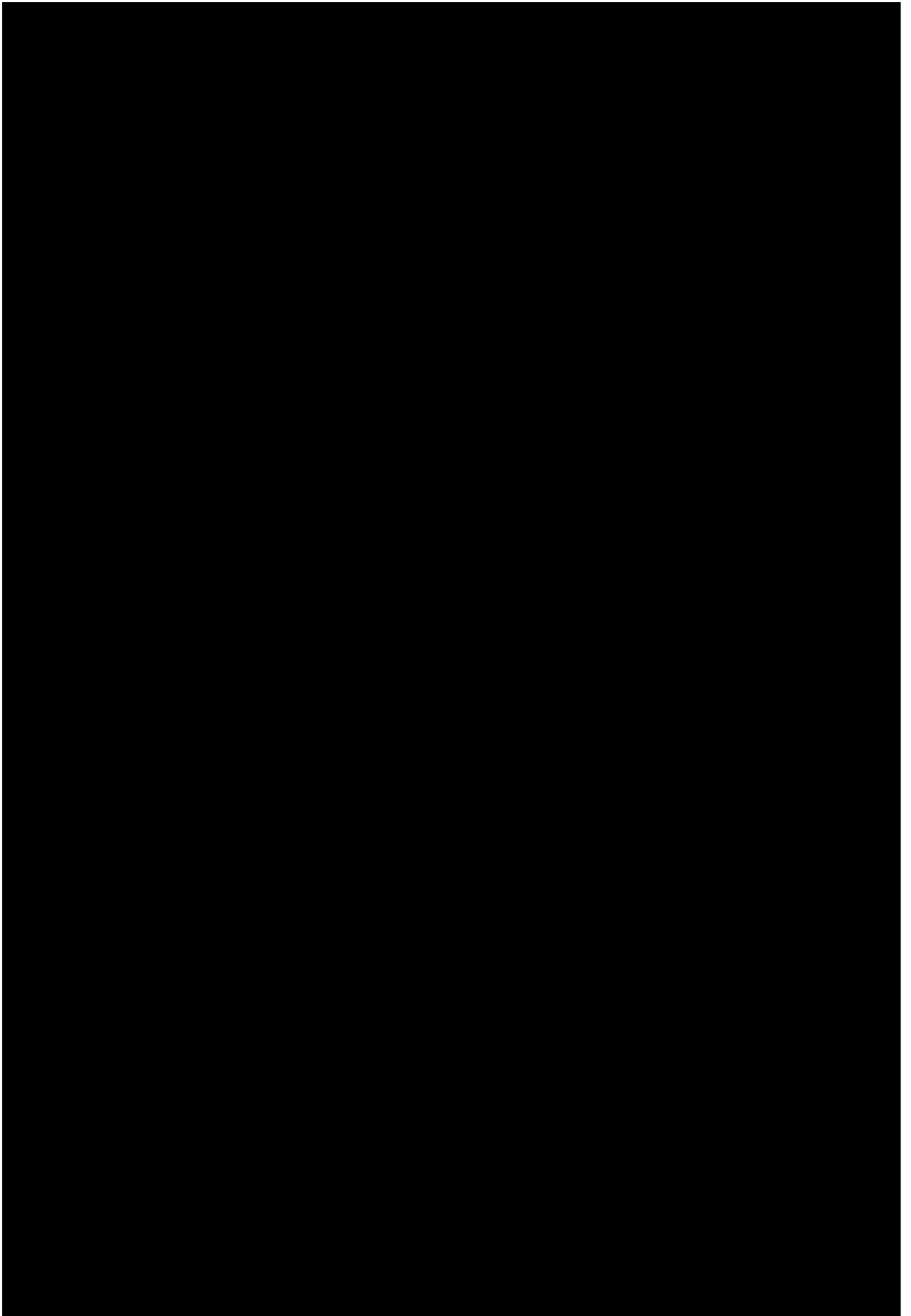


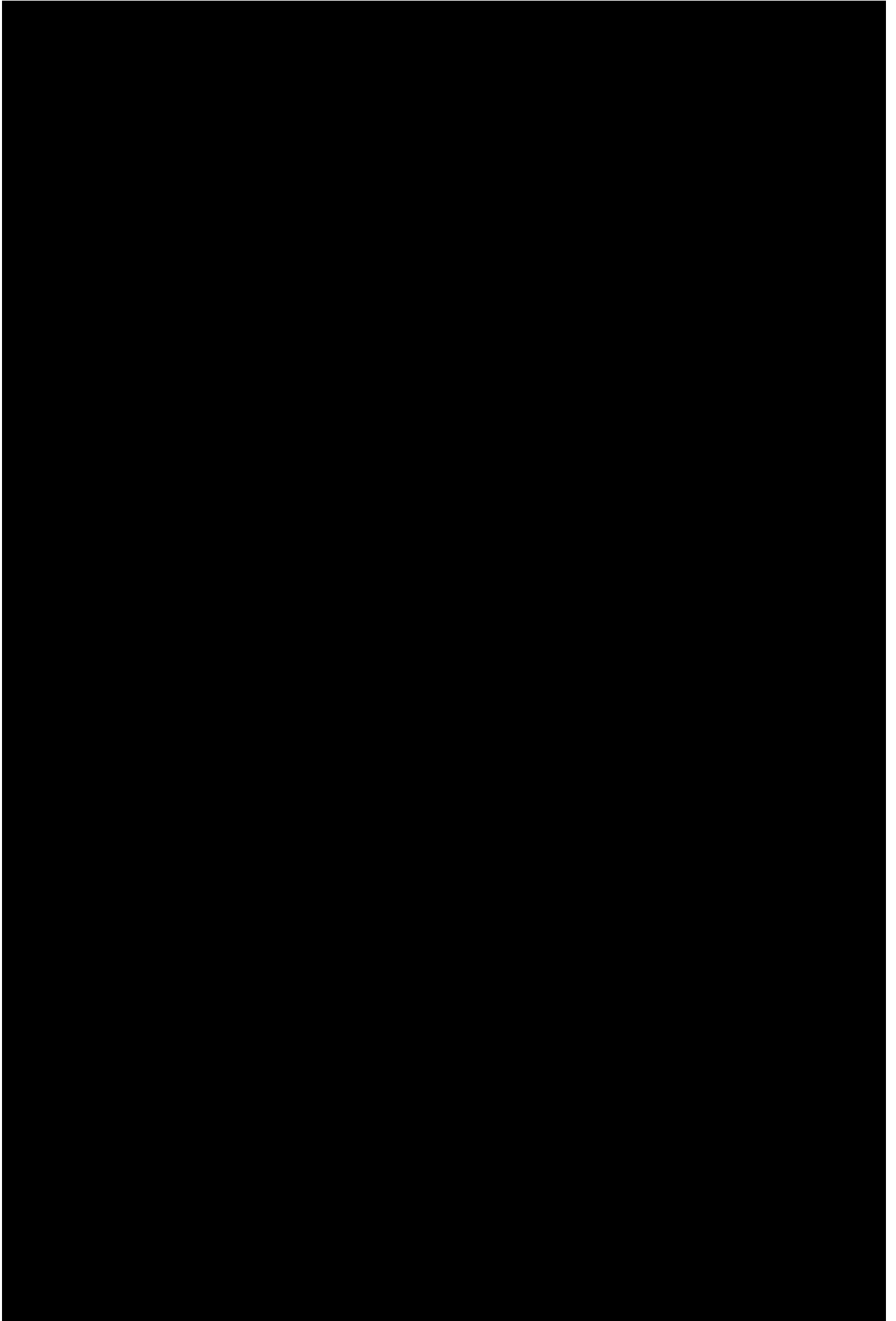


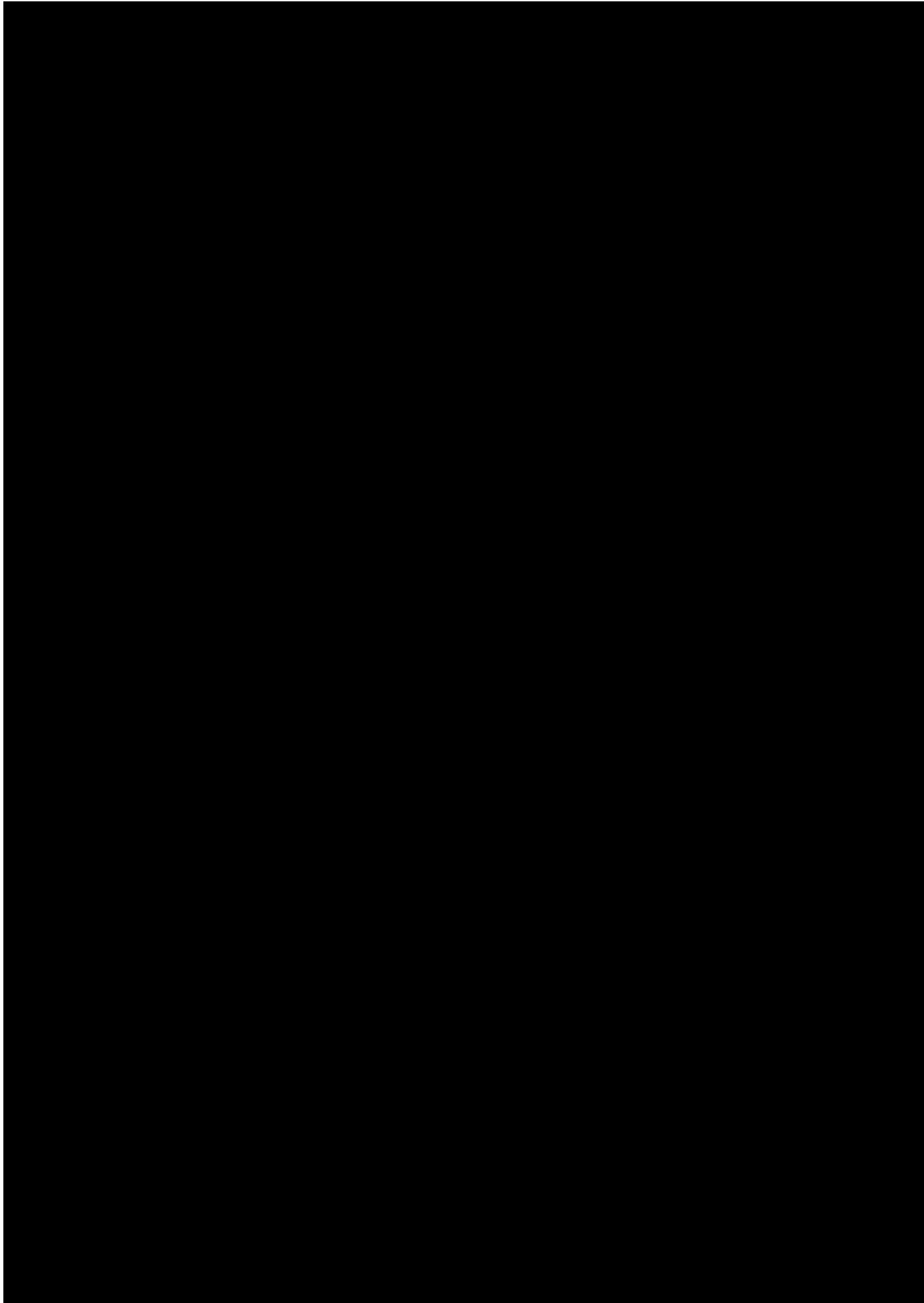


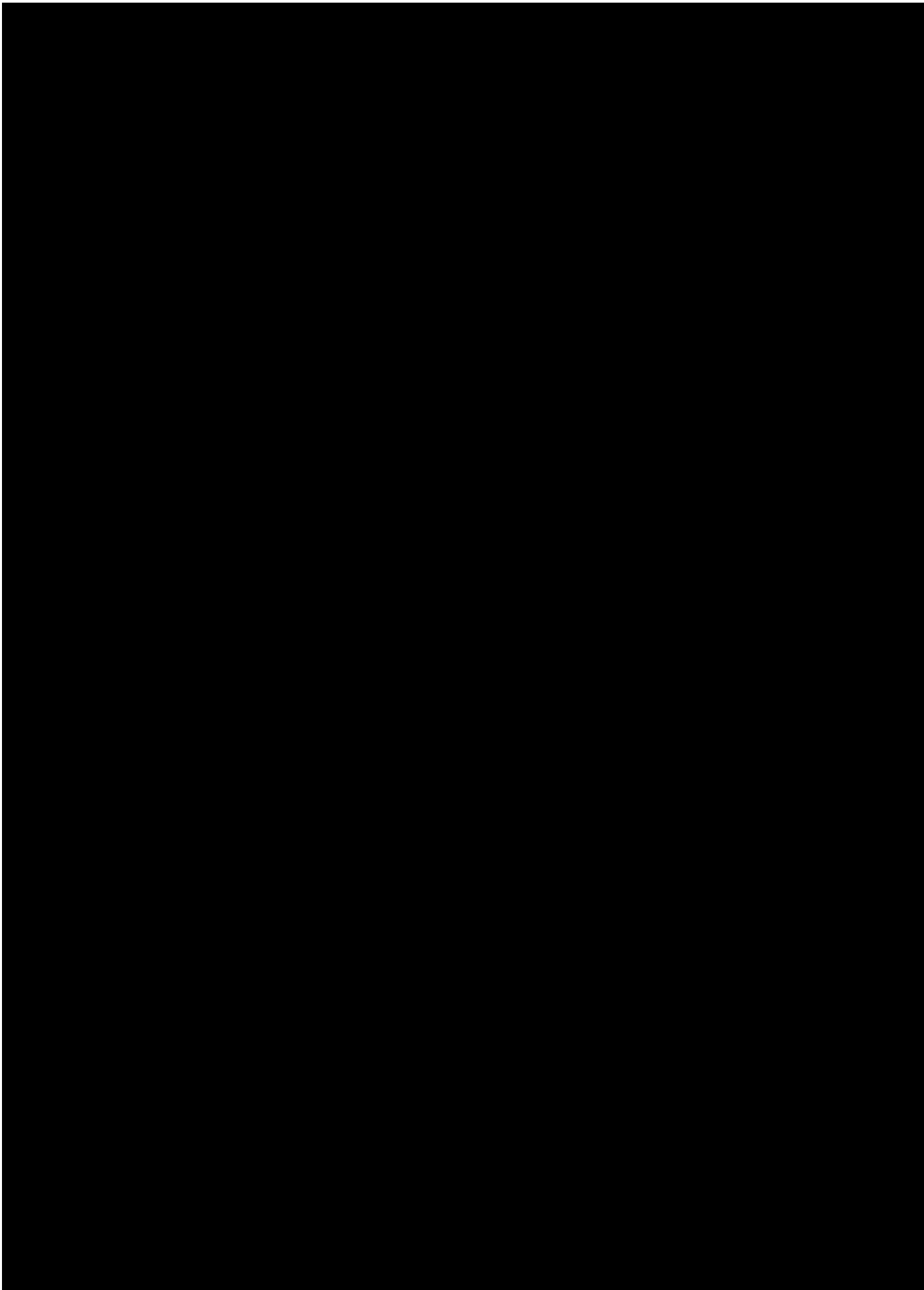


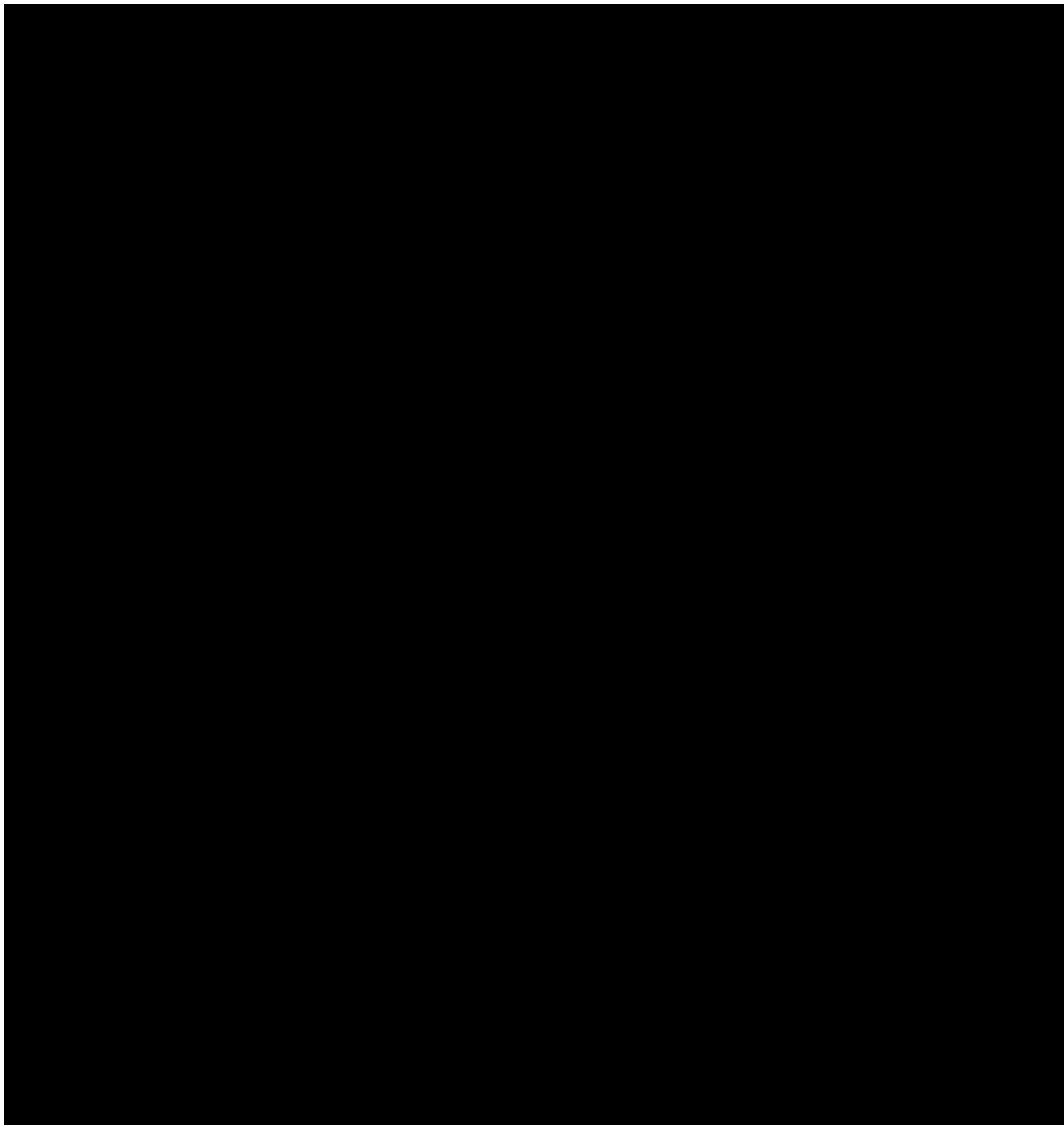


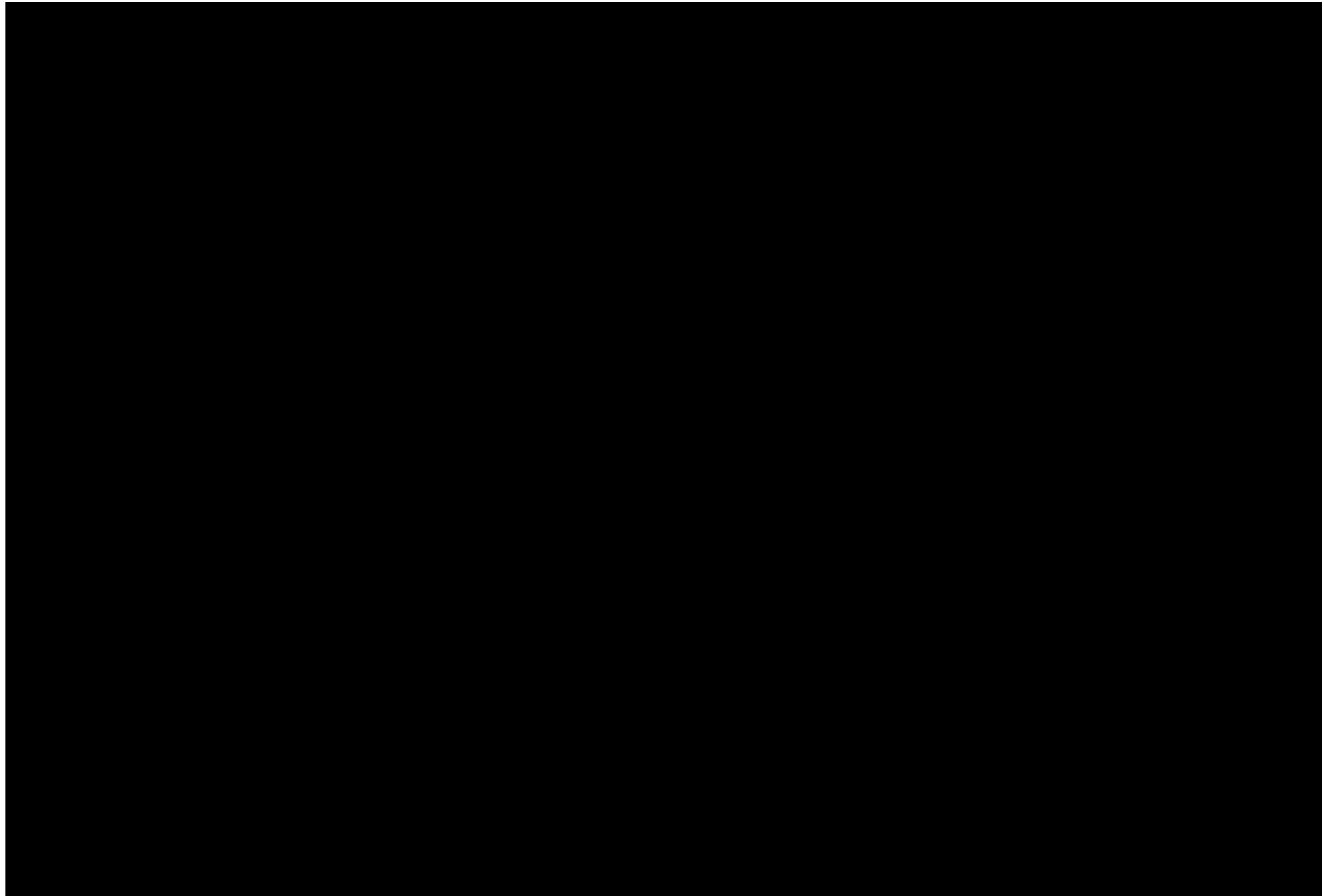


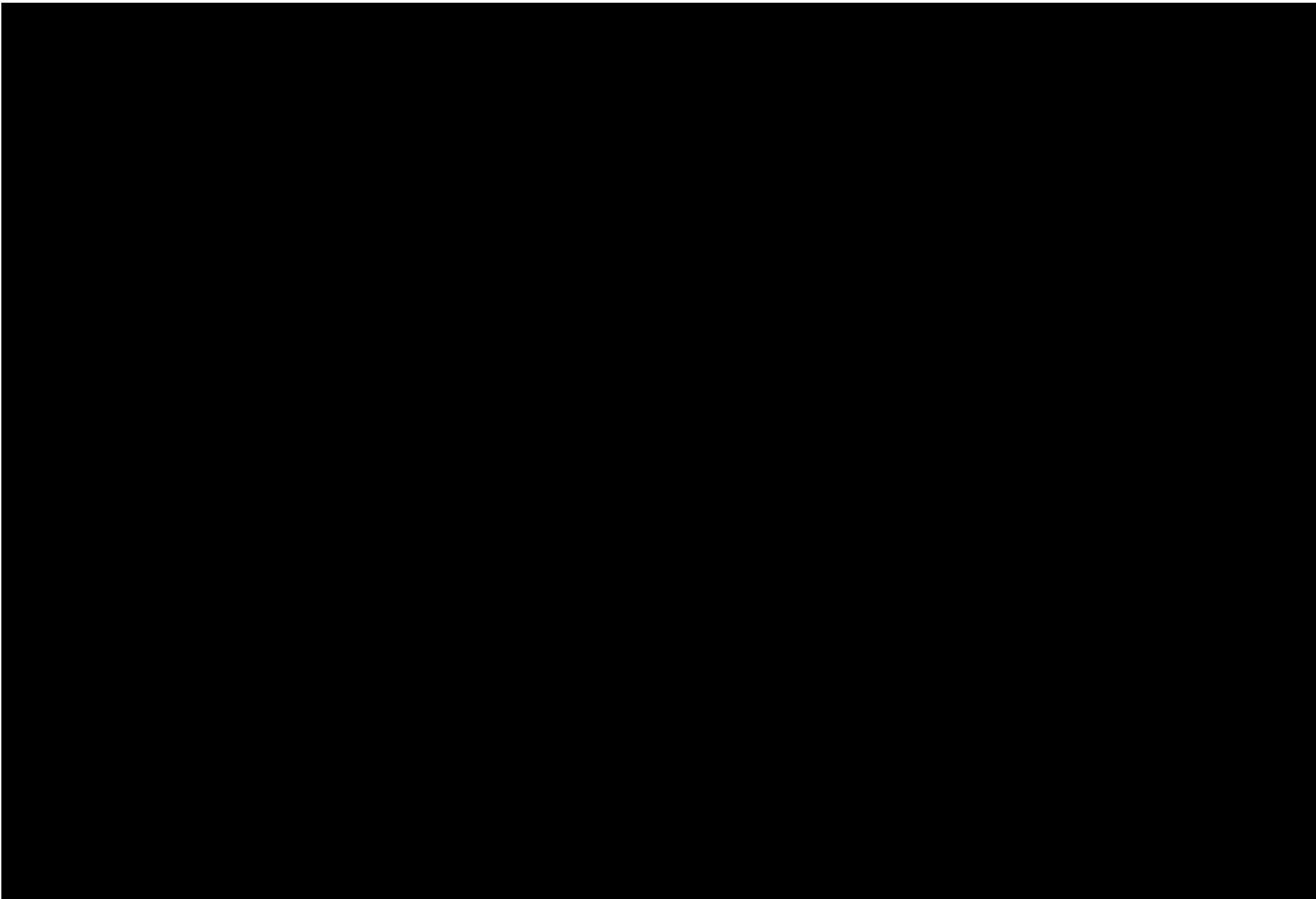


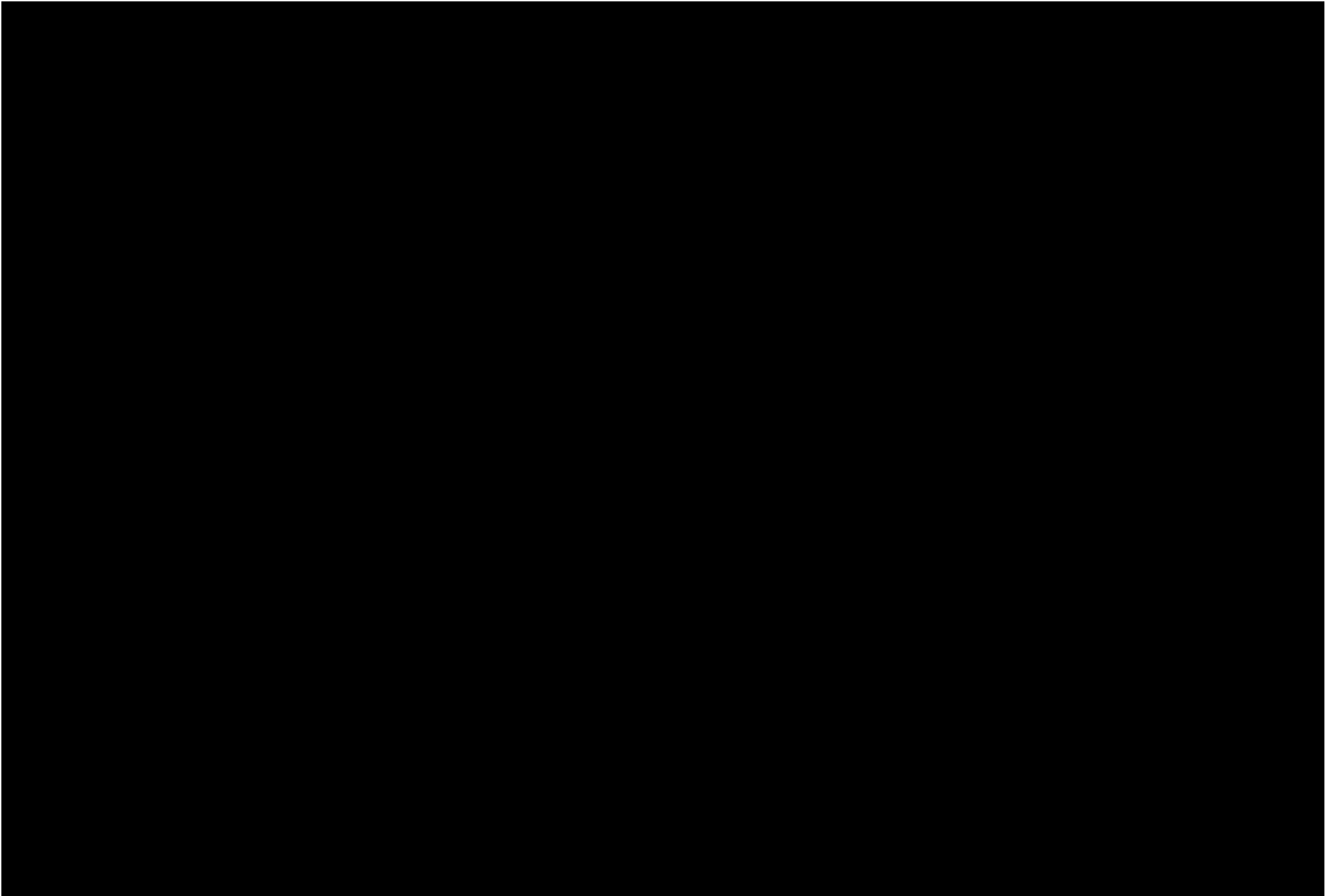






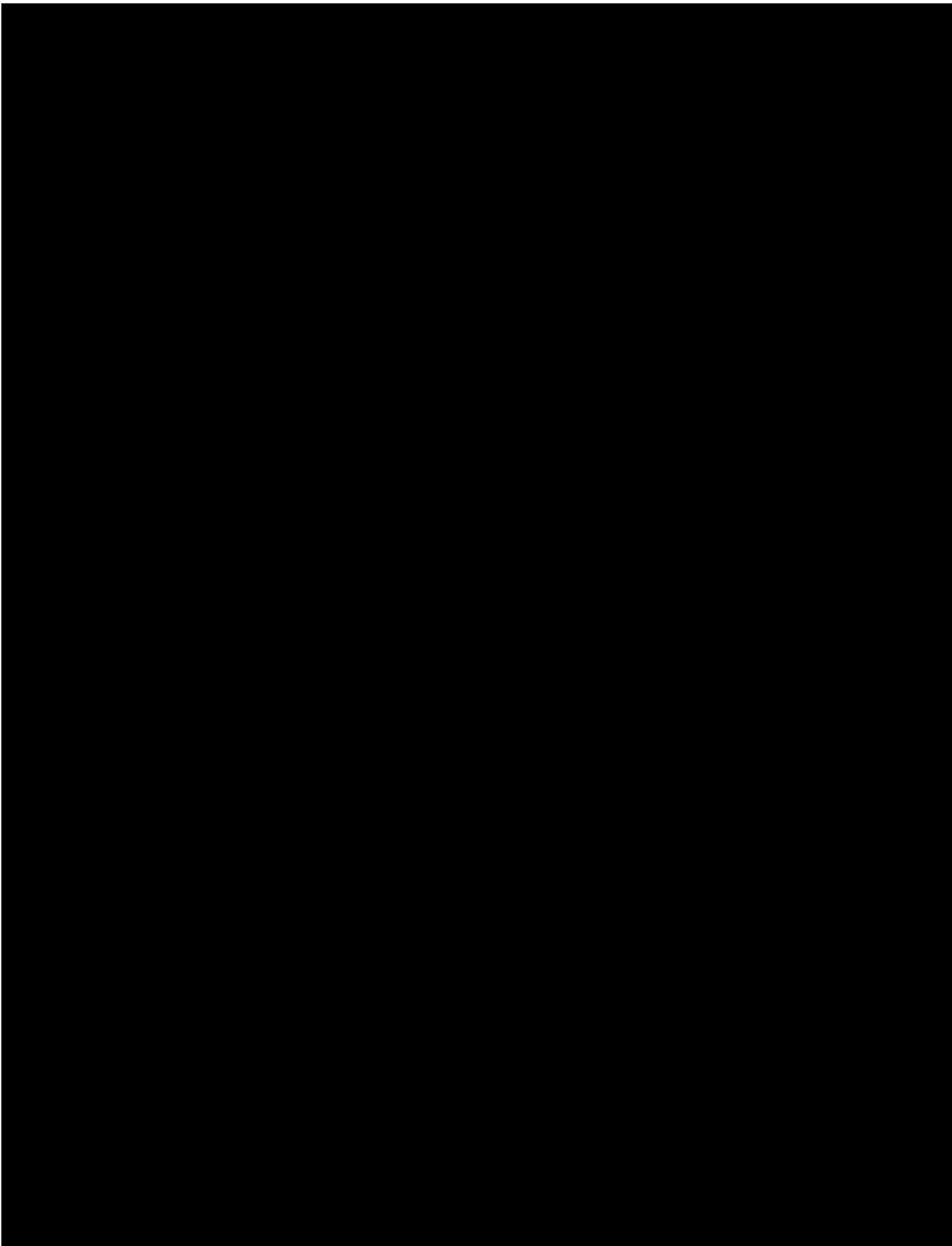






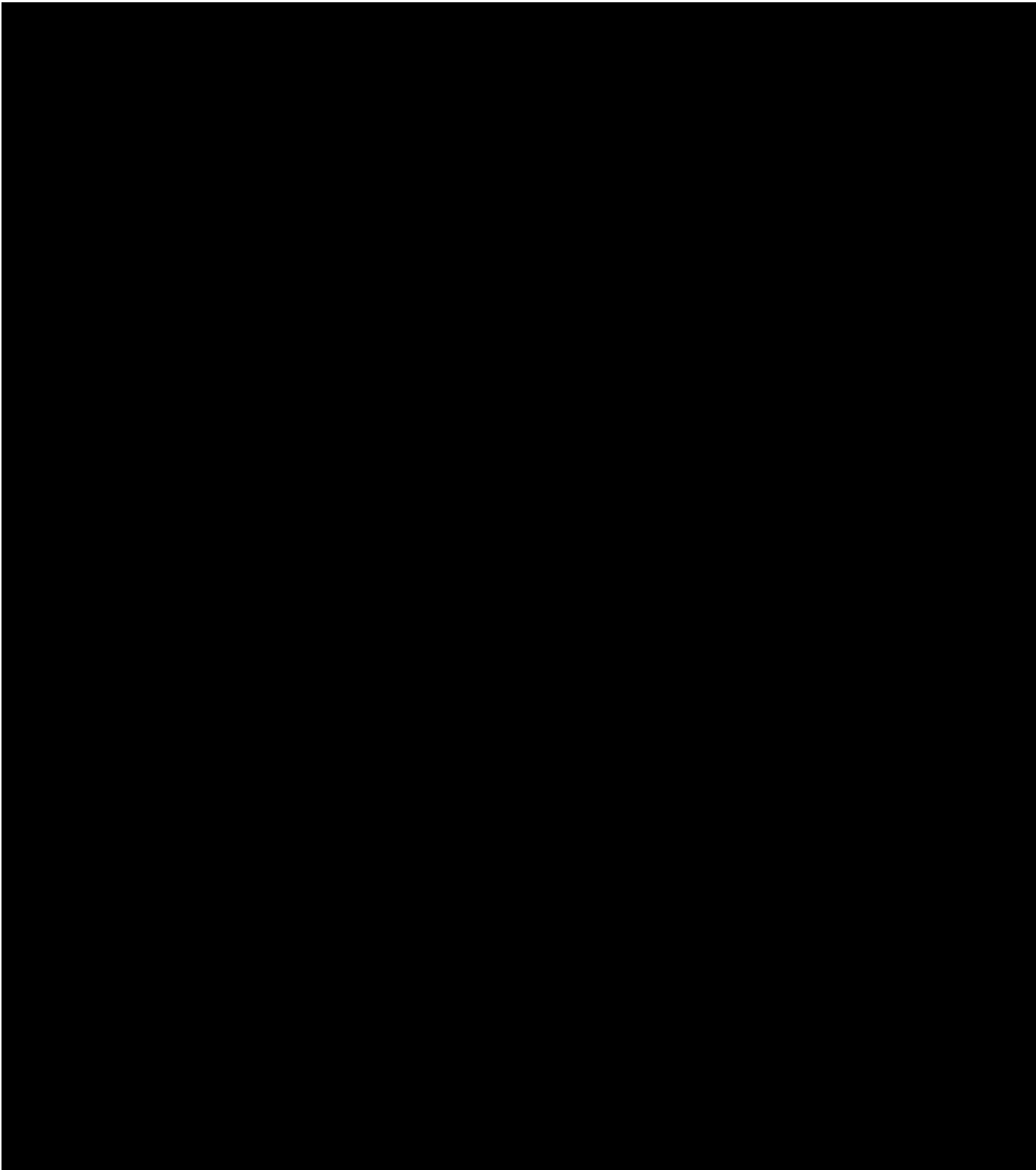


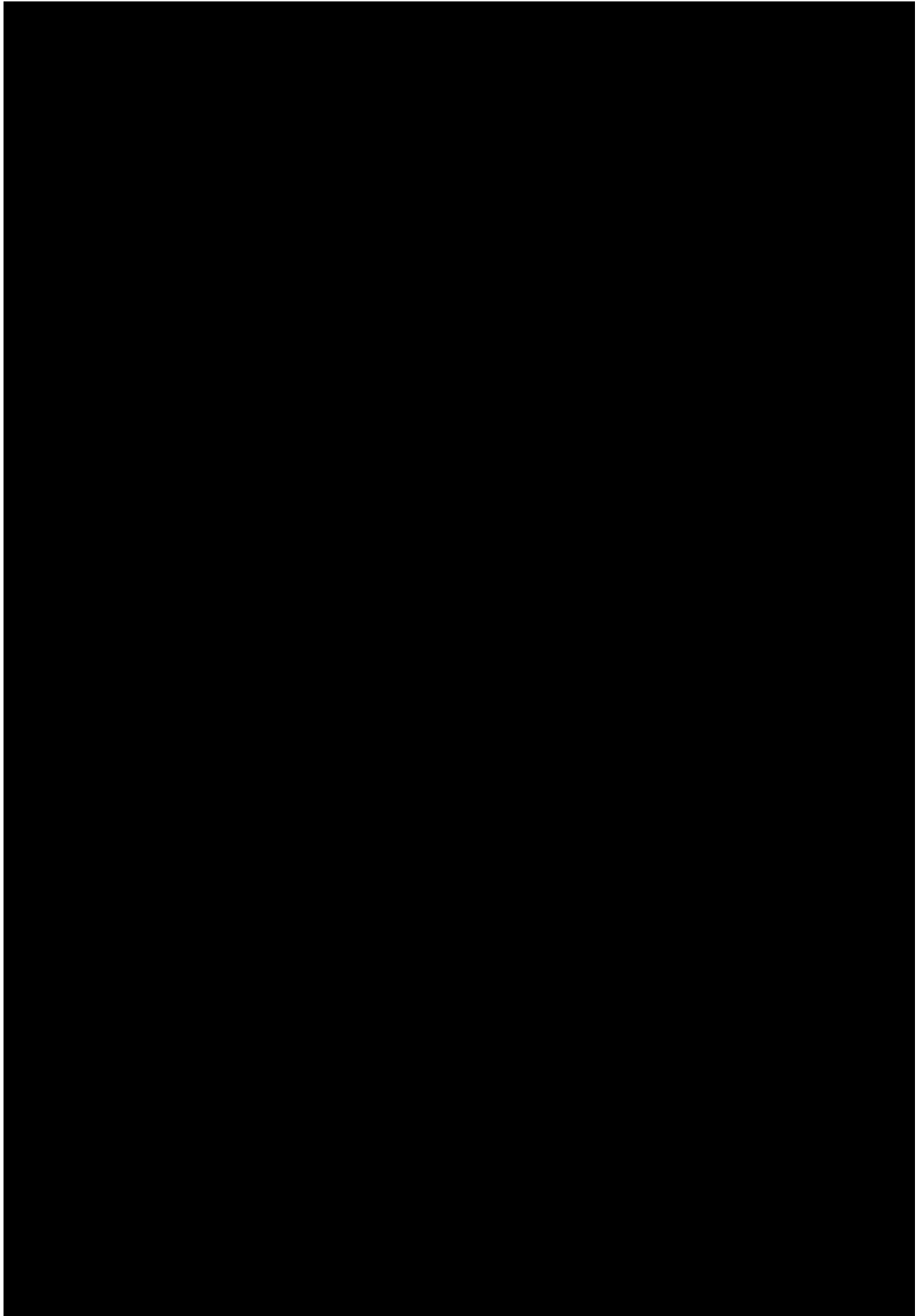
DRAFT

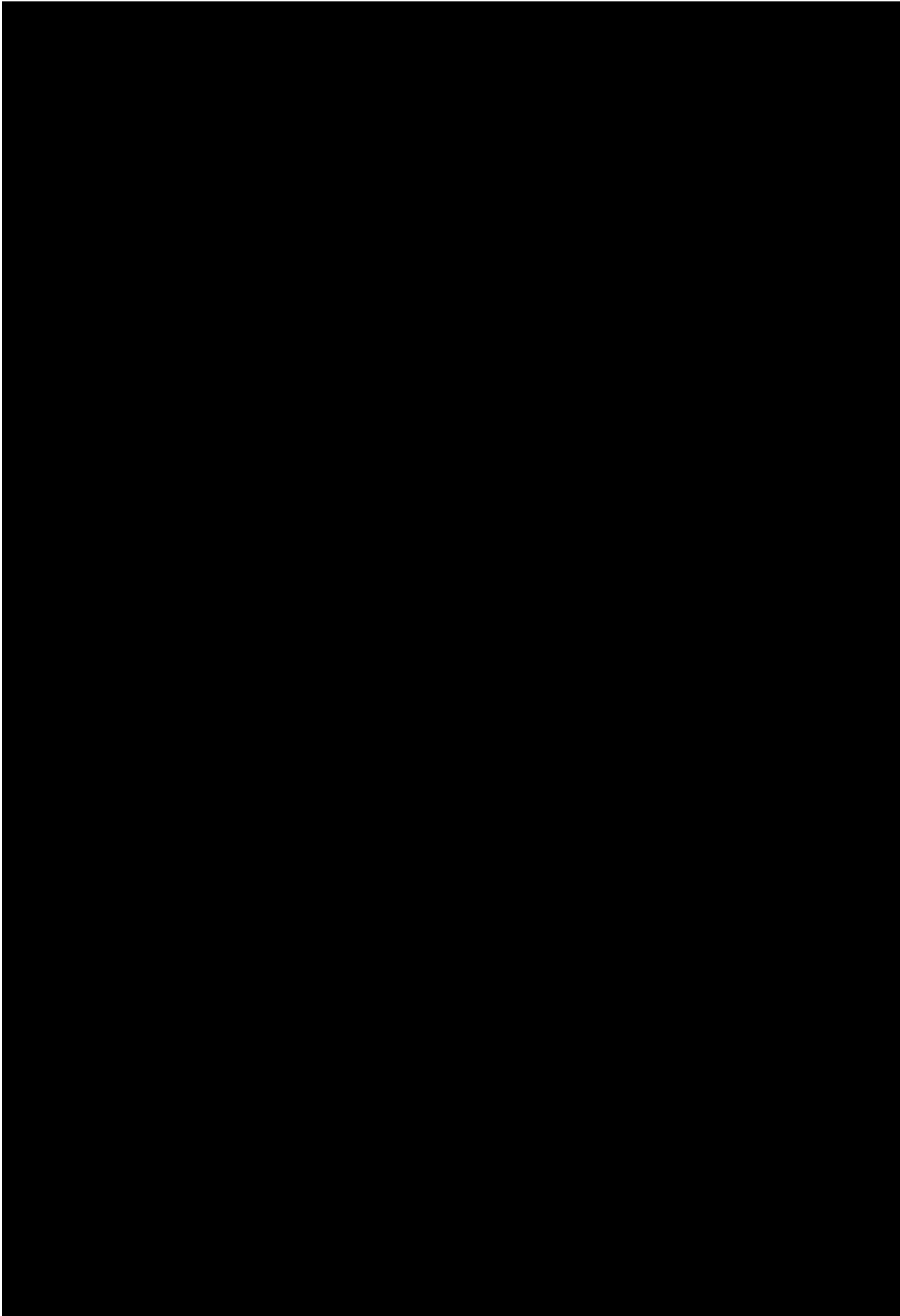


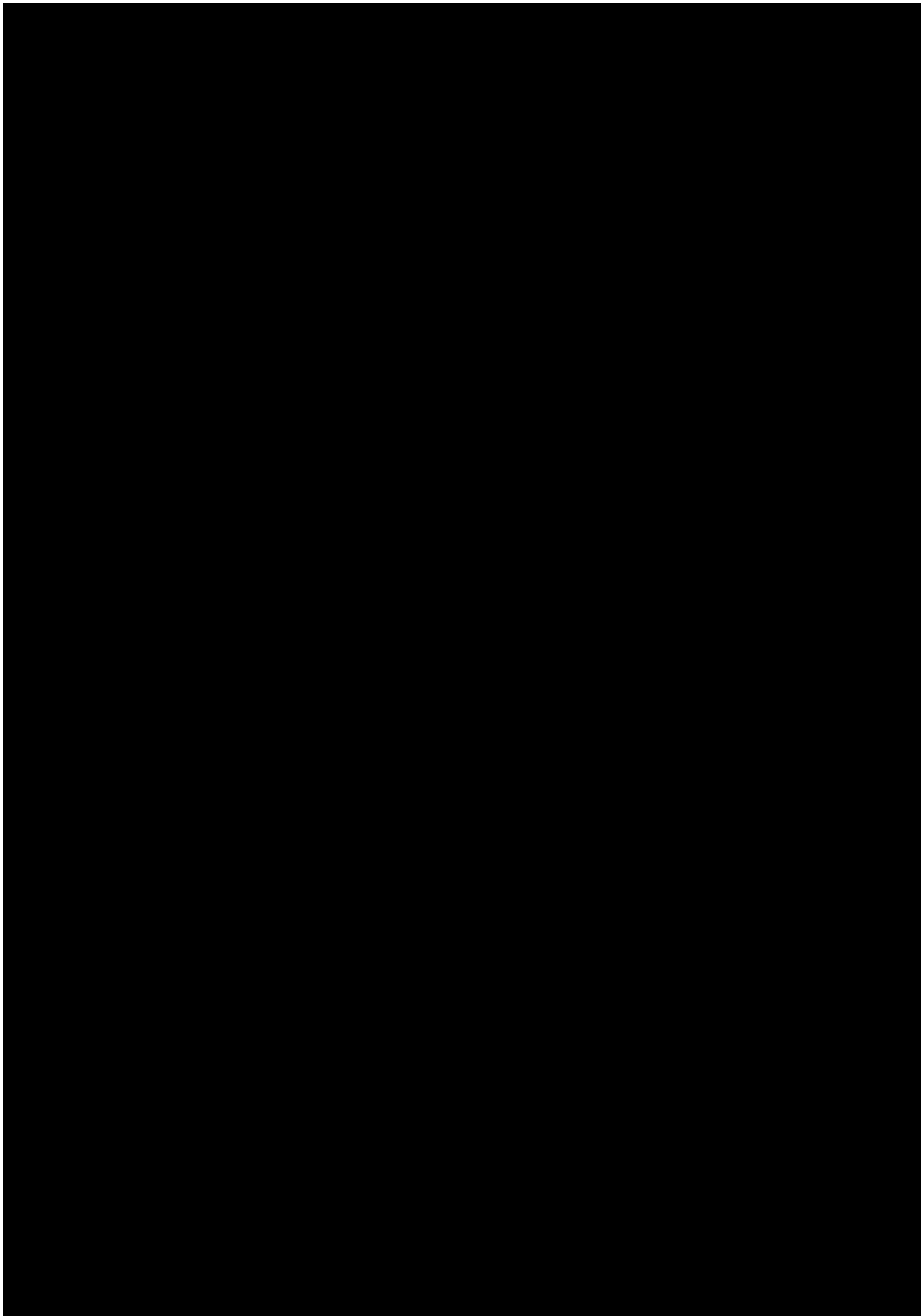


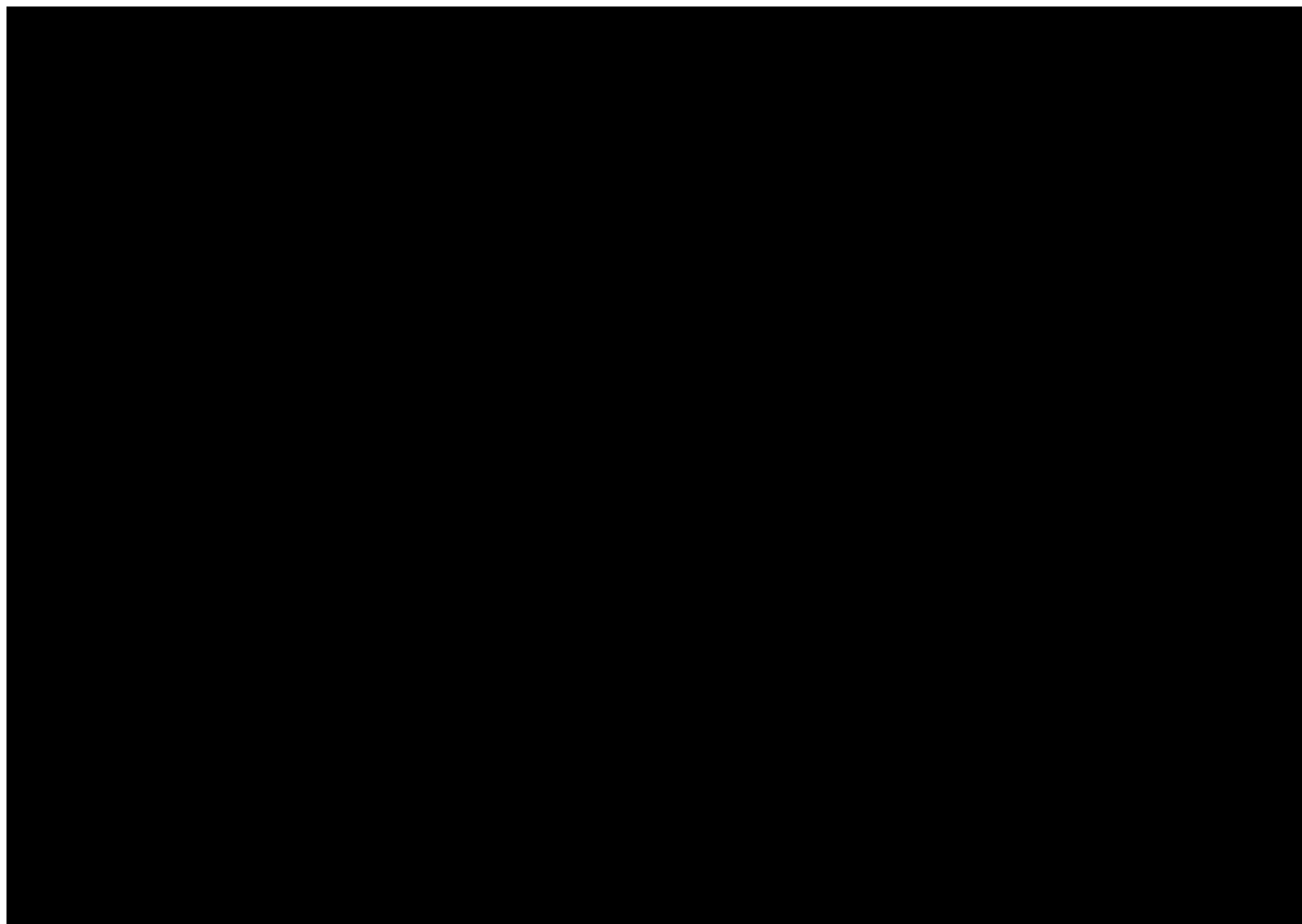
DRAFT











DRAFT



Senior Leadership Team Meeting Minutes

Meeting Details

Day & Date	Wednesday, 28 January 2026
Time	9 am – 12 pm
Location	In Person Manawatu
Concierge	Prof Giselle Byrnes
Karakia	Mr Paora Ammunson
Meeting Chair	Prof Jan Thomas
Members	Prof Cynthia White, Prof Giselle Byrnes, Prof Jill McCutcheon, Prof Jonathan Elms, Prof Margaret Maile, Prof Ray Geor, Ms Shelley Turner, Mr Paora Ammunson, Dr Tere McGonagle-Daly, [REDACTED]

Apologies	Nil
Minutes	[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

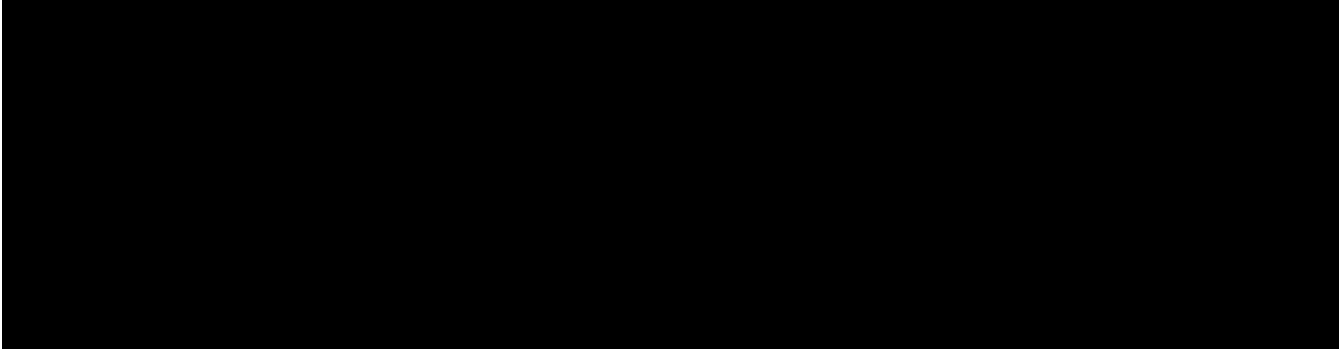
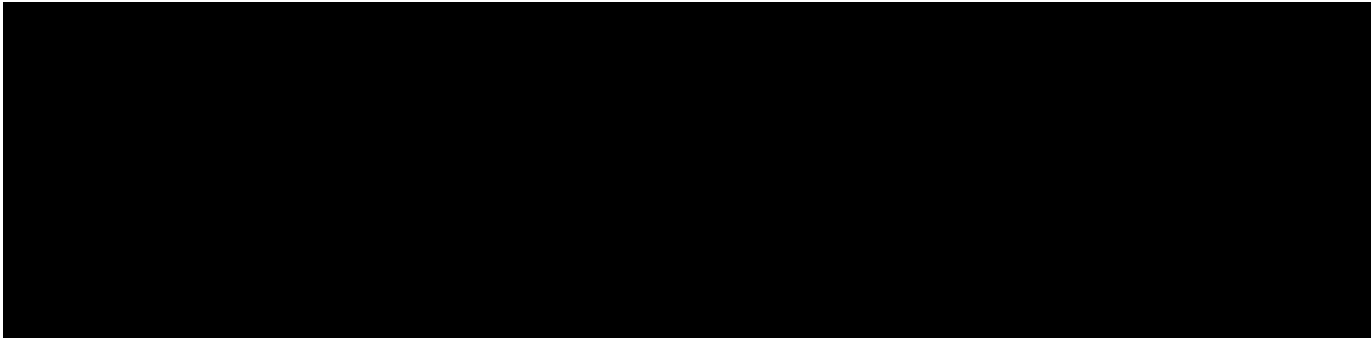
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



8.2. Interim Secure Exam Solution for 2026 -2027 [SLT 26 01 10](#)

Presented by: Prof Giselle Byrnes

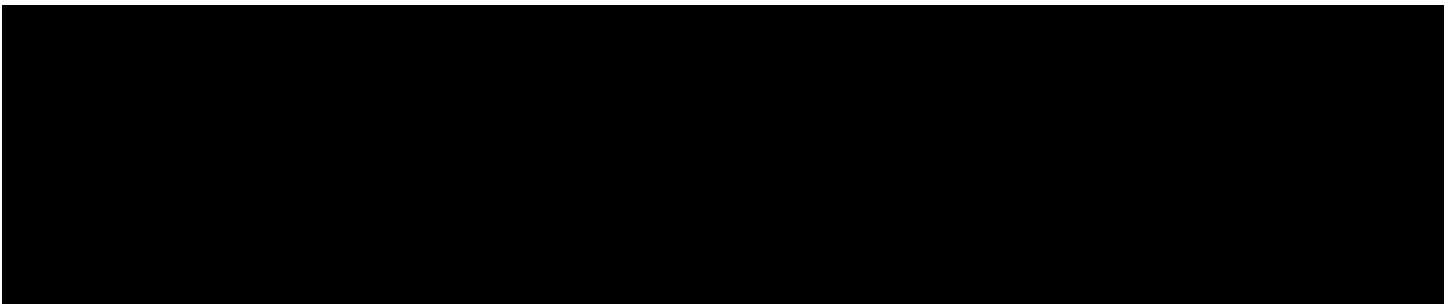
Giselle outlined SLT's previous approved transition to in-person, invigilated secure assessments for 2026, encompassing both digital and traditional pen-and-paper formats (refer SLT 25/10/113). Additionally, Giselle confirmed that a Business Case has been approved for the development of a centrally administered platform for Online Supervised Examinations, with the RFP process for an interim solution to commence in semester one, 2026.

Outcome

- SLT discussed and approved all recommendations as highlighted in the paper.
- Option 3 was approved: User-pays model, i.e. colleges using the services to pay.
- Funding stream is Option A: as recommended in the paper.
- PCGB has been briefed, and an exemption has been requested. Paper under preparation for the PCGB.

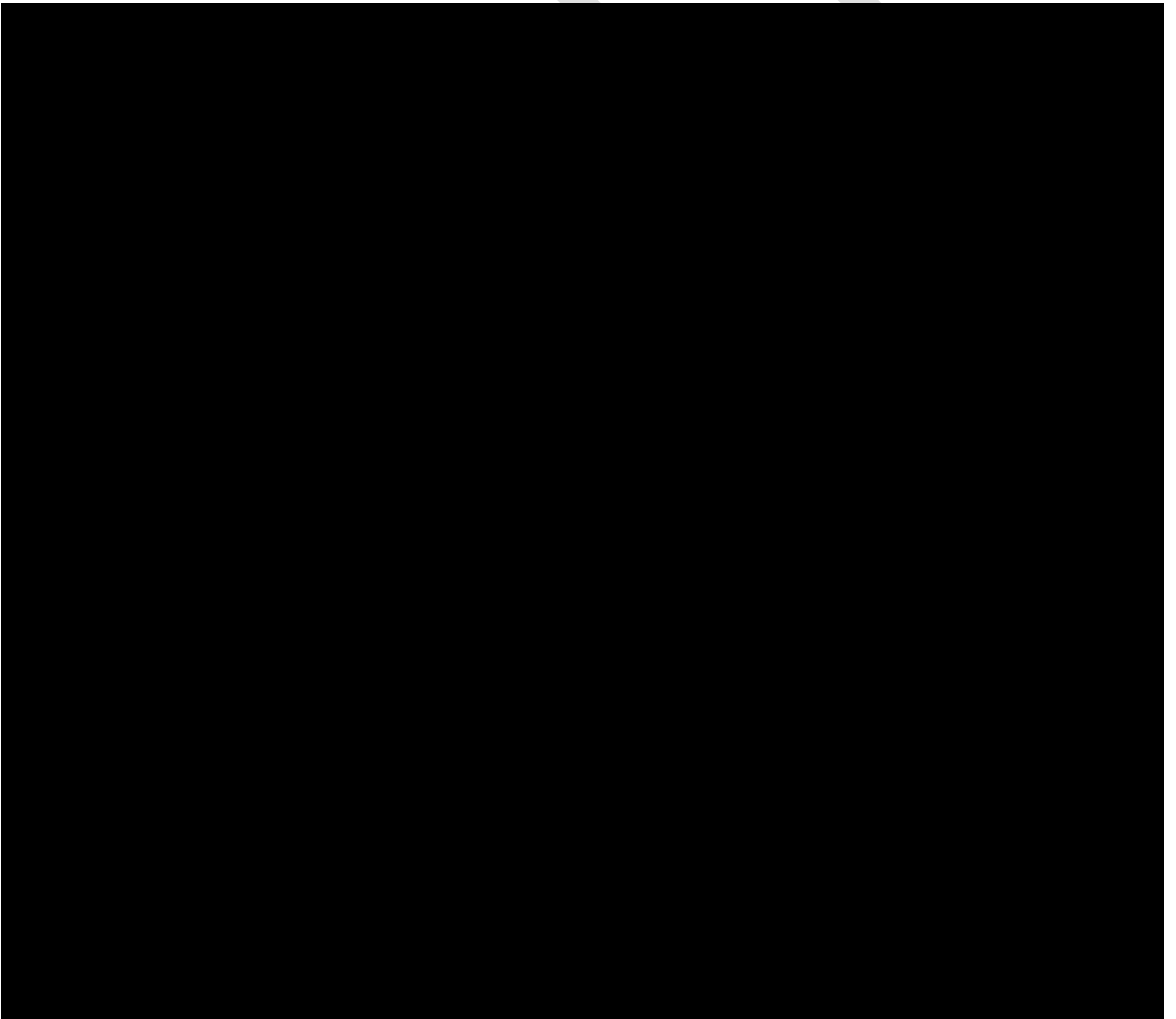
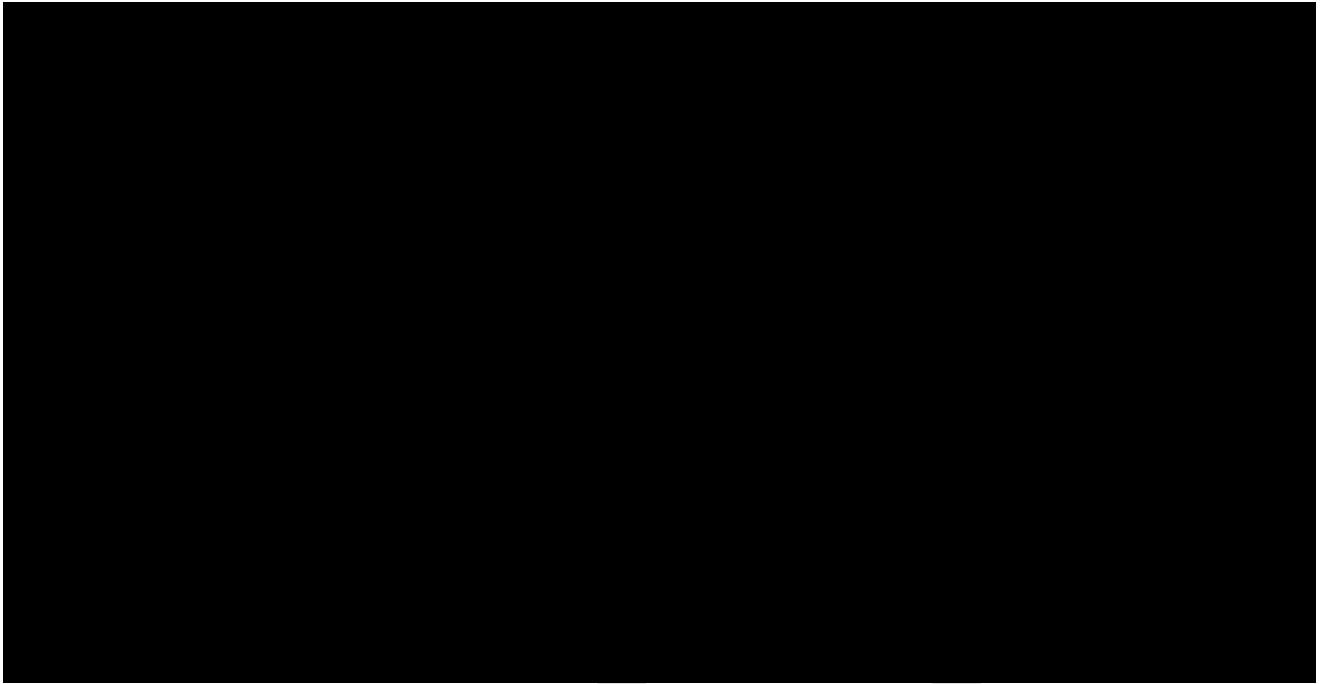
Action

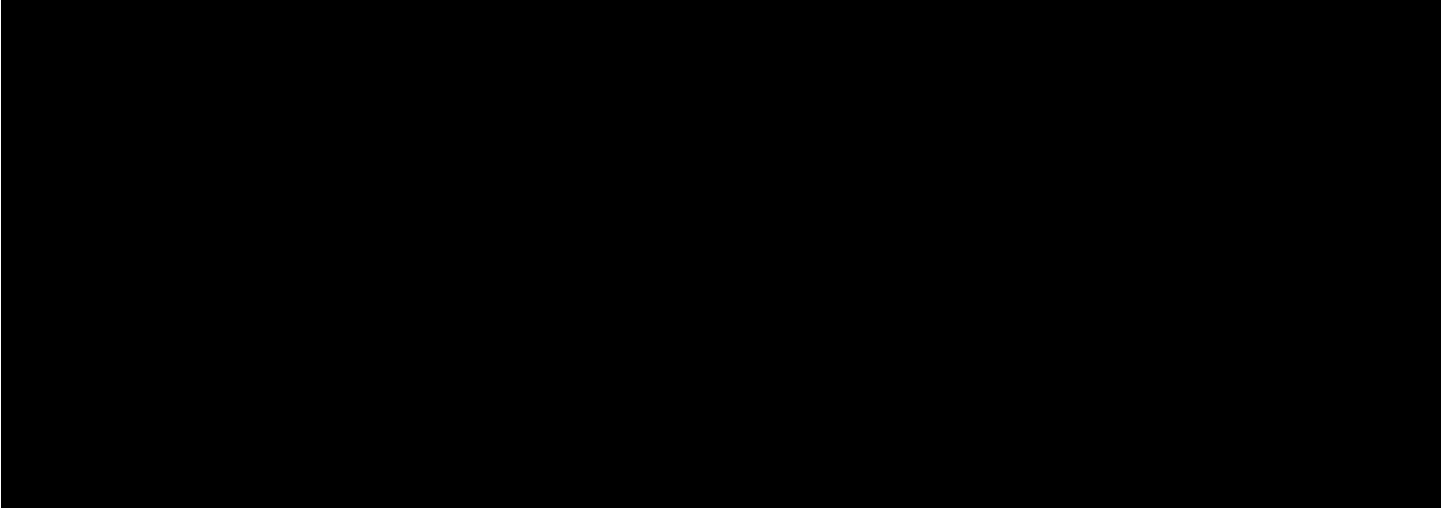
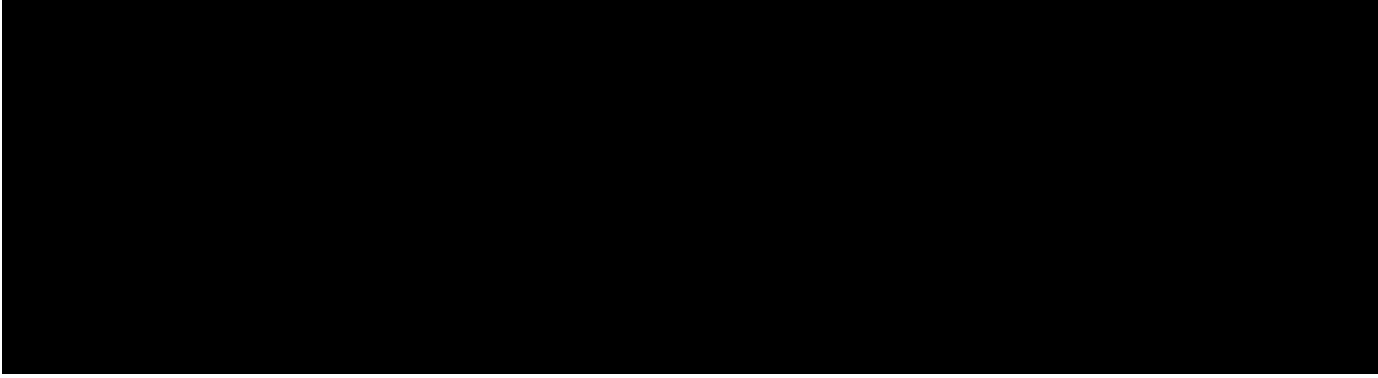
- Giselle to provide costs to Shelley in terms of ITS and Facilities costs.



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]





DRAFT



Memorandum

To: Chair, Academic Committee

From: A/Pro Peter Rawlins, convenor Future of Examination Requirements Working Group

Date: 25th March 2024

Subject: Response to feedback from Te Tira Ahu Pae

At the March meeting of Academic Committee, the Future of Examinations Requirement Working Group (FERWG) was asked to respond to feedback provided by Te Tira Ahu Pae in relation to the FERWG report. The Working Group met once via Teams, and then continued to work asynchronously online to consider the feedback provided and the Working Group's response to it. As a result, some changes were made to the report. These changes were primarily around issues of clarification, and the essential direction and the recommendations of the report remain the same.

We have provided two documents: the amended report and a document that outlines Te Tira Ahu Pae's main concerns and our responses to them.

Recommendation: That Academic Committee receive the revised FERWG report.



MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Committee

From: Learning and Teaching Committee

Date: 25 March

Subject: **REPORT FROM THE FUTURE OF EXAMINATIONS REQUIREMENTS WORKING GROUP**

1. PURPOSE

To present the report from the Future of Examinations Requirements Working Group to Academic Committee for discussion and endorsement.

2. BACKGROUND

In May 2023, a working group was established by the Chair of the University Learning and Teaching Committee to look at the future examination requirements across the University. The working group met 6 times over the last four months. The following report is the outcome of that working group, and the revisions reflect consideration of a number of points raised by Te Tira Ahu Pae in response.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Academic Committee discuss and endorse the report from the Future of Examinations Requirements Working Group.

Report from the Future of Examinations Requirements working group.

Background

In May 2023, a working group (WG) was established to look at the future examination requirements across the University. This working group reports back to the University Teaching and Learning Committee. The working group consisted of the following members:

Associate Professor Peter Rawlins (Convenor) CoHSS Associate
 Professor Elizabeth Gray (MBS)
 Professor Kieran O'Donoghue (CoH)
 Regan O'Malley (Massey University College)
 Jo Hopkirk (Assessment Services, Centre for Education Transformation)
 Andrew Rowatt (Centre for Education Transformation)
 Eteta Trueman (VC & Provost Business Hub)

The WG determined that there were four main areas that it needed to discuss:

1. Is there still a need for examinations at Massey University and what form(s) should these take?
2. What infrastructure will need to be in place to support examinations?
3. What are some of the factors to consider when deciding on a suitable digital platform?
4. The costs associated with the provision of CAEs) via a digital platform

1. Is there still a need for examinations at Massey University and what form(s) should these take?

The WG recognised that there were a variety of valid assessment methods that are used throughout the University. Many of these are run by the individual Colleges or Academic Units. For the purposes of this report, the WG only considered assessments that are centrally administered. This consists of two types: centrally administered Online Supervised Examinations (OSE), and centrally administered Time Constrained Assessments (TCA). OSEs are closed book, closed web, proctored examinations. For the most part, OSEs will be remotely proctored using webcam digital recording. TCAs are open book, open web assessments, that are still time constrained but are not proctored. For simplicity, the two types together will be referred to as Centrally Administered Examinations (CAE) unless a distinction between the two types needs to be made. There is a third category of 'examination' that Assessment Services are involved in called Other Assessments (OA). These OAs are centrally scheduled, so that an examination date and time appears in the students' portal, but these assessments are administered at the College level. As such, they are similar to a College-based assessment and are considered out of scope for this WG.

At the start of the COVID 19 pandemic, the University moved away from primarily paper-based CAEs towards using a digital platform for these assessments. The WG established that there was still a need to have CAEs delivered primarily through an online/digital platform. Online provision of examinations supports the provision of flexible, accessible, and digitally-enabled learning, to which Massey is committed. For some programmes, students need to be examined under verifiable conditions to satisfy the requirements of various accrediting and professional bodies, or because particular courses must assure foundational knowledge before a student can justifiably progress, or because a course has a manifest requirement to evidence knowledge. For these programmes it was felt that OSEs were the best method of providing these verifiable conditions. In other programmes, there is a clear preference for digitally delivered CAEs as part of the suite of assessment tools, on the part of both staff and students (Hartnett et al., 2020; Hartnett et al., 2023)

A widespread return to paper-based proctored examinations was considered but dismissed by the WG. Over recent years, the infrastructure to support paper-based examinations has largely been dismantled by the university, and the rebuilding of that infrastructure was seen to be too time- consuming, costly, and not forward-looking. While many of the existing CAEs presently mirror more traditional paper-based examinations in their design, there was recognition that a digital platform for examinations opened up a range of possibilities in terms of improved assessment design and the inclusion of digital artifacts in assessments. For the vast majority of students, the end of the need to travel to an examination venue represents a significant and keenly recognised benefit, as does the 24-hour 'opening window' that may be accommodated through online examinations. The WG also felt that the use of a digital platform may benefit some students with disabilities through affordances such as the use of 'text to speak', adjustments to text size, flexibility of duration etc. Additionally, digitally delivered examinations are significantly more sustainable, in terms of greatly reducing the student travel necessitated by venue-based examinations; greatly reducing both the paper usage required by traditional hard-copy examinations and the transportation costs involved with the global distribution and collection of hard-copy scripts; and significantly enhancing the timeliness of marking and grade publication (eliminating the delays caused by mailed script return). That said, there was a recognition that, in some circumstances, there will need to be paper- based examinations available for some students in particular courses. An example of this would be for incarcerated students who are not allowed to engage with online devices. It may be that these examinations are alternative versions rather than a paper copy of the examination primarily used in that course.

2. What infrastructure will need to be in place to support centrally administered examinations?

A number of procedural and operational matters were discussed. Firstly, whether to retain the existing 24-hour period for undertaking CAEs or to change this to two 12-hour periods on separate days. Providing two timetabled 12-hour periods may provide more flexibility for some students who have time constraints

or other commitments outside of their control. Countering this are the practicalities of providing two versions of the CAE in order to ensure security, the need to accommodate students who are overseas in other time zones, and the provision of operational support. On balance, it was decided to retain the single 24-hour window for undertaking CAEs. The University currently allows for Supplementary Assessments and it was felt that this will accommodate those students who are unable to engage with their CAE in the scheduled 24-hour window.

Secondly, one of the advantages of using a digital platform for the CAEs is that most students will have the choice of where they sit their exam. This will primarily be through the use of TCAs or OSEs. In some instances, however, (e.g. for religious, physical, psychological, or philosophical reasons) it may not be appropriate for students to sit a remotely proctored OSE using webcam recording. In these instances, the University should provide facilities where in-person proctored examinations without the use of a recording can be undertaken on request. These facilities may be equipped with University computers but they could also accommodate students who want to bring their own devices provided that they comply with the examination requirements (e.g. lockdown browsers). The provision of facilities with computers will also accommodate those who may not have a suitable digital device with webcams etc., or reliable broadband. In instances where a remotely proctored examination using webcam recordings is not possible/appropriate, and students are not able to travel to a University provided in-person examination centre (e.g. for students overseas), alternative assessment arrangements are possible through the existing supplementary assessment provisions coordinated through Assessment Services. (e.g. remote proctoring using a live video feed such as Zoom, supervision by a commanding officer for military personnel posted overseas, arrangements with partner Universities, etc.). The University is committed to working one-on-one with students with genuine circumstances or concerns that might impact them successfully completing a CAE.

In some instances, (e.g. School of Aviation, School of Veterinary Medicine) where the entire cohort of students are on-campus, or at a specific off-campus location, in-person proctored assessments may still be desirable and/or necessary. These may still use a digital platform or other forms of assessment such as oral assessment. These examinations would be centrally timetabled but administered by the College. While acknowledging that the University needs to accommodate such assessments, the WG feel that these exceptional arrangements should be considered on a case by case basis and approved by the relevant College Board.

Thirdly, the WG recognised that the University will need to provide sufficient support for staff and students to ensure that CAEs are inclusive, equitable, robust, and efficiently managed. For staff, this includes support for the creation of tasks suitable for the digital platform. This creation of assessments may either be outside of the particular digital platform used, or potentially, within the digital platform. In addition to exam creation, support may be needed for the local administration of the CAE, for example, downloading scripts for marking, or marking within the digital platform, processing of marks etc. Support for students should include adequate technical support, both before and during the CAE. This should include opportunities for students to sit 'practice' exams ahead of time, so that they develop familiarity with the digital platform and interface used to deliver the CAE. It is noted that the provision of such support will have financial and professional learning implications for the University.

An important principle that underpinned many of our discussions on these points was the principle of transparency. Students should be given advance notice, prior to enrolment, of the type of assessments used in any course they are considering taking. This will be particularly important for courses using OSEs. In addition to the minimum technical requirements of the digital devices needed to undertake the course, students must also be made aware of any specific technical requirements for undertaking the assessments in that course (e.g. webcam, microphone etc.). Similarly, the University should articulate to students the minimum digital competencies required to undertake the assessments in a particular programme/course.

3. What are some of the factors to consider when deciding on a suitable digital platform?

While there was some discussion about factors to consider when choosing a digital platform, the WG recognises that there will need to be a University procurement process that will need to be followed. That said, we have produced a list of factors that we feel are important to factor into the decision. This list is indicative of possible considerations and is not intended to be an exhaustive list. We note that the factors identified below should be considered in light of the particular CAE being considered. Some will be more important for OSEs than TCAs.

All requirements will be categorised using the MoSCoW system as below:

Initial	Category	Description
M	Must	The requirement MUST be met for the solution to be a success. Even if one MUST is not met, then the project will be deemed to have failed.
S	Should	The requirement is important, but the solution will still be effective if it is not met and the project can be measured as a success. They would normally be reasonably worked around in day to day operations. As many of these will be met in the solution as is possible within the timeframe and budget.
C	Could	The requirement is a nice-to-have – a feature that would enhance the solution, but can easily be worked around.
W	Would (or Won't)	The requirement would be a great feature but is unlikely to eventuate in the current project and may be considered in a future project.

Functional Requirements

A functional requirement describes a task or objective that a solution is required to be able to perform or meet; something the solution must, should or could be able to do. The following list of factors relating to a digital platform for delivery of online examinations are in no particular order of priority.

ID	Requirement	Category
FR.001	Ability to override CAE parameters e.g., time limit, based on group, cohort, or individual student.	M

FR.002	The digital platform must have a range of assessment question types including, but not limited to multiple choice, long answer (essay), true/false, spreadsheet.	M

ID	Requirement	Category
FR.003	The digital platform should support scenario-based, branching, or adaptive assessments.	S
FR.004	The digital platform must support the use of digital media including, but not limited to video, audio, and animations.	M
FR.005	The digital platform must provide automatic marking for objective question types e.g., Multiple choice	M
FR.006	The digital platform must enable different markers to be assigned to mark specific questions ("strip marking")	M
FR.007	The digital platform must support question (item) banks	M
FR.008	The digital platform needs to support centralised control of all aspects of the CAE including content, delivery parameters, quality assurance processes, while allowing for delegation where needed.	M
FR.009	The CAE should be able to be undertaken on a desktop or laptop consistent with the minimum technical specifications for study at Massey University.	M
FR.010	The digital platform and any software or hardware prerequisites need to be compatible with standard university devices e.g., be able to run in a computer lab environment.	M
FR.011	The digital platform needs to function alongside in-person proctors if required e.g., if the exam is being run online but in a computer lab.	M
FR.012	The digital platform must have a range of assessment security options but at minimum the ability to lockdown the workstation and whitelist approved applications.	M
FR.013	The digital platform must offer record and review remote proctoring.	M
FR.014	The digital platform should offer record and deliver remote proctoring.	S
FR.015	The digital platform must offer live proctoring. - OR - Integrate with a video conferencing platform such as Microsoft Teams or Zoom to provide live monitoring.	M
FR.016	The digital platform must be able to deliver all forms of CAEs i.e., "OSE" and "TCA" assessments.	M
FR.017	The digital platform must have the ability for staff to switch a CAE from one form to another i.e., OSE to TCA, TCA to OSE.	M
FR.018	A digital copy of the CAE can be produced e.g., PDF version.	M

ID	Requirement	Category
FR.019	The digital platform must be resilient to network connectivity interruptions with no data loss in the event of network connectivity interruption. This includes interruptions on the local device, the platform itself, and all points in between.	M
FR.020	Students must be able to continue taking the CAE if network connectivity is lost, either by continuing offline, or by being able to continue when network connectivity is restored with work done automatically saved and time adjusted for the disruption.	M
FR.021	The digital platform must integrate with Turnitin to provide similarity checking	M

Non-Functional Requirements

A non-functional requirement (NFR) describes the qualities the product or service must have, how well it does the thing it does. It does not describe anything the solution should do, or tasks the solution needs to be able to perform.

ID	Aspect	Requirement	Category
NFR.001	Usability	Must be easy to use with student and staff digital literacy taken into account with an emphasis on minimising technical complexity.	M
NFR.002	Usability	For students, features to download and use any necessary programmes and documents, and upload any documents or results must be user-friendly and easy to use.	M
NFR.003	Usability	Features to manage CAE creation, configuration, marking, and general administration must be user-friendly and easy to use.	M
NFR.004	Availability	The digital platform must be stable and technically resilient	M
NFR.005	Availability	The digital platform must be available 24x7 within certain periods i.e., the exam window.	M
NFR.006	Performance	Response times for returning data must be within reasonable standards	M
NFR.007	Auditability	Comprehensive logging of student and staff activity.	M
NFR.008	Compliance	Must meet or exceed privacy obligations as expressed in the <i>Privacy Impact Assessment</i> .	M
NFR.009	Compliance	Must comply with any recommendations raised as a result for the <i>IT Services Risk Acceptance</i> process.	M

ID	Aspect	Requirement	Category
NFR.010	Capacity	The digital platform must be able to support up to 1000 concurrent sessions.	M
NFR.011	Reporting	The digital platform should be able to integrate with the University's data warehouse ("RAPID")	S
NFR.012	Security	The digital platform must provide a seamless login experience to all users, minimizing the number of credential/login prompts.	M
NFR.013	Usability	The digital platform must provide a seamless integration with Stream (Moodle)	M
NFR.014	Extensibility	The digital platform should allow administrators to easily add new question types and features that emerge including, but not limited to video calling, online document editing, collaboration, VR simulations.	S
NFR.015	Licensing	The digital platform should offer flexible licensing options, including site-wide, College-based, per-student, and/or per- sitting.	S

4. The costs associated with the provision of CAEs via a digital platform

The WG did discuss the issue of the costs associated with using a digital platform to deliver CAEs. We note that, while there is an additional cost to the University associated specifically with the provision of examinations over other forms of assessment, this has always been the case. For example, the costs associated with using a paper-based examination system included such things as: the setting up of both on-campus and off-campus examination centres; the printing of paper copies of examinations; postage, particularly for overseas venues; the provision of paid proctors etc. As noted in point 1 above, certain sustainability costs of traditional CAEs are also significantly decreased via digital delivery. The WG's view is that, while there will be software licensing fees associated with the use of a digital platform, the overall cost may be reduced because of the reduction or removal of most of the aspects associated with paper-based examinations identified above. As such the WG recommends that a careful analysis of the costs associated with the provision of CAEs via a digital platform, and how these might be covered, should be undertaken once all the costs are known.

Recommendations:

The WG recommends that the University:

1. Continue with CAEs through an online/digital platform.
2. Support the continuation of OSEs using webcam recordings for examinations.
3. Provide and resource facilities (potentially on each of the three campuses) where students can, by arrangement with Assessment Services, have alternate ways of sitting OSEs.
4. Allow for exceptions to online examination for programmes with an internal-only cohort and demonstrable need for in-person proctored examinations (to be approved by College Boards).
5. Continue with the existing supplementary assessment provisions made possible through the Specific Circumstances Framework (for example, Replacement Exams), as needed.
6. Provide a 24 hour period for students to undertake CAEs.
7. Resource adequate technical and administration support to both staff and students prior to and during the exam period.
8. Ensure students are informed of the types of assessment (OSE, TCA etc) used in the course prior to enrolment.
9. Ensure that students are informed of any technical requirements for undertaking assessments in a given course (e.g. webcams, microphones, etc.), prior to enrolment.
10. Articulate to students the minimum digital competencies required to undertake the assessments in a particular programme/course, prior to enrolment.
11. Undertake a procurement process to identify the most suitable online/digital platform for the delivery of CAEs.
12. Ensure that any online digital platform has a Privacy Impact Assessment undertaken before adoption.
13. Conduct an analysis of the costs associated with the provision of CAEs via a digital platform and how these might be covered.
14. Review and revise the Exam Regulations, Rules and procedures in line with the recommendations adopted.

REFERENCES

- Hartnett, M., Rawlins, P., & Butler, P. (2020). *Changes in assessment: The impact of COVID-19 at Massey University*. Palmerston North, New Zealand: Massey University.
- Hartnett, M., Butler, P., & Rawlins, P. (2023). Online proctored exams and digital inequalities during the pandemic. *Journal of Computer Assisted Learning*, 39(4), 1103-1115. doi:[10.1111/jcal.12813](https://doi.org/10.1111/jcal.12813)

Feedback from Students	WG response.
That the identified benefit of students not needing to travel to an examination can only be realised if the software is stable	We acknowledge and agree that the student experience is paramount. This will be reflected in procurement criteria that will place significant weight on simplicity, stability, and resilience to factors students cannot control.
The need for a standard approach to the 24-hour window for undertaking CAEs	We agree with this. We have not adjusted the report as we feel that the existing wording indicates a standard approach of a 24 hour window for CAEs, but certainly work can be done to ensure increased clarity of communication to students around this window.
Whether remote proctoring would be available to all students who wanted to apply and not only to those located overseas	We have adapted the report to indicate that this will continue to be available to all students who genuinely need it, through existing supplementary assessment provisions coordinated by Assessment Services
Whether it is possible for the external IT platform provided (currently PSI) to provide the level of exam support needed by students undertaking OSEs	We agree that appropriate levels of support should be provided. In part this may be through the external provider but we feel it is important that student have a support person that they can contact to solve any issues. Please see recommendation 7.
Whether students partway through their degree would be allowed to use an alternative examination method if it wasn't clear to them that OSEs would be use in their degree when they originally enrolled.	This is not really a question that the WG can answer as it is a University general regulations question. We have noted that transparency is an important principle, and that students should be provided with as much relevant information as possible. That said, circumstances change over time and the University currently reserves the right to make reasonable changes to programmes (e.g. schedule changes, progression regulations etc.) during a student's period of study.
That a comparative, detailed cost analysis be undertaken of in-person examinations and digital methods before any final decision is made to move away from in-person examinations.	We have indicated in our recommendations that a cost analysis be undertaken (see recommendation 13); however, our recommendation to continue with CAEs through an online/digital platform (recommendation 1) is not based solely on cost as outlined in our report.
The perception that disability students were being used as a justification for switching to digital exams without consultation and lack of recognition that digital platforms can also present problems for disability students.	We accept that the use of an online/digital platform for assessment will not suit all students with disabilities. The University remains committed to supporting students with disabilities, and Assessment Services will continue to provide appropriate support in relation to assessment through the Specific Circumstances framework.

Whether domestic distance students who are not located close to University campuses will be provided extra accommodations similar to those who live near University facilities.	We have recommended the provision of in-person proctored examination centres although the number and location of these is a resourcing issue that is beyond the scope of the WG to determine. We do note that students have historically had to travel to examination centres. The University is committed to working one-on-one with students with genuine circumstances or concerns that might impact them successfully completing a CAE.
Within the functional table requirements, it is recommended the following item be changed to a 'MUST' have rather the "SHOULD' have: 'Students should be able to continue taking the CAE if network connectivity is lost, either by continuing offline, or by being able to continue when network connectivity is restored with work done automatically saved and time adjusted for the disruption'	We broadly agree with this and have changed the report accordingly. Network resilience is covered under FR.019.
That the report does not adequately reflect the associated problems with online exams such as installation issues, bad technical support, and hard-to-use interfaces.	We acknowledge that some students have had sub-optimal experiences with the present platform, which have contributed to stress and anxiety. As such the WG has recommended the investigation of possible better providers, as well as provision of adequate technical and administrative support for both staff and students both prior to and during the exam period. (see recommendation 7)



MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Committee

From: Learning and Teaching Committee Chair

Date: 23rd January 2023

Subject: Student Feedback on Future of Examinations Requirements Working Group Report

In 2023, LTC was tasked with providing guidance on the future of operational examination requirements at the university. A small working group was established to explore operational examination requirements. The Working Group, chaired by Associate Professor Peter Rawlins, produced the Future of Examination Requirements Working Group (FERWG) report that was presented at the October Academic Committee meeting. At that meeting, the recommendations proposed in the report were endorsed.

At the same meeting, it was identified that further student consultation was needed in addition to feedback from the Learning and Teaching Committee student reps (September 2023 meeting) and Academic Committee student reps (October 2023 meeting), and an action item was raised asking the Chair of LTC to circulate the report to a wider student audience for feedback. The president of Te Tira Ahu Pae was contacted and asked to facilitate the gathering of feedback on the report from other students who represented the student body. The requested feedback was not available for the December 2023 meeting so is being presented at the first Academic Committee meeting for 2024.

Te Tira Ahu Pae feedback identified several points that they felt required further clarification namely:

- That the identified benefit of students not needing to travel to an examination can only be realised if the software is stable
- The need for a standard approach to the 24-hour window for undertaking CAEs
- Whether remote proctoring would be available to all students who wanted to apply and not only to those located overseas
- Whether it is possible for the external IT platform provided (currently PSI) to provide the level of exam support needed by students undertaking OSEs
- Whether students partway through their degree would be allowed to use an alternative examination method if it wasn't clear to them that OSEs would be used in their degree when they originally enrolled.

Te Tira Ahu Pae also raised several points of concern including:

- That a comparative, detailed cost analysis be undertaken of in-person examinations and digital methods before any final decision is made to move away from in-person examinations.
- The perception that disability students were being used as a justification for switching to digital exams without consultation and lack of recognition that digital platforms can also present problems for disability students.

- Whether domestic distance students who are not located close to University campuses will be provided extra accommodations similar to those who live near University facilities.
- Within the functional table requirements, it is recommended the following item be changed to a 'MUST' have rather the "SHOULD' have:
 - 'Students should be able to continue taking the CAE if network connectivity is lost, either by continuing offline, or by being able to continue when network connectivity is restored with work done automatically saved and time adjusted for the disruption'
- That the report does not adequately reflect the associated problems with online exams such as installation issues, bad technical support, and hard-to-use interfaces.

Finally, students appreciated the work done to produce the report but highlighted their concern with the lack of student involvement and consultation with the working group. On this point, the Working Group Terms of Reference, which were approved by LTC stated the following:

Note: *As this Working Group is set up to consider operational matters it does not contain any student members. Any changes to policies and procedures as a result of recommendations from FERWG will include specific student and other interested parties' consultation.*

Recommendations:

- That Academic Committee note the feedback received from Te Tira Ahu Pae.
- Ask LTC to forward the feedback to the Working Group for consideration.

Future of Examinations Requirements Working Group

Compiled by Flynn O'Hallahan on behalf of Te Tira Ahu Pae

Te Tira Ahu Pae sees the task of maintaining a high level of wellbeing amongst Massey students as a top priority. As exams have such a large impact on student wellbeing, it's necessary to ensure they are constructed in a way that minimises stress while avoiding any unnecessary complications. The following points of feedback, clarification and concerns are constructed in a way that hopes to achieve this, through inputting student voice into the report.

Feedback

Importance of a review

Thank you for undertaking a review on the future of examinations. Moving forward with the introduction of OSE's, it's important we get this right from the beginning to streamline the process for students. We appreciate that thought was given to students on how digital exams would affect them.

Student Involvement

We believe there was a lack of student involvement and consultation within the working group. While we appreciate being given the chance to provide this feedback, the timeframe is clearly too tight. By the time we received the document for review, many of our students were off campus and unable to be contacted for consultation purposes. As a student led organisation, everything we do is based off consultation. While we have been able to collate basic feedback, in the future it is preferred that we have representation on these working groups, and/or provided with more notice before deadlines.

Points for Clarification

Identified benefit of not needing to travel to an examination

Have you surveyed students that have recently sat an OSE, asking them which exam method they would choose (in-person/digital)? When we interviewed 5 students about their experiences they all said they liked the idea of sitting an exam where they chose, but in reality they would choose a paper-based in-person examination if they had a choice. The reason for this was due to the amount of issues they had with using the PSI based software. This was an opinion held across the majority of students that feedback was collected from.

For your identified benefit of, 'not needing to travel to an examination' to be realised, it must be ensured that the software is stable and students can easily operate it. Given the choice, students would rather travel to sit an examination then spend hours on the phone to support.

Standardisation of the 24-hour window for undertaking CAEs

We support the 24-hour window provided for undertaking examinations. This works best for those in different timezones, and especially for students who work and have busy schedules. However, an issue was raised in student consultation where course coordinators/lecturers would provide conflicting information on exam times that would conflict between courses. For example, some said that the exams did not have a 24 hour period and had to be sat at a specific time, whereas others were more lenient.

If a 24 hour window is decided on, will it be standardised across all courses? It should be advertised without doubt that students are available to sit their exam within the 24 hour period to avoid confusion.

Remote proctoring (process of applying for it)

Will the process of applying for a provision, for example 'remote proctoring using a live video feed such as zoom' be accessible to all students who are unable to sit an exam using the OSE software? The report identifies this as an option for students studying overseas only.

Assumption of external IT support

It is rightly identified that 'support for students should include adequate technical support, both before and during the CAE'. Is Massey expecting the bulk of this support to be offered by the provider of the examination software? Students that recently sat an OSE in Semester 2 reported an inadequate support network, especially from PSI. It may not be possible to insure adequate technical support for a digital platform if reliance is placed upon the provider, as evidenced by what occurred during the Semester 2 exam period.

Current students in courses that are changing to OSE's

Transparency is important, and we agree that students should be given advance notice prior to enrolment that OSEs will be used in their course. However, what about students already completing a degree? Will they be allowed to use an alternative exam method if it wasn't made clear that OSEs would be used within their degree?

Points of Concern

Cost comparison between paper-based and digital-based examinations.

It is repeatedly mentioned that switching to paper-based examinations would not be a cost effective option compared to digital examination methods. However, it is also stated that the working group, 'did not discuss the issue of the costs associated with using a digital platform to deliver CAEs'. How can it be claimed that digital is more cost effective when there is no detailed cost comparison between the two methods? We understand that there are costs involved with in-person examinations such as setting up the examination centers and paying proctors, but digital is not exempt from similar charges. For example, there would be costs involved with ensuring effective technical support during the process. Have these types of additional fees been included?

The working group recommends a careful analysis of the costs, and we agree. However, this should be completed before a decision is made to completely move away from in-person exams. The cost of conducting in-person exams should also be analysed and used for comparative purposes.

Disability assumptions

Disability students raised concerns that they were being used as a reason for switching to a digital platform, especially without consultation. Disability reps informed us that accessibility measures were already in place with in-person exams, and this simply transfers over to digital platforms, rather than being a new and improved benefit. Furthermore, when surveyed, disability students expressed a lack of support for digital platforms as in some cases they were actually less accessible. For example, flagging movements, difficult to use software, and being less accepting of alternative arrangements. It should be noted that a switch to a digital platform is not an automatic improvement for disabled students, and Massey should consult with them rather than assume.

Distance students may not live near facilities

The report finds that allowing students to utilise facilities with University computers will accommodate domestic students unable to sit the exam on their own. However, many distance students may not live near facilities, so it cannot be claimed that this will be suitable for all domestic students. Will extra accommodations be standardised for students not living near a campus who have issues with digital examination software?

Network connectivity requirement

Within the functional requirements table, 'Students should be able to continue taking the CAE if network connectivity is lost, either by continuing offline, or by being able to continue when network connectivity is restored with work done automatically saved and time adjusted for the disruption', is listed as a 'should'. This should be a must within the requirements, as many students suffer from issues with network connectivity, no matter the quality of their connection. Dropping out and losing time was identified as a large contributor to stress for students, so the ability to either continue offline or continue when the network is restored with time adjustments is important.

More can go wrong with digital

The recent exam period has clearly shown that transitioning to a digital platform incurs additional issues that aren't seen with paper-based formats. We do not believe the report adequately reflects the difficulties associated with online exams, such as installation issues, bad technical support, and hard to use interfaces. More consultation needs to be included based on negative experiences that students have had, which would not have happened by using a traditional method. More information on negative experiences can be found in the OSE Feedback Report.

Previous Report on OSE's

Earlier consultation was undertaken within the distance campus on the use of OSE's in their current state. The feedback was overwhelmingly negative, and I highly recommend reading the report which has been imbedded on the next page and **can be opened by double-clicking the image**. A snapshot of the concerns for OSE's taken from the report has been included below:

- *Students may be unable to afford the necessary hardware required to sit an OSE.*
- *Students may not have a suitable environment to sit an OSE.*
- *There are privacy and data concerns associated with the program. PSI weren't doing reviews of videos before sending them to Massey, which also brings into question whether the company themselves can be trusted.*
- *Disabled students have raised concerns about accessibility issues, with certain rules being ableist and not taking into account disabilities.*
- *Lack of knowledge of OSE software within Massey IT team.*
- *PSI software clashes not letting students install the program. In many instances this is leading students to miss their exams and spend hours talking with support.*
- *Many students do not have access to fast internet, leading to slow exam load times. This can be frustrating and take away from exam time.*
- *Students expressed annoyance at being locked out of the stream page on the day of exam, as opposed to when the exam starts.*
- *Software running slow on student hardware, leading to input lag with typing and page loading. Many students expressed annoyance at this, ruining work flow.*
- *Limited time provided to scan the room.*
- *Long wait times to get in contact with PSI staff, exam clock still runs during this process.*
- *Anxiety is induced by exam rules that disallow moving lips and mouth.*
- *PSI has requested some students pay a fee for the provision of tech support/service.*
- *Students are having more issues this semester than they were previously.*
- *Practice exams aren't replicating software issues for some students.*



TE TIRA AHU PAE
HEI HĀPAI WHAKAMANA



TE TIRA AHU PAE
HEI HĀPAI WHAKAMANA

OSE Feedback Report

Distance Campus

Learning and Teaching Committee

Memorandum

To: Professor Giselle Byrnes,
Chair, Academic Committee

From: Assoc Professor Peter Rawlins
Chair, Future of Examination Requirements Working Group

Date: 8th August 2024

Subject: **Updated recommendations and decision pathway for S2 2024 and beyond.**

At the end of Semester 1 2024, Massey University suffered a series of outages in the Online Supervised Exam (OSE) system. As a result of these outages, the Chair of Academic Committee, Professor Giselle Byrnes, reconvened the Future of Examination Requirements Working Group (FERWG) to make recommendations to AC in relation to the provision of OSEs for semester 2 2024 and beyond. The group has been meeting under urgency, twice a week since late June. The group was expanded to the following membership.

Peter Rawlins (Chair of FERWG, and DAQ, CoHSS)
 Giselle Byrnes (Provost and Chair AC)
 Fiona Coote (Director, OAQRA)
 Andrew Gray (Head of Architecture, ITS)
 Elizabeth Gray (ADTL, MBS), Hamish Anderson (MBS), Jo Cullinane (DPVC, MBS)¹
 Maggie Hartnett (Director Teaching Academy and Chair LTC)
 Jo Hopkirk (Manager, Assessment Services)
 Faith Kane (Director Academic, CoCA)
 Liz Norman (DTL, CoS)
 Kieran O'Donoghue (Associate Dean Academic, CoH)
 Flynn O'Hallaran (Vice President Distance, Te Tira Ahu Pae)
 Regan O'Malley. (MUC)
 Andrew Rowatt (Director, Learning Ecosystems and Operations)
 Alison Wallbutton (Associate University Librarian, Client Services)

¹ Three separate individuals represented MBS over the period of meeting under urgency.

This memorandum builds on the existing report and recommendations submitted to Academic Committee in April 2024 (AC23/10/372 rev).

The most urgent order of business was to make a recommendation for the semester 2 2024 and summer school examination periods. The recommendation arrived at was that we suspend the use of OSEs for both of these periods. This was communicated to both the Chair of LTC and the chair of AC on 1st July.

The group then started work on looking at OSE options for semester 1 2025. Central to the discussion was the need to retain some form of OSE for the foreseeable future. In addition to remotely invigilated OSEs there was also a clear desire for an in-person invigilated OSE option. While these had been incorporated into our original recommendations in 2023, students needed to apply to sit their OSE with in-person invigilation through Assessment Services. Within the current working group it was felt that students should be given the option of sitting OSEs with in-person invigilation as a matter of right, rather than needing to apply for it. It is unclear at this stage how many students will take up this option but there are clear budget and capacity implications. On this matter, the group were guided by the Provost to be aspirational in their recommendations and not concern themselves overly with the consequential impacts. Our key task was to recommend a model of OSE invigilation that was academically sound and technically robust. Operational aspects associated with the implication of our recommended model were outside the terms of reference of this working group.

The Working Group's recommendations are set out in detail below but essentially the model we recommend is a dual system which has provision for both remotely invigilated and in-person invigilated OSEs. To get to this point, a phased implementation plan will be adopted to ensure that the system is technically robust before full implementation is adopted. Given that we have very few courses that are solely offered internally (i.e. no distance offering) it is important that we ensure that there is at least partial implementation of the remote invigilated component before a partial implementation of the in-person invigilated component is introduced. The two components, however, can be partially implemented concurrently. The phased implementation plan decision flow chart is included in appendix A.

During our discussions around the recommended dual OSE system, a number of questions arose that remain unresolved. The first question came up as part of the discussion of the in-person component of the dual system. Should all internal students sit their OSEs in-person on-campus? One argument for requiring students to sit their OSEs in-person on-campus is that it is an extension of the requirement that they are on campus for classes. It was also voiced that in-person invigilation is superior to remote invigilation so requiring in-person on-campus invigilation will add to the credibility of the results. A counter argument is that students may have returned to their normal place of residence during the study break so they should have the choice about whether to come back on campus to sit their OSEs with in-person invigilation, or sit their OSEs using remote invigilation. Given that we are

recommending a phased implementation of the two components it was decided that this was not a question that we need to resolve for the initial implementation phase. As such, the decision was deferred until an evaluation of the success of the initial implementation of the in-person on-campus could be undertaken and a greater understanding of the capacity required for full implementation assessed.

A second question was whether the provision of in-person examination centres should be limited to the three Massey campuses or whether these should be extended to other centres, (e.g. one in the South Island)? Apart from the additional cost of setting up these centres, a number of technical concerns were raised. Firstly limiting the in-person examination centres to University equipped labs or similar, would give us more control of the technological aspects of things like: the quality of computers and other peripheral hardware such as webcams, any necessary software provision, internet access either via wifi or hard wired ethernet cable etc. Noting that our on-campus facilities for conducting exams are presently limited. Concerns were raised that if we allowed a BYOD situation then this may be overwhelmed with incompatibility issues with the devices brought in and the requirements for siting the OSE. Again, given the phased implementation of the dual system, it was felt that we should use University resourced examination centres on-campus until an evaluation of the capacity to accommodate BYOD or expand to non-university examination centres can be undertaken.

Lastly, while the recommendation of this working group to Academic Committee is that the University continue to support the use of OSEs for the foreseeable future, we feel that there needs to be ongoing conversations about the affordances and constraints of a range of assessment methods. These conversations should capture both academic and student voices as we strive to refine our assessments for a contemporary world.

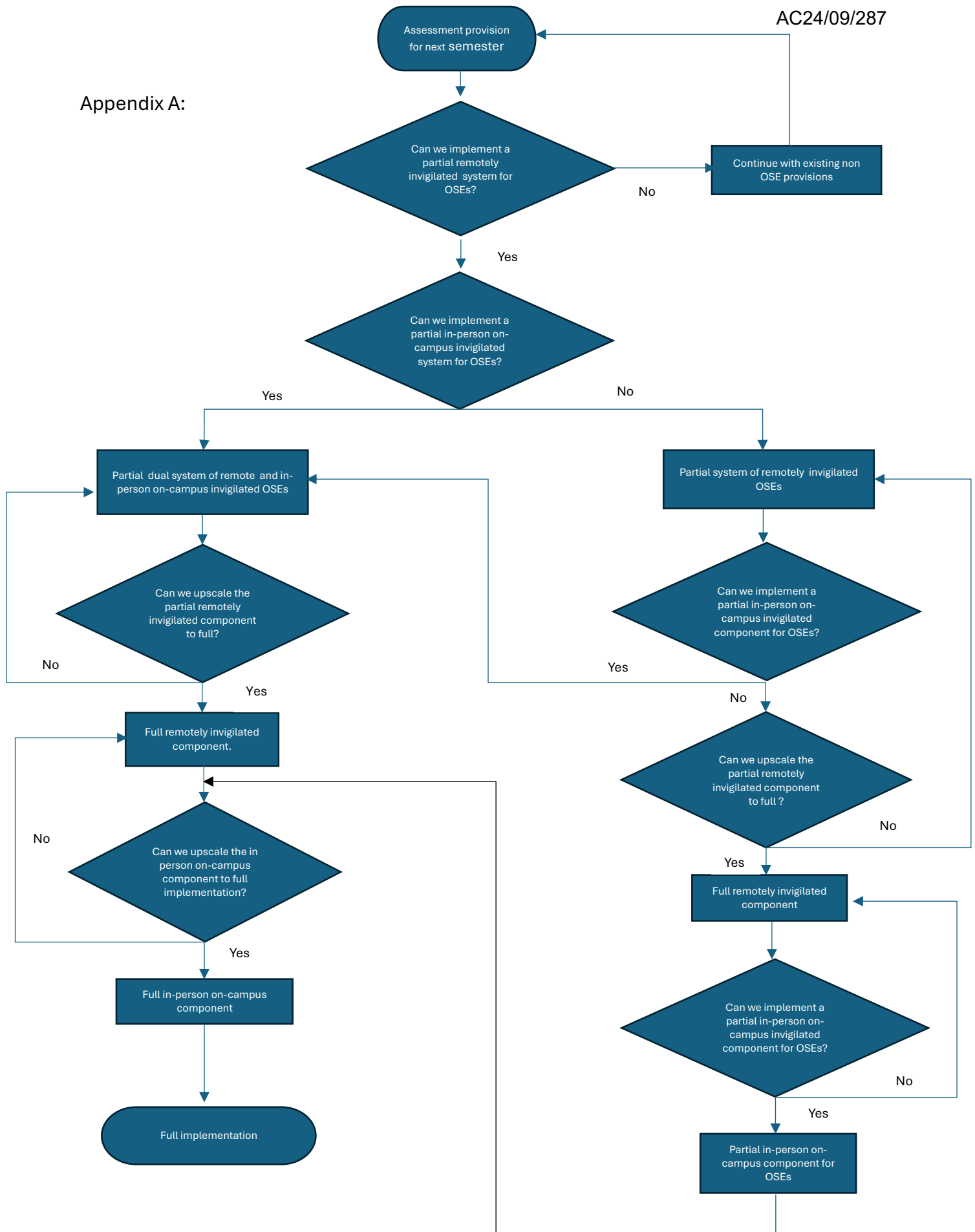
FERWG recommendations

The WG recommends that the University:

1. Continues to support the use of examinations and tests where these are appropriate methods for assessment of the learning outcomes of the course, as determined by academic staff and approved by College Boards.
 2. Continues to provide central administration of final examinations and invigilated tests, for quality assurance, technical support, and appropriate management of student accommodations.
 3. Continues to offer all centrally-administered examinations through an online/digital platform. Non-standard examination formats (e.g. practical examinations) may be centrally scheduled but will be college-administered.
 4. Continue to support both invigilated and un-invigilated examination formats, with College Boards to approve the examination format as part of the course approval process.
 5. Continue to offer invigilation of online examination by remote supervision at a location of the student's choosing, using video and audio observation, with or without recording, and local control of access to other resources (e.g. lockdown browser).
-

6. Provide for an additional system of in-person supervision of online examinations for internal course offerings at an examination venue on campus(es), with an option for distance students to undertake their examinations on campus as well if they should wish, providing students give notice of this intention to the University by the required deadline.
 7. Continue to provide extra assistance and alternative arrangements for examinations through Assessment Services, on a case by case basis as needed.
 8. Undertake a procurement process to identify the most suitable online/digital platform for the delivery of centrally-administered examinations and tests.
 9. Ensure that any online digital platform has a Privacy Impact Assessment undertaken before adoption.
 10. Resource adequate technical and administration support to both staff and students prior to and during the exam period.
 11. Review and revise the Exam Regulations, Rules For Exams and procedures in line with the recommendations adopted.
 12. Create and institute a communication plan to
 - a. Ensure students are informed of the types of assessment used, and associated rules in the course prior to enrolment and why they are used.
 - b. Ensure that students are informed of any technical requirements for undertaking assessments in a given course (e.g. webcams, microphones, etc.), prior to enrolment.
 - c. Articulate to students the minimum digital competencies required to undertake the assessments in a particular programme/course, prior to enrolment.
 13. Institute an ongoing staff communication and development plan to
 - a. Ensure that assessments are well designed and aligned with course and qualification outcomes
 - b. Continually develop staff knowledge about new approaches to assessment that cater to changing expectations and challenges in tertiary assessment
-

Appendix A:





To: Academic Committee

From: Professor Giselle Byrnes

Date: 5 November 2024

Subject: **College responses to FERWG recommendations**

1. PURPOSE

The *Updated OSE recommendations and decision pathway for S2 2024 and beyond* paper was recently shared with College Boards requesting feedback on the recommendations that were made by the OSE Working Group. This paper provides Academic Committee with the College responses to the paper and is requesting Academic Committee to agree and recommend a way forward for semester one 2025 exams for SLT approval.

2. BACKGROUND

At the end of Semester 1 2024, Massey University suffered a series of outages in the Online Supervised Exam (OSE) system. As a result of these outages, the Chair of Academic Committee, Professor Giselle Byrnes, reconvened the Future of Examination Requirements Working Group (FERWG) to make recommendations to Academic Committee in relation to the provision of OSEs for semester 2 2024 and beyond.

The most urgent order of business for the Working Group was to make a recommendation for the semester 2 2024 and summer school examination periods. The final recommendation was that Massey University suspends the use of OSEs for both periods. This was communicated to both the Chair of Learning and Teaching Committee and the chair of Academic Committee on 1st July 2024.

The Working Group then considered OSE options for semester 1 2025. Central to the discussion was the need to retain some form of OSE for the foreseeable future. In addition to remotely invigilated OSEs there was also a clear desire for an in-person invigilated OSE option. While these were incorporated into our original recommendations in 2023, students needed to apply to sit their OSE with in-person invigilation through Assessment Services. Within the current Working Group, it was felt that students should be given the opportunity of sitting OSEs with in-person invigilation as a matter of right, rather than needing to apply for it. It is unclear at this stage how many students would take up this option but there are clearly budget and capacity implications. On this matter, the group was guided by the Provost to be aspirational in their recommendations and not concern themselves with the consequential impacts. The key objective of the Working Group was to recommend a model of OSE invigilation that was academically sound and technically robust. Operational aspects associated with the implication of our recommended model were outside the terms of reference of the working group.

The Working Group's recommendations essentially recommended dual system model which has provision for both remotely invigilated and in-person invigilated OSEs. To get to this point, a phased

implementation plan will need to be adopted to ensure that the system is technically robust before full implementation is adopted.

3. Discussion

Both the **College of Creative Arts** and **College of Humanities and Social Sciences** do not offer OSE exams as a means of assessment and are therefore, not impacted by any of the recommendations that were made. While the paper was discussed at these two College Boards, members of the Boards did not provide feedback on the recommendations.

Massey Business School supported most of the recommendations from the Working Group but were highly concerned by the proposal of a full 'dual' system providing both on-campus in-person invigilated exams and online invigilated exams. In summary, as taken directly from Massey Business School feedback (full feedback can be viewed in Appendix one) the College believes:

- Massey must continue to offer online examinations because we strongly believe that the return to paper-based multiple examination venues is not feasible and that the provision of mixed mode examinations (some online and some on paper) is not equitable or pedagogically defensible.
- Massey must continue to offer provision for online invigilated examinations, but we urge that there should be a clear and high threshold to determine when online examination can be used. These assessment methods have been so prone to risk, it is imperative that the system and provider offer reliability, ease of use, and robustness of support, and if these criteria cannot be guaranteed, then we believe the risk entailed must result in the assessment method not being used.
- Massey should continue to provide an OPTION for students who cannot engage with online invigilation (as has been the case in past semesters, on a case-by-case basis), but this should be negotiated on a case-by-case basis as it has been by Assessment Services in the past. We believe that allowing Assessment Services to match the solution to the specific barrier a student faces would be ultimately more effective than wholesale broadening to a full 'dual system' using the Massey campuses. The dual system as proposed, does not adequately resolve the core issues and would pose new problems which we consider irresolvable in the current resource environment. Therefore, we strongly urge that this dual system option should not be offered as it will exacerbate the already high-risk situation.
- Therefore, while recommendation 7 is supported (Continues to provide extra assistance and alternative arrangements for examinations through Assessment Services, on a case-by-case basis as needed), the College does not support recommendation 6 (Provides for an additional system of in-person supervision of online examinations for internal course offerings at an examination venue on campus(es), with an option for distance students to undertake their examinations on campus as well if they should wish, providing students give notice of this intention to the University by the required deadline).

College of Health and College of Sciences did not provide a consolidated response per se to the paper, such as the Massey Business School response, but instead provided several individual or School/Department comments/notes in response to the paper. These are as follows.

College of Health provided four comments (these are verbatim):

1. It doesn't seem to directly pick up on the learnings from the PWC review of the OSE technology issues from S1
2. I think recommendation 6 "Provides for an additional system of in-person supervision of online examinations for internal course offerings at an examination venue on campus(es), with an option for distance students to undertake their examinations on campus as well if they should wish, providing students give notice of this intention to the University by the

required deadline.”. This should be fully supported as it helps address many of the perceived privacy issues/concerns of the remote OSE solutions.

3. I wasn't sure whether recommendation 13 “Institutes an ongoing staff development plan to:
 - a. Ensure that assessments are well designed and aligned with course and qualification outcomes;
 - b. Continually develop staff knowledge about new approaches to assessment that cater to changing expectations and challenges in tertiary assessment”, was just for OSEs or more widely.
4. Interestingly, there is no mention of the impact of the wide availability and use of GenAI in terms of being a driver for more OSEs, or using the language of Sydney University, Massey having ‘Lane 1’ (secure, in-person or equivalent).

College of Sciences provided individual, Department and College Board response. In summary form these are as follows (full response can be seen in Appendix 2):

- It is important to keep things flexible with regards to exams while Massey designs new assessment approaches (individual response)
- It is essential to have invigilated exams, that are equivalent across modes, with access to a computer. There is a need for a backup plan if things do not work (from CSIT group in the School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences)
- Essential to return to in person assessment for internal and distance students due to GenAI advancements (individual response).
- Online vs in-person invigilation is dependent on the course of study (i.e. maths is not good for online testing). Urgent need to return to invigilated exams and for there to be a backup plan (individual response).
- College Board feedback was:
 - o Lack of available on campus labs and appropriate equipment, and risk around laptop battery capacity (facilities are not set up for plugs for the number of laptops)
 - o Concerns raised with Time Constraint Assessment and cheating
 - o Concerns if OSE can invigilate exams properly – in person exams are preferred until OSEs can be done well
 - o Acknowledge the disconnect in-person exams and students need for digital formats for assessment
 - o Logistic issues for distance students in computer science courses who cannot attend on campus for exams along with functionality of on-campus computers for computer-based invigilated exams are currently inadequate
 - o Staff are encouraged to critically assess the necessity of exams and to consider reducing their frequency, such as having fewer summative assessments and alternative formats. Adopting a project-based approach to engage staff in developing future assessment strategies relevant to their specific areas, especially for programmes with accreditations, was suggested.

Appendices:

- **Appendix 1:** Massey Business School feedback
- **Appendix 2:** College of Sciences feedback

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is requested that the Academic Committee:

- **Recommend** an agreed university response that will be in place from Semester 1 2025 to SLT for approval at the 13 November 2024 meeting.

Appendix 1.



MASSEY BUSINESS SCHOOL

TO: Professor Giselle Byrnes, Provost
FROM: Professor Jo Cullinane, Chair of College Board on behalf of the College of Business Board
DATE: 11 October 2024
SUBJECT: Updated OSE recommendations and decision pathway for S2 2024 and beyond – Feedback from College of Business Board

The College of Business Board appreciates the opportunity to contribute feedback on the Updated OSE recommendations and decision pathway for S2 2024 and beyond.

This memo combines and condenses feedback from the College of Business Academic Programmes Committee and the Massey Business School Teaching and Learning Committee, as well as the College of Business Board.

While we commend the Working Group for the effort and dedication that went into producing these recommendations, and we recognise that we had a representative present throughout, we must still express our disquiet. Specifically, the College supports the majority of the recommendations from the Working Group, but expresses grave reservations in relation to the proposal of a full 'dual' system providing both on-campus in-person invigilated exams AND online invigilated exams. In summary, the College believes:

- Massey must continue to offer online examinations because we strongly believe that the return to paper-based multiple examination venues is not feasible and that the provision of mixed mode examinations (some online and some on paper) is not equitable or pedagogically defensible.
- Massey must continue to offer provision for online invigilated examinations, but we urge that there should be a clear and high threshold to determine when online examination can be used. These assessment methods have been so prone to risk, it is imperative that the system and provider offer reliability, ease of use, and robustness of support, and if these criteria cannot be guaranteed, then we believe the risk entailed must result in the assessment method not being used.
- Massey should continue to provide an OPTION for students who cannot engage with online invigilation (as has been the case in past semesters, on a case-by-case basis), but this should be negotiated on a case-by-case basis as it has been by Assessment Services in the past. We believe that allowing Assessment Services to match the solution to the specific barrier a student faces would be ultimately more effective than wholesale broadening to a full 'dual system' using the Massey campuses. The dual system as proposed, does not adequately resolve the core issues and would pose new problems which we consider irresolvable in the current resource environment. Therefore we strongly urge that this dual system option should not be offered as it will exacerbate the already high-risk situation.
- Therefore, while recommendation 7 is supported, the College does not support recommendation 6.

RE: Suggestion internal students be required to sit in-person invigilated exams

The document notes differing views from the Colleges in terms of requiring internal students to sit their examinations with in-person invigilation. From the MBS perspective such a requirement would only be possible for internal-only courses (such as those in Vet, or Aviation). For other courses, such a requirement would not be practically possible. As we must provide equivalent examinations for all students, it would be essential for all examinations to be sat online ie. on a computer, but our campuses lack computer labs with the capacity to handle large internal enrolments, of which MBS has many.

Additionally, the document makes it clear that BYOD is not a viable option, which renders moot the question of whether campuses have other venues (eg. lecture theatres) with sufficient electrical outlets for students bringing their own computers.

In short, if access to computers with needed programmes like Excel cannot be supplied in an on-campus venue, we cannot require students to sit in an on-campus venue.

We further note that research by Hartnett, Rawlins and Butler on the experiences of Massey students after the initial introduction of online examinations showed that a high proportion of internal students highly value the opportunity to sit exams at a time that suits them, from wherever they happen to be. Requiring on-campus invigilation of internal students would not be desired by many and possibly most students.

RE: Suggestion all students be offered the choice of in-person or online invigilation

Further to the same practical challenges around on-campus capacity outlined above, another argument against the provision of a 'dual system' (offering students the choice of internal or online invigilation) is that this is not equally accessible to all our students. The provision of an option for on-campus in-person invigilation is actually not fair or equitable for our Distance learners, for many of whom travelling to an in-person venue is not a practical or financial possibility, so this would not be an available option to them.

A point around equity was raised: If exams are solely online, students without regular access to reliable broadband and/or appropriate hardware are disadvantaged, and we know that among this group, Māori and Pacific students are disproportionately represented. It may be worth considering different ways of supporting students struggling with connection challenges eg. subsidising Starlink or a similar service.

It continues to be essential that students receive clear communication to help them understand that the modes of study they enrol in may have specific requirements for modes of assessment. We think more could be done in terms of adding this to collateral and offers of enrolment.

As noted above, alternate options for students who CANNOT sit online should be allowed to continue and be managed by Assessment Services with the multiple forms and methods they have developed.

Broader questions about the need for invigilation

While the College feels it is important for Massey to remain in line with what students at our competitors are required to do in terms of examinations, a broader discussion is needed as to the necessity for invigilated exams. Where there is not a clear accreditation or programme verification need for invigilation, it should not be employed.

Finally, we note that the report does not directly address a significant ongoing problem with the provision of online invigilated exams: Student discomfort with using online invigilation software and the perceived invasion of privacy.

Significant questions of pedagogical necessity versus risk to student welfare and remain unanswered. Unless there is a clear imperative to use examinations, it would be better to step back from online

examination. This would necessitate the adjustment of internal assessment patterns, exploration of alternative high veracity assessment methods and professional development for staff in utilising alternatives.

Appendix 2

Updated OSE Recommendations and Decisions Pathway for S2 2024 and Beyond

Collated feedback from College of Sciences (CoS)

31 October 2024

The “Updated OSE Recommendations and Decisions Pathway for S2 2024 and Beyond” document has been read by the College of Sciences College Board. Below are the comments received from CoS staff (both individual and group) and the CoS College Board for consideration.

1) Individual feedback

I welcome the effort undertaken to provide a variety of options for supervised exams on- and off-campus. Allowing flexibility seems to be the correct pragmatic decision until new assessment approaches can be designed. I regard the last paragraph of the discussion as critically important:

Lastly, while the recommendation of the working group to Academic Committee is that the University continue to support the use of OSEs for the foreseeable future, the Working Group felt that there needs to be ongoing conversations about the affordances and constraints of a range of assessment methods. These conversations should capture both academic and student voice as the University strives to refine our assessments for a contemporary world.

Recommendation 13 addresses staff development. I suggest that this needs to be extended to working with academic units (discipline groups, departments, ...) and qualification groupings to create and implement new assessment approaches. Work with individual staff is not sufficient to facilitate change.

2) Group feedback

The CSIT group in the School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences discussed the document entitled *Updated OSE recommendations and decision pathway for S2 2024 and beyond*, which was sent by Professor Giselle Byrnes to College Boards. We appreciate the opportunity to comment on this document and to provide feedback. The feedback outlined in this document is a group submission by those listed at the bottom of the document. It does not pre-empt any feedback made by individuals of the CSIT group.

The group welcomes the commitment of the university to support some form of invigilated exams and recognises that the document distributed by Giselle is aspirational in nature. At the same time, we like to point out that the problems with how invigilation was attempted in Semester 1 were of an operational nature. It is therefore important, that the focus of future work must lie on establishing a robust operational framework.

From the viewpoint of our discipline, the following points are important:

- It is essential that we have invigilated exams in those courses where otherwise it would be impossible to test whether a student has achieved the learning outcomes.
- Since most of our courses are offered in blended mode to both internal and distance students, it is important to maintain equivalence across all offerings of a course.
- Many of our courses involve programming, which can be tested most efficiently if students have access to a computer. Paper-based examination have significant shortcomings in this respect.

- Students need to be informed in advance about the assessment in their degree, at least before enrolling in a course and ideally before choosing a degree.

Regardless of how invigilation is achieved, either through an OSE or in person, there needs to be a backup plan in case problems arise during examination. Both staff and students need to be informed about this backup plan before the examination, so that problems can be mitigated without causing unnecessary stress for students.

3) Individual Feedback

1. I received the document “Updated OSE recommendations...” via my Head of School. Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.
2. AI (artificial intelligence) can do almost any written university assessment. It can write essays and reports. It can solve mathematical problems. And it can write computer programs.
3. Students can access AI and use it to do any assessment. Massey’s present lack of invigilation (as of S2, 2024) means no student can prove they did the work that led to their qualification. Therefore, students can only take Massey courses for their own personal interest and knowledge; certainly, some students study for these reasons. However, any qualification obtained in a non-invigilated environment will have no value when seeking employment, because there is no way to ensure that a student met any of the learning outcomes for the qualification. Future employment is a major reason for studying at Massey. By not having invigilation, Massey graduates will be viewed negatively by employers.
4. I estimate approximately 25% of students cheat by using AI in assignments, tests, or other work. Cheating with AI is easy to detect, but not easy to prove. The simplest and most flagrant abuse is to copy-and-paste the assessment instructions into AI and then copy-and-paste the AI generated output and attempt to pass this off as your own work. This is surprisingly common, especially in courses where all the assessments consist of writing reports. It also occurs in courses where there are non-invigilated tests and/or exams.
5. The video “A practical approach to looking ahead around Gen AI at all levels of an institute” by Prof Danny Liu (DVC, Education, University of Sydney) was recommended to the College of Sciences. Here is the link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Xr4Wcwlh9TU>

Starting at time 11:52, the speaker proposes two “Lanes” of assessment. Lane 1 is “Secured, in person”, with the principle of “forming trustworthy judgements of student learning”. Various examples are given, but for practical reasons, tests and exams will be the main type of such an assessment. While the speaker is promoting the use of Lane 2 “AI scaffolded” assessments, he emphasises, and is completely unambiguous, that programmes must have Lane 1 “secured, in person” assessments.

At present, Massey generally doesn’t have “Lane 1” assessments. So, Massey is operating without any trustworthy judgement of student learning.

During 40:00 – 42:30, the speaker mentions that if Lane 1 assessments are not used in a course, then that course cannot contribute to the learning outcomes of the qualification. Instead, those learning outcomes will have to be achieved in another course that does have Lane 1 assessments.

In other words, “Secured, in person” assessments are essential.

The speaker dismisses plagiarism detecting software as ineffective during 43:30 – 44:35 of the video. He explains how simple it is for students to avoid detection.

6. It won't work to have in-person invigilated exams for internal students, and another type of exam for online students. The lack of trustworthy judgement of student learning for the online cohort is enough to destroy the credibility of the qualification for all students.
7. In summary, Massey must return to in-person exams, as it had pre-Covid in 2019 and earlier. As the DVC at the University of Sydney makes clear, there is no other option. Without in-person exams (or similar, secured, in person assessment), Massey is not forming trustworthy judgements of student learning. As such, Massey's qualifications are only for "student interest" and not "qualifications for employment". In short, if Massey continues without in-person exams while promoting its courses as paths to possible employment, it would be operating a scam.

4) Individual feedback

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on *Updated OSE recommendations and decision pathway for S2 2024 and beyond*.

Online Examinations

- Online examinations have advantages for some disciplines (Computer Science, IT) but others (Mathematics) can only be completed with hand-written answers. Both modes should be supported.
- Invigilation software should ideally allow access to a limited set of software (Excel, RStudio, MATLAB etc). On-campus invigilation would require the same software as human invigilators would be unable to effectively monitor this.

Urgent need for Invigilated Assessments

- Availability of Generative AI tools mean invigilated assessments are urgently required. The ease-of-access, secrecy, and immediate results of these tools mean invigilation is more important than ever.
- Lack of invigilation makes it very hard for staff to detect whether students are meeting the learning outcomes of their courses. This leads to:
 - o Staff disillusionment
 - o Students being unprepared for higher level courses
 - o Reputational damage to Massey

Backup Plan

- Regardless of any invigilation method used, Massey must have an emergency plan in place in the case of failure during the exams. No software platform will ever be immune to outages and a clear process and communication plan is vital.
- This should include:
 - o A clear plan presented to both staff & students about what to expect in case of a problem.
 - o Pre-approved communications that can be sent to any affected students/staff in case of a problem that clearly states what they need to do and what they should expect to happen.

5) CSB feedback

The document (CSB24/9/172) was discussed on 17 October 2024. The following were mentioned during the discussion:

- Issues were identified around the availability of adequate computer labs for students to sit exams on campus. The use of personal devices may be a challenge, such as compatibility issues and insufficient charging infrastructure. Students' devices might not last for the duration of an exam (2–4 hours). Most existing spaces are occupied by veterinary students, which limits its availability for others. Lecture theatres also lack sufficient charging facilities, which has become an accreditation issue. The university should prioritise funding to improve the exam facilities. Staff should make a compelling case to address accreditation and subject requirements, despite suggestions to have alternative assessment methods.
- Some members supported having examinations. External examiners and accreditation panels have raised concerns about not having proper examination systems. Mechanisms should be in place to ensure that the person taking the exam is the same person who enrolled in the course. Concerns were also raised about time-constrained assessments (TCAs) being open for 24-hours, with questions quickly circulated on social media. This undermines the integrity of the exams, despite randomisations of questions.
- Current video-based monitoring systems may not provide proper invigilation. There were discussions whether to accommodate distance students differently or to use traditional assessment methods. This raises the question of whether it is best to return to traditional exam methods while solutions for online invigilation are being developed.
- There is discomfort with the use of online supervised exams (OSEs) for assessments. Although some may advocate for traditional exams, students increasingly need digital formats for their assessments. Preparations for Semester 1, 2025, must be in place and communicated effectively to students.
- Assessment logistics for computer science courses are a pressing issue, particularly for distance students who cannot physically attend exams on campus. Many students enrolled for 2025 are located globally. Also, the availability and functionality of on-campus computers for computer-based invigilated exams are currently inadequate. Using a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) may be a practical alternative. The only viable options moving forward are reliable online assessments or the continuation of TCAs. Even with BYOD exams, lockdown browser technology should be implemented to prevent students from accessing unauthorised information or communicating during assessments.
- Staff are encouraged to critically assess the necessity of exams and to consider reducing their frequency, such as having fewer summative assessments and alternative formats. Adopting a project-based approach to engage staff in developing future assessment strategies relevant to their specific areas, especially for programmes with accreditations, was suggested. There should be a balance in student and staff workloads while ensuring appropriate graduate outcomes.



MEMORANDUM

To: Academic Committee

From: Associate Professor Peter Rawlins

Date: 21st January 2025

Subject: Student insights on OSEs Changes and trends from 2020 to 2023

Background

The attached report presents the findings of a research project that investigated Massey University students' experiences with online supervised examinations (OSEs) in 2023 and compares these findings with those from a similar study conducted in 2020. The original research, undertaken in 2020 (Hartnett et al., 2020), sought to understand the experiences of students affected by the shift to online supervised exams (OSE). The current research sought to repeat the survey research to determine whether students' experiences and perceptions of OSEs had changed in the intervening three years.

Key findings

The 2023 research revealed that students generally rated their digital competence at an intermediate level. Their experiences of the technologies used for online supervised examinations (OSEs), namely RPNOW and Stream, were generally positive and high levels of confidence were also reported especially when using Stream.

In terms of their experiences and attitudes towards OSEs, most students considered them to be an acceptable and appropriate method for course assessment. They appreciated the flexibility and clarity provided by OSEs, although some students found the experience to be stressful. While many students felt comfortable being observed during exams, a slightly higher proportion expressed discomfort with this aspect. The support provided by the university was generally acceptable.

When comparing the 2023 results with those from the original 2020 survey, several trends and changes were observed. There was a notable improvement in the perceived ease of use of both RPNOW and Stream, along with an increase in student confidence levels. Students in 2023 reported more positive experiences and attitudes towards OSEs compared to 2020. However, there was a slight increase in discomfort with being observed during exams, and concerns about the potential for cheating decreased significantly. Minor differences in assessment preferences were observed from 2020 to 2023, and student perceptions of the support offered by the university slightly improved.

Future Considerations

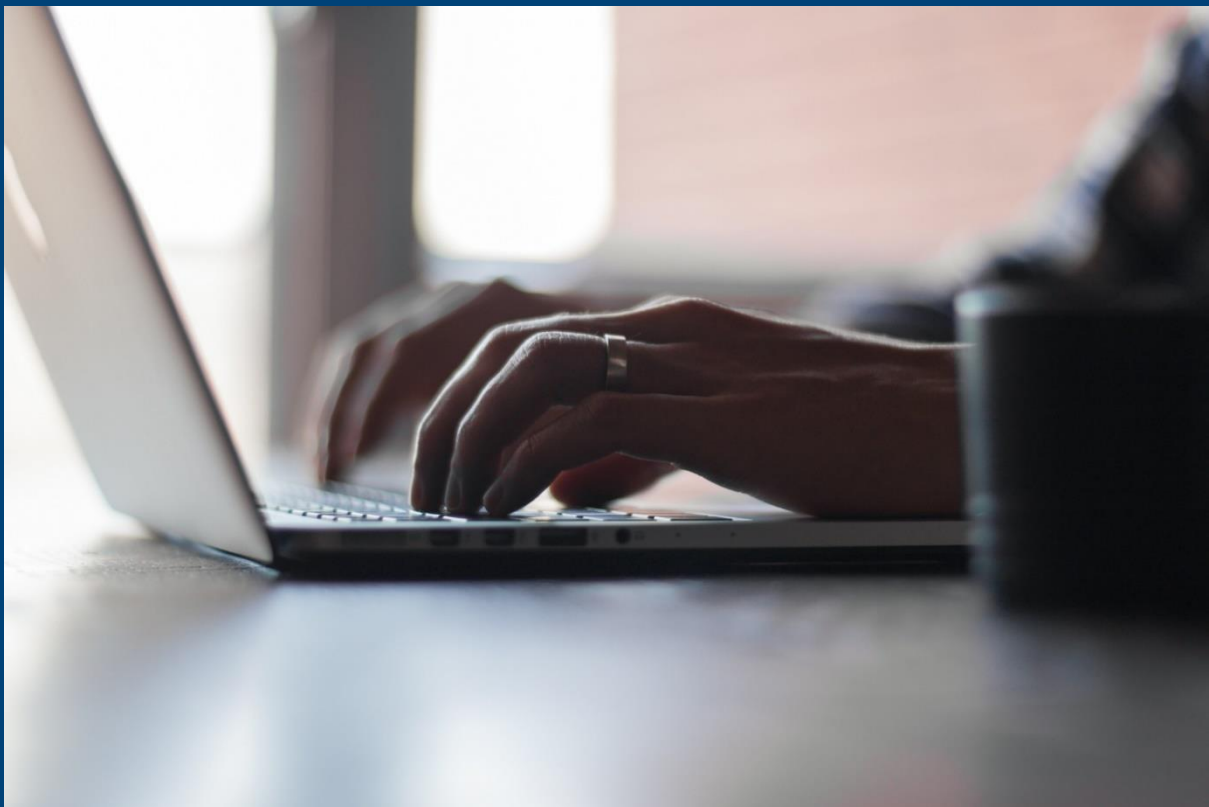
The situation has changed significantly since the last survey in 2023, particularly due to the PSI service outage during the Semester One 2024 exam period. Despite this, the results from the 2023 survey provide a valuable benchmark of students' overall experiences and attitudes towards online supervised

exams (OSEs), which can inform future decisions including the selection of a new assessment platform to replace the existing service provider.

Recommendation

1. That Academic Committee discuss the report.

Student insights on OSEs: Changes and trends from 2020 to 2023



Peter Rawlins, Philippa Butler, and Maggie Hartnett
December 2024

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	1
1. Overview	2
1.1 Background	2
1.2 Aim	2
2. Methodology	2
2.1 Survey	2
2.2 Response rate.....	4
2.3 Data analysis.....	4
3. Demographics of participants	5
4. Findings from the 2023 survey	7
4.1 Digital competence (DIGCOMP).....	7
4.2 Perceived Ease of Use (PEU).....	8
4.3 Students' confidence (CONF) to complete an OSE	10
4.4 Students' experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) via OSE	11
4.5 Relationships between DIGCOMP, CONF, PEU and EATA.....	13
4.6 Analysis by ethnic group, online learning experience and mode of study	14
4.7 Students' perceptions of university support.....	15
4.8 Assessment preferences	18
4.9 Summary	18
5. Comparisons between 2020 and 2023 results.....	19
5.1 Digital competence (DIGCOMP) comparison	19
5.2 RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison.....	20
5.3 Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison.....	21
5.4 Confidence (CONF) comparison.....	23
5.5 Experiences of and Attitudes Towards Assessment (EATA) comparison	25
5.6 Assessment preferences comparison	28
5.7 Comparisons of university support.....	28
5.8 Comparisons by ethnic group, online learning experience and mode of study.....	29
5.9 Summary	31
6. Conclusions.....	31
7. Recommendations	32
8. Limitations.....	33
9. Future research.....	33
10. References.....	34
Appendix 1. 2023 Student Survey	35

Appendix 2. 2023 Cronbach's Alpha (α) results	43
Appendix 3. 2023 Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test results	47
Appendix 4. 2023 Skewness and Kurtosis test results	49
Appendix 5. 2023 Background demographic information	50
Appendix 6. 2020 and 2023 comparisons	53

List of Tables

Table 1:Demographics of OSE survey participants.....	5
Table 2. OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU)	8
Table 3. OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU)	9
Table 4. OSE students' confidence statements by quartile	11
Table 5. Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) via OSEs	12
Table 6. Summary of correlations for OSE assessment	14
Table 7. Key themes and sub-themes associated with students' perceptions of university support for OSEs.....	16
Table 8: Student assessment preferences	18
Table 9: Digital competence by subcategory for 2020 and 2023	19
Table 10: OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023.....	20
Table 11: OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023	22
Table 12: Confidence (CONF) comparison for 2020 and 2023	23
Table 13: Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) comparison for 2020 and 2023.....	25
Table 14: Assessment preferences comparison for 2020 and 2023.....	28
Table 15. Comparison between students' perceptions of university support for OSEs for 2020 and 2023	29
Table 16: Cronbach's alpha for student DIGCOMP scale	43
Table 17: Cronbach's alpha for student OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) scale	43
Table 18: Cronbach's alpha for student OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) scale	44
Table 19: Cronbach's alpha for student confidence (CONF) scale	44
Table 20: Cronbach's Alpha for student EATA scale	45
Table 21: Cronbach's alpha for student EATA scale with items 3, 4, and 19 removed.....	46
Table 22: One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for student scales	47
Table 23. Skewness and Kurtosis for student scale mean scores	49
Table 24. Student gender by age.....	50
Table 25. Student ethnic group by age.....	50
Table 26. Student location by age.....	50
Table 27. Student study pattern by age	50
Table 28. Student type of community by age.....	50
Table 29. Student mode of study by age	50
Table 30. Student online learning experience by age	51
Table 31. Student type of internet access by age	51

Table 32. Student age by ethnic group	51
Table 33. Student gender by ethnic group.....	51
Table 34. Student location by ethnic group.....	51
Table 35. Student study pattern by ethnic group	51
Table 36. Student type of community by ethnic group	52
Table 37. Student mode of study by ethnic group	52
Table 38. Student online learning experience by ethnic group	52
Table 39. Student type of internet access by ethnic group	52

List of Figures

Figure 1: Student digital competence.....	7
Figure 2: Digital competence by sub-category	8
Figure 3: OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU).....	9
Figure 4: OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU).....	10
Figure 5: OSE mean confidence (CONF) by quartile.....	11
Figure 6: Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) via OSEs.....	13
Figure 7: Digital competence by sub-category for 2020 and 2023.....	19
Figure 8: OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023	21
Figure 9: OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023.....	22
Figure 10: Confidence (CONF) comparison for 2020 and 2023	24
Figure 11: Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) comparison for 2020 and 2023	27
Figure 12: Mean score student digital competence (DIGCOMP) scale.....	47
Figure 13: Mean score student RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) scale	47
Figure 14: Mean score student Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) scale.....	48
Figure 15: Mean score student confidence (CONF) scale	48
Figure 16: Mean score student experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) scale with items 3, 4 and 19 removed.....	49

Executive Summary

This report presents the findings of a research project that investigated Massey University students' experiences with online supervised examinations (OSEs) in 2023 and compares these findings with those from a similar study conducted in 2020. The original research, undertaken in 2020 (Hartnett et al., 2020), sought to understand the experiences of students affected by the shift to online supervised exams (OSE). The current research sought to repeat the survey research to determine whether students' experiences and perceptions of OSEs had changed in the intervening three years.

The results of the most recent 2023 survey, indicate that students generally rated their digital competence at an intermediate level. The perceived ease of use of the technologies used for OSEs, namely RPNOW and Stream, was generally positive. Students reported high levels of confidence in using these technologies, particularly Stream.

In terms of experiences and attitudes towards OSEs, most students found OSEs acceptable and an appropriate way to assess their courses. They appreciated the flexibility and clarity provided by OSEs, although some considered it a stressful experience. While many students felt comfortable being observed during the exams, a slightly higher proportion expressed discomfort with being observed. The support provided by the university was generally considered acceptable.

When comparing the 2023 results with those from the original survey in 2020, several trends and changes were observed. There was a notable improvement in the perceived ease of use of both RPNOW and Stream, as well as an increase in student confidence levels. Students in 2023 reported more positive experiences and attitudes towards OSEs compared to 2020. However, discomfort with being observed during exams increased slightly, and concerns about the potential for cheating decreased significantly. Minor differences in assessment preferences were observed from 2020 to 2023 and student perceptions of support offered slightly improved.

The situation has changed significantly since the last survey in 2023, particularly due to the PSI service outage during the Semester One 2024 exam period. Despite this, the results from the 2023 survey provide a valuable benchmark of students' overall experiences and attitudes towards online supervised exams (OSEs), which can inform future decisions. With the rise of generative artificial intelligence and the increasing need for secure assessments across various programmes of study (Bridgeman et al., 2024, 26 November), the need for supervised examinations remains clear. This report is especially timely as Massey University is currently in the process of selecting a new assessment platform to replace the existing service provider.

1. Overview

This report presents the findings of a research project that asked Massey University students about online supervised examinations (OSEs). Results from the most recent survey, conducted in 2023, serves as a follow-up to a similar study carried out in 2020 during the onset of COVID. The report begins by detailing the results of the 2023 survey, highlighting key insights into students' attitudes and experiences with online supervised exams. Following this, a comparative analysis is provided, examining changes and trends between the 2023 findings with those from 2020. This comparison aimed to identify shifts in student perceptions and experiences over the three-year period, offering insights to inform the debate over the ongoing use of OSEs.

1.1 Background

The unique circumstances brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic required Massey University to rethink the provision of final examinations in Semester One, 2020. At that time, many courses shifted from final paper-based exams to online supervised exams. Since then, OSEs have continued to be utilised for end of course assessment though not without some concerns. With the ongoing debate about the use of OSE's in mind, the current research sought to repeat the survey research to determine whether students' experiences and perceptions of OSEs had changed in intervening years from 2020 to 2023.

1.2 Aim

The research questions informing this investigation were:

1. What were students' experiences of end of semester one online supervised exams in 2023?
2. How do the 2023 results compare with those of 2020?

2. Methodology

To investigate students' experiences of OSEs in Semester One 2023, an anonymous survey was utilised. A low-risk ethics application was submitted to the Massey University Human Ethics database prior to the commencement of the study (ethics notification 4000027801).

2.1 Survey

The same student online survey that was developed for the 2020 study was used again with a few minor changes (see [Appendix 1](#)). A range of demographic questions were included in the survey, in addition to questions in the following areas: digital competence, ease of use of the digital technology used in OSEs, confidence to engage with the digital technology used for OSEs, experiences of and attitudes towards OSEs, and support accessed. The demographic questions included participants' age, gender, ethnic groups, location, nature and location of study, online study experience, and internet and device accessibility. As part of this section, participants were asked to nominate the primary college in which their studies took place. No analysis by college was undertaken for this report.

Next, questions about digital competence, related to everyday experiences of problem solving and digital technologies, were included in the survey. The Digital Competence framework (Ferrari, 2013; Khateeb, 2017), developed by the European Union, was adopted for this

study. Specifically, four questions related to digital competence and problem-solving were included. Participants were asked to choose one of three statements that most accurately described their digital capability for each question. The three statements for each question equated to a three-point scale of basic, intermediate, and advanced levels of digital competence.

Subsequent sections of the survey asked respondents to focus on one specific course with an OSE assessment. These sections consisted of a series of statements related to the use of technology for OSEs. A construct from the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), namely perceptions of ease of use (Davis, 1989), was adopted. Perceptions of ease of use (PEU) is the belief that using the technology will be straightforward and effortless. Since its development, the TAM model has been used extensively to determine individuals' attitudes towards adopting various technologies (Selim, 2003). The researchers used a slightly adapted PEU scale from Selim (2003), who investigated university students' acceptance of course websites for learning. The original PEU scale comprised six statements. All statements were retained for this study with only slight changes to the wording of each statement to refer to the technology under consideration. One additional statement was also added (*I found the X technology for the Online Supervised Exam flexible to interact with*). Participants were asked to respond to these statements using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

The PEU statements were repeated twice; once for the online proctoring platform (RPNow) from PSI used as part of the assessment process, and once for the university's learning management system (Stream). It is important to note that the online supervised exams were not undertaken using RPNow software but through Stream. However, the OSEs did require students to authenticate their identity (using a valid form of photo ID) and connect their webcam and microphone so that the proctoring software recorded the desktop, webcam feed and audio feed during the exam period. Recordings were reviewed by certified proctors, looking for violations that could compromise the integrity of the exam. Successfully completing this process was necessary prior to commencing the actual exam.

The next section in the survey asked about respondents' confidence to complete the OSE given certain factors related to the technology being used. The statements within this section were developed with reference to the well-established computer self-efficacy scale created by Compeau and Higgins (1995). Participants were asked to respond to these statements on a sliding scale ranging from 0 (not at all confident) to 100 (completely confident). A 'not applicable' option was also available. Nine statements related to RPNow and Stream, were included.

A further section asked about respondents' experiences of and attitudes towards their OSEs. Statements in this section were developed with reference to the assessment literature (Huda et al., 2020; Myyry & Joutsenvirta, 2015; Stöddberg, 2012). In this section, 19 statements related to experiences of and attitudes towards RPNow and Stream in addition to more general assessment considerations were included. Participants were asked to respond to these statements using a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) in addition to a 'not applicable' option.

The final section of the survey asked all participants an open-ended questions about whether they had accessed support before or during the OSE, and if they did, what type of support was accessed and why? The final question asked participants to rank eight statements in terms of their assessment preferences (six in the original survey in 2020). Two additional ranking statements were added for the 2023 survey namely, "solely through in-person

supervised paper-based exams” and “solely through in-person supervised online exams (e.g., on-campus).

2.2 Response rate

All students in courses with an end of semester one, 2023 scheduled OSE, were invited to take part in the anonymous survey in August of 2023. An invitation to complete the student survey (containing a link to the online survey) was successfully sent to 3340 unique email addresses at the beginning of August 2023. The survey was hosted in *Qualtrics*. The survey remained open for one month and a total of 661 responses from unique respondents were received, representing a response rate of 19.8% of invited students. Of those, 591 were valid responses (i.e. they had completed more than the demographics section). Students could complete the survey more than once if they were studying multiple courses with OSEs. This resulted in 701 unique responses about courses with OSEs. Of these, 503 students reported on one OSE, 73 students reported on two OSEs, nine students reported on three OSEs, five students reported on four OSEs, and one student reported on five OSEs.

Student participants could also choose to enter a prize draw to win one of two vouchers worth \$200 each, to recognise the value of their contributions and the time involved in completing the survey. To enter the draw, a participant needed to supply their student ID. A total of 398 participants entered the draw. Identification details were kept separate from survey responses and were not included for analysis purposes.

2.3 Data analysis

After the data were cleaned for invalid responses, descriptive statistics (frequency counts and percentages) were generated from the full set of 701 unique responses about courses with OSEs. Blank responses and ‘not applicable’ responses were excluded from the data analysis. Where appropriate, percentages have been rounded to the nearest whole percentage. Measures that use disagree (somewhat, disagree, disagree, and strongly disagree) and agree (somewhat agree, agree, strongly agree) scales have been aggregated for ease of interpretation. Rank order questions (i.e. assessment preferences) were calculated for each of the eight items via a weighted sum where the number of first ranked preferences was multiplied by the number of items, the second by the number of items minus one and so on. To investigate the responses of participants, the mean scores on three key measures, namely perceived ease of use (PEU) for both RPNOW and Stream), confidence (CONF) and experiences of and attitudes toward assessment (EATA) were calculated.

Cronbach’s Alpha (α) scores were calculated to investigate the internal consistency of each scale (see [Appendix 2](#) for results). As an existing scale, all items were retained for the digital competence scale (DIGCOMP). Cronbach’s Alpha (α) scores for the experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) measures indicated removal of specific items would improve internal consistency.

To determine the most appropriate inferential statistical tests for analysis, a series of one-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) tests were conducted to examine the parametric nature of the data. For all nine measures, the KS test statistics were significant, indicating that the data were not normally distributed (see [Appendix 3](#)). This was confirmed by an examination of the Skewness and the Kurtosis of the scales (see [Appendix 4](#)). These results imply that non-parametric tests would be the preferred analytical tools for this dataset. However, the use of parametric tests provides some distinct advantages over non-parametric tests. Parametric tests have more statistical power than non-parametric tests, meaning that they are more likely to

detect a significant difference when one exists; parametric tests can perform better when the spread (dispersion) between the two groups is different; and inferences drawn from parametric tests are easier to interpret and more meaningful than that of nonparametric tests. A further examination of the sample size for the various groups determined that parametric tests were suitable as parametric tests can perform well in situations with skewed or non-normal data if the sample size is appropriate (Rana et al., 2016). A suitable sample size for performing a one sample t-test on non-normal data is one greater than 20, for a two-sample t-test each group should have more than 15 observations, and for performing a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with 2–9 groups, each group requires more than 15 observations.

To investigate the strength of relationships between measures, two-tailed Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated. The following guidelines are commonly used to represent the strength of the relationship in social science research: weak positive correlations range from 0.1 to 0.3, moderate positive correlations range from 0.3 to 0.5, and strong positive correlations range from 0.5 to 1.0 (Cohen, 1988). Using these conventions, a weak positive correlation would account for 1% to 9% of the total variance, a moderate positive correlation would account for 9% to 25% of the total variance, a strong positive correlation for 25% to 100% of the total variance. To reduce the possibility of type I errors, a conservative p value $p < .01$ was used for this study (Huck, 2012).

3. Demographics of participants

The demographics of survey participants are summarised in Table 1. Overall, respondents were predominantly under 25 years old or less (55%), female (66%), of New Zealand European ethnicity (49%), studying in New Zealand (93%), studying full-time (64%), studying online in New Zealand (50%), lived in a city (66%), had broadband internet access (86%), had some experience as online learners (i.e., 1 year or more of experience) (56%), and completed their online invigilated exam in the place where they normally lived (82%). The most common device available to participants was a laptop/notebook (92%). The average number of devices per respondent was 1.64.

Table 1: Demographics of OSE survey participants

Variable	N	Categories	n	Percentage
Age ^a	590	25 years or less	327	55.4%
		26-40 years	203	34.4%
		41 years or more	60	10.2%
Gender ^b	589	Male	190	32.3%
		Female	390	66.2%
		Gender diverse	4	0.7%
		Prefer not to say	5	0.8%
Ethnicity ^{c, d}	588	Māori	48	8.2%
		Pacific Peoples	26	4.4%
		Asian	119	20.2%
		Other	81	13.8%
		Pākehā/NZ European	291	49.5%
		Prefer not to say	23	3.9%

Variable	N	Categories	n	Percentage
Location ^e	589	New Zealand	549	93.2%
		Overseas	40	6.8%
Community type	588	City	390	66.3%
		Small town	114	19.4%
		Rural area	76	12.9%
		Other	8	1.4%
Study pattern ^f	589	Full time	377	64.0%
		Part time	212	36.0%
Internet access	461	Broadband	398	86.3%
		Rural internet	60	13.0%
		Other	3	0.7%
Type of device	589	Laptop/notebook	544	92.4%
		Desktop computer	128	21.7%
		Tablet	86	14.6%
		Smart phone	207	35.1%
Online learning experience	589	Inexperienced (<1 year)	219	37.2%
		Some experience (1-2 years)	131	22.2%
		Experienced (>2 years)	198	33.6%
		Other	41	7.0%
Mode of study ^g	590	Block delivery	39	6.6%
		On campus	213	36.1%
		NZ online	293	49.7%
		Overseas online	43	7.3%
		Other	2	0.3%
Exam location	587	Where I normally live	481	81.9%
		A friend or family member's house	26	4.4%
		University campus	59	10.1%
		Other	21	3.6%

^a University 2023 student population statistics report 58.6% were over 25 years of age.

^b University 2023 student population statistics report 64.8% were female.

^c University 2023 student population statistics report 12.3% Māori and 5.6% Pacific. In the survey, respondents could select more than one ethnic group. These responses were prioritised according to Ministry of Education (2020) protocols, where Māori are first priority, followed by Pacific Peoples, Asian, Other, and New Zealand European, so that each individual was assigned to one ethnic group category for ease of statistical analysis.

^d Māori (indigenous people of New Zealand) and Pacific Peoples are identified as priority learners by the New Zealand Ministry of Education (2021).

^e Overseas locations: China (14); Australia (10); UK (4); UAE (2); Vietnam (2); and 1 each in Egypt, Germany, Singapore, and South Africa. Four did not specify their location.

^f University 2023 student population statistics report 38.9% full-time and 61.1% part-time.

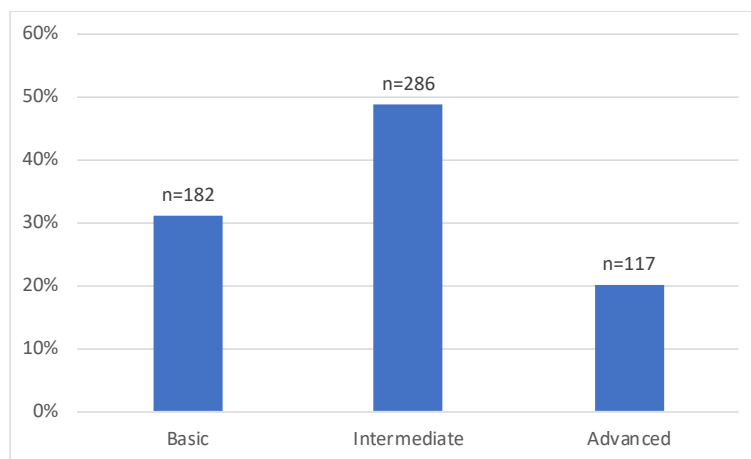
^g University 2023 student population statistics report 43.1% internal (on campus) and 56.9% distance (online or block delivery).

4. Findings from the 2023 survey

4.1 Digital competence (DIGCOMP)

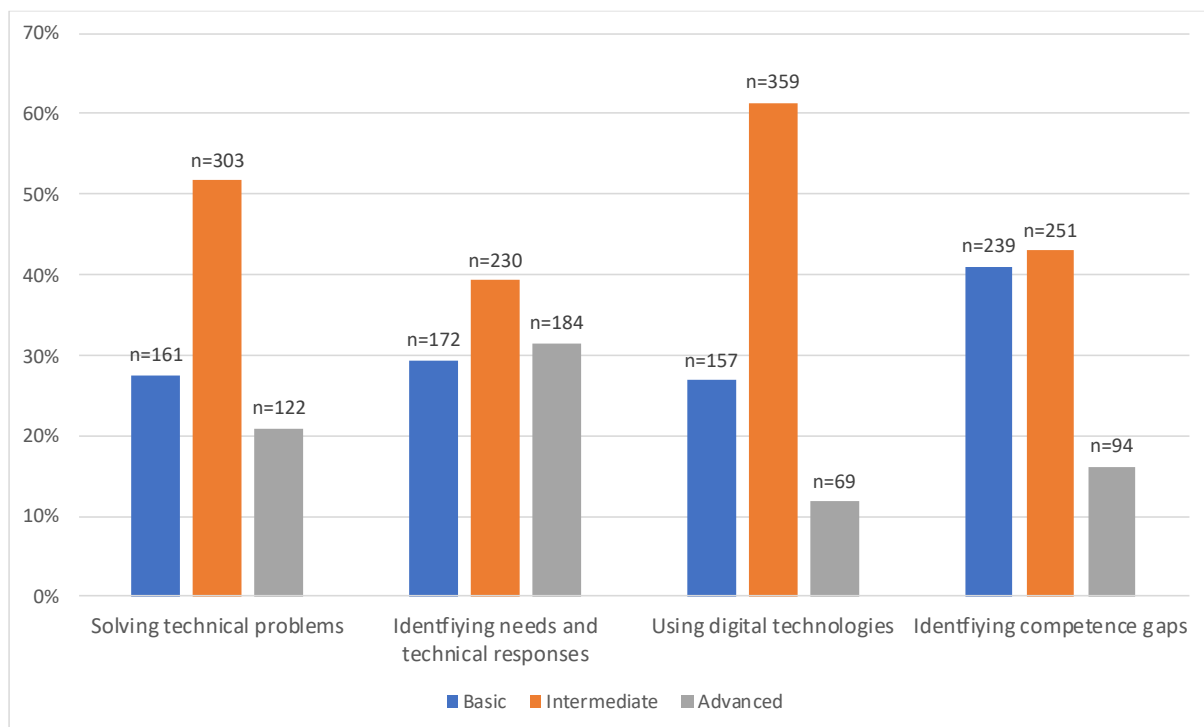
Respondents were asked about their digital competence as it related to problem-solving (see Figure 1). Overall, the results indicate that across all problem-solving sub-categories, almost half of respondents rated their skills at an intermediate level (49%), followed by a third who rated their skills at a basic level (31%). Relatively few respondents (20%) rated their digital competence at an advanced level.

Figure 1: Student digital competence



Looking at the sub-categories that comprise the digital competence problem-solving scale (see Figure 2), 73% of respondents were reasonably self-reliant (i.e. intermediate to advanced) when dealing with technical problems. Approximately half (52%) of respondents indicated that they could solve most frequent technical problems that occur (i.e. intermediate). Only about one fifth (21%) indicated they had the ability to solve almost all technical problems (i.e. advanced). In terms of identifying needs and technical responses, most respondents (70%) indicated that they had intermediate to advanced skills. In terms of the actual use of digital technologies, 73% of respondents rated their skills as intermediate to advanced. The results for being able to accurately identify competence gaps were noticeably different. While 41% number of respondents indicated that they were aware of the need to update their digital skills (i.e. basic), they were not necessarily doing so on a regular or frequent basis. A further 43% of respondents were aware of their digital limitations and regularly updated their digital skills (i.e. intermediate). Relatively few (16%) participants actively kept up to date with new digital tools and technological developments (i.e. advanced).

Figure 2: Digital competence by sub-category



4.2 Perceived Ease of Use (PEU)

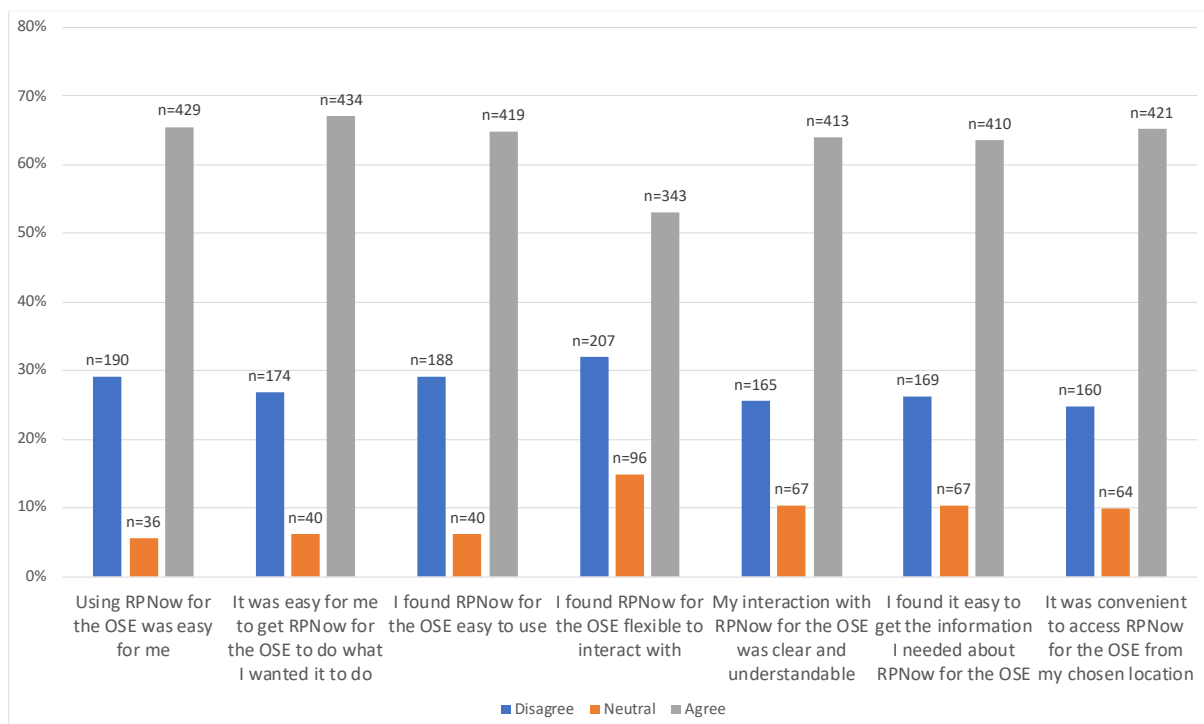
The following section presents the results from respondents, about their perceived ease of use of RPNOW and Stream.

4.2.1 RPNOW PEU Table 2 and Figure 3 show the results of the perceived ease of use scale (PEU) for RPNOW. Across all statements in the PEU scale, more than half of students who undertook an OSE agreed (53%-67%) that RPNOW was easy to use, clear and understandable and convenient to access, compared with those who disagreed (25%-32%) or were neutral (5%-15%). Looking more closely at the individual items, notably fewer students agreed the RPNOW technology was flexible to use (53%) compared with all other statement responses which were close to two thirds agreement (63%-67%).

Table 2. OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU)

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
Using the RPNOW technology for the OSE was easy for me	190 (29%)	36 (5%)	429 (65%)	655 (100%)
It was easy for me to get the RPNOW technology for the OSE to do what I wanted it to do	174 (27%)	40 (6%)	434 (67%)	648 (100%)
I found the RPNOW technology for the OSE easy to use	188 (29%)	40 (6%)	419 (65%)	647 (100%)
I found the RPNOW technology for the OSE flexible to interact with	207 (32%)	96 (15%)	343 (53%)	646 (100%)
My interaction with the RPNOW technology for the OSE was clear and understandable	165 (26%)	67 (10%)	413 (64%)	645 (100%)
I found it easy to get the information I needed about the RPNOW technology for the OSE	169 (26%)	67 (10%)	410 (63%)	646 (100%)
It was convenient to access the RPNOW technology for the OSE from my chosen location	160 (25%)	64 (10%)	421 (65%)	645 (100%)

Figure 3: OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU)



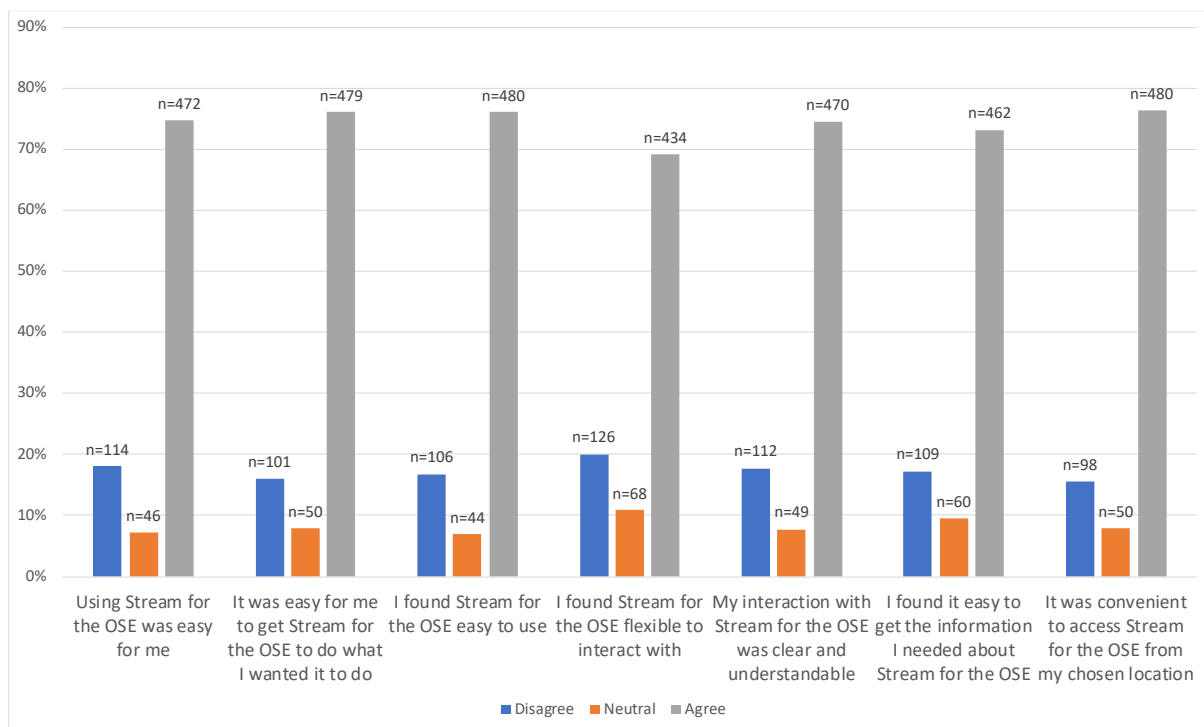
4.2.2 Stream PEU

When asked about the perceived ease of use of Stream to complete an OSE (see Table 3 and Figure 4), most students who undertook an OSE agreed (69-76%) that Stream was easy to use, clear and understandable and convenient to access, compared with those who disagreed or were neutral (24-31%).

Table 3. OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU)

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Total
Using Stream for the OSE was easy for me	114 (18%)	46 (7%)	472 (75%)	632 (100%)
It was easy for me to get Stream for the OSE to do what I wanted it to do	101 (16%)	50 (8%)	479 (76%)	630 (100%)
I found Stream for the OSE easy to use	106 (17%)	44 (7%)	480 (76%)	630 (100%)
I found Stream for the OSE flexible to interact with	126 (20%)	68 (11%)	434 (69%)	628 (100%)
My interaction with Stream for the OSE was clear and understandable	112 (18%)	49 (8%)	470 (74%)	631 (100%)
I found it easy to get the information I needed about Stream for the OSE	109 (17%)	60 (10%)	462 (73%)	631 (100%)
It was convenient to access Stream for the OSE from my chosen location	98 (16%)	50 (8%)	480 (76%)	628 (100%)

Figure 4: OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU)



4.3 Students' confidence (CONF) to complete an OSE

Students were asked about their confidence to complete the OSE given certain factors related to the technology being used. Results are reported by quartile.

Looking at the mean confidence (CONF) scores by quartile (see Figure 5), more than two thirds of respondents rated their confidence to complete their OSE as reasonable (36%) or high (33%). Only 11% rated their confidence as minimal.

Exploring the individual confidence statements making up the confidence scale shows that between 12%-49% of students indicated they had minimal confidence when responding to statements about completing the exam using the RPNOW technology (see Table 4). In contrast, between 28%-56% of students indicated they had high confidence when responding to those same statements. Factors that promoted high confidence included the opportunity to practise with the technology (56%), instructions on who to contact to get help if something went wrong (52%), and the time-limited nature of the exam (47%).

Table 4 shows that the number of responses to the item about the use of similar technology (n=329) was low in comparison to the other items (n>397), suggesting that respondents did not have prior experience of using the RPNOW invigilation technology or similar technology for an online supervised exam (i.e. more participants chose the 'N/A' option). Participants' limited prior experience of using these technologies may contribute to a higher cognitive load for students at a time of increased stress (Cramp et al., 2019).

Figure 5: OSE mean confidence (CONF) by quartile

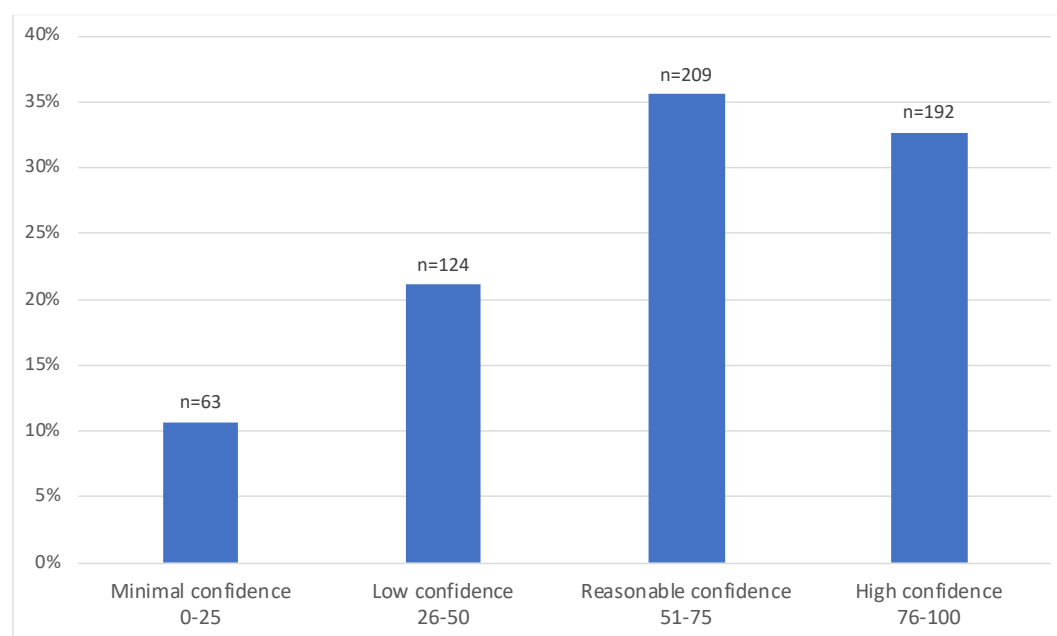


Table 4. OSE students' confidence statements by quartile

	0-25 Minimal confidence	26-50 Low confidence	51-75 Reasonable confidence	76-100 High confidence	Total
I had never used technology like RPNOW before	125 (25%)	88 (18%)	124 (25%)	161 (32%)	498 (100%)
I had never used Stream for an OSE before	117 (27%)	62 (14%)	110 (25%)	148 (34%)	437 (100%)
I only had the technology information provided by Massey for reference	74 (14%)	74 (14%)	142 (27%)	234 (45%)	524 (100%)
I had already used the RPNOW technology before completing the OSE	161 (40%)	40 (10%)	51 (13%)	146 (37%)	398 (100%)
I had already used Stream for an OSE before	117 (29%)	41 (10%)	48 (12%)	196 (49%)	402 (100%)
I had already used similar technology before completing this OSE	161 (49%)	28 (9%)	48 (15%)	92 (28%)	329 (100%)
I had an opportunity to practice with the RPNOW technology before completing the OSE	62 (12%)	53 (10%)	118 (22%)	293 (56%)	526 (100%)
I had instructions about who to contact for help if something went wrong with the RPNOW technology during the OSE	73 (14%)	55 (10%)	130 (24%)	282 (52%)	540 (100%)
I had limited time to complete the OSE	95 (18%)	70 (13%)	113 (22%)	245 (47%)	523 (100%)

4.4 Students' experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) via OSE

When asked about their experiences of and attitudes towards an OSE (EATA), over half of students agreed (59%) that having an OSE was acceptable to them and that an OSE was an appropriate way to assess the course (58%), compared with those who disagreed (30% and 32% respectively). Looking at the individual statements (see Table 5 and Figure 6) shows that students generally agreed with many of the statements.

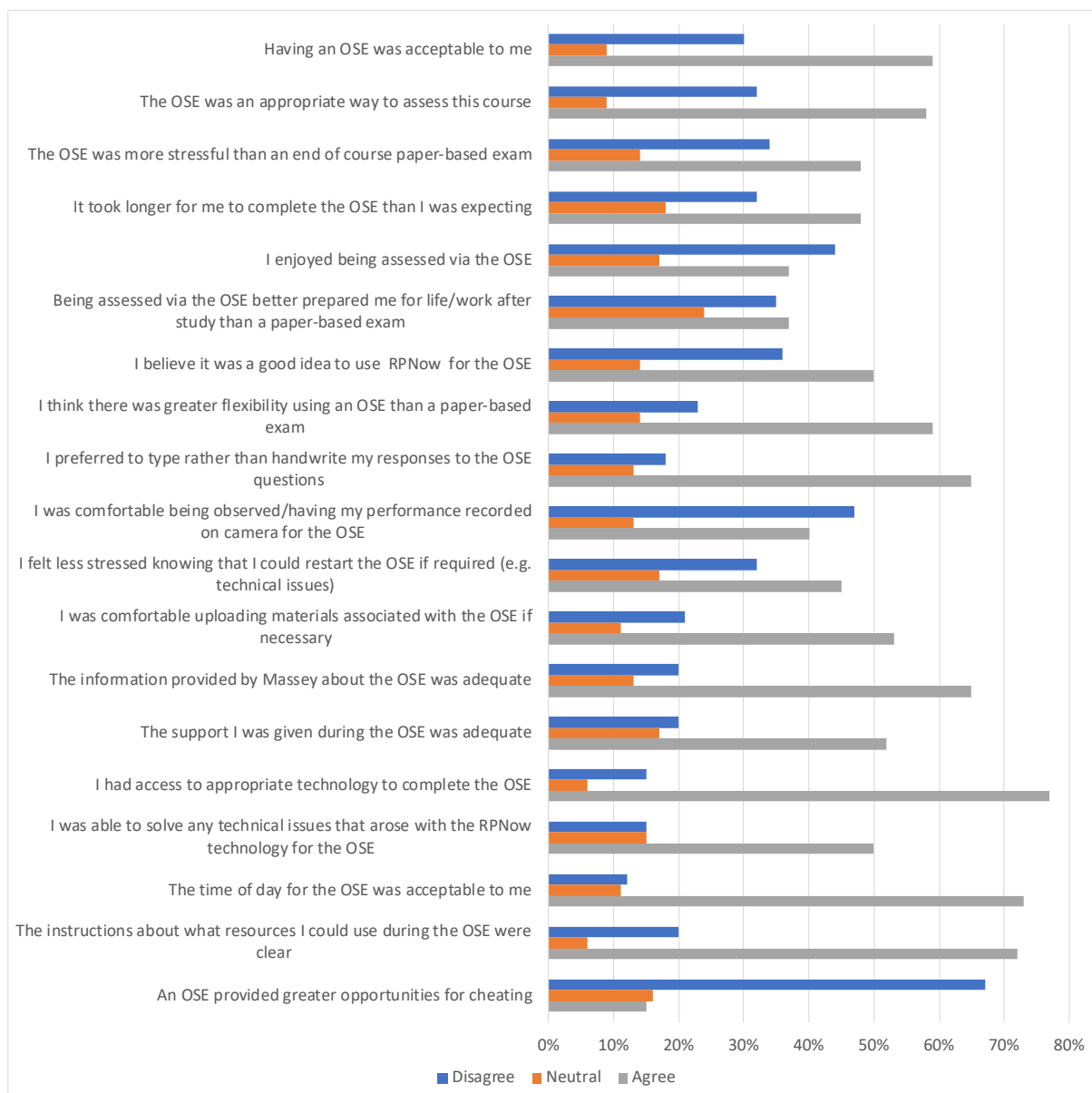
The most notable results were that students agreed that they had access to appropriate technology (77%), the time of day of the OSE was acceptable (73%), they were clear about what resources could be used during the OSE (72%), the information provided by Massey was acceptable (65%), and the support given during the OSE was adequate (52%). In terms

of reverse ordered questions, students generally agreed that the OSE was more stressful than a paper-based exam (48%) and the OSE took longer than expected to complete (48%). Results also indicated that 47% were not comfortable being observed/having their performance recorded and two thirds disagreed (67%) that the OSE provided a greater opportunity for cheating.

Table 5. Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) via OSEs

	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	N/A	Total
Having an OSE was acceptable to me	179 (30%)	55 (9%)	346 (59%)	7 (1%)	587 (100%)
The OSE was an appropriate way to assess this course	188 (32%)	53 (9%)	340 (58%)	4 (1%)	585 (100%)
The OSE was more stressful than an end of course paper-based exam	197 (34%)	84 (14%)	278 (48%)	27 (5%)	585 (100%)
It took longer for me to complete the OSE than I was expecting	187 (32%)	103 (18%)	282 (48%)	12 (2%)	584 (100%)
I enjoyed being assessed via the OSE	257 (44%)	102 (17%)	217 (37%)	7 (1%)	583 (100%)
Being assessed via the OSE better prepared me for life/work after study than a paper-based exam	206 (35%)	140 (24%)	218 (37%)	20 (3%)	584 (100%)
I believe it was a good idea to use the RPNOW technology for the OSE	208 (36%)	81 (14%)	290 (50%)	6 (1%)	585 (100%)
I think there was greater flexibility using an OSE than a paper-based exam	133 (23%)	83 (14%)	345 (59%)	22 (4%)	583 (100%)
I preferred to type rather than handwrite my responses to the OSE questions	103 (18%)	74 (13%)	378 (65%)	27 (5%)	582 (100%)
I was comfortable being observed/having my performance recorded on camera for the OSE	274 (47%)	74 (13%)	231 (40%)	5 (1%)	584 (100%)
I felt less stressed knowing that I could restart the OSE if required (e.g. technical issues)	189 (32%)	100 (17%)	262 (45%)	33 (6%)	584 (100%)
I was comfortable uploading materials associated with the OSE if necessary	124 (21%)	66 (11%)	312 (53%)	82 (14%)	584 (100%)
The information provided by Massey about the OSE was adequate (e.g. OSE student support site, exams and assessment FAQs, online support session, etc.)	119 (20%)	75 (13%)	381 (65%)	9 (2%)	584 (100%)
The support I was given during the OSE was adequate	116 (20%)	101 (17%)	301 (52%)	65 (11%)	583 (100%)
I had access to appropriate technology to complete the OSE (e.g. internet bandwidth, laptop, desktop, webcam, microphone, up-to-date operating system, etc.)	85 (15%)	34 (6%)	447 (77%)	17 (3%)	583 (100%)
I was able to solve any technical issues that arose with the RPNOW technology for the OSE	90 (15%)	90 (15%)	293 (50%)	111 (19%)	584 (100%)
The time of day for the OSE was acceptable to me	72 (12%)	66 (11%)	424 (73%)	22 (4%)	584 (100%)
The instructions about what resources I could use during the OSE were clear	116 (20%)	34 (6%)	419 (72%)	15 (3%)	584 (100%)
An OSE provided greater opportunities for cheating	391 (67%)	95 (16%)	88 (15%)	9 (2%)	583 (100%)

Figure 6: Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) via OSEs



4.5 Relationships between DIGCOMP, CONF, PEU and EATA

Pearson correlation coefficients were calculated to investigate possible relationships between the participants' digital competence (DIGCOMP), confidence (CONF), perceived ease of use (PEU) of RPNOW and Stream, and experiences of and attitudes towards the online supervised exam (EATA).

Collectively (see Table 6), these results suggest that those participants who perceived that RPNOW and Stream were easy to use (PEU), had more favourable views towards their experiences of and attitudes towards their OSE (EATA). Even though ease of use (for both RPNOW and Stream) were strongly correlated to students' confidence in their ability to complete the online supervised exam, ease of use was not related to students' self-reported levels of digital competence. Finally, students who reported higher levels of confidence in their ability to complete the OSE tended to have more favourable experiences of and attitudes towards the OSE.

In addition, a paired samples t-test was conducted to see if there was a difference in the mean level of PEU for RPNOW and the mean level of PEU for Stream. This examination found that participants had a statistically higher mean level of PEU for Stream ($\mu=5.188$) than they did for RPNOW ($\mu=4.688$; $t(632)=12.791$, $p<.001$). In other words, students reported that the ease of use of Stream was greater than the ease of use of RPNOW, which, while not the platform used to undertake the OSE, was an essential part of the assessment process.

Table 6. Summary of correlations for OSE assessment

Correlation	r	n	Sig.	Strength
RPNOW PEU versus Stream PEU	0.825	633	<.001	Strong
RPNOW PEU versus EATA	0.790	583	<.001	Strong
Stream PEU versus EATA	0.740	582	<.001	Strong
RPNOW PEU versus CONF	0.636	595	<.001	Strong
Stream PEU versus CONF	0.616	593	<.001	Strong
CONF versus EATA	0.638	569	<.001	Strong
DIGCOMP versus RPNOW PEU	0.105	572	Not sig.	
DIGCOMP versus Stream PEU	0.105	557	Not sig.	
DIGCOMP versus CONF	0.198	523	<.001	Weak
DIGCOMP versus EATA	0.086	513	Not sig.	

4.6 Analysis by ethnic group, online learning experience and mode of study

Further analysis of students' digital competence (DIGCOMP), confidence (COF), perceived ease of use (Stream PEU and RPNOW PEU), and experience and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) for 2023 were undertaken against the demographic variables ethnic group, online learning experience, and mode of study. Results indicate that Asian students reported higher perceived ease of use of RPNOW and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessment than Pākehā students. In addition online students had better perceived ease of use of RPNOW, higher confidence when undertaking an OSE, and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments compared with on-campus students+.

4.6.1 Ethnic group 2023 results

One-way ANOVA tests were used to examine participants' mean scores for the above variables based on their ethnic group. Results revealed that there were no significant differences by ethnic group for DIGCOMP, Stream PEU or CONF. However, significant differences by ethnic group were noted for RPNOW PEU, and EATA.

In terms of RPNOW PEU, a one-way ANOVA test found that Asian students had a statistically higher mean RPNOW PEU score ($\mu=5.160$, $n=132$) than Pākehā students ($\mu=4.532$, $n=322$), although the effect size is low, indicating that there was a small but significant difference in the mean level of RPNOW PEU ($F(4,623)=3.837$, $p=.004$, $\eta^2=.024$).

In a similar vein, a one-way ANOVA test found that Asian students had a statistically higher mean EATA score ($\mu=5.085$, $n=115$) than Pākehā students ($\mu=4.462$, $n=291$), although the effect size is low, indicating that there was a small but significant difference in the mean level of EATA ($F(4,555)=4.409$, $p=.002$, $\eta^2=.031$). See [Appendix 6](#) for more details.

Collectively, these results show that Asian students reported significantly higher perceived ease of use of RPNOW and significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments than Pākehā students.

4.6.2 Online learning experience 2023 results

One-way ANOVA tests were used to examine participants' mean scores for the above variables based on their online learning experience. Results of tests revealed that there were no significant differences by online learning experience for DIGCOMP, RPNOW PEU, Stream PEU, or CONF for 2023 results. However, a significant difference was observed for EATA. The students who rated themselves as inexperienced at online learning had a statistically higher mean EATA score ($\mu=4.891$, $n=215$) than students who rated themselves as experienced online learners ($\mu=4.398$, $n=196$), though the effect size was low, indicating that there was a small but significant difference in EATA scores ($F(2,540)=6.306$, $p=.002$, $\eta^2=.023$). This result shows that inexperienced online learners had significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments than experienced online learners. This could be because inexperienced learners were unfamiliar with other online assessment platforms and therefore had nothing to compare their current experiences with. See [Appendix 6](#) for more details.

4.6.3 Mode of study 2023 results

Two tailed t-tests were used to examine participants' mean scores for the above variables based on their mode of study. There was a significant difference for RPNOW PEU between those studying online ($\mu=4.887$, $n=360$) and those studying on campus ($\mu=4.405$, $n=288$), though the effect size was low, indicating that there was a small but significant difference in RPNOW PEU scores ($t(646)=3.593$, $p<.001$, $d=.284$). There was a significant difference for Stream PEU between those studying online ($\mu=5.34$, $n=350$) and those studying on campus ($\mu=4.975$, $n=281$), with a small effect size ($t(629)=2.847$, $p=.005$, $d=.228$). There was also a significant difference for CONF between those studying online ($\mu=64.627$, $n=330$) and those studying on campus ($\mu=56.502$, $n=261$), though again this effect was small ($t(589)=4.005$, $p<.001$, $d=.332$). A further significant difference was noted for EATA between those studying online ($\mu=4.795$, $n=328$) and those studying on campus ($\mu=4.340$, $n=254$), though this was a small effect ($t(580)=3.799$, $p<.001$, $d=.318$). There was no significant difference between modes of study for DIGCOMP. See [Appendix 6](#) for more details.

Collectively, these results indicate that online students had significantly better perceived ease of use of RPNOW and Stream, higher confidence when undertaking an OSE, and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments compared with on campus students.

4.7 Students' perceptions of university support

Students were asked an open-ended question related to whether they accessed support before or during their OSE and, if so, what sort of support they accessed and why. Table 7 outlines the key themes and sub-themes identified through the coding process and their frequency counts. Of the 197 students who identified what help they accessed, over one third (36%, $n=70$) indicated they did not access any kind of support. Of those who did access support, 22% ($n=43$) contacted Massey exam support. Some students reported that they also accessed the RPNOW (PSI) support (17%, $n=33$) or accessed support but did not specify what kind (13.5%, $n=27$). Relatively few contacted their lecturer (9%, $n=16$). Several students (3%, $n=6$) identified accessing other resources such as the Massey Stream site for using RPNOW, and the associated question and answer forum prior to their exam.

Table 7. Key themes and sub-themes associated with students' perceptions of university support for OSEs

Theme	Sub-theme	Coded frequency count*	n
Type of support		197	197
	Support not required	70	
	Exam support	43	
	RPNOW support	33	
	Not specified or not clear	27	
	Lecturer or course administrator	18	
	Other support resources	6	
Reason for seeking support		120	120
	RPNOW problem	25	
	Clarify instructions or set up exam	21	
	ID or login problem	21	
	Internet connection or system responsiveness	18	
	Software problem other than RPNOW	14	
	Hardware problem	8	
	Technical problem unspecified	7	
	Time expired	3	
	Submission process other than time expired	3	
Satisfaction with support		54	54
	Positive, or problem resolved	28	
	Negative, or problem unresolved	26	

Of the 120 respondents who gave reasons for seeking support, four main areas were identified. Twenty one percent (n=25) identified a RPNOW problem, 17.5% (n=21) sought to clarify instructions or the setup of the exam, 17.5% (n=21) talked about an ID or login problem, and 15% (n=18) reported an internet connection or system responsiveness problem. A further 12% (n=14) indicated they had a problem with software other than RPNOW.

The most frequently occurring comments related to RPNOW problems. Several students commented that they had software problems relating to various aspects of the exam process. Experiences of the software crashing, downloading problems or other software glitches were commonly reported problems: *“The RPNOW software crashed just as I had finished and had hit submit on my exam. I wasn’t able to confirm if the exam had been submitted. I contacted the Massey helpline and they were able to quickly confirm my answers had been submitted and all was fine”* (Student 179) and *“The software wouldn’t download onto my laptop despite having done the practice download the night prior. So I called the helpline and was able to sort the issue 30 minutes later”* (Student 193) or *“On my last exam I had to call the phone line due to RPNOW glitching and they were very helpful”* (Student 69).

Students also identified that they rang the helpline to clarify the instructions on how to undertake their OSE, or the setup of the exam. For some students they were unsure about how to navigate to their OSE once the software had loaded: *“I couldn’t figure out how to access*

stream once it restricted internet access” (Student 347). Others wanted clarification about what resources they were allowed to use: “I accessed support to double check if I was able to use the calculator on my PC which I wasn’t” (Student 407) or about taking bathroom breaks: “just asking about toilet breaks” (Student 391). Several students also talked about accessing the practise exam/resources available on Stream prior to doing their OSE: “There is the practice online exam that you can do before exam. That’s good for me. Because I’m not really used to online exam, so I can know the process first and get ready for the exam” (Student 650).

Students also sought help for login or identification problems when accessing their exam. Most login problems were to do with passwords not working: *“I called and emailed tech support, as for my intro to investment class the password would not work so I could not start my exam, they were pretty quick to reply and offer advice and a timeframe of when the issue would be fixed, however, it was pretty stressful” (Student 54); or having to reset their password: “due to my password re-set not working” (Student 56). Others rang because they did not have their Massey student identification and sought help about what to do: “I got in touch with the Massey exam support as I didn’t have an id card and the issue was solved allowing me to just use my driver’s license” (Student 280).*

Others rang because they were experiencing internet connection problems: *“I accessed support as my wifi disconnected, logging me out of my exam. Support went into my computer and got me back into my exam” (Student 79); or responsiveness issues: “The test said I couldn’t complete the OSE because my internet was too slow even though I had taken OSEs before” (Student 22). Some students also reported issues with software other than RPNOW such as: “the RPNOW program wasn’t loading properly, and Massey support figured out it was a browser incompatibility” (Student 514) and “phone calls and emails because excel templates weren’t working” (Student 697).*

Of the students who commented on their satisfaction with the support received (n=54), 52% (n=28) were positive or talked about the problem being resolved, while 48% (n=26) were negative or indicated the problem had gone unresolved. Those reporting a positive experience really appreciated the help they received. *“I emailed for support due to some images in the exam not loading/were showing as blank. I received a very prompt response and the issue was resolved ready for me to backtrack to that skipped question” (Student 127) and “examination office since my internet connection failed during exam. They provided a really good service and helped me resolve the issue very quick and effectively” (Student 201). In some instances, it was noted by the respondent that their issues took some time to resolve during the OSE: “I contacted the RPNOW support team as I lost connection and had to do the room scan again. I was concerned that the blank paper I can write on now has writing on since an hour and 30 minutes have passed. The support person was patient and directed me to Massey support in the end and I didn’t experience any further issues” (Student 257).*

Those reporting negative experiences, reported problems accessing the support. Some reported that the line was busy or there was a long wait time: *“I tried to call the university when the problem arose but it was a long queue then I hung up” (Student 304) and “Support was slow took over 15 minutes, and no response. Not acceptable” (Student 350). A number said they left messages but were not called back: “I emailed the people and they never got back to me, it seriously could have f*** my entire paper up on a fault through the RPNOW” (Student 610). Other respondents reported that the support person did not resolve their issue: “I called technical support number. She directed me to the wrong way, unbelievable” (Student 33). Despite the best intentions of the support staff, this was a period of high stress for some students as illustrated in the following quote: “It was an extremely stressful situation*

and not one I want to have to go through ever again. 2 hours wasted trying to get help from online support and Massey, and I accomplished nothing” (Student 667).

4.8 Assessment preferences

All student respondents were asked to rank their assessment preferences from most preferred to least preferred (see Table 8). Participants’ two most preferred options were a mix of assignments and online open book/time constrained assessments (1) and solely through assignments during the course (2). The least preferred option was solely through in-person supervised paper-based exams (8).

Table 8: Student assessment preferences

Assessment type	Rank
A mix of assignments and an online open book/time constrained assessment	1
Solely through assignments during the course	2
A mix of assignments and a paper-based open-book/time constrained assessment	3
A mix of assignments and an end of course online supervised exam	4
A mix of assignments and an end of course paper-based supervised exam	5
Solely through online supervised exams exam(s)	6
Solely through in-person supervised online exams (e.g., on-campus)	7
Solely through in-person supervised paper-based exams	8

4.9 Summary

Results from the 2023 survey revealed that over half of respondents rated themselves as mostly digital competent. Confidence levels were reasonable, with students feeling more assured using Stream compared to RPNOW. The perceived ease of use of the technologies used for OSEs (i.e., RPNOW and Stream) were generally positive, though comfort with being observed during exams was less favourable. Furthermore almost 60% reported that having an OSE was acceptable to them and an acceptable way to assess the course, though flexibility was a noted concern.

Analysis by ethnic group revealed that Asian students reported significantly higher perceived ease of use (PEU) of RPNOW and significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (EATA) than Pākehā students. Online students had significantly better perceived ease of use (PEU) of RPNOW, higher confidence (CONF) when undertaking an OSE, and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (EATA) compared with on campus students. Inexperienced online learners had significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (EATA) than experienced online learners.

The most common reason for seeking support was for a RPNOW problem. Other reasons for seeking support included seeking clarification about exam instructions or exam setup, an ID or login problem, and internet connection and responsiveness problems. Slightly more students reported positive experiences and their problems being resolved (48%) than students who reported negative experiences and their problems remaining unresolved (41%). Finally, students’ most preferred assessment option was a mix of assignments and online open book/time constrained assessments.

5. Comparisons between 2020 and 2023 results

Having reported the 2023 survey results, attention is now turned to comparisons between the 2020 and 2023 results. Comparisons between digital competence, perceived ease of use (both RPNOW and Stream), confidence, experiences of and attitudes towards assessment, and assessment preferences are reported here.

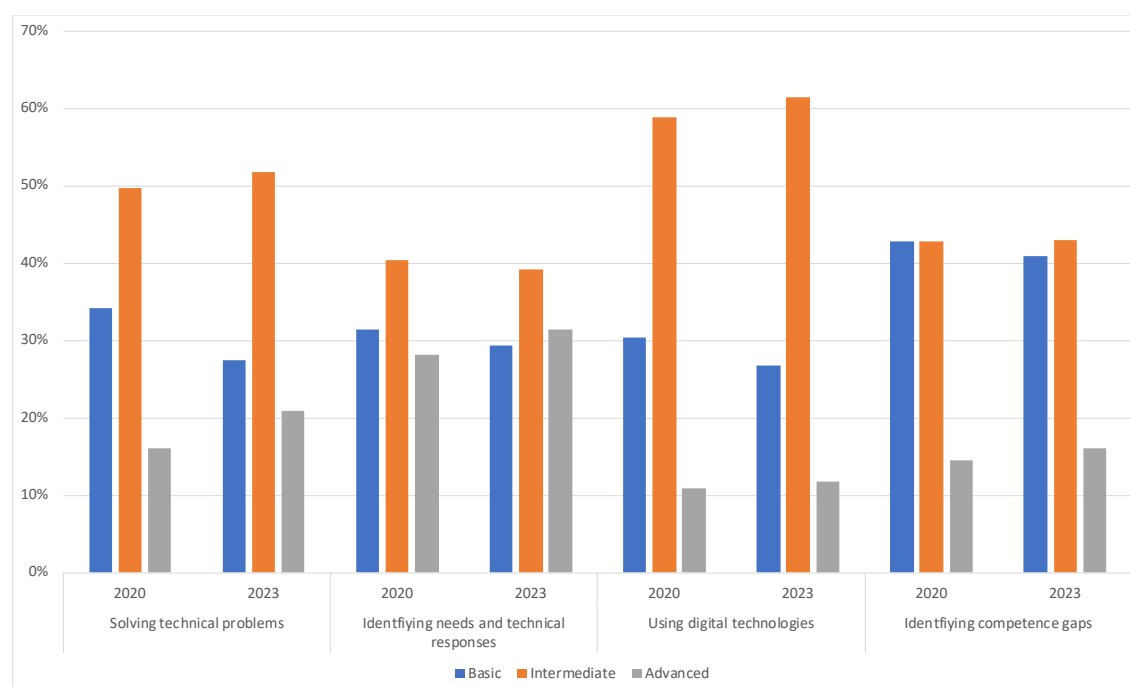
5.1 Digital competence (DIGCOMP) comparison

Comparing results from 2020 and 2023 show that the number of respondents who rated their DIGCOMP as basic, intermediate and advanced are very similar across all problem-solving subcategories (see Table 9 and Figure 7). In both 2020 and 2023, in all subcategories apart from identifying competence gaps, the largest group rated themselves at an intermediate level of digital competence. Identifying competence gaps was different to other subcategories in that the percentage of those who rated themselves at a basic level was essentially the same as those who rated themselves at an intermediate level in both 2020 and 2023.

Table 9: Digital competence by subcategory for 2020 and 2023

		Basic	Intermediate	Advanced	n
Solving technical problems	2020	34.2%	49.7%	16.0%	754
	2023	27.5%	51.7%	20.8%	586
Identifying needs and technical responses	2020	31.4%	40.4%	28.2%	748
	2023	29.4%	39.2%	31.4%	586
Using digital technologies	2020	30.3%	58.8%	10.9%	746
	2023	26.8%	61.4%	11.8%	585
Identifying competence gaps	2020	42.7%	42.7%	14.5%	751
	2023	40.9%	43.0%	16.1%	584

Figure 7: Digital competence by sub-category for 2020 and 2023



A statistical comparison of digital competence (DIGCOMP) for 2020 and 2023, via a two-tailed t-test, was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference in the mean levels of DIGCOMP. There was no significant difference in digital competence between respondents in 2020 ($\mu=1.823$, $n=756$) and respondents in 2023 ($\mu=1.889$, $n=588$), ($t(1342)=-2.394$, $p=.017$, $d=-.132$).

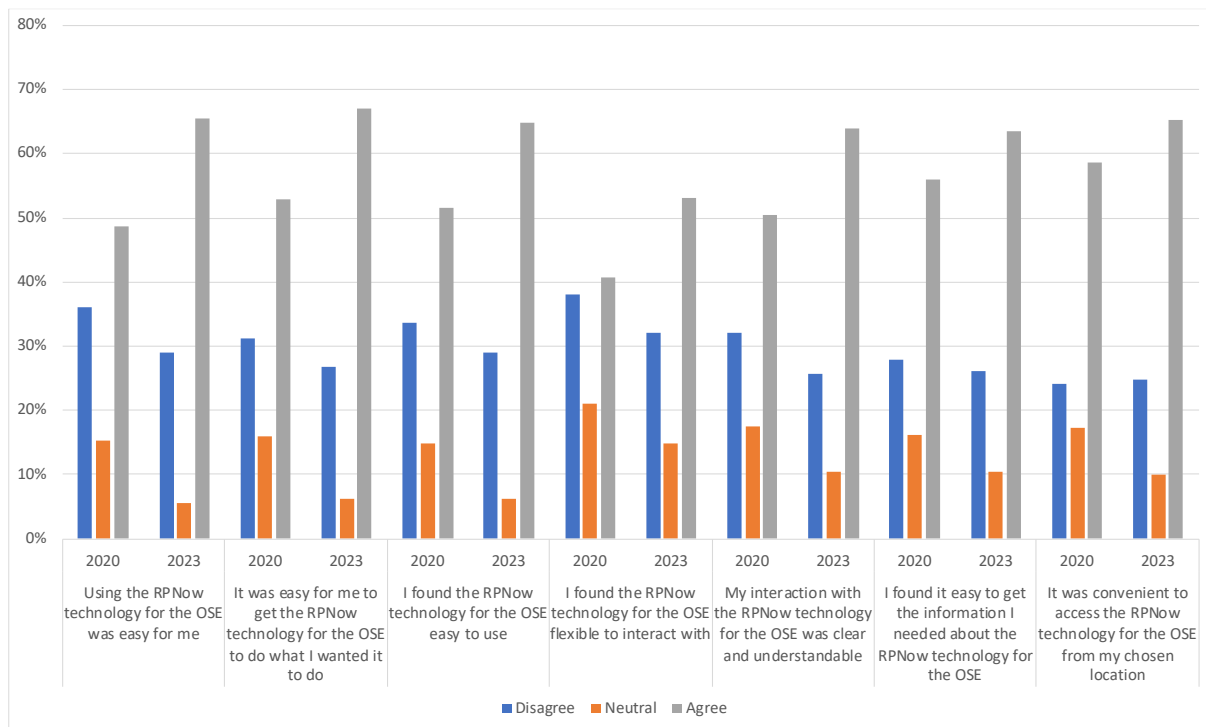
5.2 RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison

Comparing RPNOW perceived ease of use results from 2020 and 2023 (see Table 10 and Figure 8) show that the number of respondents who agreed that RPNOW was easy to use, clear and understandable, convenient to access, easy to get the information needed and was easy to access from their chosen location increased and the number of respondents who disagreed decreased.

Table 10: OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023

		Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n
Using the RPNOW technology for the OSE was easy for me	2020	36.0%	15.3%	48.6%	658
	2023	29.0%	5.5%	65.5%	655
It was easy for me to get the RPNOW technology for the OSE to do what I wanted it to do	2020	31.2%	16.0%	52.8%	648
	2023	26.9%	6.2%	67.0%	648
I found the RPNOW technology for the OSE easy to use	2020	33.6%	14.8%	51.5%	648
	2023	29.1%	6.2%	64.8%	647
I found the RPNOW technology for the OSE flexible to interact with	2020	38.1%	21.1%	40.8%	645
	2023	32.0%	14.9%	53.1%	646
My interaction with the RPNOW technology for the OSE was clear and understandable	2020	32.0%	17.5%	50.5%	646
	2023	25.6%	10.4%	64.0%	645
I found it easy to get the information I needed about the RPNOW technology for the OSE	2020	27.8%	16.1%	56.1%	644
	2023	26.2%	10.4%	63.5%	646
It was convenient to access the RPNOW technology for the OSE from my chosen location	2020	24.1%	17.3%	58.5%	646
	2023	24.8%	9.9%	65.3%	645

Figure 8: OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023



A statistical comparison for RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) for 2020 and 2023, via a two-tailed t-test, was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference in the mean levels. There was a significant difference between RPNOW PEU 2023 ($\mu=4.677$, $n=655$) and RPNOW PEU 2020 ($\mu=4.31$, $n=659$), although the effect size is low, indicating that there was a small but significant increase in the mean level of RPNOW PEU over the three-year period ($t(1312)=-3.995$, $p<.001$, $d=-.22$). In other words, 2023 students reported significantly higher mean perceived ease of use of RPNOW than 2020 students.

5.3 Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison

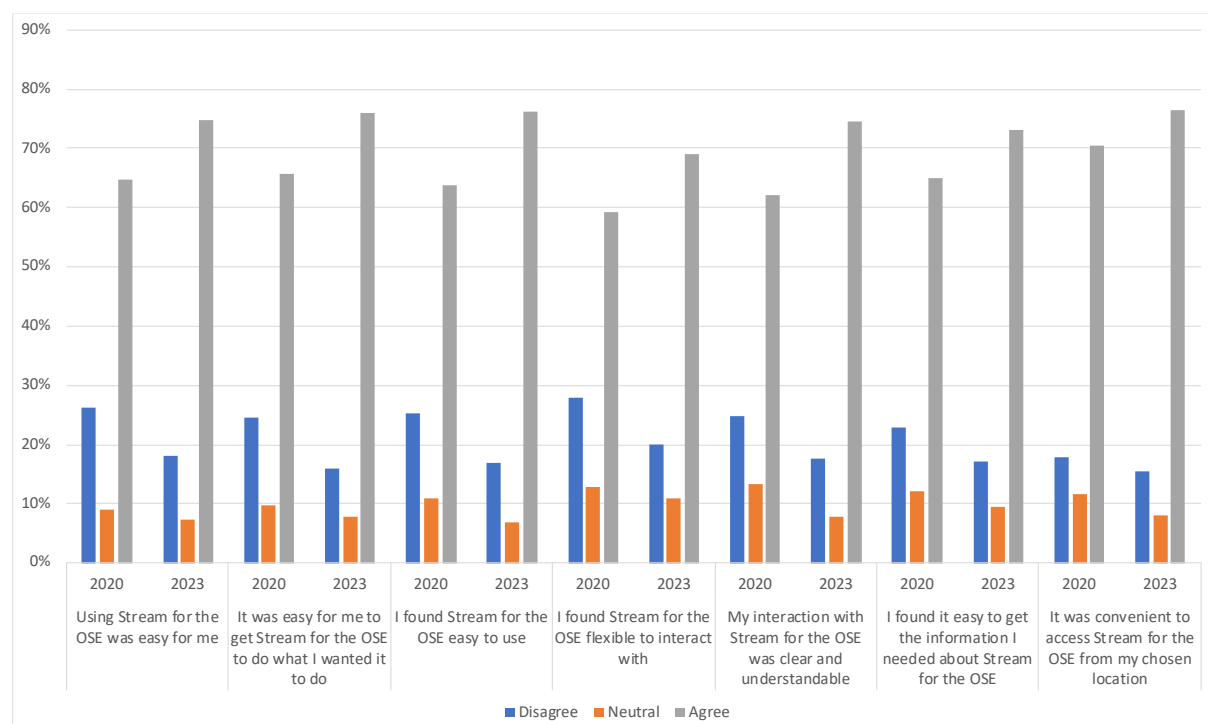
Comparing Stream perceived ease of use results from 2020 and 2023 (see Table 11 and Figure 9) show that the number of respondents who agreed that Stream was easy to use, clear and understandable, convenient to access, easy to get the information needed and was easy to access from their chosen location increased and the number of respondents who disagreed decreased.

Table 11: OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023

		Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n
Using Stream for the OSE was easy for me	2020	26.3%	9.1%	64.7%	651
	2023	18.0%	7.3%	74.7%	632
It was easy for me to get Stream for the OSE to do what I wanted it to do	2020	24.5%	9.8%	65.7%	644
	2023	16.0%	7.9%	76.0%	630
I found Stream for the OSE easy to use	2020	25.3%	10.9%	63.8%	644
	2023	16.8%	7.0%	76.2%	630
I found Stream for the OSE flexible to interact with	2020	28.0%	12.8%	59.2%	640
	2023	20.1%	10.8%	69.1%	628
My interaction with Stream for the OSE was clear and understandable	2020	24.7%	13.2%	62.1%	643
	2023	17.7%	7.8%	74.5%	631
I found it easy to get the information I needed about Stream for the OSE	2020	22.9%	12.1%	65.0%	645
	2023	17.3%	9.5%	73.2%	631
It was convenient to access Stream for the OSE from my chosen location	2020	17.8%	11.8%	70.4%	646
	2023	15.6%	8.0%	76.4%	628

A statistical comparison for Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) for 2020 and 2023, via a two-tailed t-test, was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference in the mean levels. There was a significant difference between Stream PEU 2023 ($\mu=5.183$, $n=634$) and Stream PEU 2020 ($\mu=4.778$, $n=652$), although the effect size is low, indicating that there was a small but significant increase in the mean level of Stream PEU over the three-year period ($t(1284)=-4.494$, $p<.001$, $d=-.251$). In other words, 2023 students reported significantly higher perceived ease of use of Stream than 2020 students.

Figure 9: OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) comparison for 2020 and 2023



5.4 Confidence (CONF) comparison

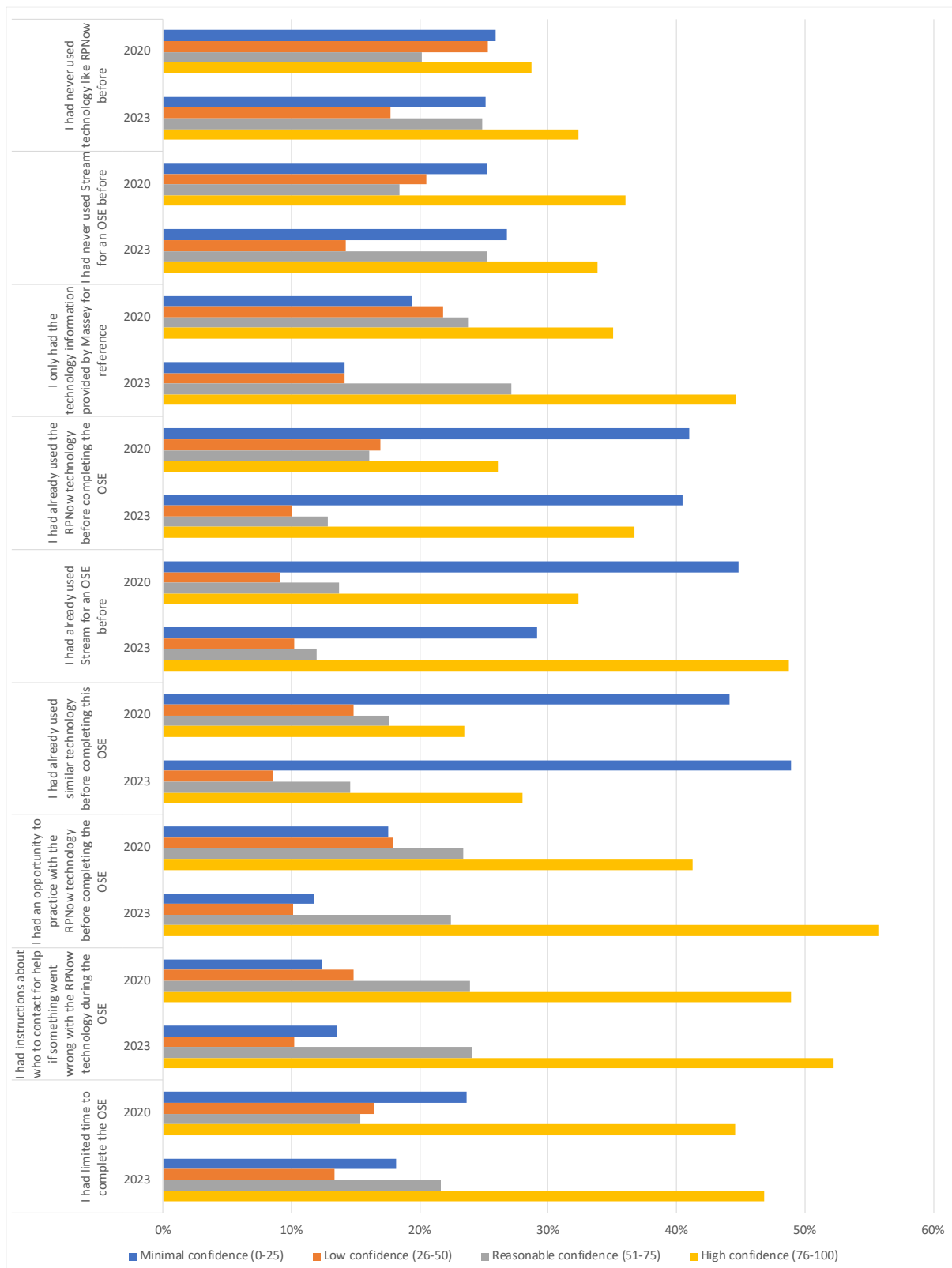
Comparing confidence levels from 2020 and 2023 (see Table 12 and Figure 10) show that the number of respondents who rated themselves as highly confident increased and the number of respondents who rated themselves as having minimal confidence decreased across most items.

Table 12: Confidence (CONF) comparison for 2020 and 2023

		Minimal confidence (0-25)	Low confidence (26-50)	Reasonable confidence (51-75)	High confidence (76-100)	n
I had never used technology like RPNow before	2020	25.9%	25.3%	20.1%	28.7%	541
	2023	25.1%	17.7%	24.9%	32.3%	498
I had never used Stream for an OSE before	2020	25.2%	20.5%	18.4%	36.0%	528
	2023	26.8%	14.2%	25.2%	33.9%	437
I only had the technology information provided by Massey for reference	2020	19.3%	21.8%	23.8%	35.1%	559
	2023	14.1%	14.1%	27.1%	44.7%	524
I had already used the RPNow technology before completing the OSE	2020	40.9%	16.9%	16.0%	26.1%	337
	2023	40.5%	10.1%	12.8%	36.7%	398
I had already used Stream for an OSE before	2020	44.9%	9.0%	13.7%	32.4%	321
	2023	29.1%	10.2%	11.9%	48.8%	402
I had already used similar technology before completing this OSE	2020	44.1%	14.8%	17.6%	23.4%	290
	2023	48.9%	8.5%	14.6%	28.0%	329
I had an opportunity to practice with the RPNow technology before completing the OSE	2020	17.5%	17.9%	23.3%	41.2%	497
	2023	11.8%	10.1%	22.4%	55.7%	526
I had instructions about who to contact for help if something went wrong with the RPNow technology during the OSE	2020	12.4%	14.8%	23.9%	48.9%	540
	2023	13.5%	10.2%	24.1%	52.2%	540
I had limited time to complete the OSE	2020	23.6%	16.4%	15.3%	44.6%	554
	2023	18.2%	13.4%	21.6%	46.8%	523

A statistical comparison for confidence (CONF) for 2020 and 2023, via a two-tailed t-test, was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference in the mean levels. There was a significant difference between CONF 2023 ($\mu=61.331$, $n=597$) and CONF 2020 ($\mu=56.602$, $n=617$), although the effect size is low, indicating that there was a small but significant increase in the mean level of CONF over the three-year period ($t(1212)=-3.253$, $p<.001$, $d=-.187$). In other words, 2023 students reported significantly higher mean confidence levels than 2020 students.

Figure 10: Confidence (CONF) comparison for 2020 and 2023



5.5 Experiences of and Attitudes Towards Assessment (EATA) comparison

Comparing respondents' experiences of and attitudes towards their OSE assessment (EATA) from 2020 and 2023 (see Table 13 and Figure 16) show that the number of respondents who agreed with the statements increased and the number of respondents who disagreed decreased across many items.

The most notable results were that students agreed that having an OSE was acceptable (increased from 54% to 60%) and an appropriate way to assess the course (increased from 53% to 59%), the time of day of the OSE was acceptable (increased from 57% to 75%), they were clear about what resources could be used during the OSE (increased from 68% to 74%), and the information provided by Massey was acceptable (increased from 58% to 66%). In terms of reverse ordered questions, students who agreed that the OSE was more stressful than a paper-based exam (reduced from 72% to 50%) and the OSE took longer than expected to complete (reduced from 75% to 49%).

Two areas where the proportion who agreed with a statement was similar to those who disagreed were the areas of students being comfortable being observed or having their performance recorded, and whether they enjoyed being assessed using an OSE. Over time, the proportion who felt comfortable being observed decreased (i.e., those not comfortable increased from 39% to 47%) and the gap between agreeing and disagreeing that they enjoyed being assessed using an OSE reduced (12% to 7%).

In 2020, similar proportions of students agreed and disagreed that having an OSE provided a greater opportunity for cheating but by 2023 a significant majority disagreed that OSEs provided greater opportunities for cheating.

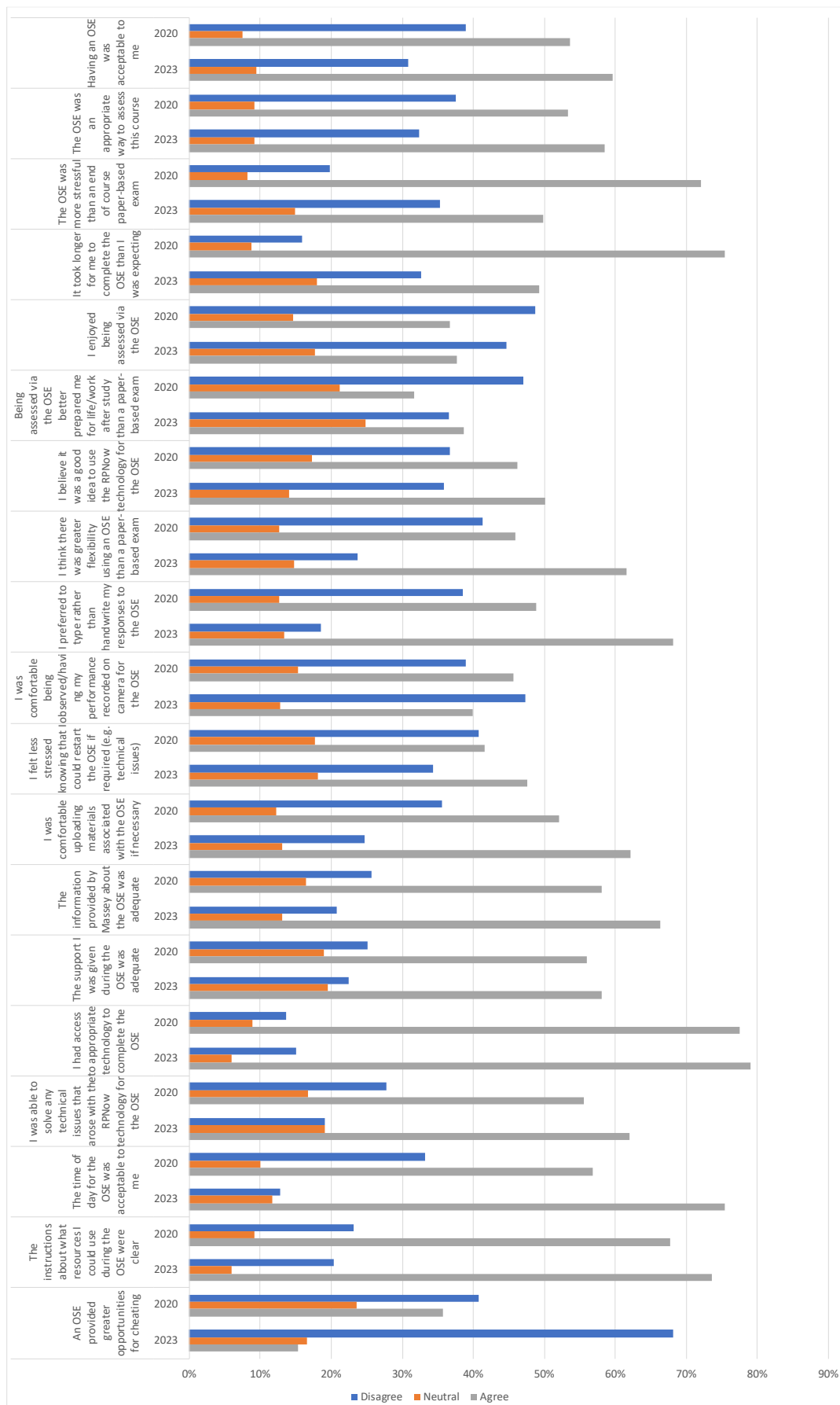
Table 13: Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) comparison for 2020 and 2023

		Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n
Having an OSE was acceptable to me	2020	38.9%	7.4%	53.6%	606
	2023	30.9%	9.5%	59.7%	580
The OSE was an appropriate way to assess this course	2020	37.6%	9.1%	53.3%	604
	2023	32.4%	9.1%	58.5%	581
The OSE was more stressful than an end of course paper-based exam	2020	19.8%	8.2%	72.0%	601
	2023	35.3%	14.9%	49.8%	558
It took longer for me to complete the OSE than I was expecting	2020	15.9%	8.7%	75.4%	598
	2023	32.7%	18.0%	49.3%	572
I enjoyed being assessed via the OSE	2020	48.7%	14.6%	36.8%	604
	2023	44.6%	17.7%	37.7%	576
Being assessed via the OSE better prepared me for life/work after study than a paper-based exam	2020	47.1%	21.2%	31.7%	599
	2023	36.5%	24.8%	38.7%	564
I believe it was a good idea to use the RPNOW technology for the OSE	2020	36.6%	17.2%	46.2%	587
	2023	35.9%	14.0%	50.1%	579
I think there was greater flexibility using an OSE than a paper-based exam	2020	41.4%	12.7%	46.0%	607
	2023	23.7%	14.8%	61.5%	561
I preferred to type rather than handwrite my responses to the OSE	2020	38.5%	12.6%	48.8%	602
	2023	18.6%	13.3%	68.1%	555

		Disagree	Neutral	Agree	n
I was comfortable being observed/having my performance recorded on camera for the OSE	2020	39.0%	15.3%	45.7%	567
	2023	47.3%	12.8%	39.9%	579
I felt less stressed knowing that I could restart the OSE if required (e.g. technical issues)	2020	40.7%	17.7%	41.6%	553
	2023	34.3%	18.1%	47.5%	551
I was comfortable uploading materials associated with the OSE if necessary	2020	35.6%	12.3%	52.1%	570
	2023	24.7%	13.1%	62.2%	502
The information provided by Massey about the OSE was adequate	2020	25.6%	16.4%	58.0%	598
	2023	20.7%	13.0%	66.3%	575
The support I was given during the OSE was adequate	2020	25.1%	18.9%	55.9%	549
	2023	22.4%	19.5%	58.1%	518
I had access to appropriate technology to complete the OSE	2020	13.7%	8.8%	77.5%	600
	2023	15.0%	6.0%	79.0%	566
I was able to solve any technical issues that arose with the RPNOW technology for the OSE	2020	27.7%	16.8%	55.6%	531
	2023	19.0%	19.0%	61.9%	473
The time of day for the OSE was acceptable to me	2020	33.2%	9.9%	56.8%	593
	2023	12.8%	11.7%	75.4%	562
The instructions about what resources I could use during the OSE were clear	2020	23.1%	9.2%	67.7%	589
	2023	20.4%	6.0%	73.6%	569
An OSE provided greater opportunities for cheating	2020	40.7%	23.6%	35.7%	589
	2023	68.1%	16.6%	15.3%	574

A statistical comparison for students' experiences of and attitudes towards their OSE assessment (EATA) for 2020 and 2023, via a two-tailed t-test, was conducted to see if there was a statistically significant difference in the mean levels. Results indicate there was a significant difference between EATA 2023 ($\mu=4.596$, $n=584$) and EATA 2020 ($\mu=4.308$, $n=611$), although the effect size is low, indicating that there was a small but significant increase in the mean level of EATA over the three-year period ($t(1193)=-3.419$, $p<.001$, $d=-.198$). In other words, 2023 students reported significantly more positive experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments than 2020 students.

Figure 11: Experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) comparison for 2020 and 2023



5.6 Assessment preferences comparison

Comparing respondents' assessment preferences from 2020 and 2023 (see Table 14) show that the order has changed slightly with a mix of assignments and online open/book time constrained assessment moving from second place in 2020 to first position in 2023. The two additional statements included in the 2023 survey (i.e., solely through in-person supervised online exams (e.g., on-campus) and solely through in-person supervised paper-based exams) were placed seventh and eighth respectively.

Table 14: Assessment preferences comparison for 2020 and 2023

Assessment preferences	2020	2023
A mix of assignments and an online open book/time constrained assessment	2	1
Solely through assignments during the course	1	2
A mix of assignments and a paper-based open-book/time constrained assessment	3	3
A mix of assignments and an end of course online supervised exam	5	4
A mix of assignments and an end of course paper-based supervised exam	4	5
Solely through online supervised exams *	6	6
Solely through in-person supervised online exams (e.g., on-campus) *	-	7
Solely through in-person supervised paper-based exams *	-	8

* In 2020, one option was available: Solely through course exam(s)

5.7 Comparisons of university support

Comparisons between students' perceptions of university support for OSEs for 2020 and 2023 highlight several differences (see Table 15). In terms of the type of support sought, more than two thirds of students (69%) asked for help related specifically to their OSE exam in 2020, whereas this had dropped to 22% in 2023 when more than one third of students (35.5%) indicated that they did not require support. The primary reasons for seeking support were similar in 2020 and 2023, with the most notable differences being a greater percentage of time expiration problems in 2020 compared to 2023, and more ID/login problems and internet connection problems in 2023 compared with three years earlier.

Student satisfaction with the support received was similar in 2020 compared with 2023, though the majority of students (52%) having negative experiences or not having their problem resolved in 2020 shifted in 2023 to most students (52%) having positive experiences or finding a resolution to their problem (see Table 15).

Table 15. Comparison between students' perceptions of university support for OSEs for 2020 and 2023

		2020		2023	
Theme	Sub-theme	Frequency count	n	Frequency count	n
Type of support		132	132	197	197
	Exam support	91 (69%)		43 (22%)	
	RPNOW support	18 (13.5%)		33 (17%)	
	Other support resources	9 (7%)		6 (3%)	
	Not specified or not clear	7 (5%)		27 (13.5%)	
	Lecturer or course administrator	6 (4.5%)		18 (9%)	
	Support not required	1 (1%)		70 (35.5%)	
Reason for seeking support		216	216	120	120
	Time expired	45 (21%)		3 (2.5%)	
	Clarify instructions or set up exam	40 (18.5%)		21 (17.5%)	
	Submission process other than time expired	37 (17%)		3 (2%)	
	RPNOW problem	35 (16%)		25 (21%)	
	Software problem other than RPNOW	21 (10%)		14 (12%)	
	Internet connection or system responsiveness	13 (6%)		18 (15%)	
	ID or login problem	11 (5%)		21 (17.5%)	
	Hardware problem	9 (4.2%)		8 (6.5%)	
	Technical problem unspecified	5 (2.3%)		7 (6%)	
Satisfaction with support		67	67	54	54
	Positive, or problem resolved	32 (48%)		28 (52%)	
	Negative, or problem unresolved	35 (52%)		26 (48%)	

5.8 Comparisons by ethnic group, online learning experience and mode of study

Further analysis of students' digital competence (DIGCOMP), confidence (CONF), perceived ease of use (RPNOW PEU and Stream PEU), and experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) were undertaken against various demographic variables including ethnic group, online learning experience, and mode of study. Results from one-way ANOVA tests and two-tailed t-tests conducted on 2020 results were compared to the equivalent tests conducted on 2023 results for each of the identified demographic variables to see if any changes had occurred.

5.8.1 Ethnic group comparisons

Results of one-way ANOVA tests revealed that there were no significant differences by ethnic group for Stream PEU or CONF for either 2020 or 2023. However, significant differences by ethnic group were noted for DIGCOMP, RPNOW PEU, and EATA.

In terms of 2020 DIGCOMP, a one-way ANOVA test found several statistically significant differences between ethnic groups. Māori students had a statistically higher mean DIGCOMP score ($\mu=1.898$, $n=67$) than Pacific students ($\mu=1.577$, $n=42$), Other students ($\mu=1.907$, $n=67$) had a statistically higher mean DIGCOMP score than Pacific students ($\mu=1.577$, $n=42$), Pākehā students ($\mu=1.886$, $n=351$) had a statistically higher mean DIGCOMP score than

Pacific students ($\mu=1.577$, $n=42$), and Pākehā students ($\mu=1.886$, $n=351$) had a statistically higher mean DIGCOMP score than Asian students ($\mu=1.716$, $n=201$). In all cases the effect size was low, indicating that there were small but significant differences in mean DIGCOMP scores ($F(4,723)=7.418$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.039$). In other words, the 2020 results show that Pacific students reported significantly lower digital competence than Māori students, Pākehā students and other students. In addition, Asian students reported significantly lower digital competence than Pākehā students, Māori students and other students. By comparison, no significant differences in digital competence were found in 2023 based on ethnic groups.

In terms of RPNOW PEU and EATA, one-way ANOVA tests found no statistically significant differences between ethnic groups in 2020. However this was not the case in 2023. Results showed that Asian students reported significantly higher perceived ease of use of RPNOW and significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments than Pākehā, students (see section [4.6.1](#)). See [Appendix 6](#) for more details.

5.8.2 Online learning experience comparisons

Results of one-way ANOVA tests revealed that there were no significant differences by online learning experience group for RPNOW PEU, Stream PEU, or CONF for either 2020 or 2023. However, significant differences by online learning group were noted for DIGCOMP and EATA.

In terms of 2020 DIGCOMP, a one-way ANOVA test found two statistically significant differences between online learning experience groups. Students with some experience of online learning had a statistically higher mean DIGCOMP score ($\mu=1.883$, $n=206$) than inexperienced online learners ($\mu=1.757$, $n=396$), and experienced online learners ($\mu=1.913$, $n=153$) had a statistically higher mean DIGCOMP score than inexperienced online learners ($\mu=1.757$, $n=396$). In both cases the effect size was low, indicating small but significant differences in the mean DIGCOMP scores ($F(2,752)=7.629$, $p<.001$, $\eta^2=.020$). In other words, experienced online learners and learners with some experience reported significantly higher digital competence than those who were inexperienced online learners. By comparison, no significant differences in digital competence were found in 2023 based on online learning experience.

While no differences in EATA were noted based on online learning experience in 2020, this was not the case in 2023. Results showed that inexperienced online learners had significantly higher experience of and attitudes towards OSE assessments than experienced online learners (see section [4.6.2](#)). See [Appendix 6](#) for more details.

5.8.3 Mode of study comparisons

Results of two-tailed t-tests revealed that there were significant differences by mode of study for DIGCOMP, RPNOW PEU, Stream PEU, CONF, and EATA in either 2020 or 2023.

In terms of 2020 DIGCOMP, there was a significant difference for DIGCOMP between those studying online ($\mu=1.867$, $n=502$) and those studying on campus ($\mu=1.737$, $n=254$), though the effect size was low, indicating that there was a small but significant difference in DIGCOMP scores ($t(754)=3.429$, $p<.001$, $d=.264$). In other words, students studying online rated their digital competence significantly higher than those studying on-campus. By comparison, no significant differences in digital competence were found in 2023 based on online learning experience.

For the 2023 data, results of two-tailed t-tests showed that online students had significantly better perceived ease of use of RPNOW and Stream, higher confidence when undertaking an OSE, and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (see section [4.6.3](#)).

There were no significant differences based on mode of study for these scales in 2020. See [Appendix 6](#) for more details.

5.9 Summary

Comparing the OSE survey results from 2020 and 2023, revealed several key findings. In both years, most respondents rated their overall digital competence at an intermediate level, which was confirmed by analysis which showed no significant difference between the years. The perceived ease of use (PEU) for RPNOW and Stream improved over time, with more respondents finding these tools easy to use, clear, and convenient. This led to a significant but small increase in the mean PEU in both cases. Confidence (CONF) levels also rose, with more respondents rating themselves as highly confident and fewer as minimally confident, resulting in a significant increase in the mean confidence level.

Overall, 2023 students reported significantly more positive experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (EATA) than 2020 students. In 2023, EATA showed increased agreement that having an OSE was both an acceptable and appropriate way to assess the course. Students increasingly felt that there was greater flexibility using an OSE rather than a paper-based exam, appreciated the flexibility and clarity provided by OSEs, felt less stressed and more comfortable with the format over time, and agreed that the information provided, and the support offered by Massey was acceptable, an improvement on 2020 results. However, discomfort with being observed or recorded during exams slightly increased, and a slight majority still disliked being assessed via OSEs, though this gap narrowed. In 2023 a significant majority disagreed that OSEs provided greater opportunities for cheating, a notable difference to the 2020 results.

Assessment preferences shifted, with a mix of assignments and online open/book time-constrained assessments becoming more popular in 2023. New options included in the 2023 survey, such as in-person supervised exams, were less favoured.

Ethnic group comparisons showed no significant differences in Stream PEU or confidence levels for either year. While digital competence varied among ethnic groups in 2020, these differences disappeared by 2023. Asian students had higher RPNOW PEU and EATA scores compared to Pākehā students in 2023, whereas no difference were found in 2020.

Online learning experience comparisons indicated that in 2020, those with more experience or some experience had higher digital competence than those with no experience. Interestingly in 2023, less experienced online learners indicated they had a significantly better experience of and attitudes towards the OSE than experienced learners. Mode of study comparisons revealed that online students had higher digital competence than on campus students in 2020, though this difference had disappeared by 2023. In 2023, online students had higher levels of RPNOW PEU, Stream PEU, confidence in taking OSEs, and better experiences and attitudes towards OSE assessments than on campus students.

6. Conclusions

Looking at the 2023 results, over half of respondents rated themselves at an intermediate or advanced level of digital competency. The perceived ease of use of the technologies used for OSEs (i.e., RPNOW and Stream) were generally positive. Confidence levels were reasonable, with students feeling more assured using Stream compared to RPNOW. Students' experiences of and attitudes towards assessment via OSEs were generally favourable. Most students reported that having an OSE was acceptable to them and an appropriate way to assess the

course, although they were split over whether they were comfortable being observed/recorded during the OSE. Asian students reported significantly higher perceived ease of use (PEU) of RPNOW and significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (EATA) than Pākehā students. Students who rated themselves as inexperienced at online learning had significantly better experiences of and attitudes towards assessment via OSEs than those who rated themselves as experienced online learners. Online students had significantly better perceived ease of use (PEU) of RPNOW and Stream, higher confidence (CONF) when undertaking an OSE, and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSE assessments (EATA) compared with on campus students. Most students agreed that the support offered by Massey was acceptable.

In conclusion, the study highlights that although there were no significant differences in digital competence between 2020 and 2023, there were significant increases in perceived ease of use (both RPNOW and Stream), confidence levels, and student attitudes towards OSEs over the period. Digital competence differences by ethnicity observed in 2020 had disappeared by 2023, however new differences based on ethnicity for perceived ease of use of RPNOW and experiences of and attitudes towards OSE were evident in 2023. Differences in digital competence based on online learning experience in 2020 had disappeared by 2023 but a new difference emerged related to experiences of and attitudes towards OSEs. While online students reported higher digital competence than on-campus students in 2020, this difference had also disappeared by 2023. New differences had become evident in 2023 with online students reporting higher perceived ease of use, confidence and better experiences of and attitudes towards OSEs than on-campus students. Assessments preferences changed slightly between 2020 and 2023. Finally, students' perceptions of support offered by Massey improved slightly from 2020 to 2023.

7. Recommendations

The findings from the latest survey study indicate that students' overall experiences of online supervised exams was mostly positive. These recommendations identify areas where the University can further develop capacity and capability to meet future assessment requirements.

- Use the findings of this research to help inform the decision-making process of selecting a new assessment platform to replace the existing service provider.
- Continue to run the report on a bi-annual basis to gauge the perceptions of students towards OSEs.
- Re-run the survey after a new assessment platform has been implemented and used for the first time.
- Continue to incrementally improve the availability and responsiveness of technical support, especially during exam periods, to promptly address issues.
- Offer training sessions or resources to help students improve their digital competence, particularly in areas where they feel less confident.

8. Limitations

As with all research, there are limitations associated with this project. Primary among them was that the student sample may not be representative. Another limitation of this study is the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias as participants might overestimate or underestimate their digital competence and experiences. Additionally, the study's cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality between variables. These limitations suggest that while the findings provide valuable insights, they should be interpreted with caution and considered as part of a broader context.

9. Future research

The findings reported here will also be used to identify relevant areas for further research. These include an exploration, by discipline, of the types of assessment and the quantity of assessment occurring across courses and programmes of study to address the future needs of diverse learners and the changing nature of assessment in a GenAI world.

10. References

- Bridgeman, A., Weeks, R., & Liu, D. (2024, 26 November). Aligning our assessments to the age of generative AI. *Teaching@Sydney*. <https://educational-innovation.sydney.edu.au/teaching@sydney/aligning-our-assessments-to-the-age-of-generative-ai/>
- Cohen, J. (1988). *Statistical power analysis for the Behavioral Sciences*. Routledge.
- Compeau, D. R., & Higgins, C. A. (1995). Computer self-efficacy: Development of a measure and initial test. *MIS Quarterly*, 19(2), 189-211. <https://doi.org/10.2307/249688>
- Cramp, J., Medlin, J. F., Lake, P., & Sharp, C. (2019). Lessons learned from implementing remotely invigilated online exams. *Journal of University Teaching and Learning Practice*, 16(1). <https://ro.uow.edu.au/jutlp/vol16/iss1/10>
- Davis, F. D. (1989). Perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and user acceptance of information technology. *MIS Quarterly*, 13(3), 319-340. <https://doi.org/10.2307/249008>
- Ferrari, A. (2013). *DIGCOMP: A framework for developing and understanding competence in Europe*. E. Union.
- Hartnett, M., Rawlins, P., & Butler, P. (2020). *Changes in assessment: The impact of COVID-19 at Massey University*.
- Huck, S. W. (2012). *Reading statistics and research* (6th ed.). Pearson.
- Huda, S. S. M., Kabir, M., & Siddiq, T. (2020). E-assessment in higher education: Students' perspective. *International Journal of Education & Development using Information & Communication Technology*, 16(2), 250-258.
- Khateeb, A. M. a. (2017). Measuring digital competence and ICT literacy: An Exploratory Study of in-service English language teachers in the context of Saudi Arabia. *International Education Studies*, 10, 38-51. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.5539/ies.v10n12p38>
- Ministry of Education. (2020). *2020 school roll return guidelines*. https://www.educationcounts.govt.nz/data-services/guidelines/school_roll_return_guidelines
- Ministry of Education. (2021). *The statement of national education and learning priorities (NELP) and the tertiary education strategy (TES)*. <https://www.education.govt.nz/our-work/overall-strategies-and-policies/the-statement-of-national-education-and-learning-priorities-nelp-and-the-tertiary-education-strategy-tes/#objectives>
- Myyry, L., & Joutsenvirta, T. (2015). Open-book, open-web online examinations: Developing examination practices to support university students' learning and self-efficacy. *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 16(2), 119-132. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1469787415574053>
- Rana, R., Singhal, R., & Dua, P. (2016). Deciphering the dilemma of parametric and nonparametric tests. *Journal of the Practice of Cardiovascular Sciences*, 2(2), 95-98. <https://doi.org/10.4103/2395-5414.191521>
- Selim, H. M. (2003). An empirical investigation of student acceptance of course websites. *Computers & Education*, 40(4), 343-360. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0360-1315\(02\)00142-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0360-1315(02)00142-2)
- Stödtberg, U. (2012). A research review of e-assessment. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 37(5), 591-604. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2011.557496>

Appendix 1. 2023 Student Survey

Online Supervised Exams 2023

Welcome to this survey **about your experiences of having an online supervised exam**. You can **repeat the survey for each of your courses**. We undertake to protect the confidentiality of your response to the fullest possible extent. In accordance with the Education (Pastoral Care) Amendment Act we undertake to provide confidential support, if needed. Completion of any question implies that you consent to participate in this survey. Click here to find out more.

Thank you for taking the time to respond to this survey.

ABOUT YOU

What is your age?

- ☐ 20 years or less
- ☐ 21-25 years
- ☐ 26-30 years
- ☐ 31-40 years
- ☐ 41-50 years
- ☐ 51-60 years
- ☐ 61-65 years
- ☐ Over 65 years

What is your gender?

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Gender diverse
- ☐ Prefer not to say

What ethnic group or groups do you identify with? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Māori
- ☐ Pākehā/New Zealand European
- ☐ Pacific Islands (please specify) _____
- ☐ Asian (please specify) _____
- ☐ Other European (please specify) _____
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____
- ☐ Prefer not to say

Where are you located?

- ☐ In New Zealand
- ☐ Overseas (please specify country) _____

What type of community do you live in?

- ☐ City
- ☐ Small town
- ☐ Rural area
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

ABOUT YOUR STUDY

Are you studying full-time or part-time?

- ☐ Full-time
- ☐ Part-time

What Massey University College are you studying in? (This data will only be used to report back to the Colleges)

- ☐ College of Business
- ☐ College of Creative Arts
- ☐ College of Health
- ☐ College of Humanities and Social Sciences
- ☐ College of Sciences
- ☐ Prefer not to say

How long have you been studying online?

- ☐ Since the beginning of Semester 1, 2023
- ☐ 6 months to 1 year
- ☐ 1-2 years
- ☐ 2-3 years
- ☐ More than 3 years
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

What kind of device(s) do you have access to for completing your assessments? (Please select all that apply)

- ☐ Laptop/notebook
- ☐ Desktop computer
- ☐ Tablet
- ☐ Smart phone
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

What type of internet access do you have, where you normally live, for your Massey studies?

- ☐ Ultrafast Fibre (UFB)
- ☐ ADSL/VDSL Broadband
- ☐ Satellite or Wireless (e.g. rural areas)
- ☐ Rural Broadband (RBI)
- ☐ Dial-up internet
- ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

DIGITAL COMPETENCE

Please respond to these questions in general terms, about **your everyday experiences of digital technologies**.

In terms of solving technical problems, which one of the following would describe you the best:

- a) I can find support when a technical problem occurs or when using a new program
- b) I can solve most of the more frequent problems that arise when using digital technologies
- c) I can solve almost all problems that arise when using digital technologies

In terms of identifying needs and technical responses, which one of the following would describe you the best:

- a) I know that digital tools can help me in solving problems
- b) I can use digital technologies to solve problems
- c) I can frequently choose the right tool, device, application, software or service to solve problems

In terms of using digital technologies, which one of the following would describe you the best:

- a) When confronted with a technological problem, I can use tools I know to solve it
- b) I can solve technical problems by exploring the settings and options of programs or tools
- c) I am aware of new technological developments. I understand how new tools work

In terms of identifying competence gaps, which one of the following would describe you the best:

- a) I am aware that I need to update my digital skills regularly
- b) I regularly update my digital skills. I am aware of my limits and try to fill my gaps
- c) I frequently update my digital skills to decrease my limits and increase my digital knowledge

ONLINE SUPERVISED EXAMS

Please think about **ONE of your courses that had an end of semester online supervised exam (OSE)**.

What is your mode of study for this course?

- ☐ Block delivery – Auckland
- ☐ Block delivery – Manawatū
- ☐ Block delivery – Wellington
- ☐ On campus – Auckland
- ☐ On campus – Manawatū
- ☐ On campus – Wellington
- ☐ Online/Distance in New Zealand
- ☐ Online/Distance overseas
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

Where did you complete the Online Supervised Exam?

- Where I normally live
- A friend or family member's house
- A public library
- A Massey University campus
- A school or early childhood centre
- A tertiary institution (other than Massey University)
- Other (please specify) _____

OSE RPNOW EXPERIENCES

As part of your Online Supervised Exam, you were required to download and run RPNOW (an exam supervision tool). Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about **your experience of using RPNOW**:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Using the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam was easy for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was easy for me to get the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam to do what I wanted it to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam easy to use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam flexible to interact with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My interaction with the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam was clear and understandable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found it easy to get the information I needed about the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was convenient to access the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam from my chosen location	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

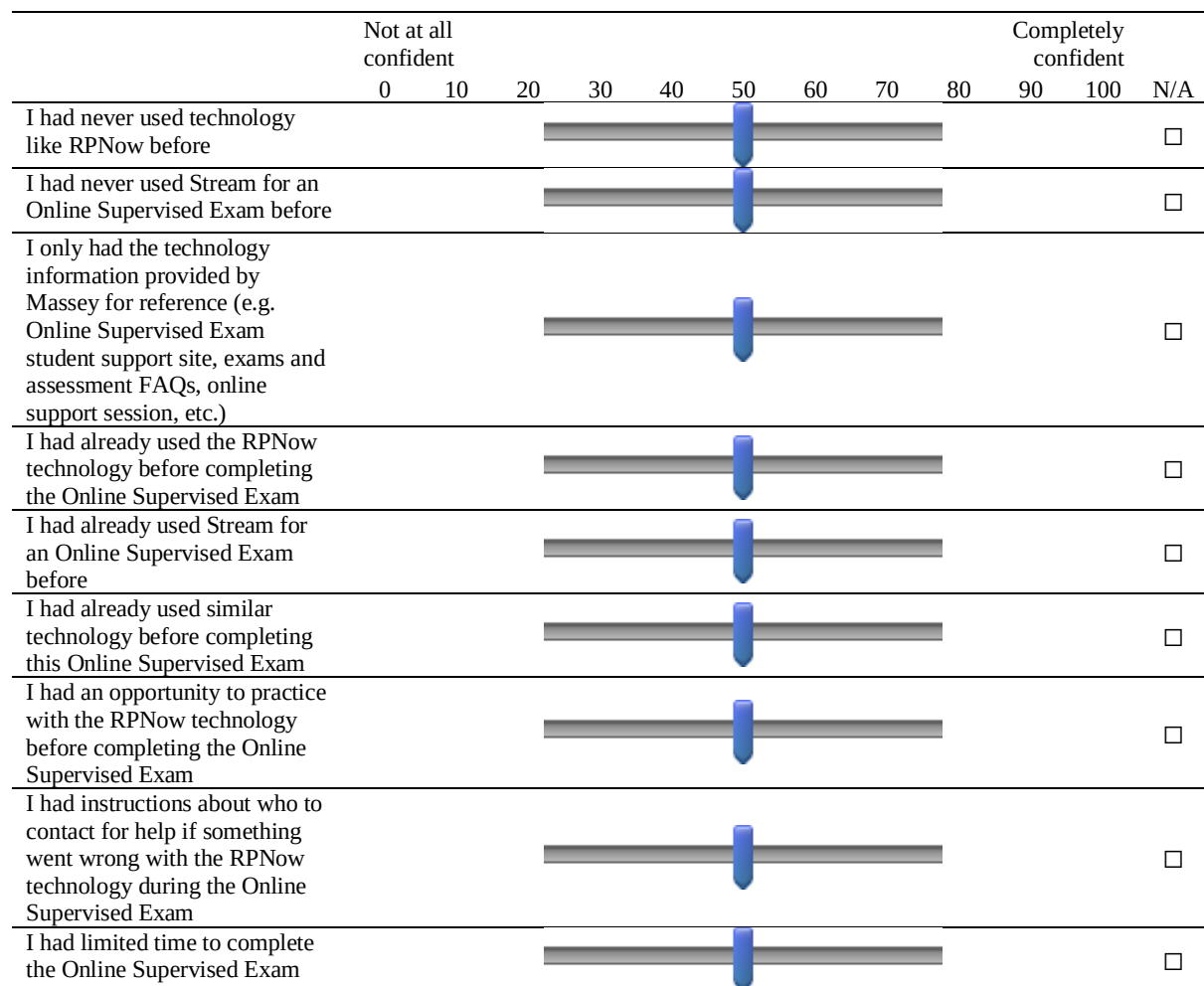
OSE STREAM EXPERIENCES

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about **your experience of using Stream for your Online Supervised Exam**:

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree
Using Stream for the Online Supervised Exam was easy for me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was easy for me to get Stream for the Online Supervised Exam to do what I wanted it to do	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found Stream for the Online Supervised Exam easy to use	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found Stream for the Online Supervised Exam flexible to interact with	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
My interaction with Stream for the Online Supervised Exam was clear and understandable	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I found it easy to get the information I needed about Stream for the Online Supervised Exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It was convenient to access Stream for the Online Supervised Exam from my chosen location	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

OSE CONFIDENCE

How **CONFIDENT** were you to complete your Online Supervised Exam, **GIVEN**:



OSE EXPERIENCES AND ATTITUDES

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements about **your Online Supervised Exam experience** (please select N/A if they do not apply to you):

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Agree	Strongly agree	N/A
Having an Online Supervised Exam was acceptable to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Online Supervised Exam was an appropriate way to assess this course	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The Online Supervised Exam was more stressful than an end of course paper-based exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
It took longer for me to complete the Online Supervised Exam than I was expecting	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I enjoyed being assessed via the Online Supervised Exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
Being assessed via the Online Supervised Exam better prepared me for life/work after study than a paper-based exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I believe it was a good idea to use the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I think there was greater flexibility using an Online Supervised Exam than a paper-based exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I preferred to type rather than handwrite my responses to the Online Supervised Exam questions	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was comfortable being observed/having my performance recorded on camera for the Online Supervised Exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I felt less stressed knowing that I could restart the Online Supervised Exam if required (e.g. technical issues)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was comfortable uploading materials associated with the Online Supervised Exam if necessary	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The information provided by Massey about the Online Supervised Exam was adequate (e.g. Online Supervised Exam student support site, exams and assessment FAQs, online support session, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The support I was given during the Online Supervised Exam was adequate	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I had access to appropriate technology to complete the Online Supervised Exam (e.g. internet bandwidth, laptop, desktop, webcam, microphone, up-to-date operating system, etc.)	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
I was able to solve any technical issues that arose with the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The time of day for the Online Supervised Exam was acceptable to me	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
The instructions about what resources I could use during the Online Supervised Exam were clear	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
An Online Supervised Exam provided greater opportunities for cheating	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

If you accessed support before or during the Online Supervised Exam, what type of support did you access and why?

PREFERENCES FOR ASSESSMENT

Please rank the following in terms of your preference for being assessed: (Please drag the options into your preferred order)

- _____ Solely through assignments during the course
- _____ Solely through online supervised exams
- _____ Solely through in-person supervised paper-based exams
- _____ Solely through in-person supervised online exams (e.g., on-campus)
- _____ A mix of assignments and an end of course paper-based supervised exam
- _____ A mix of assignments and an end of course online supervised exam
- _____ A mix of assignments and a paper-based open-book/time constrained assessment
- _____ A mix of assignments and an online open book/time constrained assessment

If you have another exam or more exams to discuss, the questions about a specific exam will now repeat.

If you have finished, we thank you for giving of your time and sharing your experiences.

PRIZE DRAW

The responses you have made to this survey are anonymous and no link will be made between your individual responses and your identity as a student. If you wish to be included in a prize draw for one of two vouchers to the value of **\$200 each**, please write your student ID number in the box below. Your ID number will be used solely for the purpose of awarding a prize to a randomly selected participant in this survey. The results of the prize draw will be notified directly to the winner.

Appendix 2. 2023 Cronbach's Alpha (α) results

Table 16: Cronbach's alpha for student DIGCOMP scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. In terms of solving technical problems, which one of the following would describe you the best:	5.62	2.429	0.455	0.588
2. In terms of identifying needs and technical responses, which one of the following would describe you the best:	5.53	2.222	0.459	0.587
3. In terms of using digital technologies, which one of the following would describe you the best:	5.71	2.673	0.434	0.605
4. In terms of identifying competence gaps, which one of the following would describe you the best:	5.80	2.420	0.435	0.601

Cronbach's Alpha (α)=.663

Table 17: Cronbach's alpha for student OSE RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Using the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam was easy for me	28.09	103.486	0.899	0.959
2. It was easy for me to get the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam to do what I wanted it to do	28.01	104.483	0.904	0.959
3. I found the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam easy to use	28.07	103.932	0.917	0.958
4. I found the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam flexible to interact with	28.45	106.326	0.842	0.963
5. My interaction with the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam was clear and understandable	28.06	106.034	0.898	0.959
6. I found it easy to get the information I needed about the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	28.03	107.110	0.852	0.962
7. It was convenient to access the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam from my chosen location	28.01	105.397	0.837	0.964

Cronbach's Alpha (α)=.966

Table 18: Cronbach's alpha for student OSE Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Using the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam was easy for me	31.10	91.611	0.908	0.966
2. It was easy for me to get the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam to do what I wanted it to do	31.09	92.034	0.907	0.966
3. I found the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam easy to use	31.09	90.484	0.937	0.964
4. I found the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam flexible to interact with	31.37	91.884	0.867	0.969
5. My interaction with the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam was clear and understandable	31.16	90.729	0.928	0.965
6. I found it easy to get the information I needed about the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam	31.16	92.004	0.886	0.968
7. It was convenient to access the Stream technology for the Online Supervised Exam from my chosen location	30.98	92.777	0.843	0.971

Cronbach's Alpha (α)=.972

Table 19: Cronbach's alpha for student confidence (CONF) scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. I had never used technology like RPNOW before	435.56	34599.755	0.595	0.798
2. I had never used Stream for an Online Supervised Exam before	436.74	35808.736	0.486	0.811
3. I only had the technology information provided by Massey for reference	422.79	34988.582	0.636	0.795
4. I had already used the RPNOW technology before completing the Online Supervised Exam	452.74	35337.412	0.502	0.809
5. I had already used Stream for an Online Supervised Exam before	440.63	35519.733	0.442	0.818
6. I had already used similar technology before completing this Online Supervised Exam	452.46	35680.782	0.472	0.813
7. I had an opportunity to practice with the RPNOW technology before completing the Online Supervised Exam	421.92	34670.149	0.612	0.797
8. I had instructions about who to contact for help if something went wrong with the RPNOW technology during the Online Supervised Exam	421.85	34933.187	0.624	0.796
9. I had limited time to complete the Online Supervised Exam	420.98	37472.125	0.405	0.820

Cronbach's Alpha (α)=.824

Table 20: Cronbach's Alpha for student EATA scale

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Having an Online Supervised Exam was acceptable to me	80.43	470.832	0.804	0.912
2. The Online Supervised Exam was an appropriate way to assess this course	80.49	471.045	0.802	0.912
3. The Online Supervised Exam was more stressful than an end of course paper-based exam	80.46	564.412	-0.235	0.936
4. It took longer for me to complete the Online Supervised Exam than I was expecting	80.44	548.539	-0.068	0.931
5. I enjoyed being assessed via the Online Supervised Exam	81.21	473.012	0.769	0.913
6. Being assessed via the Online Supervised Exam better prepared me for life/work after study than a paper-based exam	80.90	478.170	0.706	0.914
7. I believe it was a good idea to use the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	80.76	467.996	0.827	0.911
8. I think there was greater flexibility using an Online Supervised Exam than a paper-based exam	80.21	479.632	0.731	0.914
9. I preferred to type rather than handwrite my responses to the Online Supervised Exam questions	79.88	500.933	0.482	0.920
10. I was comfortable being observed/having my performance recorded on camera for the Online Supervised Exam	81.16	472.281	0.766	0.913
11. I felt less stressed knowing that I could restart the Online Supervised Exam if required (e.g. technical issues)	80.71	478.168	0.734	0.914
12. I was comfortable uploading materials associated with the Online Supervised Exam if necessary	80.34	478.635	0.752	0.913
13. The information provided by Massey about the Online Supervised Exam was adequate	80.17	480.492	0.788	0.913
14. The support I was given during the Online Supervised Exam was adequate	80.37	480.718	0.768	0.913
15. I had access to appropriate technology to complete the Online Supervised Exam	79.66	498.625	0.562	0.918
16. I was able to solve any technical issues that arose with the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	80.21	492.676	0.655	0.916
17. The time of day for the Online Supervised Exam was acceptable to me	79.78	496.732	0.627	0.917
18. The instructions about what resources I could use during the Online Supervised Exam were clear	79.98	484.957	0.718	0.914
19. An Online Supervised Exam provided greater opportunities for cheating	82.05	533.575	0.118	0.927

Cronbach's Alpha (α)=.921

Table 21: Cronbach's alpha for student EATA scale with items 3, 4, and 19 removed

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
1. Having an Online Supervised Exam was acceptable to me	68.32	488.756	0.835	0.949
2. The Online Supervised Exam was an appropriate way to assess this course	68.38	489.727	0.824	0.949
5. I enjoyed being assessed via the Online Supervised Exam	69.10	491.577	0.798	0.950
6. Being assessed via the Online Supervised Exam better prepared me for life/work after study than a paper-based exam	68.79	496.633	0.736	0.951
7. I believe it was a good idea to use the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	68.65	485.696	0.861	0.949
8. I think there was greater flexibility using an Online Supervised Exam than a paper-based exam	68.10	498.598	0.753	0.951
9. I preferred to type rather than handwrite my responses to the Online Supervised Exam questions	67.77	522.035	0.490	0.956
10. I was comfortable being observed/having my performance recorded on camera for the Online Supervised Exam	69.04	492.032	0.778	0.950
11. I felt less stressed knowing that I could restart the Online Supervised Exam if required (e.g. technical issues)	68.60	498.613	0.746	0.951
12. I was comfortable uploading materials associated with the Online Supervised Exam if necessary	68.22	498.894	0.762	0.951
13. The information provided by Massey about the Online Supervised Exam was adequate	68.06	501.010	0.796	0.950
14. The support I was given during the Online Supervised Exam was adequate	68.26	501.673	0.770	0.951
15. I had access to appropriate technology to complete the Online Supervised Exam	67.54	521.751	0.544	0.955
16. I was able to solve any technical issues that arose with the RPNOW technology for the Online Supervised Exam	68.09	512.596	0.676	0.952
17. The time of day for the Online Supervised Exam was acceptable to me	67.68	517.648	0.630	0.953
18. The instructions about what resources I could use during the Online Supervised Exam were clear	67.87	505.534	0.728	0.951

Cronbach's Alpha (α)=.954

Appendix 3. 2023 Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test results

Table 22: One-sample Kolmogorov-Smirnov test for student scales

	N	Mean	SD	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a		
				Statistic	df	Sig.
DIGCOMP	588	1.889	0.495	0.127	588	<.001
RPNOW PEU	655	4.677	1.706	0.121	655	<.001
Stream PEU	634	5.183	1.609	0.154	634	<.001
CONF	597	61.331	24.882	0.060	597	<.001
EATA	584	4.596	1.449	0.083	584	<.001

^a Lilliefors Significance Correction

Figure 12: Mean score student digital competence (DIGCOMP) scale

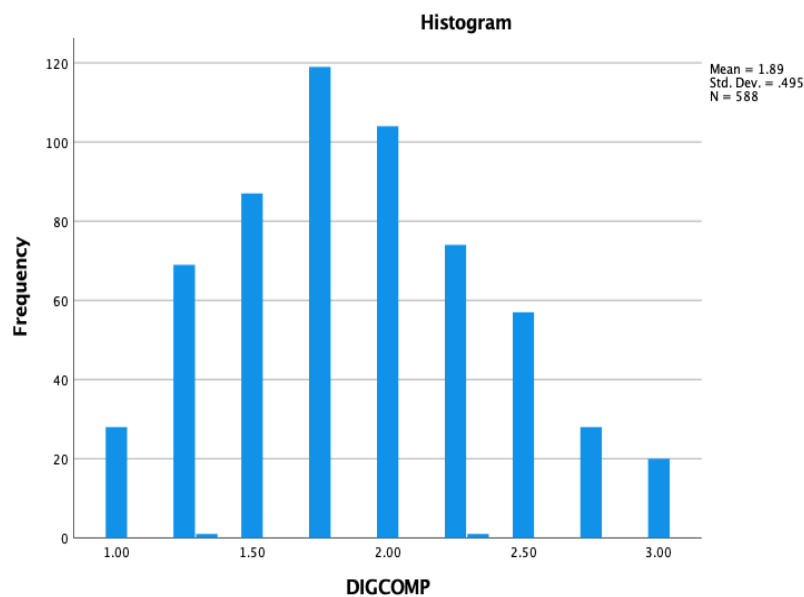


Figure 13: Mean score student RPNOW perceived ease of use (PEU) scale

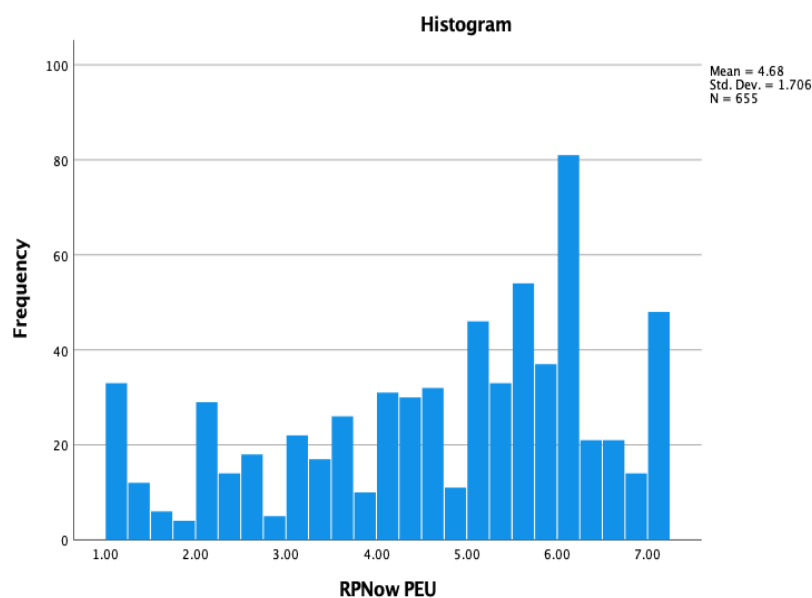


Figure 14: Mean score student Stream perceived ease of use (PEU) scale

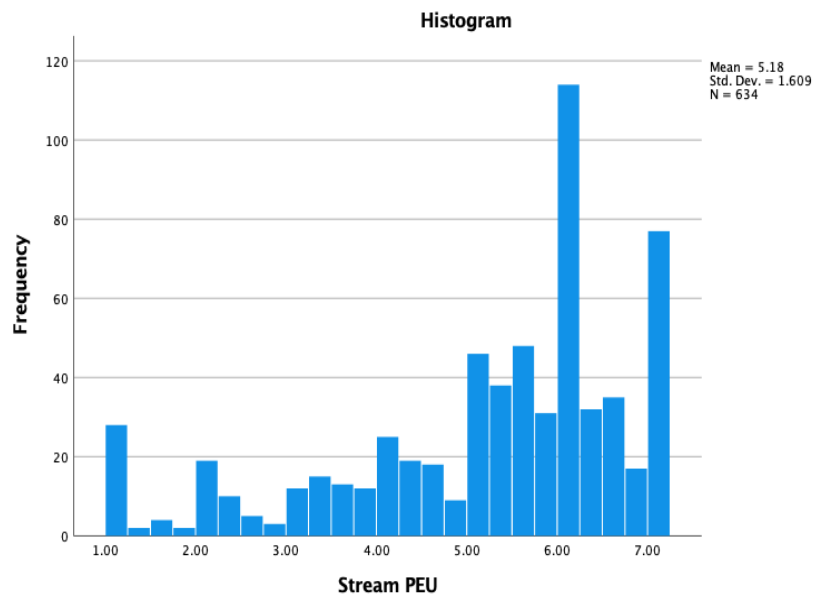


Figure 15: Mean score student confidence (CONF) scale

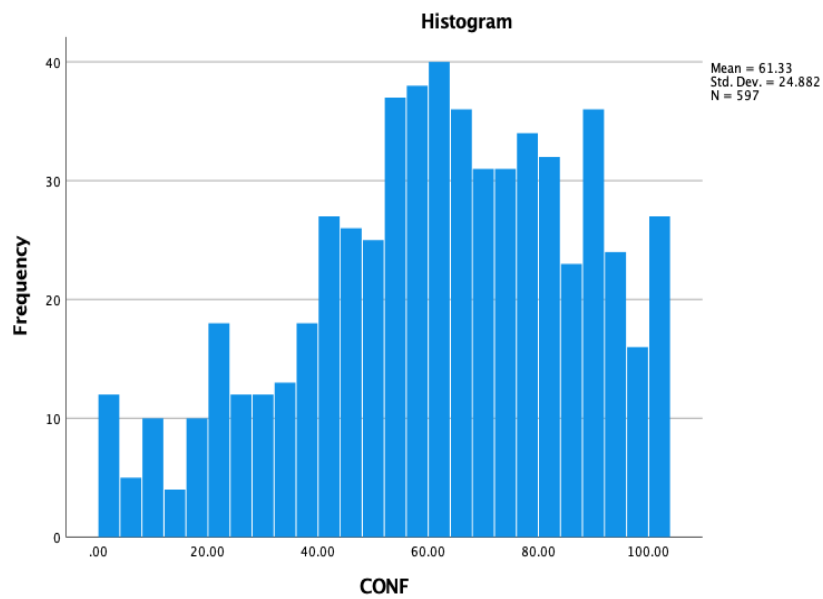
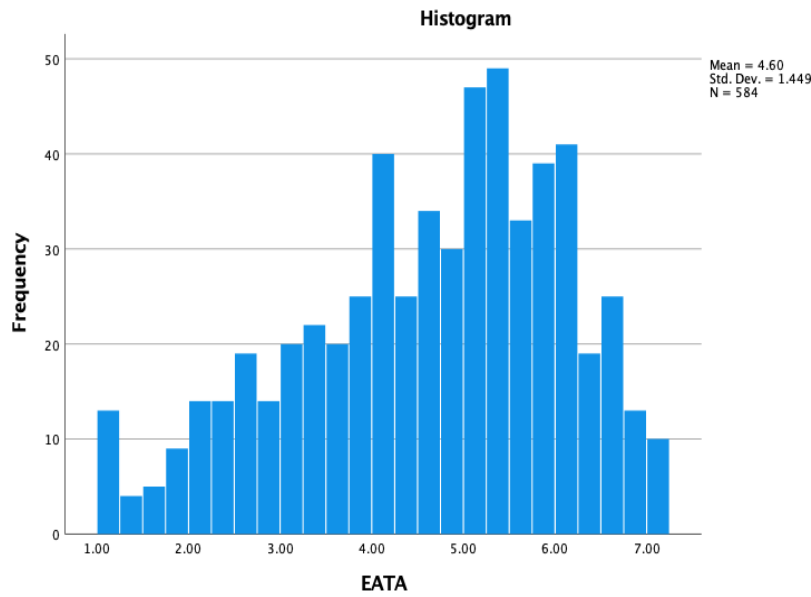


Figure 16: Mean score student experiences of and attitudes towards assessment (EATA) scale with items 3, 4 and 19 removed



Appendix 4. 2023 Skewness and Kurtosis test results

Table 23. Skewness and Kurtosis for student scale mean scores

	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Skewness		Kurtosis	
						Statistic	Std. error	Statistic	Std. error
DIGCOMP	588	1	3	1.889	0.495	0.264	0.101	-0.546	0.201
RPNOW PEU	655	1	7	4.677	1.706	-0.627	0.095	-0.626	0.191
Stream PEU	634	1	7	5.183	1.609	-1.090	0.097	0.414	0.194
CONF	597	0	100	61.331	24.882	-0.444	0.100	-0.467	0.200
EATA	584	1	7	4.596	1.449	-0.508	0.101	-0.456	0.202

Appendix 5. 2023 Background demographic information

Crosstabs by age

Table 24. Student gender by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
Male	107 (33%)	66 (33%)	17 (29%)	190 (33%)
Female	213 (66%)	135 (67%)	42 (71%)	390 (67%)
Gender diverse	4 (1%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4 (1%)
Total	324 (100%)	201 (100%)	59 (100%)	584 (100%)

7 missing responses

Table 25. Student ethnic group by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
Māori	22 (7%)	22 (12%)	4 (7%)	48 (8%)
Pacific Peoples	14 (4%)	9 (5%)	3 (5%)	26 (5%)
Asian	73 (23%)	38 (20%)	8 (14%)	119 (21%)
Other	21 (7%)	18 (9%)	4 (7%)	43 (8%)
Other European	19 (6%)	14 (7%)	5 (9%)	38 (7%)
Pākehā/NZ European	169 (53%)	90 (47%)	32 (57%)	291 (52%)
Total	318 (100%)	191 (100%)	56 (100%)	565 (100%)

26 missing responses

Table 26. Student location by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
New Zealand	308 (94%)	188 (93%)	53 (88%)	549 (93%)
Overseas	19 (6%)	14 (7%)	7 (12%)	40 (7%)
Total	327 (100%)	202 (100%)	60 (100%)	589 (100%)

2 missing responses

Table 27. Student study pattern by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
Full time	280 (86%)	84 (41%)	13 (22%)	377 (64%)
Part time	47 (14%)	119 (59%)	46 (78%)	212 (36%)
Total	327 (100%)	203 (100%)	59 (100%)	589 (100%)

2 missing responses

Table 28. Student type of community by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
City	216 (67%)	130 (65%)	44 (75%)	390 (67%)
Small town	58 (18%)	46 (23%)	10 (17%)	114 (20%)
Rural area	47 (15%)	24 (12%)	5 (8%)	76 (13%)
Total	321 (100%)	200 (100%)	59 (100%)	580 (100%)

11 missing responses

Table 29. Student mode of study by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
Block delivery	23 (7%)	14 (7%)	2 (3%)	39 (7%)
On campus	190 (58%)	19 (9%)	4 (7%)	213 (36%)
NZ online	96 (30%)	152 (75%)	45 (75%)	293 (50%)
Overseas online	16 (5%)	18 (9%)	9 (15%)	43 (7%)
Total	325 (100%)	203 (100%)	60 (100%)	588 (100%)

3 missing responses

Table 30. Student online learning experience by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
Inexperienced (<1 year)	142 (48%)	62 (31%)	15 (26%)	219 (40%)
Some experience (1-2 years)	76 (26%)	41 (21%)	14 (24%)	131 (24%)
Experienced (>2 years)	75 (26%)	94 (48%)	29 (50%)	198 (36%)
Total	293 (100%)	197 (100%)	58 (100%)	548 (100%)

43 missing responses

Table 31. Student type of internet access by age

	25 years or less	26-40 years	41 years or more	Total
Broadband	175 (82%)	168 (90%)	55 (96%)	398 (87%)
Rural internet	39 (18%)	19 (10%)	2 (4%)	60 (13%)
Total	214 (100%)	187 (100%)	57 (100%)	458 (100%)

133 missing responses

Crosstabs by ethnic group

Table 32. Student age by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
25 years or less	22 (46%)	14 (54%)	73 (61%)	21 (49%)	19 (50%)	169 (58%)	318 (56%)
26-40 years	22 (46%)	9 (35%)	38 (32%)	18 (42%)	14 (37%)	90 (31%)	191 (34%)
41 years or more	4 (8%)	3 (12%)	8 (7%)	4 (9%)	5 (13%)	32 (11%)	56 (10%)
Total	48 (100%)	26 (100%)	119 (100%)	43 (100%)	38 (100%)	291 (100%)	565 (100%)

26 missing responses

Table 33. Student gender by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
Male	17 (35%)	8 (31%)	31 (26%)	12 (29%)	11 (29%)	100 (35%)	179 (32%)
Female	30 (63%)	18 (69%)	87 (74%)	29 (71%)	27 (71%)	185 (64%)	376 (67%)
Gender diverse	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	3 (1%)	4 (1%)
Total	48 (100%)	26 (100%)	118 (100%)	41 (100%)	38 (100%)	288 (100%)	559 (100%)

32 missing responses

Table 34. Student location by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
New Zealand	43 (90%)	26 (100%)	105 (88%)	39 (91%)	36 (95%)	279 (96%)	528 (94%)
Overseas	5 (10%)	0 (0%)	14 (12%)	4 (9%)	2 (5%)	11 (4%)	36 (6%)
Total	48 (100%)	26 (100%)	119 (100%)	43 (100%)	38 (100%)	290 (100%)	564 (100%)

27 missing responses

Table 35. Student study pattern by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
Full time	27 (56%)	17 (65%)	90 (76%)	24 (56%)	24 (63%)	180 (62%)	362 (64%)
Part time	21 (44%)	9 (35%)	29 (24%)	19 (44%)	14 (37%)	111 (38%)	203 (36%)
Total	48 (100%)	26 (100%)	119 (100%)	43 (100%)	38 (100%)	291 (100%)	565 (100%)

26 missing responses

Table 36. Student type of community by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
City	27 (56%)	12 (46%)	92 (81%)	33 (80%)	26 (68%)	188 (65%)	378 (68%)
Small town	11 (23%)	7 (27%)	16 (14%)	5 (12%)	10 (26%)	58 (20%)	107 (19%)
Rural area	10 (21%)	7 (27%)	6 (5%)	3 (7%)	2 (5%)	43 (15%)	71 (13%)
Total	48 (100%)	26 (100%)	114 (100%)	41 (100%)	38 (100%)	289 (100%)	556 (100%)

35 missing responses

Table 37. Student mode of study by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
Block delivery	3 (6%)	4 (15%)	14 (12%)	2 (5%)	3 (8%)	11 (4%)	37 (7%)
On campus	13 (27%)	9 (35%)	49 (41%)	17 (40%)	12 (32%)	106 (37%)	206 (37%)
NZ online	26 (54%)	13 (50%)	43 (36%)	19 (44%)	19 (50%)	161 (56%)	281 (50%)
Overseas online	6 (13%)	0 (0%)	13 (11%)	5 (12%)	4 (11%)	12 (4%)	40 (7%)
Total	48 (100%)	26 (100%)	119 (100%)	43 (100%)	38 (100%)	290 (100%)	564 (100%)

27 missing responses

Table 38. Student online learning experience by ethnic group

	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
Inexperienced (<1 year)	18 (39%)	11 (44%)	49 (47%)	21 (54%)	10 (29%)	99 (36%)	208 (40%)
Some experience (1-2 years)	12 (26%)	5 (20%)	36 (34%)	7 (18%)	9 (26%)	54 (20%)	123 (23%)
Experienced (>2 years)	16 (35%)	9 (36%)	20 (19%)	11 (28%)	16 (46%)	121 (44%)	193 (37%)
Total	46 (100%)	25 (100%)	105 (100%)	39 (100%)	35 (100%)	274 (100%)	524 (100%)

67 missing responses

Table 39. Student type of internet access by ethnic group

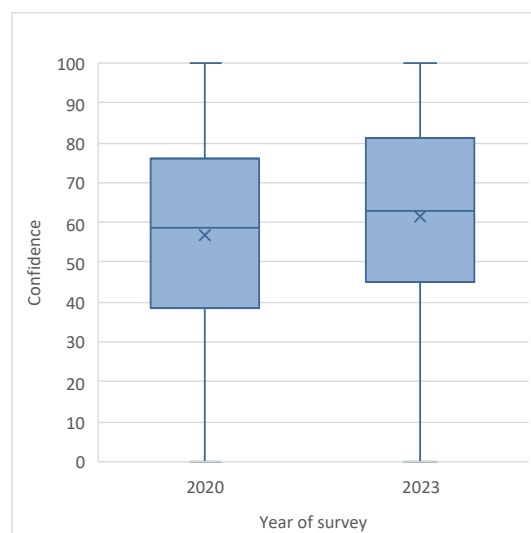
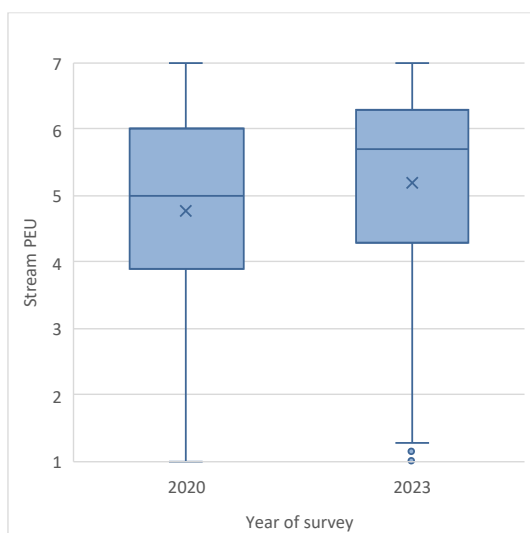
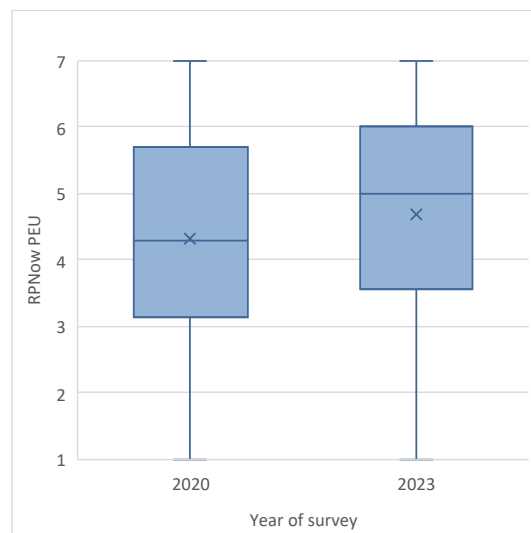
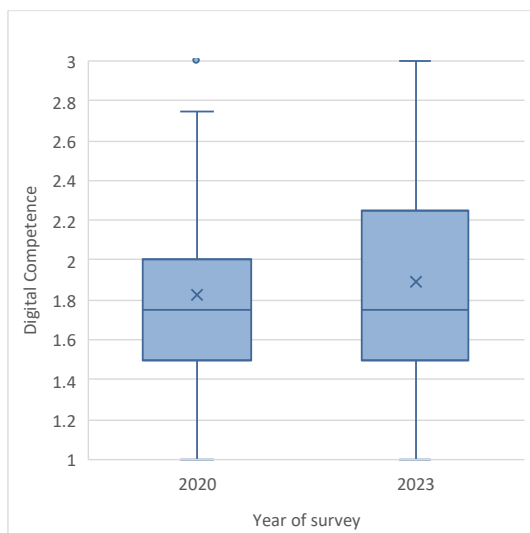
	Māori	Pacific Peoples	Asian	Other	Other European	Pākehā/NZ European	Total
Broadband	33 (89%)	16 (80%)	72 (89%)	27 (90%)	31 (100%)	202 (84%)	381 (87%)
Rural internet	4 (11%)	4 (20%)	9 (11%)	3 (10%)	0 (0%)	38 (16%)	58 (13%)
Total	37 (100%)	20 (100%)	81 (100%)	30 (100%)	31 (100%)	240 (100%)	439 (100%)

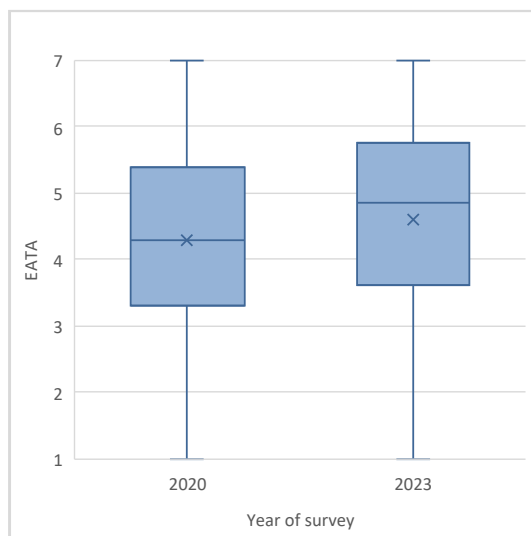
152 missing responses

Appendix 6. 2020 and 2023 comparisons

Descriptive statistics

		n	Mean	SD	Median	Interquartile Range	Skewness	Kurtosis
DIGCOMP	2020	756	1.823	0.499	0.249	0.5	0.211	-0.444
	2023	588	1.889	0.495	0.245	0.75	0.264	-0.546
RPNOW PEU	2020	659	4.310	1.626	2.643	2.6	-0.304	-0.797
	2023	655	4.677	1.706	2.910	2.4	-0.627	-0.626
Stream PEU	2020	652	4.778	1.620	2.624	2.1	-0.633	-0.409
	2023	634	5.183	1.609	2.589	2	-1.090	0.414
CONF	2020	617	56.602	25.736	662.360	37.2	-0.281	-0.681
	2023	597	61.331	24.883	619.137	36.1	-0.444	-0.467
EATA	2020	611	4.308	1.456	2.121	2.1	-0.168	-0.760
	2023	584	4.596	1.119	2.098	2.1	-0.508	-0.456





Ethnic group

		n	Mean	F	df	Sig.	Eta-squared	Strength	Sig. differences between groups
Digital Competence									
2020	Māori	67	1.898	7.418	4, 723	<.001	0.039	small	Māori/Pacific Pacific/Other Pacific/Pākehā Asian/Pākehā
	Pacific	42	1.577						
	Asian	201	1.716						
	Other	67	1.907						
	NZE/Pākehā	351	1.886						
	Total	728	1.824						
2023	Māori	48	1.953	1.550	4, 560	Not sig.			
	Pacific	26	1.712						
	Asian	119	1.837						
	Other	81	1.877						
	NZE/Pākehā	291	1.914						
	Total	565	1.886						
RPNow PEU									
2020	Māori	57	4.722	2.417	4, 627	Not sig.			
	Pacific	41	4.370						
	Asian	189	4.081						
	Other	52	4.639						
	NZE/Pākehā	293	4.306						
	Total	632	4.308						
2023	Māori	53	4.555	3.837	4, 623	0.004	0.024	small	Asian/Pākehā
	Pacific	28	4.250						
	Asian	132	5.160						
	Other	93	4.784						
	NZE/Pākehā	322	4.532						
	Total	628	4.691						
Stream PEU									
2020	Māori	57	5.253	1.484	4, 621	Not sig.			
	Pacific	40	4.678						
	Asian	186	4.674						
	Other	51	4.820						
	NZE/Pākehā	292	4.739						
	Total	626	4.769						
2023	Māori	52	5.236	1.915	4, 603	Not sig.			
	Pacific	27	4.566						
	Asian	123	5.431						
	Other	90	5.283						
	NZE/Pākehā	316	5.126						
	Total	608	5.195						
Confidence									
2020	Māori	55	59.836	0.755	4, 588	Not sig.			
	Pacific	38	53.701						
	Asian	166	54.916						
	Other	51	55.063						
	NZE/Pākehā	283	57.935						
	Total	593	56.748						
2023	Māori	52	58.088	2.676	4, 569	Not sig.			
	Pacific	24	49.454						
	Asian	116	66.052						
	Other	83	60.713						
	NZE/Pākehā	299	61.368						
	Total	574	61.425						
EATA									
2020	Māori	56	4.445	0.929	4, 586	Not sig.			
	Pacific	38	4.442						
	Asian	169	4.133						
	Other	49	4.263						
	NZE/Pākehā	279	4.364						
	Total	591	4.302						
2023	Māori	50	4.326	4.409	4, 555	0.002	0.031	small	Asian/Pākehā
	Pacific	24	4.504						
	Asian	115	5.085						
	Other	80	4.619						
	NZE/Pākehā	291	4.462						
	Total	560	4.602						

Online learning experience

		n	Mean	F	df	Sig.	Eta-squared	Strength	Sig. differences between groups
Digital Competence									
2020	Inexperienced	396	1.757	7.629	2, 752	<.001	0.020	small	Inexperienced/ Some experience Inexperienced/ Experienced
	Some experience	206	1.883						
	Experienced	153	1.913						
	Total	755	1.823						
2023	Inexperienced	219	1.865	1.300	2, 544	Not sig.			
	Some experience	131	1.859						
	Experienced	197	1.934						
	Total	547	1.888						
RPNow PEU									
2020	Inexperienced	340	4.343	0.555	2, 655	Not sig.			
	Some experience	179	4.349						
	Experienced	139	4.181						
	Total	658	4.310						
2023	Inexperienced	239	4.854	1.264	2, 603	Not sig.			
	Some experience	150	4.690						
	Experienced	217	4.602						
	Total	606	4.723						
Stream PEU									
2020	Inexperienced	337	4.922	3.559	2, 648	Not sig.			
	Some experience	179	4.727						
	Experienced	135	4.491						
	Total	651	4.779						
2023	Inexperienced	233	5.386	2.738	2, 583	Not sig.			
	Some experience	142	5.248						
	Experienced	211	5.033						
	Total	586	5.225						
Confidence									
2020	Inexperienced	312	55.756	2.115	2, 614	Not sig.			
	Some experience	172	59.902						
	Experienced	133	54.316						
	Total	617	56.602						
2023	Inexperienced	220	60.585	0.404	2, 550	Not sig.			
	Some experience	135	62.236						
	Experienced	198	62.717						
	Total	553	61.751						
EATA									
2020	Inexperienced	304	4.396	1.106	2, 607	Not sig.			
	Some experience	172	4.206						
	Experienced	134	4.243						
	Total	610	4.309						
2023	Inexperienced	215	4.891	6.306	2, 540	0.002	0.023	small	Inexperienced/ Experienced
	Some experience	132	4.615						
	Experienced	196	4.398						
	Total	543	4.646						

Mode of study

		n	Mean	t	df	Sig.	Cohen's d	Strength
Digital Competence								
2020	On campus	254	1.737	3.429	754	<.001	0.264	small
	Online	502	1.867					
2023	On campus	251	1.862	1.211	583	Not sig.		
	Online	334	1.912					
RPNow PEU								
2020	On campus	217	4.338	0.313	657	Not sig.		
	Online	442	4.296					
2023	On campus	288	4.405	3.593	646	<.001	0.284	small
	Online	360	4.887					
Stream PEU								
2020	On campus	214	4.861	0.913	650	Not sig.		
	Online	438	4.737					
2023	On campus	281	4.975	2.847	629	0.005	0.228	small
	Online	350	5.340					
Confidence								
2020	On campus	203	55.615	0.667	615	Not sig.		
	Online	414	57.085					
2023	On campus	261	56.502	4.005	589	<.001	0.332	small
	Online	330	64.627					
EATA								
2020	On campus	195	4.314	0.072	609	Not sig.		
	Online	416	4.305					
2023	On campus	254	4.340	3.799	580	<.001	0.318	small
	Online	328	4.795					

To: Academic Committee

From: Jean Jacoby, Director, Education Futures

Date: 24 February 2025

ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI

Background

Massey's approach to the delivery of 'secured' assessments, in particular, invigilated examinations, has shifted significantly in the last five years. Prior to the global pandemic, the expectation was that distance students could be required, at many points in their studies, to sit an invigilated (pen and paper) examination at a pre-determined venue. However, the shift to remotely-proctored online exams as part of the response to Covid was, despite opposition from some, generally well-received by students (Rawlins, Butler & Hartnett, 2024). This approach afforded financial savings to the university at the same time as offering our distance cohort increased flexibility in examination delivery. This led to the decision in 2021 to continue to deliver secured assessments, referred to as Online Supervised Exams (OSEs), as the standard approach to exam delivery. The decision was reconfirmed by the Future Exam Requirements Working Group (FERWG) in 2024.

The decision to move to OSEs was accompanied by a general reduction in the use of examinations, with some qualifications dropping the examination as a form of assessment altogether. This made the use of tools such as Turnitin's similarity detection critical to ensuring the authenticity of students' work. These strategies were especially important in the assessment of distance students and those in large classes, where a teacher may not have had the opportunity to get to know individual student voice.

However, the impact on higher education of the release of ChatGPT and other generative AI (genAI) in late 2022 has been cataclysmic. The arrival and rapid proliferation of tools which now can do much, if not most, of the writing and research associated with many assessment types, has fundamentally undermined our ability to rely on the authenticity of work submitted by students. Calls from some academic staff to ban these tools not only show a lack of understanding of their pervasiveness and the futility of policing such a ban, but also ignores the fact that AI skills are increasingly essential skills for employability.)

Estimates of student use of these tools vary significantly. A blog post by Turnitin November 2023 suggested that while AI use was present, it was not pervasive, with only about 1 out of 10 assignments showing some AI involvement and a smaller percentage being mostly AI-generated (West-Smith, 2023) A year later, a report released by KPMG Canada in late 2024



found that more than 80% of students surveyed admitted to submitting AI-produced content as their own work, and largely (and unsurprisingly) without telling their educator that they are using these tools.

Equally important are questions about our ability to reliably detect genAI use. The reliability of detection tools remains extremely variable. The most widely accepted tool, from Turnitin, was initially said to be able to detect 97% of ChatGPT authored writing with a lower than 1/100 false positive rate, but the company has since revised that to “in cases where we detect less than 20% of genAI writing in a document, there is a higher incidence of false positives” (Turnitin, 2023). Significantly, although the use of detection tools has always been promoted secondary to ‘human judgement’, it is clear that human judgement is an extremely poor means of detecting genAI use, with one study showing that up to 94% of cases are undetected by markers (Scarfe, Watcham, Clarke & Roesch, 2024).

At Massey, concern about the impact of genAI on academic integrity was initially mitigated through increased use of online supervised exams (OSEs), and through the use of so called ‘AI-proof’ assessment types (such as reflective writing, oral presentations and case studies). However, given the cost of increasing OSE provision, the intention was that increased use of OSEs would be a temporary measure while academic staff found different, ‘AI-resistant’ methods to assess students.

The impact of the online proctoring delivery failure in the end-of-semester one assessments in 2024 is evidence of the heavy dependence that some disciplines were placing on the use of OSEs. Unfortunately, the loss of access to online proctoring has coincided with significant advances in the capabilities of genAI. Many of the assessment types that were regarded as ‘AI-proof’ in 2023 can no longer be viewed thus¹. At the same time, many of the detection strategies that indicated illicit genAI use, such as hallucinations and fake references, are no longer reliable. Version tracking, traditionally a reliable method of detecting cheating behaviours, can now be faked by genAI, and as genAI ‘humanisers’ become more powerful and sophisticated, the utility of detection tools such as Turnitin is increasingly in doubt.

The implementation of the AI Use Framework, approved by Academic Committee in November 2024, marked a key step in the university’s development of a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the management of genAI use by students. However, with the technology continuing to evolve rapidly, further work on the assurance of learning is required.

Discussion

The ubiquity of genAI tools, and the rapid increase in their power and scope, presents considerable challenges for a higher education sector that is struggling to keep up. Resources released by the Australian Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUpoRTyNvVE&list=PLts-Ei4tTTZ5HOGi9RFixZcNVzml9XcLT>

(TEQSA) at the end of 2024 (see footnote) prove that easily accessible (usually free) tools mean that students can use genAI tools to complete *all forms of take-home assessments*, including synchronous online oral assessments. A return to remote proctoring *may* help to address this. However, the speed at which the cheating industry has historically created workarounds to academic integrity control measures suggests that we should not consider the future implementation of a new OSE platform as the whole solution to the challenges posed by genAI.

The perceived value of a university qualification depends, in large part, in the public believing that the qualification represents a valid measure of an individual's levels of knowledge and skill. A provocation from TEQSA described in a recently published article in Future Campus (Winkler, 2025) argues that the value of online degrees may be called into question because the integrity of online assessments cannot be guaranteed and suggests that some sort of note (presumably functioning as a disclaimer) should be attached to the transcript of online qualifications. A response article (Ellis & Dollinger, 2025) published the following week noted the following:

“The key concern lies specifically with degrees conducted entirely online without any supervised verification of student learning. While online learning and the assessment of it can be an excellent complement to traditional education or even comprise almost all of a degree program, allowing completely unsupervised assessment of online learning necessarily compromises the integrity of that award. This presents as a significant problem.

While the solution to this problem isn't complex, it does require educational providers to face an uncomfortable truth. For an award to be worthy of trust it must provide genuine assurance of learning. In a world where Generative AI exists, this now requires some form of in-person supervised verification.”

In line with discussions already underway at Massey about the need for a programmatic view of assessment, Ellis & Dollinger also note that:

“... not every assessment moment needs this level of verification. This is certainly not an insurmountable barrier, and many successful programs already combine online flexibility with periodic in-person components. Education providers and their students need to accept that this is now part of the cost of award integrity.”

A return to in-person assessment represents some challenges for Massey University. Having focussed on the delivery of online assessment for the past five years, we have disassembled the systems and resourcing necessary for the delivery of different forms of in-person assessments. Recent IT and space consolidations means that we may not have the technical and physical infrastructure necessary to accommodate large sittings of invigilated examinations, be they digital or, in a worst-case scenario, pen-and-paper.



We have also created an expectation in our distance students of ‘any time, any place’ delivery. A return to fixed-time-and-place assessment is likely to be welcomed by some students, but will create significant challenges for others, especially our part-time and remote students for whom attendance at such assessments will incur costs for travel, accommodation, childcare, and time away from work.

On behalf of the FERWG (who report to AC) the Centre for Education Transformation is managing the development of a business case for a new online assessment platform. The future value of OSEs may need to be weighed against the imperative for in-person verification. While the ability to deliver online assessments remains important to a university seeking to position itself as a leading distance provider, viewing the use of OSEs as our primary means of authenticating assessment for distance students at Massey University means that the value of our qualifications may be brought into question.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Academic Committee approve the following next steps:

1. As a matter of urgency, all Colleges begin the process of reinstating secured assessments at key progression points in all qualifications. Mapping of these secured assessments across qualifications must be prioritised, taking into consideration not only the challenges of genAI, but also the threats posed by other cheating industries such as contract cheating and the use of connected devices such as wearables.
2. Colleges work with the Centre for Education Transformation to explore options for the operationalising of in-person secured assessments.
3. Implementation of new (additional) assessment ‘Types and Titles (see Appendix 1) to support the clear mapping of secured assessments across qualifications.
4. Initiation of consultation with our distance student cohort about potential impacts of a return to in-person assessment and how these might be mitigated.
5. Recommend that SLT consider the additional administrative and operational burdens that managing the impact of genAI on the integrity of qualifications brings to colleges and central services. Key savings decisions made in a pre-genAI era may need to be revisited if the university is to be in a position to deliver high quality and authenticated learning. (For example, additional resourcing may be required for the purchase or lease of fleets of secured laptops for delivery of online assessments ‘in-person’ and the recruitment of invigilators and assessment delivery administrators.) Consideration should also be given to how the university ensures proactive decision-making about genAI, and that academic and operational decision-makers remain fully informed about the implication of changes in this rapidly evolving context.



References

- Ellis, C., & Dollinger, M. (2025). The Real Cost of Convenience: Online Learning's Moment of Truth. Future Campus. <https://futurecampus.com.au/2025/02/18/the-real-cost-of-convenience-online-learning-moment-of-truth/>
- KPMG. (2024). Students using generative AI confess they're not learning as much. [https://kpmg.com/ca/en/home/media/press-releases/2024/10/students-using-gen-ai-say-they-are-not-learning-as-much.html#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20survey%2C%20as,assignments%20\(38%20per%20cent\).](https://kpmg.com/ca/en/home/media/press-releases/2024/10/students-using-gen-ai-say-they-are-not-learning-as-much.html#:~:text=According%20to%20the%20survey%2C%20as,assignments%20(38%20per%20cent).)
- Rawlins, P., Butler, P., & Hartnett, M. (2024). *Student insights on OSEs: Changes and trends from 2020 to 2023*. Massey University.
- Scarfe, P., Watcham, K., Clarke, A., & Roesch, E. (2024). A real-world test of artificial intelligence infiltration of a university examinations system: A "Turing Test" case study. *Plos One*. 19(6): e0305354. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0305354>
- Turnitin. (2023) *AI writing detection update from Turnitin's Chief Product Officer*. <https://www.turnitin.com/blog/ai-writing-detection-update-from-turnitins-chief-product-officer>.
- West-Smith, P. (2023) *One year of ChatGPT: Where are we now?* Turnitin. <https://www.turnitin.com/blog/one-year-of-chatgpt-where-are-we-now>
- Winkler, T. (2025). *Online integrity under microscope*. Future Campus. <https://futurecampus.com.au/2025/02/13/life-support-for-online-degrees/>



Appendix 1: Secured Assessment Types and Titles

Type	Title
Exam – secured	Written exam
	Practical exam
	Oral exam
Test – secured	Written test
	Practical test
	Oral test
In person – secured	Interview or conversation
	Practical
	Practical or performance task
	Written or creative task
	Q&A following presentation, submission or placement
Placement, internship, or supervision	Observation or supervision
	Practical or creative task



To: Academic Committee

From: Jean Jacoby, Director, Education Futures

Date: 11 April 2025

Subject: ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI

1. PURPOSE

To provide discussion points on a way forward to ensure the validity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI (genAI).

2. BACKGROUND

Massey's approach to the delivery of 'secured' assessments, in particular, invigilated examinations, has shifted significantly in the last five years. The decision to move to Online Supervised Exams (OSEs) in 2021 was accompanied by a general reduction in the use of examinations, with some qualifications dropping the examination as a form of assessment altogether. This made the use of tools such as Turnitin's similarity detection critical to ensuring the authenticity of students' work. These strategies were especially important in the assessment of distance students and those in large classes, where a teacher may not have had the opportunity to get to know individual student voice.

However, the impact on higher education of the release of ChatGPT and other genAI in late 2022 has been cataclysmic. The arrival and rapid proliferation of tools which now can do much, if not most, of the writing and research associated with many assessment types, has fundamentally undermined our ability to rely on the authenticity of work submitted by students. This then leads to questions about our ability to dependably detect genAI use with the reliability of detection tools remaining extremely variable. Significantly, although the use of detection tools has always been promoted secondary to 'human judgement', it is clear that human judgement is an extremely poor means of detecting genAI use.

At Massey, concern about the impact of genAI on academic integrity was initially mitigated through increased use of online supervised exams (OSEs), and through the use of so called 'AI-proof' assessment types (such as reflective writing, oral presentations and case studies). However, the intention was that increased use of OSEs would be a temporary measure while we found different, 'AI-resistant' methods to assess students.

Unfortunately, the loss of access to online proctoring due to the system failure at the end of semester one in 2024, has coincided with significant advances in the capabilities of genAI. Many of the assessment types that were regarded as 'AI-proof' in 2023 can no longer be viewed thus¹. At the same time, many of the detection strategies that indicated illicit genAI use are no longer reliable. Version tracking, traditionally a reliable method of detecting cheating behaviours, can now be faked by genAI, and the utility of detection tools such as Turnitin is increasingly in doubt.

¹ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FUpoRTyNvVE&list=PLts-Ei4tTTZ5HOGi9RFixZcNVzml9XcLT>

The implementation of the AI Use Framework, approved by Academic Committee in November 2024, marked a key step in the university's development of a coordinated and comprehensive approach to the management of genAI use by students. However, with the technology continuing to evolve rapidly, further work on the assurance of learning is required.

3. SECURED ASSESSMENT

While the ability to deliver online assessments remains important to a university seeking to position itself as a leading distance provider, viewing the use of OSEs as our primary means of authenticating assessment for distance students at Massey University means that the value of our qualifications may be brought into question. The future value of OSEs may need to be weighed against the imperative for in-person verification.

The perceived value of a university qualification depends, in large part, in the public believing that the qualification represents a valid measure of an individual's levels of knowledge and skill. A provocation from TEQSA described in a recently published article in *Future Campus* (Winkler, 2025) argues that the value of online degrees may be called into question because the integrity of online assessments cannot be guaranteed and suggests that some sort of note (presumably functioning as a disclaimer) should be attached to the transcript of online qualifications. A response article (Ellis & Dollinger, 2025) published the following week noted the following:

"The key concern lies specifically with degrees conducted entirely online without any supervised verification of student learning. While online learning and the assessment of it can be an excellent complement to traditional education or even comprise almost all of a degree program, allowing completely unsupervised assessment of online learning necessarily compromises the integrity of that award. This presents as a significant problem.

While the solution to this problem isn't complex, it does require educational providers to face an uncomfortable truth. For an award to be worthy of trust it must provide genuine assurance of learning. In a world where Generative AI exists, this now requires some form of in-person supervised verification."

In line with discussions already underway at Massey about the need for a programmatic view of assessment, Ellis & Dollinger also note that:

"... not every assessment moment needs this level of verification. This is certainly not an insurmountable barrier, and many successful programs already combine online flexibility with periodic in-person components. Education providers and their students need to accept that this is now part of the cost of award integrity."

A return to in-person assessment represents some challenges for Massey University. Having focussed on the delivery of online assessment for the past five years, we have disassembled the systems and resourcing necessary for the delivery of different forms of in-person assessments. Recent IT and space consolidations means that we may not have the technical and physical infrastructure necessary to accommodate large sittings of digital invigilated examinations.

We have also created an expectation in our distance students of 'any time, any place' delivery. A return to fixed-time-and-place assessment is likely to be welcomed by some students, but will create significant challenges for others, especially our part-time and remote students for whom attendance at such assessments will incur costs for travel, accommodation, childcare, and time away from work.

It is therefore proposed that, as a matter of urgency, Colleges begin the process of reinstating secured assessments at key progression points in all qualifications. Mapping of these secured assessments across qualifications must take into consideration not only the challenges of genAI, but also the threats posed by other cheating industries such as contract cheating and the use of connected devices such as wearables. It is emphasised here, that secured assessments do not need to occur in every course but at key progression points. The Centre for Education Transformation will work with Colleges to explore options for the operationalising of in-person secured assessments and what these might look like.

At the programme level, we may need to change what we do and look at those deeper level skills, knowledge and attributes. One potential solution is to consider introducing a capstone assessment for the qualification which would involve engaging with the students in person with some assessment at the final stage of the qualification. To authenticate qualifications, we may need to build into our regulations that students are required to come onto campus toward the end of their qualification.

As part of this, new assessment Types and Titles to support the clear mapping of secured assessments across qualifications will be introduced (See Appendix 1).

At the same time consultation with our distance student cohort about potential impacts of a return to in-person assessment and how these might be mitigated will be initiated.

It is important that SLT consider the additional administrative and operational burdens that managing the impact of genAI on the integrity of qualifications brings to Colleges and central services. Key savings decisions made in a pre-genAI era may need to be revisited if the University is to be in a position to deliver high quality and authenticated learning. Additional resourcing may be required for the purchase or lease of fleets of secured laptops for delivery of online assessments 'in-person' and the recruitment of invigilators and assessment delivery administrators. Consideration should also be given to how the University ensures proactive decision-making about genAI, and that academic and operational decision-makers remain fully informed about the implication of changes in this rapidly evolving context.

Like all education providers, we need to authenticate that our enrolled students have legitimately completed work that is theirs, and this needs to be demonstrated regardless of platform or learning mode. There needs to be multiple layers for checks and balances.

4. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Academic Committee consider the points made in this document and seek consultation through College Boards and appropriate service units.

Appendix 1: Secured Assessment Types and Titles

Type	Title
Exam – secured	Written exam
	Practical exam
	Oral exam
Test – secured	Written test
	Practical test
	Oral test
In person – observed/secured	Interview or conversation
	Practical
	Practical or performance task
	Written or creative task
	Q&A following presentation, submission or placement
	Case Study
	Simulation/scenario
	Gamification
	Collaborative problem solving
	Project
	Live pitch
	Negotiation exercise
Placement, internship, or supervision	Observation or supervision
	Practical or creative task

APPENDIX 2 - REFERENCES

Ellis, C., & Dollinger, M. (2025). The Real Cost of Convenience: Online Learning's Moment of Truth. Future Campus. <https://futurecampus.com.au/2025/02/18/the-real-cost-of-convenience-online-learnings-moment-of-truth/>

Winkler, T. (2025). *Online integrity under microscope*. Future Campus. <https://futurecampus.com.au/2025/02/13/life-support-for-online-degrees/>

To: Academic Committee

From: Jean Jacoby, Director, Education Futures

Date: 28 June 2025

Ensuring the Validity of our Qualifications in the Age of Generative Artificial Intelligence:
Feedback and next steps.

Background

A discussion paper raising concerns about the impact of Generative AI on the validity of Massey Qualifications, particularly in the context of the current suspension of OSES, was circulated for comment in May. Feedback was received from 21 individuals and 6 groups. Several college responses combined feedback from the Learning and Teaching Committee and the College Board.

All received responses are in the attached appendix. Individual responses have been anonymised, but those received from committees remain identified.

Key themes emerging from the feedback include comments about the reputation of the university, arguments in favour of particular assessment approaches and the amount of authenticated assessment necessary. A number of responses expressed concern about the practicalities of reintroducing secured assessments, and emphasised that such a move would require investment and resourcing. The impact of such a move on both students and staff was also a common theme.

Discussion

Most responses advocated for the reinstatement of secure, in-person assessments, although there was some variation of interpretation of what this meant – some respondents were arguing for a return to pen-and-paper and ‘traditional examinations’, whereas others acknowledged that ‘secured assessment’ could take many forms, including contact workshops and field trips. Respondents who supported a return to secured assessments particularly highlighted concerns about academic dishonesty, reputational risk, and a decline in student learning outcomes. There was widespread concern about the impact of the uncontrolled use of generative AI on the integrity and reputation of qualifications.

Respondents who opposed a return to secured assessment expressed concern that it represented a ‘panic button’ response or would lead to an increase in rote learning. A couple argued for a more fundamental change to what and how we teach, arguing that the focus should be on ‘redesigning assessments to go beyond what AI can produce’, and noted the importance of trust in the teaching relationship. A perceived move away from the integration of technology and AI in the teaching and learning process was also opposed by several respondents.

Extensive feedback was received about what secured assessment could look like. While some respondents spoke of the value of traditional ‘blue book’ pen and paper examinations, other responses acknowledged the possibility of wider forms of securing assessment, including contact courses, field trips, project based learning and oral assessment, and several described innovative approaches they were already using in their own practice. A range of views on, and examples of, the use of in-person oral assessment were received, with descriptions of its use with relatively

large classes contrasting with concerns about the workload implications. It was clear from the feedback that different disciplines required different solutions.

A number of respondents also provided advice on the amount of secured assessment that was required. While most appeared to support the idea of securing at key stages in a programme, several argued for secured assessments within every course, with one respondent pointing out the risk of a programme-level approach would represent for those students who only enrol at Massey to complete a few courses.

The logistical and resourcing challenges of a return to in-person assessments was a concern for many, although several responses proposed solutions such as regional test centres and the strategic use of oral assessments. While the impact on distance students was a cause for concern in some feedback, others noted that 80% of our distance students were located within easy travelling distance of one of our campuses.

Recommendations

1. Academic Committee consider the feedback received.
2. Academic Committee advise on preferred next steps.

APPENDIX:

Feedback on Ensuring the Validity of our Qualifications in the Age of Generative Artificial Intelligence

Submission One

I strongly agree with this document. In particular, a return to secure, invigilated assessment is critical to Massey's long-term reputation. All staff I have spoken to agree with this and refer to the closure of tertiary institutions in Australia due to the lack of proper assessment. There is anecdotal evidence that Massey is not keeping up with domestic enrolments (compared to other NZ universities) precisely because students are worried about the quality of a Massey degree. The other universities in NZ may offer an online certificate here or a diploma there but they all assiduously avoid offering the mainline degrees (BA, BSc, BCom, etc) online, precisely because of the challenge of online invigilation.

There are two other major reasons why a return to secure assessment is a priority, namely:

- a) Accreditation – most accredited degrees will require invigilated exams.
- b) International perception – many countries (especially in Asia) are wary of a lack of exam invigilation. Some refuse to accept distance qualifications at all. There is a real concern that international partnerships could be reduced or disappear altogether if Massey is perceived to be “lax on exam invigilation”.

The majority of students in the School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences are distance students. A suggested approach for online courses is Online Supervision (OSEs). We have already experienced one catastrophic technical failure of OSEs and no matter how good a new OSE is meant to be, another failure is always a possibility. The major risk of OSEs is that there is no plan on the day. In addition, students experience significant stress in arranging their rooms for an OSE. Pictures must be removed from walls and furniture rearranged in many cases.

There is concern that our modern online courses must be available around the world. However, a recent survey in the College of Sciences has revealed that almost 80% of the distance students live in Auckland or Wellington. The remainder live elsewhere in NZ or Sydney or Melbourne. If we were to require students to write a final exam on a Massey campus (and set up exam centres in, say, Christchurch and Sydney) we would cover over 90% of the students. The few students unable to reach an exam centre could be offered the option of an oral exam.

There is concern that Massey cannot provide enough computers on campus to allow students to use computers during an exam. I would be interested to discuss why staff want computers used during an invigilated exam. Since the start of covid we have struggled to offer any assessment with mathematical content via a computer. To this day, students in a TCA are instructed to write their answers on paper, and then scan the paper and submit it online. The sooner we get back to paper-based exams the better.

There is concern that some students feel stressed about exams. My own experience over the last 5 years is that students are far more stressed by preparing for an OSE (shifting furniture) and worrying about technical failures. If any kind of technical failure occurs, students get zero to minimal support from Massey. One student, writing a TCA in Germany at 3am NZT was told to contact Massey support during NZ office hours.

The option with least risk (and one which is trusted internationally) is paper-based exams in invigilated exam rooms with the backup of oral exams (for a minority). In addition, this option can be confidently introduced from the first day of enrolment for 2026.

Submission Two

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this discussion paper. My remarks below are intended to support the University's efforts to uphold academic integrity and deliver high-quality learning experiences.

1. Regional test centres

Has the University—either independently or in collaboration with other New Zealand universities or the Tertiary Education Commission—considered establishing regional test centres where distance students could complete assessments in person on locked-down computers? A coordinated, sector-wide approach would likely increase viability and reduce duplication of effort.

2. Programme-level capstone assessments

'At the programme level, we may need to change what we do and look at those deeper level skills, knowledge and attributes. One potential solution is to consider introducing a capstone assessment for the qualification which would involve engaging with the students in person with some assessment at the final stage of the qualification.'

Capstone experiences can be valuable; however, clarification would be helpful on whether the intention is to introduce a single terminal assessment that determines eligibility to graduate (which is how this reads), or a broader integrative experience embedded throughout the programme. The former would be quite risky.

3. Resourcing for in-person assessment

'Having focussed on the delivery of online assessment for the past five years, we have disassembled the systems and resourcing necessary for the delivery of different forms of in-person assessments.'

The decision to scale back infrastructure for on-campus assessment was taken in good faith during a period when online delivery appeared predominant. Nonetheless, many staff cautioned that in-person assessment would remain essential, particularly for authentication purposes. Re-establishing these capabilities seems an urgent need.

4. Online proctoring

'Unfortunately, the loss of access to online proctoring due to the system failure at the end of semester one in 2024, has coincided with significant advances in the capabilities of genAI.'

The statement that we have “lost access to online proctoring” may inadvertently imply the change was beyond our control. In reality, the University chose to discontinue OSEs after the Semester 1 2024 outage. Acknowledging this distinction will help frame the discussion around alternative solutions that are already available; i.e., there are other, more robust platforms.

5. Secured laptop fleets and invigilation

'Additional resourcing may be required for the purchase or lease of fleets of secured laptops for delivery of online assessments 'in-person' and the recruitment of invigilators and assessment delivery administrators.'

Additional information would be helpful on the proposed “fleet of secured laptops.” For example:

- o Would devices be shipped to students, retained centrally, or used exclusively at prescribed locations?
- o Have the financial and logistical implications been considered?

It is also worth noting that academic staff routinely invigilate both in-person and remote exams for courses of all sizes. Leveraging this existing expertise may help contain administrative costs; however, the Timetabling of final exams would continue to need central administration.

6. Distance-student assessments

In the absence of central guidance for Semester 1 2025, several science courses have successfully implemented Zoom-invigilated tests. Similar ad-hoc solutions are likely in place elsewhere. Capturing and sharing these practices could accelerate the development of a cohesive, University-wide framework. This is not an intractable problem and there are likely many solutions available, but it is a serious time challenge when academics are given very little notice to develop such methods without support.

7. Contact workshops and student accommodation

Many current distance offerings include compulsory contact workshops. We often run in-person assessments during these workshops.

Anything the university can do to make it easier for students to attend contact workshops would be helpful - easing students' travel and accommodation burden would significantly improve attendance and equity. For example, for the last several years, there has been no on-campus housing available for students during our contact workshops, which is an embarrassment. There should not only be housing available, but it should also be the least expensive regional option for students (in the past it has not been). Restoring affordable on-campus housing—or partnering with local providers—should be a priority.

Submission Three

My penny's worth

From my perspective the document raises valid issues and provides a number of ways forward that make sense in terms of managing the current challenges of AI and assessments.

In particular I support the concerns raised about the University's ability to respond to the needs of the AI environment given the hollowing -out of core capacity within the University – in particular IT and lecture capture, recording technology in class rooms – as well as the significant shift to online delivery.

However, I would caution that what ever changes are imposed this needs to take into account the particular characteristics of different programmes and what is already in place. As we tend to base many assessments around field trips – the tailored nature of these assessments avoids the risk of AI Generated responses – the practice of working through assessments in tutorials and courses also to a large extent helps here.

I support the need for distance students to have an in-person presence on campus (or a satellite campus) for most courses in our programmes.

One concern I do have is that although hinted at – what is not made explicit is the impact these changes will/ are having on staff workload. Moving away from a blended style of teaching to a style where distance and internal are serviced distinctly means additional work for staff, likewise tailoring specific assessments to assess students in this new environment also takes time. This needs to be acknowledged as part of this discussion – likewise therefore there is a need to reassess the workload model and its links to the current SSR metric used with staff, courses and programmes.

Submission Four

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the document “ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI” dated 11 April 2025.

1. I strongly support the return of secure assessments. As the document notes, without secure assessments we cannot ensure the validity of our qualifications and the university would face an extreme reputational risk.
2. Every course should contain a securely assessed component. Otherwise, there is no way to know if the student has met the learning outcomes.
3. The university should consider how large that component should be. Before Covid, in our group (Mathematics) we tended to use at least 70% secure assessments, due to traditional forms of cheating. Perhaps it could be lower now (30%?). But it is a key point to consider.
4. The resourcing requirements need not be large. Internal students can do in-person, hand-written tests or exams supervised by their lecturer. A couple of other exam centres around the country would catch most distance students. Offshore students might need to use OSEs. In-person, closed-book assessments do reveal a student's knowledge and understanding more than other forms of assessment.
5. Assessment drives learning. The knowledge that a secure, closed-book assessment is coming up is needed to keep students learning.
6. The introduction of GenAI poses challenges to more than just assessment. It risks directly undermining students' ability to learn to read, to learn to think, and to learn to communicate. We are already seeing a new lack of motivation in students this year. “Why bother? AI can do it all and I can just paste in the answer.”

Submission Five

Comments on

ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI

I limit my comments to teaching subject that I have been involved with for the last 30 years at Massey. This is primarily mathematics and the sciences.

1. It is absolutely essential to have each paper contain an invigilated assessment component. This is important because:
 - a. We must have some quality control that can be assured if we are to remain competitive. Our reputation is on the line here and we do not want to lose any more ground.

- b. If any of our papers are tied to professional degree such as engineering or medicine, then it is essential to have this quality control to keep accreditation. If we are planning to move to more professional degrees, then we also need to consider this.
 - c. Our students would be at some disadvantage should they move to another university that has proper invigilated assessment in place. Such moves may be a progression to graduate work or shifting to start a degree that Massey does not offer. In any case, if the student never had to sit an examination, how would they be prepared?
2. Digital input/output is not always preferable or efficient. The current mindset seems to be that somehow everything needs to be done digitally. In fact, for mathematics, this is more a hindrance than help for tests and examinations. Typing mathematics is a slow and somewhat specialized skill that usually requires dedicated software and knowledge how to use it efficiently under test conditions. This is just too much for most and rightfully so as we are trying to assess their mathematical skills as opposed to specialist typing. We get around this by having students hand write out stuff and then scan it as a pdf file and upload it. If we return to in-person examinations, the university should bear in mind that these subjects do not necessarily need dedicated computer rooms for tests and exams.
3. Online invigilation is not the answer. Massey trialed online invigilation a year before its final meltdown. For reasons that escape logic, the university went ahead with this invigilation in the face of copious evidence that it had a lot of problems. I was involved in an initial trial for mathematics and thus got good feedback before this dreadful decision was made. We need not revisit horrid episode except perhaps to take away a few more lessons:
- a. Even when the invigilation was working there were lots of issues with appropriate software and glitches that were perhaps more the fault of the student's individual computer than the invigilation system itself. A huge proportion of problems and questions we had on tests revolved around this invigilation. The students found the whole process an additional burden. My internal calculus class requested several times that they just have a "normal" test in class. It would have been a lot easier for all of us.
 - b. The invigilation software is by its nature necessarily a form of "Spyware". It has to monitor what the student is doing minute by minute. A lot of people are not comfortable having to put this sort of software on to their machines. There might be options to use university computers for internal students (though this seems a waste of resources in some cases when in person invigilation could be done), but what are the options for distance students?
 - c. Some students might have to take tests/exams on their work computer or on a network with security requirements. Most businesses and all military installations would probably object to this sort of software going onto any of their machines or a machine that is on their network. This limits possibilities for some of the distance students.
 - d. It may still be possible for students to source outside help despite any camera or computer work of the invigilation software. There are still any number of ways to cheat the system.
 - e. Even if all works perfectly, the invigilation software has its limitations. One bad aspect is that it limits standard resources for a test. The example that I am thinking about is that we often let the students bring in at least one sheet of handwritten notes. Writing out the notes and deciding what is important is a key part of their preparation for the test. Simply providing a sheet of formulae or notes does do the same thing. The problem is that the

invigilation software must then check all this along with any proposed blank paper for scrap calculations...the software was not up to this job a few years ago.

4. We will not win the AI arms race if we stick to purely online assessments. We all know the rapid growth and power evolving for AI. At the moment, if we try to concoct test/exam questions to challenge it, we end up crafting questions that are much harder and sophisticated than would have been deemed appropriate a few years ago. This is not the way forward and it punishes the students who make an honest attempt on the test without AI.
5. We should embrace AI where it might be used with profit in our courses. Not all assessments need to be “secured”. In mathematics, however, a lot of the learning comes from doing the problems yourself and thinking through answers. A student who can simply retrieve mathematical information via AI without thought or understanding has a somewhat low value skill. It is akin to a person that claims to know, say, French, but is strapped to a translator and unable to speak it, read it, or write it without the heavy assistance of AI... For some quality control in mathematics we need at least one assessment to be “secured” in terms of an in-person invigilated examination. In addition, the prospect of such an examination should motivate the student to be less reliant on outside help.

In short, I think there is an acute need for in-person invigilated assessments. This method has proved its worth for centuries in mathematics.

Submission Six

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the discussion paper *“Ensuring the validity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI.”*

I would like to express my support for the direction proposed and offer the following comments:

Secured Assessments and Qualification Integrity

- Every course should include at least one in-person assessment, preferably a final exam. This provides a consistent and verifiable measure that the enrolled student has achieved the learning outcomes. Without secure verification, the integrity of both course and qualification is diminished.
- Secured assessments are essential to maintaining credibility. Trust in Massey’s qualifications depends on our ability to confidently confirm that learning has been completed by the enrolled student, especially in the era of generative AI and contract cheating.
- Assessment drives learning behaviour. The expectation of an in-person, closed-book assessment encourages sustained engagement, critical thinking, and independent study throughout the semester.

Practical and Resource Considerations

- Not all in-person assessments require computers. Handwritten exams, structured interviews, or oral presentations can be effective and more manageable in terms of resources and logistics.

- A manageable in-person model is feasible. Massey's existing campuses (Auckland, Manawatū, Wellington), complemented by selected regional centres and limited-use of OSE for offshore students, can provide sufficient coverage for the majority of distance learners.

I support Massey taking a strong and proactive stance on this issue. Ensuring every course has at least one in-person assessment is, in my view, the most direct and transparent way to uphold the integrity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI.

Submission Seven

Thank you for your clear and urgent proposal on ensuring the validity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI. I fully support the direction you've outlined in your document and appreciate your leadership in bringing this issue to the forefront.

My concern centres on the reputational risk we face if it becomes widely known that the integrity of our assessments has been seriously compromised. The widespread and undetectable use of GenAI by students means that we can no longer be confident that submitted work is the product of genuine individual effort. From my own experience, I know that cheating in my classes via GenAI is rampant, though I cannot provide hard evidence for this. This situation undermines the value of our qualifications as you have stated. On top of that, we are increasingly unable to link exam responses to the student who was meant to complete them, especially in these unsupervised settings. I believe we face a significant risk if the public, media, employers, or professional bodies become aware of the degree to which we have lost control of the security and integrity of our assessments. For now, I think what we are doing has gone under the radar, but once it becomes widely known, it will bring into question whether our degrees truly reflect students' own knowledge and skills, and the damage to our reputation could be long-lasting, if not permanent. I believe we are approaching a critical point, and once credibility is lost, we may not be able to win it back.

I'm also concerned about how this compares to the standards being maintained elsewhere in the sector. If other New Zealand universities continue to run invigilated assessments and we mostly do not, we risk falling out of step with sector norms and potentially attracting scrutiny over whether we should even retain the right to award qualifications at all.

For all these reasons, I strongly support the reintroduction of secured assessments across programmes, especially at key progression points. In-person invigilation, viva voce exams, or other robust forms of authentication, need to become a normal and expected part of our assessment strategy again.

I'd be happy to contribute in any way I can as this work progresses.

Submission Eight

I think this document outlines the most pressing issue we are facing at Massey. It is becoming incredibly difficult to verify if what students submit is in fact their own work. If we suspect it is not their work, then we have a duty to produce a lot of evidence to support this assertion – which is often not supported well by tools like Turnitin. We are already spending a lot of time on this exercise, but I am afraid that we are only able to identify and provide evidence for the tip of the iceberg. Providing a more solid mechanism for verifying students work is desperately needed.

The resources and systems may have been disassembled for running in person assessments, but if we are serious about our university's reputation we need to prioritise funding and work to reestablish these systems. Given the physical infrastructure limitations mentioned in this document I don't believe all supervised exams need to be digital - other universities in NZ have also returned to paper-based exams.

The only other options I see is oral examinations which can be run online, although this would also need to be resourced particularly for large courses. We need guidelines on how we should be running oral examinations as this is new to most academics.

I hope that our distance students would rather have a degree that is actually valued than rigidly stick to the expectation of 'any time, any place' delivery. Yes fixed place/time examinations come at a cost, but without these their degrees are becoming worthless. These changes could be phased in starting with new first year students and working our way up so that we are gradually shifting the expectations for students.

I support the proposal to reinstate secure assessments across the university. However I think one secure assessment is needed in all our courses, not just a select few courses or at certain points in the qualification. Each course is unique and requires its own verified assessment, otherwise we essentially devalue some of our courses. Also there are cases where students only take one or two courses and so we need this secure assessment across the board.

Submission Nine

Subject: Feedback on 'Ensuring the validity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI'

I am a [ANONIMISED] My research is also somewhat related to the fields of generative AI, so I am fortunate to have a reasonably up-to date understanding of the challenges and opportunities of generative AI.

In my experience, our courses have had few issues with generative AI, and we have seen a general increase in understanding and quality of assessments as a result of the new AI framework. In my opinion, this has improved student learning and outcomes. From this experience, I generally disagree with most points or suggestions raised in the document.

1. The perceived value of a university qualification

I believe a fundamental disagreement here is on the perceived value of a university qualification in the age of genAI and the intersection of value with trust.

A university qualification is suggested to be the "...measure of an individual's level of knowledge and skill". However, this is conflated in the memo with 'trust'. That is, "how can we trust that a student has a specific level of knowledge and skill without verifying that their work has not been

produced by AI?”. The answer to that question is always going to be removing technology in some format. However, in removing the ability to completely move online, this is removing student access to education, reducing student numbers, and ultimately the viability of Massey University as a favoured online provider.

The solutions proposed here consist of removing technology to ensure that the student, and not genAI, are addressing the assessments and demonstrating a level of knowledge and skill. However, there is a fundamental issue: *if the assessment/subject/degree can be completed satisfactorily (or better) by generative AI, there is no value to the assessment/subject/degree*. That is, the value of a degree that provides knowledge to the level (or less than) that a genAI can meet is extremely low,

The solution to the issues in the ‘age of genAI’ is not to provide more trust to low value knowledge, it is to extend knowledge and provide value above that which genAI can create. In my experience, our assessments that are research-led, problem-based, and/or locally specific are unable to be replicated satisfactorily by genAI. Some of my proposed reasons for that are:

- Research that feeds into research-led teaching is generally not in the corpus of knowledge used by genAI, by function of the recency of the research.
- Generative AI is a generalisation/statistical learning method. Local case studies, or specific tests are difficult for genAI to learn, as key elements may differ from global examples.
- Students are engaged by these examples, and utilise genAI as a support, but try to find solutions that are better than those proposed by genAI.

2. Haptics and ‘un-generatable knowledge’

Instead of trying to compete with genAI to write blocks of text (e.g. essays, short answer questions), the focus of knowledge and skills in the age of genAI should be on knowledge that cannot be generated by these tools. Specifically, the focus should be on haptics (i.e. touch and response to environment). These are an extraordinary weakness of generative AI. In field based environments where we teach, a student may be able to touch and feel the processes of the earth (e.g. by feeling grain size) at a fraction of the cost, speed and data requirements of an AI. Students should be learning to (e.g.) approach a stream and interpret processes, rather than rely on image representations that can mislead.

Furthermore, there is an emerging field of research highlighting that large language models (LLM’s – i.e. the foundation for these genAI tools) cannot provide true reasoning, rather they are pattern- matching. This highlights the need for universities to provide a source of reason, not revert to time-constrained in-person ‘secure assessments’, which emphasise rote learning rather than meaningful reasoning.

3. Concerns over policy shifts and CET engagement

I know of many cases where coordinators and teachers voiced their concerns on the limitations and inequities of OSEs, yet these were often dismissed, to detrimental effect in 2024. The current suggestion of a reversal, while perhaps well intentioned, needs to be implemented with adequate consultation and clarity as it significantly impacts staff workloads and student experience.

However, I am concerned of patterns where decisions are made without transparent rationale or engagement with teaching staff that raises questions on values of collaboration, innovation and equity. For example, our long-standing advocacy for integrating in-person taught field skills into curricula has been repeatedly sidelined, despite strong pedagogical justification and student needⁱⁱⁱ. The rationale provided – maintaining an ‘any time, any place’ delivery model – now appears inconsistent with the push for in-person assessment as a response to genAI, without acknowledgement of this shift in direction.

4. Recommendation

Rather than enforcing rote learning in person via secured assessment, the solution to the

challenges of AI is an emphasis on the quality of teaching and educators within the university, and alignment with Massey University strategy. Specifically,

- research-led teaching,
- teaching within our local environment, and
- addressing complex challenges that require reasoning, not rote learning

are in alignment with Pou Ako strategy, and simply need reinforcement and support from connected, engaged leadership. Assessments that strongly embed problem-based learning approaches seem likely to leverage genAI, while also utilising the specific, people-centred skills that we should be developing in students to thrive in the age of generative AI.

Submission 10

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the document “ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI” dated 11 April 2025. I would like to just reiterate some of the key points from [ANONIMISED] feedback that I fully support:

1. I strongly support the return of secure assessments. As the document notes, without secure assessments we cannot ensure the validity of our qualifications and the university would face an extreme reputational risk.
2. Every course should contain a securely assessed component. Otherwise, there is no way to know if the student has met the learning outcomes.
3. The resourcing requirements need not be as large as indicated in the document as many courses will not need a computer per student. Internal students can do in-person, hand-written tests or exams in many subjects. With campuses in Wellington, Manawatū and Auckland, a couple of other exam centres in the South Island would catch most distance students. Offshore students might need to use OSEs. In-person, closed-book assessments do reveal a student’s knowledge and understanding more than other forms of assessment.
4. Assessment drives learning. The knowledge that a secure, closed-book assessment is coming up is needed to keep students learning.

Submission 11

MASSEY BUSINESS SCHOOL

TO: Fiona Coote, OAQRA

FROM: Elizabeth Gray, Associate Dean Teaching and Learning, on behalf of MBS

DATE: 16 June 2025

SUBJECT: Feedback on AC25-05-139 proposal, Ensuring the Validity of our Qualifications in the Age of GenAI

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposal. The document was discussed at College of Business Board, by the MBS Teaching and Learning Committee, and additional feedback was also communicated to the ADTL outside of those two committees, from staff who are aware of the proposal and wished to voice their view. Our feedback is summarized below.

There was strong support expressed by members of the MBS Teaching and Learning Committee and College of Business Board for Massey returning to in-person verified assessments. The general position held by the College is that in-person verified assessments are essential for the security and reputation of our qualifications.

It was also articulated strongly that there is a pressing IMMEDIATE need for ONLINE secured assessments given our diverse student cohorts: the proportion of distance learners, more and more students with caregiving duties/employment, students with special needs etc. It is suggested this should be put in place while arrangements for in-person verified assessment are worked out, in anticipation that instituting in-person verification processes will take some considerable time.

The ADTL is keen to work with the CET to identify solutions for introducing in-person assessments if the university agrees to pursue this. As a College we will work with programme teams to identify the needed assessment points within our programmes.

It was also questioned whether the affordances of Cadmus could be explored further to determine if there are capabilities within this platform – already trialled in a number of Massey courses, with encouraging results – that would enable verification of assessments without an in-person element.

Specific feedback

It was acknowledged that there are costs and complexities associated with in-person verified assessments. However, we also know such complexities can be overcome, as this was the main way Massey verified and assured student learning up until 2020. We need to set these operating costs against the increasingly real reputational costs. This is not a cost problem, rather, an assurance problem. It is not scaremongering to say the risk of reputational damage is very real and would jeopardise our viability going forward.

If the media were to report that Massey has been delaying a response to the need for verified assessment – and particularly if that is reported as being primarily or solely a cost-saving measure – the impact to our reputation could be catastrophic. Our international partners, as well as academic and professional accreditation bodies may hold a very dim view of the strategy. Some, like our Chinese partners, may be forced to cancel, or in the very least, not renew our contracts.

There was discussion of the question of how many points within a qualification at which verified assessments would be needed

While it was acknowledged that such a number of verified assessment points would be largely contingent on the types of knowledge and skills being assessed within particular qualifications, a number of suggestions were made.

- Programmes should incorporate points where learning can be verified in each qualification year.
- The entry (core) courses that are critical to a degree must have verified assessment. This is particularly important for programmes that require a foundational level of knowledge to enable students to critically evaluate and apply this knowledge in higher level courses.
- If a course is a prerequisite for a higher-level course, there should be a verified assessment point within it. (It was also noted that more could be done in terms of retakes/remedies if students fail.)
- Not all higher-level courses would need to have such assessments. For example, in a major having a minimum of two degree major courses at the second and third year may be sufficient.
- The number would vary by qualification type and professional demands. For example, higher-stakes degrees (e.g., those in health, education, or those that lead to professional qualifications) may require additional checkpoints.
- Programmes that provide opportunities for practical or clinical demonstration of competency could get away with fewer additional in-person verified examinations. Minimum of one per semester would be reasonable.
- Any course with assessment linked to Assurance of Learning criteria would need at least one verified assessment.
- Courses where professional bodies require a student's achievement be verified should also have verified assessment built in.

It was suggested there may be particular 'gatepoints' eg courses or particularly significant assessments within qualifications that should function to allow students to progress only if they can verifiably prove that they have mastered the learning/content to that point.

Gatepoints function as quality assurance mechanisms, ensuring that students have genuinely achieved the learning outcomes required at each stage of their programme, thereby preserving the integrity of the qualification. It also allows these students to realistically engage with the higher-level learning outcomes expected of them throughout their programme.

Foundational courses (e.g. most of the BBus core courses), skills integration modules, and capstone type courses should have compulsory verified assessment where students must demonstrate authentic mastery before progressing further.

Such gatepoints should NOT be solely at the end point in a student's programme - where is the fairness if some teacher comes in at the last minute and says 'you should have learned this ages ago – you're not at the level you should be as a graduating student'?

There were a range of views of the usefulness of in-person oral assessments

It was supported that these should be one of the forms of in-person verified assessments that courses could include. It was noted that students benefit from diverse types of assessment.

- In-person oral assessments are reliable tools for authenticating student learning in an AI environment. They offer immediate interaction, reduce the risk of impersonation or contract cheating, and allow for probing of students' understanding and judgment.
- However, some view this type of assessment as only 'feasible' in final year undergraduate and postgraduate courses. From the student's perspective it may be an unfair, highly stressful assessment type in first year undergraduate courses. Students need to have a high level of confidence in a discipline's foundational knowledge to have confidence in answering questions like this.
- Clearly, there are some students who are terrified of speaking front of other people but who really do know their stuff. Using oral and a mix of other types of tools spreads the risk/drama out for the student.
- Interestingly, one student representative spoke of strongly preferring to be assessed orally than assessed in writing. He advocated for students being able to choose between oral or written formats.
- There are a number of benefits of in-person oral assessments: 1) they add variety to the course while meeting the course objective, someone may be good at presenting but not written; 2) they are secure; 3) they develop students' communication skills useful for future employment. They may be most suitable for smaller classes such as third year papers and when students accumulate more experience with public speaking and the like.
- We are aware of other Australasian universities (incl Otago) successfully using oral assessments with large classes and while the time set aside for the exercise is significant, the marking time is enormously reduced – casual markers are used on the panel of orals.
- It was noted that Māori or Pacific students may wish to present in their own language and/or with family present for support.

There was discussion of the disadvantages of moving away from ONLINE (ie not-fixed-place, 24-hour sitting window) secured assessments, given the benefits they offer to students particularly those studying at a distance and those with family or work commitments

Some staff and students spoke highly of the affordances of online secured assessments, particularly for the advantages they offer to students studying at a distance.

The disadvantages of in-person assessments must be weighed against the advantage of ensuring we can validate our qualifications. Further, Massey's and our students' expectations five years ago was in-person assessments. The inability to assure our students' learning is simply another long-term carry-over of COVID, because without COVID we wouldn't be having this conversation—even in the face of AI.

It was suggested that the costs of administering in-person verified assessments in certain courses could be passed on to students via a course component fee or similar.

Despite the benefits of online assessments, the majority of the College believes the ability to verify student identity and performance outweighs the risks of returning to in-person formats *for certain (not all) assessments*. It was strongly felt that the credibility of Massey's qualifications and their acceptance by employers, accreditors, and our international partners etc., depends on the university's ability to provide secure, supervised assessments.

We also solicited student views about the impacts on students and likely reactions to the reintroduction of in-person verified assessments:

- It was felt reintroducing in-person verified assessments will generate mixed reactions. Many students will appreciate the increased rigour and credibility, others such as those studying remotely or with competing commitments may experience frustration or hardship.
- There may be more stress, anxiety, cost and less flexibility for our students (one of the reasons why some students choose Massey in the first instance).
- At the moment, many students are reporting to staff that they feel that the education they are getting is not as good/rigorous as in the past (because of no hard-core verified assessments). By reintroducing verified assessments there is likely to be some gains – re-establishing and settling learning habits/expectations of minimum standards.
- Some staff report that even Distance students are less engaged since the stakes don't seem so high with the types of assessment we have nowadays. They feel that having a verified assessment would incentivise learning a bit more.
- The particular needs of Distance, Māori and Pacific students were invoked. Most of our students study part time and distance; many have family commitments; hence they will require flexibility.
- It was felt full information should be provided to students before enrolment – eg clear requirement to attend a contact course or exam location where a certain assessment will be held.
- There was considerable disquiet voiced that a solution would be put in place without proper planning and safeguards, with the disruptions experienced in the S1 2024 exam round invoked. This proved stressful and alarming to many students and affected trust in the University. It was felt that there must be thorough research on how to implement the proposed in-person verified assessments and staff and students must be given the resources they need.

In concluding, while the principle of (re)introducing in-person verified assessments was generally strongly supported, it's clear it will be essential to plan their institution and delivery carefully, and to communicate clearly with students. Careful implementation, clear communication, and student support measures (such as regional test centres) will be crucial.

Submission 12

Please can you pass on my feedback on the discussion document ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI.

I welcome Massey considering using conventional examinations to ensure the validity of our qualifications. I think that conventional examinations will be the cheapest and most effective way to achieve this. Writing on paper, examinees do not require a computer laboratory or the internet, they just need a room and a desk.

It is desirable to resume using some conventional in-person closed-book examinations in mathematical science not only to ensure validity but also to enable better learning. Cognitive science indicates that closed-book mathematics examinations can be more effective than open-book ones for a number of reasons. For example, in order to perform advanced mathematical reasoning knowledge should be lodged in long term memory to leave space in working memory for performing higher level analysis. We can provide crucial formulae on examination papers but the closed-book approach encourages students to prepare by learning how to use those formulae. I think that that some closed-book assessments will be beneficial at all stages in a programme of study.

Submission 13

My main comment is that in regards to science courses, and particularly mathematics courses, I think it is essential that some of the assessments are invigilated.

- From talking with students over the past few years, I have found that the vast majority of students strongly desire a return to invigilated exams, basically because they want authenticity in their hard-earned degree.
- I believe in-person exams are far more preferable than online exams invigilated with software, and again I believe students feel the same way. Obviously this needs to be done in a way that accommodates distance students. This can be done by simply requiring students to come on campus once a semester to sit their exams. That is, they come to Auckland, Palmerston North, or possibly Wellington. We would also have a site say in Christchurch to accommodate students based in the South Island. Surely our colleagues at the University of Canterbury could help with this (for a reasonable fee). For students based outside NZ we would make special arrangements, e.g. online invigilation.
- If not all students are sitting their exams for a course on the same day, we may wish to explore creating different versions of exams for different days.
- When sitting in-person exams, computers will be not needed. The students will be hand-writing their answers. This ought to be possible at least within the College of Sciences, for example exams for computer science are often best executed with pen and paper.
- Assuming the exam is the only invigilated assessment, it should be weighted as highly as possible, at least 50%. This is very reasonable for a 3 hour mathematics exam. Indeed about ten years ago some of our mathematics exams had a 80% weighting, and this worked well.

Submission 14

1. Yes, we absolutely must go back to in-person examinations, especially in science. We can train students to use AI in useful ways, but the temptations are too great for using it for tests/exams when they are not invigilated. This situation with TCAs and allowing AI use has rendered these assessments essentially useless for assessing their understanding of the course material we are teaching.
2. Capstone projects would be wonderful if we had three times the academic/teaching staff to do so. We don't, so that's really unrealistic. We also need regular assessment to track their learning along the way.
3. This semester, we have used zoom invigilation for 162101 Cell Biology distance students and those who have permission to use a computer as approved alternative exam arrangements. We accommodated ~50 students doing small sessions with ~10 students in each and an academic supervisor running each session. I've attached the instructions that I wrote up for us – they should be updated but I don't have a lot of time at the moment. We had in-person, paper invigilated tests/exams for the internal students (~360). Our school (SFTNS) supported us with casual support (postgrads) to help with marking – the online tests were auto-marked. It was a lot of logistics (=time) for me to sort out scheduling, but we're doing it and it is possible.
4. The University should be supporting academics to have invigilated exams and there are lots of ways to do this – some of which are in the document. Having fleets of laptops that can be deployed and scheduling assistance would be welcomed.

Submission 15

I agree with the concerns raised in this discussion document about the risk to the reputation and validity of our qualifications if we continue down the pathway that we have been treading in the last few years. It has been worrying that these concerns, until now, appeared to have fallen upon deaf ears; it was a relief to read this document.

As an academic in the mathematical sciences, I am very familiar with how competent tools like ChatGPT are now, and I can now have almost no confidence that any given piece of written work produced unsupervised from a student was not at least partly AI generated. Sadly, the higher quality the work, the more likely that it is AI-generated, which creates a terrible bias against good students.

This semester, I upended the course that I am coordinating — 124.103, the maths/physics pre-vet course — to create more suitable AI-proof assessment. The course has a distance offering and so an invigilated examination and test was not an option. My solution was that all students wanting a grade of B or higher needed to have an interactive oral interview with one of the course staff at the end of the course where they had to be able to explain and answer questions on a piece of their work from the course. My experience has convinced me that alternative approaches like this are necessary, and a good way forward. My experience has in fact been so good that I don't wish to return to our previous course structure, even if the invigilation problem was solved.

All courses should have measures embedded, be it an invigilated assessment or interview or similar. Results from any course that doesn't are at best meaningless, but at worst such courses:

- discriminate against students who don't use AI tools,
- encourage academic dishonesty (as the only means to compete),
- will orient students away from genuine learning

These factors will, over time, do significant damage to Massey's reputation.

Having only one or two authenticated touch-points or a capstone assessment puts a huge amount of weight on a student's performance in a small number of pressurised moments. We should instead be trying to embed authentic assessments as often as resources permit as part of standard course design, and focus our efforts on learning to live with AI, and teaching students how to use it responsibly. Otherwise we risk looking irrelevant and being left behind as other universities include AI more naturally. It is possible to come up with solutions that don't involve disproportionate amounts of staff time.

Thanks providing the opportunity for me to share my thoughts.

Submission 16

My name is [ANONIMISED] , I have recently joined Massey as teaching staff. Semester 1, 2025 was my first semester.

I have read the document "ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI" and found it very interesting.

As a new member I can only think forward about the matter. But hopefully my feedback will be of help.

I agree that a balance between OSEs and in-person evaluation should be found. I think that a key question to find that balance is: how the workforce of the future would be? If it includes AI, then we can embrace its use by including the teaching of how to critically use it. Therefore, the AI Use Framework still stands, specially for collaboration and exploration.

I think that prioritize interviews to evaluate the knowledge of the students in person is the best way to go. In some cases, it would be unavoidable to use virtual interviews. A temporary solution could be allow them only in very well justified situations or to included always an impartial invigilator, but that is an extra cost to consider.

A very general plan could be set an evaluation week/period and allocate in advance 15-20' slots for every assessment in advance. It does not have to be individual, in some cases could be small groups defending a final project for example. It will be very demanding on that week/period but the brightside is that by the end all marking would be done.

for post graduate studies supervise internship or placement could be a good option as well.

Submission 17

I am [ANONIMISED] and would like to provide my feedback on the aforementioned document shared with us by our HoS.

I am not familiar with other disciplines, but in Computer Science and IT fields, AI tools have become indispensable. Major companies such as Meta are working on building AI systems that can replace junior level software engineers. This means that the traditional job roles will be significantly impacted in these industries - people are no longer expected to do things from scratch but rather are expected to collaboratively work with AI systems to get the best out of both. This means, in our

courses, we must incorporate AI tools, and get the students to practice working with these tools. However, this should not mean that we should allow students to blindly use AI tools, as AI tools may not be 100% accurate. This means, the students should learn the fundamentals so that they can identify when AI tools are wrong and help them improve. I believe that our assessments should be facilitating both these aspects. In my course this semester (158244) I tried to achieve this. I got them to use GenAI tools, but asked to find their weaknesses, or to compare the outputs of different GenAI tools. For the final exam, the questions comprised of instances where genAI tools went wrong. However, we must keep in mind that these GenAI tools keep on getting better and there would be a day where we cannot find a question where the GenAI cannot properly answer. I think using Turnitin kind of systems would be meaningless because one can deploy their own GenAI tools in a matter of hours. Therefore, my suggestion is to think of innovative ways to incorporate GenAI tools in the formative assessment, but make the end exam in-person and invigilated. That way, the students would get the essential knowledge in using GenAI tools but would make sure they learn the basics so that they can pass the final exam.

And I think you should really encourage the course coordinators to try their exam questions in tools like GenAI. I tired mine and ChatGPT could answer almost all MCQ questions of my 2024 paper, prompting me to go only for essay-type questions this semester.

Submission 18

Thank you for inviting feedback on Jean Jacoby's discussion paper. The conversation around how we ensure the credibility of our assessments in the age of generative AI is one we urgently need to have. As someone teaching in a discipline where both precision and interpretation matter, I've been thinking carefully about how we move forward without retreating to blunt tools that fail to reflect the way people learn and demonstrate knowledge today.

This semester I've been trialing a five-minute recorded presentation in a large post-graduate statistics course (161.762). Students are asked to explain an analysis they've conducted, using a dataset unique to them. The goal isn't to test recall, but to give each student a chance to articulate their reasoning, communicate statistical concepts, and reflect on their decisions. It's not only helped surface genuine understanding, it's also reminded me how powerful it is to hear students speak in their own voice.

As the discussion paper rightly points out, we can no longer assume that a well-written report or polished assignment reflects a student's own thinking. But nor do I believe that reverting to high-stakes in-person exams is the only answer. The real task is to design assessments that are harder to fake because they ask students to engage more deeply. Whether that's through short oral recordings, problem-based tasks, or opportunities to apply knowledge in new contexts, we have to shift the burden away from formats that reward formulaic responses.

I agree with the proposal that qualifications need secured assessment points, i.e. moments of structured verification that students are genuinely acquiring and applying the knowledge we expect. These don't need to appear in every course, but they should be thoughtfully distributed and designed to reflect the skills that matter most in a program. In statistics, that might mean interpreting models, critiquing assumptions, or explaining the impact of uncertainty in decision-making. Much of that can be demonstrated through conversation or applied project work, rather than time-limited exams.

We also need to think carefully about distance students, many of whom balance complex lives and can't easily attend a test centre. I'd encourage the university to continue exploring hybrid verification models: brief video recordings, occasional remote viva-style interactions, or scheduled synchronous assessments with identity checks. These formats are more flexible while still offering a clear line of sight into student capability.

That said, these changes can't fall on individual lecturers to manage alone. If we want to build a sustainable model for secured assessment that works across our programmes and campuses, there are a few things we'll need.

What we'll need to succeed:

- Systems that allow staff to manage, collect, and evaluate video-based assessments easily and securely
- Timetabling software that can support the scheduling of short oral assessments across large cohorts
- Clear, student-facing rubrics that outline what is being assessed in oral or practical formats
- Time allowances for academic staff to conduct or moderate oral assessments equitably
- Professional development for colleagues on designing and delivering interactive or AI-aware assessments
- Support for students on how to prepare for these newer assessment types, especially where oral communication is involved
- Transparent communication with students about why these changes are being introduced and how their learning will benefit

At the heart of this shift is a simple but important idea: our assessments should reflect the knowledge, judgement, and adaptability we want our graduates to take into the world. That's harder to capture now than it once was, but not impossible. If we're willing to invest in assessments that feel more human, we'll end up with qualifications that are stronger, more credible, and ultimately more valuable to the students who earn them.

Submission 19

Thanks for this discussion document, I have had a read through and fully agree that no online tool is now capable of distinguishing AI generated content from a student's own work. That is the point of generative AI, to replace many human roles.

If Massey persists with its "Digital First" approach then the quality of our qualifications and reputation will inevitably be affected.

I fully support a return to at least partial in-person assessments.

For the postgraduate diploma courses in medical laboratory sciences, apart from COVID, we haven't deviated from in-person, handwritten final exams to this day. This qualification had accreditation from the Medical Sciences Council and as the graduates are health practitioners it was considered too risky to devolve to online assessments only.

And yes, that saw me stuck in a room handwriting addresses on courier envelopes and printing out exams and coordinating all the return postage myself, as course coordinator, because we don't have the systems nor even the admin staff available to support that work.

Submission 20

College of Humanities and Social Sciences College Board

- An extension to the feedback deadline for this document was requested by several members. This is a very complex and rapidly evolving subject and time is needed for consultation in the Units.
- Colleges are being encouraged to implement secure, in-person assessments at key points in their qualifications. But there are serious financial and logistical implications, especially with distance courses.
- Using the BA core courses as the key learning points for secure assessment would only measure the students' learning in those courses, not the subject areas the students are studying.
- It would be very difficult and costly to implement secure, in-person assessments for courses which have hundreds of students, especially if most of those students are spread around the country.
- The document does not take account of the situation properly and is overly reliant on one set of information from the same commercial source.
- A line in the discussion document which says that it is clear that human judgement is an extremely poor means of detecting GenAI use was disputed as not based on the surrounding conversation.
- Most internal assessments are submitted online, using the same methods used by distance students, and do not rely on in-person contact with students.
- There are enormous decisions and design features to consider when creating and implementing these secure assessments. For instance, they have to align with learning outcomes, students must see them as fair, and there are implications for the curriculum management system.
- A small oral examination-based assessment was tried in a 300-level course a few years ago. It was much more hard work than anticipated. It was just about doable with internal students, but almost impossible with distance students. There was no pre-existing personal relationship with the distance students so it was extremely difficult to judge from the conversation whether or not those students had a grasp of the material.
- Some people cannot cope with oral presentations/assessments. It would be incredibly unfair if every student's success depended on a particular set of skills and competencies which not all people possess to the same level.
- Student feedback on this document is essential, as is feedback from people who have worked in the assessment and AI area.
- DASH had a session on AI and assessment which was recorded. The link can be included in the feedback: <https://dash.edu.au/event/essential-insights-assessment-integrity-in-the-age-of-a>
- It feels like the panic button has been pushed very quickly, because of concerns about accreditation, rather than considering, for instance, a three-year strategy for addressing this.
- Another approach would be to be open and honest about whether the student has used these tools, and has any skill with them. AI tools can be treated like a computer or a spelling checker. At the end of the day students who cheat are failing themselves.
- Relevant links shared in the chat are:
<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2025/jun/09/apple-artificial-intelligence-ai-study-collapse> and <https://machinelearning.apple.com/research/illusion-of-thinking>.

- The panic button has been pushed too soon. This College went away from examinations before the advent of AI because of logistic issues and their tendency to be more about regurgitation of information than the application of learning.
- Potentially students have been able to cheat through all courses, using different methods, because assessments are submitted electronically. This is a high trust model and there needs to be caution about suddenly going away from it to a large extent.
- This document appears to be pushing the panic button and is in conflict with the AI-use Framework, which looks to be moving towards the encouragement of increasing levels of AI integration in assessments.
- A more formative approach is suggested. It is now about training in how to use this technology and providing support for its use, rather than suddenly condemning AI tools as a very bad thing and an indication that learning has not been valued or demonstrated. This document seems to be addressing the wrong problem.
- Given the significance of what is being proposed a great deal more time is needed for discussion.
- From a process point of view, if these assessments were to be put into the core courses, the proposals would need to go to October Academic Programmes Committee, for November College Board, for December Academic Committee, for implementation in 2026.
- If a student fails one of the core courses which is being used for the secure assessments, then University regulations say they are entitled to sit the course again. If they learn that course and pass it, they will pass through the degree even if they have used AI in all their other courses. A smart student will work out how to get around the system.
- If Massey adopts this system now, and other NZ universities are not doing something similar, Massey could see an exodus of students, especially those who wish to study by distance and do not live near a campus.
- This document can be shared judiciously within the University community, to people relevant to the topic.

Submission 21

I support the reintroduction of centralised secure verifiable assessments as discussed in this document. This is important for several reasons including the perceived value of Massey University qualifications (as discussed in the document). The value of online degrees has already been called in to question prior to the 2025 article cited. E.g. China has not recognised online/distance degrees from international universities since the start of 2023

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20230131132149728>

I agree with the statement that it is important that SLT consider the additional administration and operational burdens on staff for managing the impacts of genAI in teaching. There has been additional workload and stress on staff over recent years regarding assessment and qualification integrity with the transition to open book TCA assessments during CoVID and immediately after, then the transition to OSEs and its associated system failures. It is important that Massey University invests in software/hardware solutions for automated marking of hand-written in-person exam multichoice questions (i.e. a modern Scantron card equivalent) to manage workload with the return to verifiable in-person assessments. An alternative (or additional capability) is a secure computer lab, with closed network access, for verified computer-based assessments. The requirement of additional resourcing noted in the document is inevitable for the authenticated assessment of learning outcomes.

I agree that not every assessment is required to be secure or verifiable and this is obviously not a realistic outcome anyway.

The AI Use Framework is useful for outlining teaching staff's expectations to students regarding the use of AI but it provides little assurance of the integrity of assessments submitted under the framework.

The assessment types in Appendix 1 look comprehensive and reasonable.

Submission 22

I have taught into and been the course coordinator of entry level maths courses (which are predominantly skills based), for many years. I am currently the course coordinator of 160104 and 160105.

With the removal of supervised examinations and the introduction of AI, I am now at the stage that I cannot truthfully tell if *any* of the work that a student has submitted throughout the semester is their own.

This is a major problem for a number of reasons:

- At least one supervised assessment is required to ensure the validity of our courses and qualifications. Not having secure assessments puts the university at reputational risk.
- Without any supervised assessments we have no idea whether students have met the learning outcomes or not.
- Assessment drives learning. The knowledge that a secure, closed-book assessment is coming up is needed to keep students learning.

I propose that Massey University returns to having supervised end of semester examinations where students write their examinations in something similar to the old blue booklets, with exam centres scattered around NZ and a few overseas, as we were able to do prior to Covid.

Submission 23

The strategic change in the University/Digital plus strategy and the growth in distance/online delivery, movement away from face-to-face exams and increase in genAI usage has led to a very difficult environment for an academic to work in. Our programmes are distance delivery, prescribed courses in the programme have over 100 students and we have overseas students so face-to-face/ in person assessments can not be done. So secure online exam processes are very important. Oral exams could be done over zoom but there needs to be secure systems in place to ensure the student taking the exam is the actual student enrolled etc etc,

There are things we can do at College level and programme level but the university also needs to front up and provide resources to support staff in providing secure examination spaces/processes.

There are excellent points made in the document but I would like to say we have not seen what the University /SLT has done to address the concerns being raised as a lot of the problems we are having is because of the push for change in delivery of our courses and programmes to online.

So I have a question: What has Massey done in regard to examining other secure online exam systems? We do need these along with other types of assessments to ensure our reputation of our programmes is not lost under the genAI era!!

Submission 24

CoCA Feedback

The College of Creative Arts (CoCA) thanks the Education Futures team for their rigorous and timely work on this paper. Its release aligns well with ongoing discussions around AI within the college and has provided a valuable opportunity for reflection. We have discussed the paper at both our Ako CoCA learning and teaching team, and college board members have also had the opportunity to feedback on the paper.

CoCA Context

Responses to AI across CoCA vary - from enthusiastic adoption in creative practice to critical resistance in teaching and learning, and professional and industrial contexts. Our priority is to ensure students are equipped to critically engage with the ethical implications of AI, understand its applications, and develop the skills necessary to thrive in AI-influenced industries.

AI Use Framework

The AI Use Framework has been a helpful starting point for clarifying potential uses of AI in individual courses. However, both staff and students are seeking more consistent guidance. There is a clear and ongoing need to support staff in confidently initiating classroom discussions about AI, while also establishing clearer principles and directions for its use.

Assessment

Although CoCA currently does not offer online or distance assessments, we recognise the importance of maintaining the integrity and perceived value of our programmes within the context of AI. This involves more than monitoring AI use, it requires ensuring students can use AI ethically, critically, and creatively within their disciplines. And, understand the value of their qualifications within AI influenced industries. As we expand into distance offerings, we will need to further consider the implications of AI particularly in regard to assessment design.

Secure assessment

Our assessment practices at CoCA range from portfolios to written assignments, They are typically embedded within project-based learning and include ongoing formative feedback. The close engagement with students that this affords has helped minimise academic integrity issues related to AI. However, we support the paper's call for a holistic, programme-level approach to assessment mapping and see our practices reflected in the proposed 'secure assessment' categories.

We agree that further exploration is needed in regard to what 'secure assessment' means in the context of creative practice, particularly when engaging with AI in ethical, critical, and innovative ways. In principle, we support the need to interrogate and align assessment practices accordingly.

College of Creative Arts

Submission 25

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this important document. I apologise for the lateness as our meeting was scheduled for yesterday afternoon.

Feedback on “ENSURING THE VALIDITY OF OUR QUALIFICATIONS IN THE AGE OF GENERATIVE AI” document.

This document was discussed in the School of Health Sciences staff meeting Wednesday 25 June 2025. Below are comments that arose.

It is apparent that many staff in the school share the same concerns regarding the validity of the existing assessments, particularly non-invigilated types of tests/exams. Moreover, general concern was expressed regarding the actual knowledge of students in the age of generative AI, as the current means of detecting and limiting/controlling AI use in many of the adopted assessment types is not practically possible. This concern is corroborated by the general grade drift (increasing) in many courses since the adoption of online delivery.

The primary concern noted pertains to resourcing of the secured assessments – how would in-person or secured OSE assessments be resourced? The School of Health Science has a diverse, primarily distance, cohort which would make in-person invigilated assessments difficult. Moreover, many students are overseas and enrolled in the undergraduate BHLthSc programme. One alternative would be the provision of a suitable online proctoring system that would enable effective remote invigilation of OSEs. How would this be resourced? Similarly, if oral exams were adopted, this would be a hugely time-consuming exercise for large courses (over 100 students) that would require additional personnel. Key majoring courses with less students could be chosen for oral exams or other face-to-face assessments. However, again we have students overseas, and located around the country.

The current tools for detecting AI use are insufficient. How would these be overcome to ensure/improve validity of non-time constrained assessments throughout a course or between the points of invigilated assessments? The timing of the secured assessments is critical to elucidate any undetected AI/breaches of academic integrity. What would a failure of said secured assessment mean for the progression of a student? Would these be complete early (100-level in semester 1) to set a precedent?

There would also be a workload consideration for this process as the position/timing of the secured assessments could differ between majors in the Bachelor of Health Science, which may subsequently induce changes in mapping of the programme, and sequencing and delivery of courses within a major. Many students in the BHLthSc are also part-time. Furthermore, some programmes are accredited, and how these secured assessments align with these standards need to be considered. In brief – flexibility is required.

College of Health Teaching and learning Committee

Submission 26

- Will the “online secure exams” be reinstated in any form? The paper implies that this will be managed at the college level, but what is the university doing to enable us to think about how to do this and with what resources? Lots of people would want to use this but it can be overwhelming; authentication and changing rules around progression. Things would need to be addressed to make it work. What is the university’s plan for resources and training?
- The majority of our programmes and courses are distance and we have students based overseas - how are we going to implement this? Would be nice to see what the university is going to put in place for a secure proctor system for exams and tests. Think about academic integrity process. Course coordinators are picking up students who are using AI but we are not looking at students across all courses within their programme, so we are often not seeing the student’s pattern of doing this in all courses. Do students realise that they are being looked at in standalone courses and not across the programme for use of genAI?
- This highlights challenges for staff, structurally across the programme and how secure are our assessments. There will be challenges faced when we are in transition phase with the academic governance going to sit within programme committees. How do we look at security of assessments, programme lifecycle, and validity of assessments? We rely on triangulation or observation. Resource intensive, so where is the resource coming from?
- Massey previously had exam centres nationally and internationally.
- We currently have a small scale set of supervised exam hubs around the country, so rather than asking students to come onto campus, for example professional sports athletes who are travelling are allowed exceptions to take exams this way.
- Equivalency has been put on hold indefinitely. Quandary how do we manage assessments physically.
- GenAI is here and it is part of how we teach, how students learn, and the tools that they use. Philosophically, what is it we are going to ask them and how we assess them if we pull out those tools.
- We need an academic integrity forensic team or a process that can assist course coordinators, so it is not just the coordinator going through all the students.
- Academic integrity policy needs to be looked at again to include changes in how we deal with students using genAI (when it should not be used) and examining what they are doing across courses.
- There is an aspect of applied learning in courses, students can use the tools to do assessments, but when they are out on placement they need to have a level of knowledge when the tools aren’t there.
- AI has got to the point that it is smarter, you can’t forensically look at that.
- Currently we don’t have to disclose the use of assistive AI.
- Article shared in the chat that may be of interest: Corbin, T., Dawson, P., & Liu, D. (2025). Talk is cheap: why structural assessment changes are needed for a time of GenAI. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2025.2503964>

Submission 26

Massey University College

A small suggestion below:

Adding in Assessment Title of 'Workshop' as an option within 'In-person - observed/secured', Appendix 1.

Submission 27

Feedback is collated from discussions with staff in the School of Food Technology and Natural Sciences.

We are very much in favour of having options for secured assessment. Appendix 1 Secured assessment Types and Titles seem appropriate.

Many of the courses in our school are fully internal or have a high proportion of internal students and therefore in-person secured assessments are broadly achievable, and have been successfully undertaken by some courses this semester. A smaller number of invigilated zoom-based assessments were also successfully undertaken with distance cohorts.

We note however the extra workload this has transferred to teaching staff so long-term this would need to be supported. At the same time, staff would prefer to spend the time on suitable secured assessments rather than spending twice as much time trying to work out if students really did use AI to the level they declared they did or not in unsecured assessment. A desire to spend time teaching rather than policing students.

We are already seeing the cost of unsecured assessments and student reliance on AI to 'do the work for them' over the last few years leading to students who are less prepared for 200 and 300 level courses this year.

Staff are also worried about students using AI to bypass learning rather than to enhance it in courses that do not have some secured assessment.



Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

Introduction

Feedback on the Academic Committee discussion document on ensuring the validity of our qualifications received strong support from many parts of the university, with staff arguing in favour of various models, ranging from a return to traditional pen-and-paper (PP) examinations and in-person digital exams to the reintroduction of Online Supervised Examinations (OSEs). Several respondents also noted that 'securing' assessment did not have to mean examinations – in-person and studio teaching, contact workshops, field trips and placements all provide mechanisms for lecturers to ascertain that the work their students produce is authentically their own.

Although universities generally are grappling with the disruption of established teaching and assessment practices by the advent of multi-modal Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI), Massey faces additional challenges:

1. Defining what secure assessment means for our distance delivery. This includes balancing costs and logistics against current student expectations of distance study.
2. Maintaining the perceived/actual value of a Massey distance degree in a context where online delivery may not be perceived as sufficiently secure.
3. Procurement of an online assessment platform to support modern online assessment practices.
4. Re-establishing large-scale in-person secured assessment infrastructure and processes after more than 5 years in abeyance.

These are not issues that can be resolved quickly or without engagement with staff and students. Although there was a clear sense of urgency for a solution evident in a number of the feedback responses to the discussion document, several respondents also cautioned against acting in haste. Our currently limited resourcing and general change fatigue are key considerations, as is the fact that some staff and students do not perceive a need for secured assessment at all.

Successfully reintroducing an acceptable level of secured assessment in all our qualifications will require a culture and capability shift as well as updates to our technical systems, policies, and business processes. Decisions need to be made about the number of secured assessments required to effectively validate the qualifications we award, and what constitutes 'secured'. This discussion paper outlines a proposed approach to the reintroduction of secured assessments in all qualifications in 2027.

A proposed plan¹

A phased transition plan is proposed, based on three assumptions:

¹ What is proposed here is a 'minimum viable product' approach. Consideration could be given to a larger 'assessment reform' project to improve the quality, consistency, fairness and future-focus/resilience of assessment and feedback practices across the institution, aligned with the implementation of the Assessment Policy.



1. 'Digital' underpins any modern assessment infrastructure - including all the operational workflows, quality assurance and student support.
2. We are reinstating in-person, on-campus (or exam centre) invigilated assessments. There will be demand for pen and paper for some disciplines, such as maths, chemistry, and construction, and for digital for many others. This will require establishing systems and processes for management of the exam setup (paper management, quality assurance, etc.) and delivery process, room management and well the reinstatement of invigilation teams. Because of the significant changes across the university since the last time we ran a full exam schedule (2019). Introducing a comprehensive secured assessment system is, in essence, establishing a new university process, which is a significant undertaking and cannot be done as BAU.
3. Recognition of resourcing limitations and the risk of over assessment.

Phase 1 – Planning: October – March 2026

1. Establish an assessment working group comprised assessment experts from each college, representative(s) of the Office of the DVC Māori, the Office of Academic Quality, Reporting and Assurance, the Curriculum Transformation Unit, and student representatives, to determine the following:
 - Types of activity that will constitute 'secured' assessment
 - The number of assessments required to validate a qualification. (This may be a recommended number, or a set of principles by which a number can be determined.)
 - Policies and other official documentation that will require updating.
2. The Centre for Education Transformation
 - Begins procurement process for a digital assessment platform.
 - Initiates work to re-establish systems and processes for secured assessment management.

Phase 2 – Mapping and assessment (re)design: April – November 2026

3. Colleges apply decisions made in step 1, above, to qualifications, producing a clear map of each qualification to demonstrate where student work is 'authenticated' and ensuring that there is no pathway through a programme without some form of authentication at key stages. As part of the mapping process, attention is paid to assessment design, with consideration of scaffolding of skills, alternative arrangements, etc. Important: Mapping stage must be completed by end of August to ensure that assessment information published on the web from 1 October is accurate.
4. Where requested, assessment redesign is supported by the CET.
5. Colleges identify limited number of courses for pilot of in-person examinations in Semester 1 2027.
6. CET and ITS oversee implementation of new digital assessment platform.
7. CET oversees building of systems and processes for secured assessment management

Phase 3 – Pilot: February – June 2027

8. Colleges continue assessment mapping and redesign work, supported by CET where requested.



9. Courses in pilot follow proposed processes for secured assessment, including a limited offering of secured examinations at the end of Semester 1.

Phase 4 – Evaluation and second pilot – June – November 2027

10. Evaluation of Semester 1 pilot and adjustment of processes as required.
11. Limited offering of secured examinations at the end of Semester 2.
12. Evaluation of second pilot, and adjustment of processes as required.

Phase 5: Rollout and transition to BAU: Feb – June 2028

13. Full rollout of secured assessments including secured examinations.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Academic Committee:

- Consider the plan proposed in this document
- Advise on the recommended approach. Particular consideration of the following questions would be welcomed:
 - o What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?
 - o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?
 - o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?
 - o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?
 - o Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?
 - o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?
 - o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?
 - o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?
 - o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?
- Endorse the wider dissemination of this document to colleges, students and service units for feedback

Memo

To: Academic Committee

From: Jean Jacoby, Director, Education futures

Date: 7 October 2025

Subject: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment

Introduction

A draft plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments was approved for consultation at the August meeting of Academic Committee. Substantial feedback (see summary in Appendix 1 and raw feedback in Appendix 2) was received from a wide range of academic staff, as well as school groups, and college committees. While there is unanimous and emphatic support for the *principle* of reintroducing secured assessment, the feedback reveals equally strong opposition to the proposed implementation plan, particularly its extended timeline. The overwhelming sentiment, especially from the College of Sciences which provided most responses, is that the current approach is unacceptably slow and fails to address the threat to the University's reputation and the credibility of its qualifications by the unchecked use of Generative AI.

A significant number of submissions demand an accelerated programme, with comprehensive return to secured, primarily in-person assessment by the start of the 2026 academic year at the latest. Respondents note that many staff are already implementing unsustainable "ad hoc" solutions, potentially resulting in premature and poorly considered technical and operational investments elsewhere in the University.

Apart from disagreement with the proposed timeline, there were also differences of opinion regarding the methods of implementation, and the degree of standardisation across the university.

Note: This discussion excludes Time Constrained Assessments (TCAs) which will continue to run as currently.

Returning to secured assessment

Successfully reintroducing an acceptable level of secured assessment in all our qualifications will require a significant culture shift, updates to our technical systems, policies, and business processes, and additional resourcing. These factors limit what we will be able to achieve quickly.

Although several respondents have noted that examinations are only one means of securing assessments, it is clear from the feedback that this is the preferred solution for many. In addition, it is clear from the feedback that a reintroduction of pen-and-paper (PP) assessment is seen as the most pragmatic short-term solution by several respondents.

As signalled above, resourcing and capacity issues necessitate a phased approach to the reintroduction of secured assessment. The feedback received from the most recent round of discussions suggests the re-introduction of PP examinations (delivered as they were in 2019 – i.e., paper question script and answer booklets, and on-paper marking) in 2026, expanding to the delivery of broader forms of secured assessment such as digital in-person and OSEs from 2027 may

be the preferred approach; however, most of this feedback has come from one college and may not reflect the views of the wider university.

We urgently need to make a decision on a preferred approach if we are to have anything in place for 2026. The university does not have the capacity to *simultaneously* reintroduce PP examinations and a digital solution for OSEs. Consequently, the Centre for Education Transformation is seeking the advice of this committee.

Current risks and limitations

The following risks and limitations should be considered in determining a preferred approach, noting these are context-setting issues:

General

1. The reputational risk posed by the current lack of security must be balanced against the potential reputational risks of a rushed approach, potentially leading to further system failures.
2. Information about course assessments in 2026 will be visible on the web from 1 October 2025.

PP examinations

3. Space consolidation will have reduced the number of large venues, restricting the number of sittings available during the exam period.
4. Systems to deliver PP examinations have been dismantled. Reinstating the process requires reinstatement of the exam management processes, including printing, distribution to exam centres, collection distribution for marking, recruitment and training of invigilators, setup of exam centres for our remote and overseas students, and alternative arrangements and reader-writers. PP exams will require significantly longer lead-in times.
5. Students are unaccustomed to handwriting and this is likely to affect performance. This, combined with the requirement to travel to a physical location, may result in negative feedback from students.
6. Depending on the outcome and noting that no decisions have yet been made, the Printery Proposal for Change may impact on the ability to print exam scripts at scale – outsourcing this work may have an impact on deadlines.

Digital examinations

7. We currently do not have a system in place to deliver OSEs. Procurement and IT integration timelines mean that we cannot have a system in place for 2026.

Recommendations

It is recommended that Academic Committee:

- Consider the feedback received.
- Advise on the preferred approach.

Appendix 1: Summaries of feedback

Staff feedback summary

Support for the Principle of Secured Assessment

Across all submissions, there is unanimous and emphatic support for reintroducing secured assessment. The primary driver for this support is the perceived existential threat to Massey University's reputation and the credibility of its qualifications. Many respondents, particularly from the College of Sciences, state that without reliable methods to authenticate student work, the university's "main saleable product" — the certification of knowledge — is fatally undermined.

Key arguments in favour of secured assessment include:

- **Maintaining Public Trust:** Several submissions note that public trust in the university's qualifications is a "social licence to operate". These responses argue that the failure to ensure student work is authentic is a catastrophic risk that could lead to public outcry and permanent reputational damage.
- **Combating Generative AI:** The rise of generative AI is cited as a fundamental change to the assessment landscape, making unsupervised assessments untenable.
- **Ensuring Fairness for Students:** Many respondents state that secured assessment is crucial for ensuring fairness, and that currently, honest students are being disadvantaged by those who cheat. Students themselves are reported to support in-person exams because they value the "level-playing field".
- **Meeting Professional Standards:** For some accredited programmes, secured assessment is a "non-negotiable requirement" to meet international standards and ensure graduates are competent.

Opposition to the Proposed Timeline

The most consistent and forceful point of feedback is the rejection of the proposed 2028 timeline for full implementation. The timeline is widely described as "too slow," "woefully inadequate," and dangerously out of step with the urgency of the reputational risk.

Respondents argue that immediate action is required, with many demanding an accelerated work programme to have a comprehensive system in place by the 2026 academic year. In support of this argument, several respondents note that staff are already implementing "ad hoc arrangements" and interim solutions like Zoom-invigilated and in-person paper exams but these efforts are seen as unsustainable and reliant on staff goodwill.

Respondents also argue that delay exacerbates risk. Every semester that passes without secured assessment compounds the reputational damage, with entire cohorts graduating without their learning ever being authenticated in the "GenAI era".

Only a few submissions express a different view. One respondent from Psychology finds the timeline realistically fast, while the Massey Business School (MBS) notes that student feedback supports taking sufficient time to "get it right," although they still advocate for an interim solution in 2026.

Diverging Views on Implementation: In-Person vs. Online and Standardisation

While the *why* and *when* are areas of broad agreement, the *how* and *what* reveal more diverse perspectives.

Prioritising In-Person Assessment

There is a very strong push, primarily from the College of Sciences, to prioritise a return to traditional, in-person, invigilated assessments. Many respondents advocate for handwritten exams as the most secure, reliable, and practical option, citing recent failures of Massey's IT infrastructure as an argument against computer-based exams. Respondents also argue that handwritten exams are a "known challenge" that the university has successfully managed for years, unlike the "unknowns" of online solutions, and that online proctoring is seen as insecure, vulnerable to AI workarounds, and an ongoing reputational risk. It is also described as intrusive and unpopular with students.

However, this view is not universal. Some advocate for a dual system of both in-person and online options to cater for different student needs. Others argue for investing in technology and innovative remote solutions to avoid "backward moves to old ways" and to accommodate distance students who cannot travel.

Standardisation vs. Disciplinary Flexibility

There is a clear divide on whether a minimum standard for secured assessment should apply across all programmes.

- For a Uniform Standard: Many respondents, particularly from the College of Sciences, insist on a single high standard for all qualifications. They argue that varying standards would devalue certain qualifications and that "Massey University is the 'brand' on the graduation scrolls, not the Colleges".
- For Disciplinary Autonomy: Feedback from the College of Humanities and Social Sciences (CoHSS) and others argues strongly for flexibility. They contend that a "one-size-fits-all" approach is inappropriate, as the need for and form of secured assessment varies by discipline. For example, in Creative Writing, AI is a minor issue, and a formal exam would be pedagogically unsound. There are calls for specialisations or majors to decide for themselves how to manage assessment integrity.

Many submissions propose a compromise: a university-wide baseline principle of authentication, but with flexibility for disciplines to choose the most appropriate methods.

Resourcing and Support

A recurring theme is that the reintroduction of secured assessment must be properly resourced as a strategic priority. Respondents argue that the cost of inaction (reputational collapse) far outweighs the cost of implementation. Current "ad hoc" solutions are shifting the resource burden onto academic staff, which is unsustainable. Key resourcing challenges identified include recruiting and training invigilators, timetabling space, and upgrading IT infrastructure.

Summary of College Positions

- College of Sciences: Provides the most numerous and forceful submissions. They advocate for an urgent (by 2026), university-wide return to a high proportion (e.g., ≥80%) of secured,

primarily in-person, invigilated assessment in every course. The College Board passed a motion of "no confidence" in the current plan.

- College of Humanities and Social Sciences: While supporting the initiative, the CoHSS Teaching and Learning Committee strongly cautions against a mandated, uniform approach. They emphasise the need for flexibility, respect for pedagogical reasons for moving away from exams, and disciplinary autonomy.
- Massey Business School: Supports the reintroduction and feels a sense of urgency but also acknowledges student concerns about a rushed rollout. They propose a staged approach with an interim online solution in 2026 and a flexible model that allows for disciplinary needs.
- The College of Creative Arts supports the proposal and is keen to engage.
- The College of Health: Acknowledges the need for secured assessment but also argues that the approach should be less binary, recognising that securing can take place on a continuum of high, medium and low security. They also argue that the proposed timeline is too long.

Student feedback summary

(92 responses)

Students were asked to provide feedback on the following questions:

1. Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?
2. What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification?
3. What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam?
4. How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

Support for Secured Assessments to Uphold Academic Integrity

A significant number of students support the introduction of secured assessments to maintain the trustworthiness and value of their degrees.

- **Protecting qualification value:** Many students expressed concern that the unmonitored use of AI could devalue their qualifications, making them less credible to future employers. One student, who is also an employer, noted they have already developed questions to probe job applicants about their studies due to questionable work they've seen.
- **Ensuring fairness:** Students who complete their work with integrity feel it is unfair that others might use AI to achieve similar or better grades with less effort. They believe secured assessments create a level playing field.
- **Frequency:** There is a strong consensus among supporters that at least one secured assessment should be required per course. Some respondents advocated for all assessments to be secured, while others suggested a higher proportion in later years of study, particularly from the 300-level onwards.

Concerns Regarding Equity, Accessibility, and Student Wellbeing

A major theme was the potential for secured assessments to disadvantage certain student groups and negatively impact mental health.

- **Neurodiversity and learning difficulties:** Students highlighted that high-pressure formats like exams and interviews can be inaccessible for individuals with anxiety, ADHD, or other learning difficulties. One neurodivergent student explained that their brain "freezes" under pressure, preventing them from demonstrating their true knowledge in an interview format.
- **Exams as a measure of memory, not learning:** Several students argued that traditional exams test memory rather than genuine understanding and do not reflect real-world working conditions where resources are available for reference. This format is seen as punishing students with memory-affecting disabilities.

- Atmosphere of surveillance and mistrust: A recurring concern was that secured assessments, particularly online proctoring, create an atmosphere of surveillance and imply a lack of trust in students. Students felt this drives a wedge between staff and students and is an invasion of privacy, especially when monitoring technology is used in their homes.
- Stress and technical issues: The potential for technical failures during online supervised exams was a significant source of stress, with one student recounting a "very stressful time" when they had to re-sit an exam after a system crash. Another noted that the stress of their first online invigilated exam negatively impacted their performance.

Distance Student Perspective

Distance students represent a significant portion of the respondents, and their feedback highlights unique logistical and financial challenges.

- Travel is a major barrier: The requirement to travel to a campus or testing centre is considered impractical, prohibitive, or infeasible for many distance students. Reasons include living in remote rural areas, living overseas, and balancing full-time work and family commitments. The time and expense of travel would make study inaccessible for many.
- Preference for online options: When secured assessment is necessary, distance students overwhelmingly prefer online options such as online exams, Zoom interviews, or video calls. The key is to maintain the flexibility that is central to distance learning.
- Alternative ideas: Some suggested creative solutions, such as having a manager at their workplace supervise an assessment, or the university arranging for students to sit exams at other local institutions.

Embracing AI and Modernising Assessment Design

A significant and recurring argument was that the university should focus on adapting to AI rather than policing its use.

- AI as an essential workplace skill: many students argued that proficiency with AI tools is now a requirement in the modern workplace and that the university has a responsibility to teach students how to use it ethically and effectively. Banning AI is seen as a "shortsighted approach" that produces graduates who are ill-prepared for their careers.
- Designing "AI-Proof" assessments: Instead of secured assessments, students suggested that lecturers should design assessments that require critical thinking and application, making them difficult to complete using AI alone. This includes more practical, project-based work like presentations, workshops, simulated client sessions, and work placements.
- AI as a learning tool: several students described using AI as a valuable "personal tutor" to brainstorm ideas, refine understanding, and even stay motivated. They argue the focus should be on teaching students to use AI to enhance their learning, not just as a shortcut. One student proposed an innovative assessment where students' interactions with an AI could be monitored to assess their skill in using the tool effectively.

Appendix 2 Raw feedback

Staff

Note: respondents names have been included collated feedback where they have requested to be identified; where their submissions are referred to elsewhere; or where they are submitting on behalf of a committee or group.

1

Response to Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

Liz Norman, Director of Teaching and Learning, College of Sciences, Massey University
August 2025

This submission is endorsed by

- Ray Geor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences
- Simon Hall, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences Liz Norman endorses Ray Geor and Simon Hall's submission

Summary

While I have provided answers to these questions as requested below, there is a fundamental problem with this plan. **This roll out is way way too slow, and I am very worried that the reputation of the university and ALL its qualifications is on the brink of a fatal collapse.** I am worried that this risk is not being given the weight it deserves.

Our main saleable product is assessment. These days knowledge is freely available – what we offer that you can't get elsewhere is certification of that knowledge by a reputable institution. The value proposition of a university education is the certification of achievement that we provide in the form of grades, awards such as honours, qualifications and postnominals. These are the tickets to social licence and responsibility and to all that goes with that, such as earnings and prestige.

The value of our certification is critically dependent on the public perception of our reputation as an institution and that our claims (that a student has particular skills and knowledge) are credible. **It stretches all credibility if we cannot provide assurance that the student we are certifying has done the work we are assessing.** There is public concern about these things because the public has such a large stake in this. Assessment issues can easily become a public outcry – just look at the issues around high school level qualifications in the UK in the early 2000s where there were headlines such as [GCSE coursework to be curtailed to stop internet cheats | The Guardian](#), [GCSE maths coursework scrapped | Politics.co.uk](#), [GCSE home coursework is scrapped | BBC NEWS](#) stemming from concerns, amongst others, of internet cheating and students getting help from parents. Parliament ordered a [GCSE Coursework Review Report 2006 | gov.uk](#) and the eventual outcome was a system of teacher-supervised coursework called controlled assessment. Improving [GCSE: internal and controlled assessment | QCA 2007](#) to ensure there is “sufficient supervision of every candidate to enable work to be authenticated” and that “the work that an individual candidate submits for assessment is his/her own” ([Instructions for conducting non-examination assessments | JCQ UK](#)).

We have been failing to attend to this risk at our university and the reputation of its qualifications since 2020 after we had to make emergency changes to assessment during COVID. Society understood the urgent need for mitigations during COVID but also had an expectation that there would be a return to normal. We have not returned to normal. This current plan would not provide even a partial return to normal until 2028. In my mind the risk of a public outcry and effect on our reputation as a university is enormous.

Neglecting assessment is an existential threat to the university. Good assessment should be our number one strategic priority and **deserves proper resourcing**. SLT and Council should be considering how we strategically invest in resources to support assessment – we can't austerity ourselves out of this.

This feedback needs to be brought to the attention of SLT and Council so they are aware of the critical nature of this risk, and the need for an accelerated work programme to enable provision of secured assessments (targeting the 2026 academic year).

Answers to specific questions asked

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

1. The purpose of securing assessment has been stated as being ensuring the validity of our qualifications (AC25/05/139 Ensuring the validity of our qualifications in the age of generative AI).
2. To ensure the validity of our qualifications we need to assure the validity of **all course grades**. This means that all or at least the majority of course summative assessment should be secured. This is for the following reasons:
3. **If any of our grades are not credible then all are not credible.** Course level grades are publicly visible but the public will have no way of knowing which has good evidence of student authenticity and which does not. Therefore the credibility of all grades will be questionable, seriously undermining the reputation of the qualification and university.
4. We make **claims based on individual course grades that need to be credible** such as that the student concerned (i) meets the requirements to progress in a qualification; (ii) has the prerequisite knowledge to take a particular course; (iii) can receive credit at other universities for course completions. Decisions around progression and course enrolment can have **substantial downstream economic effects** within the university (in terms of student support needs and costs of teaching) if not well grounded.
5. An enormous amount of curriculum mapping and potentially restructuring of our qualifications would be needed to ensure that students cannot graduate without sitting a minimum amount of secured assessment and likely **beyond our capacity in a reasonable time**. This work is not adequately resourced.
6. Any reduction in the number of secured assessments necessarily means each of the remaining ones becomes higher stakes.
 - a. The higher the stakes the more consequential the decision based on the grade such as whether a student can progress or be awarded a qualification. As decisions become more consequential they need higher quality evidence to support the validity of the decision. High stakes assessments therefore require greater attention to all other quality assurance measures such as, moderation of design and marking, standard setting, review of marking by external examiners. This significantly increases the costs of administering them and will consequently reduce anticipated cost savings.
 - b. In addition to the higher costs of running higher stakes assessments, we will need robust methods of supporting students with temporary impairment that prevents them from completing the assessment under the secured conditions. It would undermine credibility to use non-secured assessments to determine a grade for students unable to complete secured assessment. Unless we are prepared to simply fail students with temporary impairments we will need to introduce scheduled, deferred opportunities for every secured assessment; essentially doubling the costs of them. As well as the obvious costs involved, this will have repercussions for the speed at which decisions about things such as progression and eligibility for graduation can be made.
 - c. Higher stakes assessments are higher stress for students. This causes significant negative effects on performance, and on student well being.

d. Higher stakes assessments are subject to more challenges of grades. We need to be prepared to defend not awarding a qualification to a student after years of study because of failure at a secured assessment. Challenges to these decisions are likely to be more aggressive than they may be otherwise, requiring significant time and effort to hear grievances and appeals. Such grievances are also more likely to reach the public ear and lead to reputational impacts.

e. In short, **the less secured assessment we do, the more important it is and therefore the more costly.** This may well completely offset any savings gained by not securing assessment in every course in the first place as we used to do.

7. If the work is not the student's work, *no* claims about the knowledge and skills possessed by the student can be made *at all* and therefore the purpose and use of a grade can be questioned. **Arguably, assessments where identity is not reasonably assured should only be used formatively or not used at all (ie they are worthless).**

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

1. No this should not vary by discipline.

2. Doing so would devalue some qualifications in relation to others by suggesting that some qualifications are more important than others. Graduates from any qualification can have a role that carries significant societal responsibility and the public would expect nothing less than we know that the student we are awarding a qualification to is the one who did the work.

3. The reputation of the university is not qualification specific. The reputation of graduates from one discipline could affect the value of all qualifications from Massey University. We should hold each to a high standard of expectation of validity of claims made about graduates.

4. A significant proportion of our qualifications allow courses to be taken from a variety of disciplines. How would it work for students to have different levels of assurance in different courses?

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

For the reasons outlined under the next question, I do not feel that online proctoring solutions provide sufficient security. Distance students will need to have some sort of in-person supervised assessment in each of their courses. This will likely require travel to campus at some point in their course. Where cohorts are large enough this may be able to be offered at sites other than one of our campuses.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

Online proctoring solutions do not provide the assurance we need of student identity, therefore we should prioritise in- person assessment. **Online procuring does not prevent use of other devices or communication with others** as this can still be done outside the view of the camera. I accept that online proctoring is better than no proctoring and may be needed as a stop gap. However, we should be aware that although online proctoring may currently be seen as a credible authentication by some stakeholders, this is likely to change over time as cases of fraud become more widely known. For example a recent Threat Intelligence Report from Anthropic¹ documented an employment scam whereby operators without technical training were able to pass technical interviews at

¹ Remote worker fraud: how North Korean IT workers are scaling fraudulent employment with AI. [Detecting and countering misuse of AI: August 2025 \ Anthropic](#)

reputable technology companies and then maintain their positions through the use of generative AI technology. Thus **relying on remote proctoring would remain a reputational risk for our university.**

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

There are resourcing challenges to a return to secured assessment but it needs to be recognised that

1. **The idea that a university has not allocated sufficient resources to offer secured assessment is a really bad look** and if it became widely known may cause significant public concern and reputational damage. The reputational risk is high. There was a public outcry about school level qualifications in the UK – there could easily be a public outcry about university level qualifications here. We look like a third rate university if we cannot offer this basic assurance to our students.
2. The current situation of not centrally offering secured assessment is **causing resourcing issues to be shifted to academic staff** who are having to resource this themselves and to dealing with ancillary issues such as integrity investigations and appeals. The cost is still being borne even now.
3. There were, in the past, mechanisms to recover some of the cost from students in the form of non-tuition fees. Although students may not like this, it is something we should consider reinstating.

I think there needs to be serious consideration of the relative importance of this issue compared to others we are a resourcing so that there can be proper allocation of resource.

Are the proposed timelines (full rollout by 2028) realistic?

They are realistic with current resourcing but are too slow. A slow pace amplifies the reputational risk. We need to resource this properly so we can have secured assessment in 2026.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

I don't think this will be seen as a transition but instead a return to normal – at least in our College.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

We need to support assessment design better than we have done given that it is our main saleable product but I see that as a business as usual thing we have neglected rather than something special about the current circumstance.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I think we already have that culture but have been neglecting to communicate it. Students want assessment to be fair and valid. They are worried about other student's cheating and they want to be able to compete fairly. We need to communicate this straightforwardly and in terms of the reputation of their qualification for them and all other students. The public needs to know it was them who we assessed and therefore we need to secure the assessment to provide this assurance. Plain and simple.

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

The College of Sciences College Board (CSB) received the Academic Committee *Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments* (AC25/08/308Rev1) and discussed it at the CSB meeting held on Thursday, 21 August 2025. Simon Hall chaired that meeting in Ray Geor's absence in his role as Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor for the College of Sciences. CSB members were encouraged to respond individually with their own feedback. This submission is Simon Hall's and Ray Geor's feedback and views.

Summary

We are disappointed with the plan. It is too little, too late, and we believe too risky for our institution to follow. We implore the Senior Leadership Team to recognise that our institution is facing an existential issue and, with urgency, ensure the allocation of sufficient resources and efforts to enable the implementation of secured assessments (for the 2026 academic year).

Simon Hall, Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences

Ray Geor, Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences

11 September 2025

Endorsed by Liz Norman, Director of Teaching and Learning, College of Sciences

Simon Hall and Ray Geor endorse Liz Norman's submission

Observations and Views

It is implicit that society, legislation, our funders, and our students have the view and expectation that our institution has a high level of assurance that the qualifications and course grades we award are those earned by the individual students (i.e. we have authentication processes throughout our students' studies).

This is the 'who' in the 'who, what, how, where, when and to what extent' in our assessments, i.e. we need to unambiguously link each student to course assessments to the extent that is sufficient to assure the 'who' in a student's qualification/academic transcript.

We are of the view that the plan does not adequately address the critical requirement for authentication. In particular, the inclusion of 'some' and 'key stages' in the statement "*...ensuring that there is no pathway through a programme without some form of authentication at key stages*" may lead to the public perception that not all grades will be authentic because student verification may only be required at a few so-called 'key stages'. We are of the view that whenever a grade for a course is reported that there should be authentication for the majority of courses assessments (we suggest $\geq 80\%$, and that all of these be compulsory assessments). We are not suggesting all of these assessments are by examination; authenticated assessments can be achieved through laboratories, workshops, field trips *and* examinations.

Much of the discussion paper is focused on addressing the challenges of providing authentication for our Distance students, and with the proposition that '*Digital*' underpins any modern assessment

infrastructure'. The 'Distance Campus' represents a high proportion of Massey's EFTS and so is clearly worthy of extensive consideration. However, much of the proposed lengthy timescale and relatively low authentication rate is to allow for the procurement and pilot evaluation of authentication software for remote and on-campus online secure assessments.

An alternative approach is to return to in-person ('analog') secure assessments for our Distance students, as well as for our Internal students. This was the approach pre-2020. COVID changed our approach, but we did not seem to entertain a return to in-person assessments. Rather, we have focused on the expectation that online/digital approaches will be the foundation for all future assessments. This approach has been seriously compromised by the rise of generative artificial intelligence and, in the near term, we think it is high-risk to assume there will be viable solutions to counter the impacts of Gen AI in the context of online assessments. For this reason, we strongly advocate a return to analog assessment.

Students, staff, our funders and society understood that there was a need for an abrupt change in the face of the COVID pandemic, but we are of the view that there was also an expectation of a return to sound assessment practice once the peak of the health crises had passed. We have not done this, while many institutions internationally have done this (and, in fact, strengthened authentication practices to ensure academic integrity),

A thought experiment might also be considered; had COVID not appeared in 2020 would we have substantially changed our pre-2020 approach to authenticated assessments? We are of the view the answer would have been 'no'. Further, we are of the view that in the absence of COVID, but now with AI being ubiquitous, we would be hearing calls for a strengthening of authentication methodology rather than approaches that weaken this critical element in assessment. This issue was a strong theme in the written comments from staff in the 2025 Staff Engagement Survey; they are very concerned about the integrity of our courses and qualifications, and are highly critical of what they perceive as ineffectual University leadership in working towards viable solutions.

While a return to handwritten tests and oral exams (for example) does offer an immediate solution to the overall challenge, we do see these as interim measures whilst we consider and debate longer-term strategies. However, this will take time, time that we simply do not have in the face of our current crisis.

We have undertaken an analysis of Massey University's undergraduate student enrolments by Distance in 2024 with respect to students' Term Address Region as reported in RAPID (as at 1 September 2025). Of the 11,930 individuals who enrolled in 2024 undergraduate Distance courses, 9,176 (77%) have identifiable NZ Term Address Regions, 1,935 (16%) do not have Term Address Regions loaded in RAPID, and 819 (7%) are identified as having overseas addresses.

On average, each student enrolled in 3.8 courses.

In Table 1 below we have mapped the Term Address Regions with potential onsite locations for in-person authenticated assessments:

4,216 (35%) of students are within road travel distance (0-5 hours travel) of our Auckland campus (and the majority are in the Auckland region);

3,801 (32%) of students are within road travel distance (0-5 hours travel) of our Manawātū campus (and just under half are in the Manawātū-Whanganui region; and

1,159 (10%) of students are in the South Island. If a single South Island location were to be selected then Christchurch would be a viable option, but extensive road travel times (>5 hours) would be required. Consideration could be given to a second site in Dunedin.

It is likely that many of the 16% of students in the 'Unknown' category will have Term Time Addresses that would map to either the potential Auckland or Manawatū assessment locations. Additional sites could be considered using a financial return on cost approach.

This would suggest to us that rather than undertake a process for evaluating, selecting and implementing tools for online assessment over an extended time period, and for only a rationed number of assessments, that it would be more readily achievable over a shorter timeframe and for a higher number of courses to return to onsite secured assessments.

While this would reduce a potential convenience factor for our Distance students, it will mitigate the reputational risks of their qualifications and grades being perceived by others as less than worthy.

We acknowledge that this may mean we will lose some Distance EFTS.

We also acknowledge that the re-establishment of large-scale in-person secured assessment and process after 5 years of abeyance will be a challenge. However, this could be described as a 'known' challenge; the aims, objectives and resources are identifiable, and some staff and former staff who were involved in those processes will be able to advise.

This is in contrast with the proposed online plan which is a mix of (at the risk of quoting Donald Rumsfeld) 'known knowns', 'known unknowns' and 'unknown unknowns'.

There will be a cost, and we see there *should* be a cost associated with authenticated assessment. This should be part of our business as usual, and we suspect our funders (students and TEC) are working on the assumption that we *are* including this in our expenditure. If we don't, then we run the risk of being asked for discounted fees as we:

aren't incurring those expenditures, and

we wouldn't be offering an assured product.

We recognise our views might be seen as Luddite, and wanting to turn back the clock. However, we are of the view that further years of inaction will further exacerbate reputational risk to Massey. We also need to be sure that our staff and alumni can speak with confidence and pride on our approach to assessment – we fear that the current plan does not meet that need.

Response to questions posed in the Discussion Paper

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

All compulsory assessments that contribute to the final grade for all courses. Secured assessments should comprise at least 80% of all assessments in a course.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

As above, all compulsory assessments that contribute to the final grade for all courses, and these should comprise at least 80% of all assessments.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

The need for authenticated assessments should be the same across all qualifications. Massey University cannot afford to have any perceptions that some or any of the institution's qualifications (and contributing courses) have a lesser level of authenticity. Massey University is the 'brand' on the graduation scrolls, not the Colleges.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

As detailed in our submission above, we advocate for a return to in-person onsite authenticated assessments for Distance students. We must not use cost as an argument. We are of the view that we are funded to undertake this activity.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

As detailed in our submission above, we advocate prioritising onsite/in-person authenticated assessments. The methodologies are known. In contrast online proctoring solutions fall into the unknown category, including the rapid and ongoing evolution of AI 'work arounds' that will assuredly impact the validity and suitability of available online proctoring tools.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Setting up a project team to rediscover/re-establish the range of pre-2020 authenticated onsite assessments.

Scoping the required spend for the University (putting aside for the moment the debates about which budget line(s) will 'own' the costs), together with any return to onsite assessment costs being charged to Distance students.

Recruiting and training of invigilators.

Timetabling of space.

Messaging to staff, students, funders and the public.

Realistic evaluation of the capability to operate onsite/in-person bring your own device and Massey supplied computers for computer-based assessments. We note with considerable concern two recent failures of our systems, specifically on two separate occasions there was an inability to cope with the simultaneous computer-based assessment of 146 BVSc year 4 students across four main computer labs. These computers were hard-wired to the network and yet numerous students lost connectivity. In a review of this situation, it was asked whether a bring your own device approach using wifi connectivity would be a better option but ITS advised there would likely be similar issues.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

(Re)training, particularly of more recently appointed academic staff on design of authenticated in-person assessments.

(Re)training, particularly of more recently appointed administration staff to support delivery and post-delivery of authenticated in-person assessments.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

As above, but also quality time. To reflect on what worked and what didn't work in the past, what is actually needed in the assessment.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Clear communications to students and prospective students on what it means to be evaluated and why.

Table 1 Mapping of Term Time Addresses to potential onsite assessment locations for all Massey University undergraduate students enrolled in Distance courses in 2024. On average each student enrolled in 3.8 courses.

Term Address Region	Potential on-site assessment location	Student count	% of total student count
Northland Region	Auckland Campus	259	2%
Auckland Region		3,069	26%
Waikato Region		498	4%
Bay of Plenty Region		390	3%
Sub-total Auckland Campus		4,216	35%
Manawatu-Whanganui Region	Manawatū Campus	1,710	14%
Hawke's Bay Region		275	2%
Taranaki Region		276	2%
Gisborne Region		81	1%
Wellington Region		1,459	12%
Sub-total Manawatū Campus		3,801	32%
Marlborough Region	Location in Christchurch	61	1%
Tasman Region		63	1%
Nelson Region		83	1%
Canterbury Region		604	5%
West Coast Region		42	0%
Otago Region		216	2%
Southland Region		90	1%
Sub-total Location in Christchurch		1,159	10%
Unknown	Undefined	1,935	16%
Overseas		819	7%
Total		11,930	100%

I would like to send feedback on the discussion paper that recommends reintroduction of secured assessments.

I am 100% in support of getting back to secured invigilated assessments but the timeframe for proposal is far too long (beginning in 2028). In semester 1 this year, I mobilized my teaching team to invigilate a semester test and final exam for Cell Biology (162101), which had 350 internal and another 40-50 distance students. For internals, we did paper-based tests and our school paid for postgrad assistance with marking. I organized rooms and fellow staff members to invigilate in person. For the distance students we did zoom invigilation with the students taking the test via stream and sitting with a teacher from the course. Several colleagues are now implementing this same strategy for other science courses. The challenge for this mode is that we're limited to ~10 students at one time in a zoom session so that the supervisor can see the students and their screens and monitor the chat, etc.

It is possible to have interim solutions while developing longer-term plans. It's not rocket science – we've done this before. Computer-based exams work when there is solid infrastructure, which Massey does not have. I would suggest that this needs to be part of longer-term planning to increase tech capabilities and support for online exams (internal or distance). I think distance students really do not like having to install third party software on their devices. Having distance students travel to a central location for exams would be great, but also presents challenges for the students (financial, work-related, family-related, etc.). Thus, an interim solution like the zoom invigilation works.

In the Sciences, we need formal exams to demonstrate that the students know things and aren't just attending Google University. We need more admin/professional staff to help with logistics, test layout/formatting, etc. These administrative tasks used to be done by our internal admin staff, which we no longer have of course. Colleges could assemble professional staff to focus on tests/exams as it will be a big job that would overburden the professional staff on hand.

Thanks for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Ngā mihi,

CoS

4

Advise on the recommended approach.

The implementation of the plan is too slow (2028 - really?)– the University can not afford to loose more credibility. Improved assessment should be put in place immediately at least for internal/New Zealand based students. Do what can be done now, don't wait and review.

Particular consideration of the following questions would be welcomed: o What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

It is unlikely there will be one universal solution. However, I am against online invigilated assessment for NZ based students. Online invigilation software is expensive and will need to be continuously upgraded to deal with AI. Students should be examined on course content and not on their capacity to cope with the online examination environment.

o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

In the undergraduate Science courses I teach it should be one hand written assessment and one short oral presentation.

A hand written assessment can evaluate understanding of course content, and within a few minutes of face to face meeting it can be determined whether a student can think critically has engaged well with the course material. The lack of engagement we currently have with distance students is a problem for rigorous assessment.

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Differ across programmes and the standard is best determined by course coordinators and school programme directors.

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost? o

For my courses, distance students living in New Zealand should do hand written exams at centres in Auckland, PN and Christchurch if needed. Overseas students might have online examination, but Massey should evaluate the expense and scale of this.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

The costs for staffing in person assessments are known and reliable. The cost of procurement for online invigilation is unknown, and unreliable.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

For in person assessment, the support required should already be understood. In person exams have continued for vet students at least until recently using computer labs, but future exams for my students can be designed so that excessive writing (essays) is not required, so computers are not necessary.

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

I think this is the wrong question - Academic staff need support, especially within their schools to navigate Massey eforms and IT systems, production of online materials – quality videos etc

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Do in person assessment – move away from online invigilated assessment of written exams. Don't all employers already value secured assessment? Wont all students value it once they understand employers only employ students whose capabilities have been fairly and properly assessed? I think it is a problem for Science disciplines, and the credibility of Massey, if there is not secured in person examination.

CoS

5

I am really pleased to see in-person exams returning, as this will help maintain the credibility of our qualifications. I understand the pilot will initially cover only a limited number of courses, but waiting until 2028 for full invigilation seems a bit long. Overall, the phased plan looks sensible, and I support the focus on digital systems and staff/student engagement in planning and mapping.

Ngā mihi,

School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

6

One comment from me regarding:

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I recommend the latter; all students, whether internals or distance could take online exams. In that way, we avoid having two different processes.

Kind regards

School of Humanities, Media and Creative Communication

7

I wanted to add my voice to those calling for reinstatement of secured assessment at Massey University.

Within the College of Sciences there are many courses taught where it is essential that some of the assessments are in person (or invigilated online for distance students). I teach into eight zoology and ecology courses where a range of tools are used to assess students and some form of secure assessment is an important element in the majority. I would welcome support from Massey allowing

teaching staff to match the best form of assessment for each subject that suit their students – to facilitate quality education.

Ray has asked us to supply answers to the questions posed in the discussion paper regarding the reintroduction of secured assessments to Massey University. So, in addition to my earlier comment attached are answers to the specific questions

Great, yes, let us return to the normal method of assessment by having in person exams for the majority of courses at Massey University.

I think that it is interesting that the plan proposed has so many steps and stages over three years. As an academic teaching 1st and 2nd semester undergraduate courses within the College of Science I have been given different rules and regulations about assessments every semester since 2020. The word we are now all familiar with is “pivot” because we have altered our teaching assessments every semester for five years. As a staff member I can cope with a return to in-person exams within a single semester.

A rapid return to secured assessments is required should Massey wish to maintain credibility as providing a valuable qualification.

Your questions in blue my answers in black

o What assessment types should be considered ‘secured’?

In person with photographic identification (student ID)

o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

50% or more per course

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Yes, 50% across all programmes

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

Distance student could have online assessments and be awarded a “distance” qualification.

o Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

Massey University should spend more money on the return to in-person exams.

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Students require a bit more flexibility with timing (for example; not going to an exam when they have COVID, but sitting the exam in person a week later), so staff and space needs to be resourced to allow for flexibility.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Keep the lecture theatres warm during exam periods

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

No more than offered over the last five years

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Building flexibility into the exam schedule

Ngā mihi

CoS

8

I have read the document CSB25/8/163 AC25/08/308Rev1.

I support the objective that thorough strategies need to be put back in place to ensure we assess understanding and cognition of our students.

I disagree with the statement that the problems arose only through the expansion of generative multi-modal Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI). The problem began during COVID lockdowns that encouraged Massey university take alternative routes to teaching and assessment, and which resulted in an unhealthy emphasis on so-called digital learning. This was driven from the Provost's office with a very strong push for the 'Digital+' strategy, that picked up on a populist idea that 'technological innovation' is a universal panacea.

That said, the push to use digital learning more extensively converged with the rise of Large Language Models routinely referred to as AI. Massey policy should take a lead in not referring to these models as 'artificial intelligence', and confusing students and public alike by encouraging the belief that these tools have potential to improve human thinking. Rather, these tools add to the resources that capable humans can use to do their work, and provide effortless gratification for the weak-minded or lazy.

For undergraduate learning, whatever the future development of digital tools, it is essential that we focus on improving the cognitive and communicative ability of our students. If we do not do that we fail our students, the country and the planet. Inappropriate use of 'AI' in the hands of the naïve circumvents learning rather than enhancing it, and that is not education. The students deserve better and we can give them that by making it clear from the start of every course, what we expect from them and by providing assessment methods that block the use of 'AI' or detect it.

The decision to allow students to use 'AI' for all assessments without providing any security was an error.

Online assessment tools need to have some security tools attached to them. Better still in person (what the document calls PP) assessments are definitely better and easier to oversee even if does require more real humans to be involved in the process (surely to be preferred to allowing AI drones to rule our lives).

Submitted assessments are a problem as the current process requiring students to state how they used 'AI' creates extra workload for staff, and follow-up solutions for dealing with students that cheat lack teeth. If this approach is to continue then students need to be told very clearly that any evidence of undisclosed or inappropriate 'AI' use will result in zero marks for the assessment, at least. Currently good students are being taken advantage of by cheaters.

I look forward to being given proper support to assess student learning in the future, and remind that 'AI' comes with many costs including an unsustainable carbon footprint.

Regards

9

My personal position is that going back to secured assessment (or at least a proportion of assessments being secured i.e. the final exam) is the correct move.

However, the timeline proposed in the attached is far too long – we need to have secured examination (at least) by semester one 2027 for all courses (not a few in a trial). So, the trialling needs to be semester 1 and 2 in 2026.

Further I would suggest that the 'size' of the value of the overall mark for an examination needs to be reduced (i.e. no more than 30 to 40% of the overall mark) to lessen the potential impact of examination fraud on overall grade – this type of rule could easily be brought in for 2026.

Kind regards

CoS

10

I write in response to the discussion paper on the reintroduction of secured assessments and appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback.

First, I would like to acknowledge the significant challenges in this area and the costs associated with identifying and implementing a solution. However, I must express my very serious concern about the proposed timeline for full implementation.

As a university, one of the pillars of our social licence to operate is predicated on public trust in the validity of the assessment processes which underpin the qualifications we award. Ubiquitous access to generative AI has fundamentally changed the assessment landscape. In science disciplines, the validity of our unsecured assessment methods—and hence the trust in our qualifications—is already being questioned. I believe our qualifications will lose credibility if we wait until 2028 for full implementation.

I strongly recommend that we need a solution fully implemented by the end of the 2026 academic year at the very latest, and ideally by the end of Semester 1 2026. If the university maintains the proposed timeline, I am concerned this paper will become irrelevant in the College of Sciences. Colleagues will instead take matters into their own hands (as they are already doing this academic year) and implement ad hoc arrangements of secured and semi-secured assessments in an attempt to ensure the validity of the qualifications for which they are responsible.

Ngā mihi,

CoS

11

23

Below is an excerpt from the drafted (unapproved) minutes of the discussion regarding the *Initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments* at the Learning and Teaching Committee meeting on 12 August 2025, to allow you to progress with the work required.

3.2 An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments [LTC25-08-103]

Feedback received from Academic Committee on this discussion document ensuring the validity of our qualifications received strong support from many parts of the university, with staff arguing in favour of various models, ranging from a return to traditional pen-and-paper (PP) examinations and in-person digital exams to the reintroduction of Online Supervised Examinations (OSEs). Several respondents also noted that 'securing' assessment did not have to mean examinations – in-person and studio teaching, contact workshops, field trips and placements all provide mechanisms for lecturers to ascertain that the work their students produce is authentically their own.

Successfully reintroducing an acceptable level of secured assessment in all our qualifications will require a culture and capability shift as well as updates to our technical systems, policies, and business processes. Decisions need to be made about the number of secured assessments required to effectively validate the qualifications we award, and what constitutes 'secured'. This discussion paper outlines a proposed approach to the reintroduction of secured assessments in all qualifications in 2027 and seeks the committee's consideration and advice on the recommended approach.

The committee is requested to consider and advise on the recommended approach and questions proposed in the memorandum and endorse the wider dissemination of this document to colleges, students and service units for feedback. Feedback is to be sent to Fiona Coote by the 19th of September 2025.

The following points were noted as part of a general discussion:

Concern was raised about how long the implementation may take, with the view that this could affect the reputation of the University's qualifications. It was also noted that taking too long might give the impression that the University cannot quickly reinstate something that was previously run effectively.

It was observed that the proposal requires all Massey qualifications to identify points of verified assessment. This would affect some qualifications that currently have no verified assessment points, for example those that removed examinations after COVID and the introduction of online supervised exams.

It was suggested that the number and placement of verified assessment points should be determined by discipline or subject, rather than applying a fixed rule across all qualifications. Guidelines could be developed to support this approach.

It was proposed that both in-person and non-in-person online verification options be provided, to accommodate distance students, students with disabilities, and those with personal circumstances. The challenge of determining eligibility for each option was acknowledged.

One possible approach noted was requiring in-person verification for students in New Zealand and non-in-person online verification for those overseas, though potential difficulties with this division were acknowledged.

Resourcing and support for the design of in-person oral assessments was identified as important, ensuring they are fit for purpose, appropriate for students, and balanced in expectations.

The student representative has discussed this with the student association and has expressed support for moving forward with Online Supervised Exams (OSEs), noting a shift from previous opposition. It was suggested to explore technology options, such as Respondus, while ensuring accessibility for all students. The importance of fostering a culture that values assessment and communicating its benefits to students early was emphasised, to avoid resistance to OSEs. An external meeting will be arranged between the student representative and CET to discuss this further. It was clarified to the committee that the procurement process for a platform is only now being initiated.

It was suggested that, if the decision is not primarily driven by assessment design requirements, student views should be sought. The potential implications for students of requiring in-person exams were noted, along with recognition that there are strong views regarding online proctoring approaches. It was also noted for consideration whether an online platform meets the purpose for doing secured assessments to assure the identity of the person doing the exam. If this cannot be assured, the question of preference becomes moot. It was clarified that even if assessments are conducted in person, there may still be a digital element, and therefore an online platform would still be required.

Clarification was requested regarding the use of the terms “programme” and “qualification,” which appear to be used interchangeably in the document. This caused some confusion, particularly in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences, where a Bachelor of Arts (BA) comprises multiple majors and minors rather than a single, unified qualification.

It was noted that for the BA, key assessment points would need to be applied to each major and minor, rather than just at the overall qualification level, to meaningfully authenticate student learning. In response, it was noted that determining where assessment points are required is a matter for the individual colleges, as they are best placed to decide how to verify that students have completed the work for each major or minor within the qualification.

Concern was raised about equity in oral assessments, particularly for international students and students with social anxiety or on the autism spectrum. It was suggested that expertise from Disability Services or similar support services should be incorporated in designing these assessments. It was noted that equity considerations apply to all forms of formal assessment, and processes should be in place to provide alternative formats where needed.

The discussion highlighted that limiting the number of secured assessments increases the stakes for each, potentially raising student anxiety and placing greater demands on assessment design and scrutiny. A balance must be struck between securing all assessments and targeting only certain points.

Resource implications were noted, particularly for oral presentations and assessments in disciplines where process-focused evaluation is resource intensive.

It was emphasised that a shift to securing only certain points of assessments may require robust deferred and supplementary assessment systems/processes, similar to existing frameworks in some colleges, to manage impaired performance and appeal applications.

Support was expressed for the initiative overall, with recognition that having a concrete plan with timeframes for securing assessment validity is a positive development and is likely to be welcomed

across the University. Accolades were given to Simin Littschwager and Graeme Sequeira from the Curriculum Transformation Unit within CET for their work on this.

12

6.2 [COSTL250018 LTC25-08-103 - An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments](#)

This is a plan for reintroduction of secured assessments which has been reviewed by the Academic Committee and Learning and Teaching Committee. It will be coming to Colleges for feedback.

Concerns were raised about the approach being too slow, and the lack of resourcing to support a faster roll out was disappointing.

A significant risk to the reputation of the university and to our qualifications is perceived from a slow return to secured assessment.

Experience in CoS, where staff have been organising and managing in-person assessments themselves for internal students, indicates that these are seen as fairer by students, reducing concerns about cheating. Anecdotal feedback from internal students indicates strong support for in-person, paper-based exams. There is concern that there is insufficient recognition of this important student voice compared to the voice of distance students who wish to continue with more flexible (and therefore unsecured) assessment approaches.

Concerns were raised about the feasibility of conducting two pilots (Semester 1 and Semester 2) with insufficient time to incorporate feedback between them.

There was concern that this slow rollout would be very disappointing to staff. Morale is already reportedly low, with many feeling overburdened and unsupported. Temporary solutions are being used, often relying on staff goodwill, which is unsustainable long-term. There is a risk that staff may disengage further if the situation does not improve.

One advantage pointed out was that having a definite plan was helpful as staff have been anticipating return of service semester after semester and therefore have been making temporary changes only. However there was some concern that the current proposal could easily hit bumps that slowed down roll out even further.

Suggestions included exploring oral examinations and adopting controlled assessments models such as used for some UK GCSE subjects (e.g., supervised assignment work during tutorials). These models could offer more secure assessment options without relying heavily on central systems. However the effects on staff morale are limiting how much energy staff have to do this replanning.

Committee members were encouraged to reflect further and discuss with their heads of school ahead of College Board meetings.

College of Sciences Learning and Teaching Committee.

13

Overall, the plan sounds solid. I put some comments/answers on the questions below

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programs, or should this vary by discipline?

I think it should be by discipline. I would aim for one per year. Due to the enormous variability among careers if one global plan wants to be achieved, maybe a mentor could be assigned to each student to follow throughout their studies, but that is something that should be carefully considered in terms of workload.

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

As long as a video chat can be guaranteed to be real, an interview/presentation of a project, for example, is an option. Even recording in video of the presentation to be uploaded. We are asking for an AI declaration already and that should cover for any suspicious upload.

o Should we prioritize on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I think that human contact is essential. Modern ways are changing, so it is important to accommodate. In terms of assessment I would say invest in technology, but I would equally invest in preserve human contact in other spheres of academic social life.

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Extra workload to assess integrity.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)? All of the mentioned and consider a clear transition plan.

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Access to popular AIs to check putative answers. Model assessments for inspiration.

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasizing surveillance?

Integrating AI as a tool and teaching how to use it responsibly. May be it can be developed a course on this as an introductory one for all new students.

Hope it helps, let me know if you have any questions.

Department of statistics

 14

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

27

Summary

While I am relieved to see that Massey has a plan to reintroduce secured assessments, I am highly concerned at the proposed timeline and scope.

Spending next year (2026) simply talking about secured assessments with a view to trial them the following year (2027) and hopefully introduce them for key courses in 2028 is too little too late and the risk of major reputational damage is too great.

In-person secured assessments should be brought back as standard with the utmost urgency.

Vital Importance of Secured Assessments

When Massey University awards a degree or diploma, we are making a public assertion that the recipient has completed their course of study and met the learning objectives and graduate profile of that qualification. The reputation of our university and the qualifications it awards is tied to the quality of the graduates we produce.

Without secured assessments, we are making these assertions without any reliable evidence. Many students will graduate from Massey this year having never completed a single assessment that confirmed the work submitted was their own. When graduates from Massey reach the workforce without any of the skills or knowledge that we say they have, industry and society may reach the conclusion that a Massey degree is worth nothing.

A lot of current discussion focuses on Generative AI tools in assessments (this does represent a significant challenge to all Universities) but at Massey we don't even identify the person sitting an exam or test. We also allow students to sit exams whenever they like in a 24-hour period, it would be naive to think that students aren't discussing questions between themselves during this time. In my view it is pointless to address whether someone has used Gen AI in an exam or not when we make no attempt at all to identify the person sitting said exam.

I would also be unhappy with the idea that we only offer secured assessments in a few, key courses. This sends the message that only some material is important to learn and would introduce a two-tier system where it's ok to cheat in some courses but not others. For flexible degrees where students can choose from a variety of courses, there is also the practical problem that almost all courses would need to be secured to prevent students completing a degree by just selecting the unsecured courses.

In general, society accepted that during COVID lockdowns then usual processes had to be bypassed and extra accommodations had to be made. Even then, the term COVID degree appeared with concerns that open-book exams would make a degree obtained during this period worthless. Without secured assessments, Massey is continuing to confer COVID degrees to our graduates in 2025 and plans to continue through to 2028.

Increasing risk of major reputational damage

The reputational damage Massey University suffered from the failure of the OSE system in 2024 is not something we want to repeat. However, the risk of doing nothing is far greater. \

It is likely that the other Universities (and New Zealand society as a whole) are simply unaware of the complete lack of integrity of our assessments. The revelation that Massey does not have secured

assessments in our courses (since 2020 and continuing to 2028) would cause widespread damage to our reputation, our graduates, and our viability as a university.

The longer Massey refuses to address this issue, the worse the potential fallout will be.

Solution

The simple solution to this is to return to on-campus, in-person examinations as standard. This is the model that Massey successfully used for many years without issue. The common arguments against this are - cost and distance students.

Requiring New Zealand distance students to travel to an examination location for the examination period is not overly onerous. Many NZ distance students do not live that far from one of our campuses and setting up an examination location in Christchurch or Dunedin would cover a lot of the South Island.

Just over 4% of our students EFTS are recorded as offshore in RAPID. It is difficult to determine exact numbers for Massey as a whole, but in our school, most of these offshore students are studying at a partner institution (who do secure their examinations). It is a sad state of affairs that we can trust the results of examinations at partner institutions more than our own.

Recommendations

- Return to On-Campus, In-Person invigilated assessments as standard.
- Offer hand-written examinations as the most practical option due to the lack of computer labs and the technical challenges of bring your own device exams. The courses I teach are in Computer Science and I would much prefer a secured hand-written exam to a completely open and unsecured digital exam.

College of Sciences

15

Feedback on “An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments”

Author: Dr Teo Susnjak

Role: Associate Professor, Computer Science and IT

Executive position

We must re-establish secured, invigilated assessments at pace. The primary risk is not cost or logistics but rather the continued erosion of credibility of our qualifications. Every semester that passes without some form authentication increases that risk. At the very least, we need in-person invigilated assessments at key progression points, with high-assurance alternatives for distance learners. We should treat this as core business restoration, not discretionary change. Teaching staff also need support and guidance for implementing interim solutions for securing our assessment beginning 2026 as we cannot wait until 2028.

To the Academic Committee,

I write in strong support of the proposal to reintroduce secured assessments across our programmes. In my opinion, the urgency of this work cannot be overstated. While the staged plan in the document outlines a pragmatic pathway for a rollout in 2028, I must emphasise that the risks we face are immediate and ought rather to be accelerated. Our credibility as a university depends on whether we can guarantee that the knowledge and skills our graduates claim to hold are genuinely their own. Currently we are not fulfilling this, at least not in the qualifications with which I am familiar.

1. The Reputational Risk We Face

The current reality is that widespread, undetectable use of GenAI has fundamentally compromised the integrity of unsupervised assessments. In my own teaching I see clear evidence of its misuse, even if it is difficult to provide objective evidence for it and to quantify it formally. If the public, employers, professional bodies, or the media were to scrutinise how far we have lost control of the authenticity of student work in some of our qualifications, the damage to our reputation could be permanent. Once credibility in the integrity of our qualifications is lost, it cannot easily be restored. It is also critical to recognise that other New Zealand universities, as well as many international counterparts, have retained in-person invigilated examinations. If Massey diverges too far from sector norms, we risk being perceived as offering a weaker and less credible degree. That perception could directly affect graduate employability, postgraduate opportunities, and even the legitimacy of our right to award qualifications. Our enrolments have been on a downward trend and failure to address this issue adequately may accelerate it further.

2. Risks of Delay, Over-Caution and Lack of Agility

The phased plan defers full implementation of secured assessments until 2028. In my opinion this pace of change is not in line with the level of risk we face and thus requires more urgency. Every year that passes under current assessment conditions, risks further erosion of our credibility. Large language models (like ChatGPT) began to be publicly released from the end of 2022. Since then, students have had access to GenAI for their assessments in all of 2023, 2024 and now in 2025. This means that at least one full cohort of all Massey bachelor graduates is about to enter the workforce without ever sitting a properly invigilated exam during the GenAI era. By the end of next year, a second cohort will follow. By 2027 when only a pilot phase is proposed, a third cohort will graduate under the same conditions. In effect, thousands of bachelor's degree holders, along with graduates of other smaller programmes, will have completed their qualifications without any secured assessment, despite the widespread availability of ever more capable AI tools that make academic misconduct largely undetectable. This reality magnifies the reputational risk year on year. Each cohort released without credible authentication of learning compounds the problem and the risk to our institution, and by the time the current phased plan is enacted, the damage to confidence in our qualifications may already be entrenched. Therefore, I maintain that we need to accelerate the pilot and full rollout phases so that secured assessments are in place well before current proposals. A three-year delay risks leaving us exposed at the very moment when the sector, employers, and regulators are scrutinising the role of AI in education.

Targeted commentary on the discussion paper

“Massey faces additional challenges: balancing costs and logistics against current student

expectations of distance study.”

Comment: Cost and logistics matter, yet they are not determinative when the core product is at stake. The integrity of awards defines institutional value. We must be prepared to fund exam centres, invigilation teams, and a digital assessment platform because the alternative is devaluation of degrees and long-term brand damage. The cost of re-establishing secure assessment is visible and finite. The cost of lost credibility is diffuse and ongoing.

“General change fatigue are key considerations, as is the fact that some staff and students do not perceive a need for secured assessment at all.”

Comment: Change fatigue is real in many areas at Massey right now, yet this is not that kind of change. This is a return to core academic practice. It restores shared standards and will likely lift morale among staff who want to feel that their work is not in vain and that our graduates’ qualifications have value. In my unit there is overwhelming support for secured assessment because colleagues have watched the value of our qualifications slide. The claim that “some do not perceive a need” is likely a minority view and is often tied to contexts where authentication is easier or stakes are lower.

Final position I support the proposed direction and disagree with the perceived urgency of this challenge and pace for devising solutions. The scale of the risk we face requires action beginning in 2026 with interim and practical solutions, not 2028. We need firm minimum standards, earlier pilots, and secured checkpoints embedded in programmes well before the planned rollout. The restoration of in-person invigilation and high-assurance alternatives for distance students must be treated as core business, not optional reform. Integrity of our qualifications is non-negotiable, and every additional cohort graduating without secured assessment deepens the reputational damage which we cannot afford.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Computer Science and IT

16

Response to Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

Author: Naomi Cogger, Strategic Lead – Generative AI Engagement

Date: 15 September 2025

Endorsements: I endorse the submissions from Liz Norman, Simon Hall, and Ray Geor. My position is substantively aligned with theirs.

Summary

Universities exist to award qualifications that truly reflect what students have learned and can do. If we cannot be sure the graduates who cross our stage have met the learning outcome then our qualification lose all value, and so does the institution.

The challenge of assessment integrity is not new; issues of authorship have always been with us, but previously we could look away. Generative AI has removed all plausible deniability and the public is watching. In the current environment, we can no longer expect the public, employers, or professional bodies to trust our credentials if we cannot clearly demonstrate that grades are based on students' own work.

Assessment is not a peripheral matter; it is the university's core business and its most important responsibility. To maintain trust in our qualifications, we must validate students' learning via secure assessment. While distance education is part of Massey's DNA and must remain so, 'distance' cannot mean 'unsupervised'. Remote proctoring simply cannot anchor our strategy while AI-enabled circumvention remains so easy and undetectable.

The costs associated with rebuilding the infrastructure for secured assessment are substantial and should not be underestimated. However, the potential consequences of inaction are catastrophic. If we fail to invest in these essential measures, the integrity and value of our degrees will be compromised. It is difficult to comprehend not prioritizing action in response to the most significant risk facing our core mission. As such, we have a responsibility to respond decisively and safeguard the credibility of our qualifications for our students, staff, and broader community.

Answers to specific questions asked

1) What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

Rather than a numerical threshold, course teams should map each learning outcome to an authenticated assessment task and ensure that, by the end of the course, every student's achievement of those outcomes has been validated in a secure manner.

2) Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Absolutely, a uniform standard should apply across all programs. While the specific processes and types of assessment may differ to reflect the unique requirements of each discipline, the expectation for rigorous, secure validation of learning outcomes must remain consistent throughout the university.

At its heart, this is a matter of validity: Can we confidently affirm that every student who passes has genuinely met the learning outcomes? That assurance must not shift according to subject area. It would be indefensible to imply that the credibility of a Massey qualification depends on the discipline studied. Students, employers, and the wider public expect a Massey degree to signify the same high level of authentic achievement in every field.

3) What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

Acceptable options for distance students must ensure we can credibly validate identity and authorship to the same standard applied to on-campus students. In practice, this means:

Re-establishing regional exam centres (e.g., Auckland, Manawatū, Christchurch as a minimum; additional sites based on cohort density).

Conducting in-person vivas, practicals, and oral assessments at certified centers or supervised locations.

Providing scheduled deferred sittings for students with temporary impairments, and supervised alternatives at approved venues only in exceptional circumstances (including overseas centres).

Online/remote proctoring should not be considered part of our assessment arsenal at this time given its vulnerabilities; credibility requires certified, in-person supervision.

4) Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should prioritise in-person, secure assessment. I do not believe that online proctoring is a viable option for Massey given current and foreseeable risks, particularly in the context of generative AI. The integrity of our assessments depends on confidently verifying identity and authorship; certified exam centers are the only option that provides the level of assurance required.

5) What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Reintroducing secured assessment at scale presents real resourcing challenges, including people, places, systems, and student support. However, the risks of not resourcing this work are far greater: if we fail to invest, we risk losing our credibility as an issuer of degrees—an existential risk to the institution. These challenges must be worked through. Key areas include:

Recruitment, training, and scheduling of invigilators; re-establishing exam operations capability.

Venue booking and timetabling across campuses and regional hubs; accessibility planning.

Paper and/or controlled-digital workflows, chain-of-custody, moderation, standard-setting, and external examining for consequential decisions.

Student communications, preparation resources, and equitable deferral processes.

Technical readiness for controlled digital assessments where appropriate (without making digital platforms a blocker to in-person delivery).

6) Are the proposed timelines (full rollout by 2028) realistic?

Yes, they are realistic given what resources are currently being given to the project. However, the timeline is too slow. However, waiting two years for a full role out is strategically unacceptable. Each additional cohort assessed without adequate authentication widens the credibility gap around our grades and awards, the core product of the University. We should re-prioritise and re-resource to deliver materially expanded in-person secured assessment in 2026.

7) What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Comments align with those from Liz Norman, Ray Geor and Simon Hall.

8) What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Comments align with those from Liz Norman, Ray Geor and Simon Hall.

9) How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Turning to secured assessment is not a sign that we do not trust students. In fact, it is the opposite: by setting out clear, transparent expectations and applying the same standards to everyone, we create fairness and consistency. Secured assessments are designed to protect the value of students' work and qualifications. When students know exactly what is expected and how their work will be assessed, trust is strengthened, not undermined.

What does risk trust, however, are unclear systems that rely on opaque monitoring or unreliable detection tools. These approaches single out individuals unfairly and can create anxiety without improving learning outcomes. By contrast, a secured and transparent system makes the process predictable, proportionate, and explainable. Students can then focus on showing their knowledge and skills, confident that they are being assessed in a fair and equitable way.

17

Feedback on Discussion Document AC25-08-308Rev1 Discussion Paper Reintroduction of Secured Assessment revised.

Here is my feedback regarding the discussion above discussion paper.

The paper claims to be about secured assessment, but it is not defined what secured assessment is, it may be exams it may not.

I think the issue with current assessments is there is little to no academic integrity – why not call it that. Online exams were forced onto us by COVID overnight with no discussion or debate of the impacts on academic integrity, it is what we had to do. If it was discussed my feedback would be there is no academic integrity with online time constrained assessment for examinations. Online proctoring appears to have some integrity, but I would have been concerned about reliability. Also, online proctoring was not useable during COVID and was adopted after the threat of COVID.

My concerns were proven to be correct as the use of online proctoring of exams was found to be unreliable and problematic. In my opinion once the COVID threat was over – i.e. we went back to campus-based lectures, examinations should have returned to their pre COVID protocols.

Really COVID was used as an excuse to force changes in examinations that should never have happened without robust consideration of Academic discussion. It was a change forced by senior management without proper consultation and should be immediately reversed. What we did in 2019 for exams should be the basis of what is done in 2026. I do concede if we had a robust discussion with feedback, the changes may have happened anyway as Massey Senior Leadership has a record of taking feedback, ignoring it and doing what they want anyway.

Here is my experience with online TCA's, one started as an online proctored exam but had to change to TCA. I have had issues huge with use of AI, some was proven, a lot I had to accept as there was insufficient evidence to prove what was clearly obvious. On top of that students probably googled many answers, I have no idea. For one exam I had enough evidence and two students admitted to breaking exam rules with online text generation. This was resolved by two students doing a pen and paper exam. It took me 10 hours to sort out and 2 hours of supervision of an exam. It would have been far easier for me to spend three hours proctoring a pen and paper exam in the first place. So, if money is the issue, I would be saving money by proctoring my own face to face exams. For distance

I concede this may be trickier, but what we did for distance in 2019, should be the starting point of what we do in 2026. Anything less is proving Massey does not believe in academic integrity.

Food Technology

18

I strongly endorse the comments from Ray Geor, Simon Hall and Liz Norman. It is essential the Massey has widespread invigilated assessments as soon as possible. The proposed timeline means that a student starting their degree this year could finish in 2027 without ever doing an assessment for which we know that the person who did it was the person enrolled in the course. This is unacceptable, and if made public, would make Massey a laughing stock.

Massey switched teaching and assessment formats within a few weeks when covid struck. Surely we can return to something we know how to do, and did up until 5 years ago, in less than 2.5 years?

CoS

19

First, I endorse and agree with entirely the feedback on this document (AC25-08-308Rev1 Discussion Paper Reintroduction of Secured Assessment) provided by Ray Geor, Simon Hall, and Liz Norman. I have attached that feedback.

Second, just some of my own thoughts on the document and the feedback I have read:

I also believe the timeframes are far too long. Massey's reputation is currently being tarnished and faster action is required to halt this. Specifically related to exams, I believe a return to paper based, invigilated in-person exams are the gold standard solution. Student's identities can be verified and it is not possible to use AI in this exam setting. Two major issues would be resolved.

The document, AC25-08-308Rev1, states that such a return would be "in essence, establishing a new university process, which is a significant undertaking and cannot be done as BAU". I don't agree with the perspective stated in the quoted sentence. It would be a return to business as we have done before and I believe would be significantly faster and easier to implement with much less risk than an unknown digital solution. The reputational damage, national news etc, from the previous attempt at a digital solution is still being felt.

I believe a major justification for trying to persist with a digital invigilation solution is cost i.e. trying to reduce costs. While cost reduction is important for any organisation there are times when other factors are more important. As I have seen before working in industry, intangible costs such as Massey's reputational damage and a degradation of the perceived robustness of a Massey degree do not seem to be highlighted or discussed very much. There are real financial costs associated with reputational damage to an institution and its products. I believe re-instituting in person, paper based exams, would go a long way in mitigating these risks and costs. I also see a lack of any cost/benefit analysis. If this has been carried out, I believe this should be shared.

AC25-08-308Rev1 also mentions consideration of "change fatigue" as a potential impediment. I don't believe this would be such a large issue as I believe most of those involved are well intentioned and motivated to protect Massey's reputation and the quality of qualifications that Massey awards. Also, how much more resource and change intensive is implementing an unknown, and new digital solution, than something that a lot of staff already have experience with i.e. in-person, paper based exams?

Last, a response to some of the questions in AC25-08-308Rev1:

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should prioritise on-campus/in-person assessments. I would go further, especially keeping in mind the issues encountered with the "simultaneous computer-based assessment of 146 BVSc year 4 students across four main computer labs" mentioned in Ray Geor's feedback, and say that the in-person assessments should be paper based.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

Massey should move back to on-campus/in-person assessment. If this was the case then the rooms are still there, not much technology is actually required e.g. just clocks on the wall, staff will still be around who know how this should work, and students are well used to taking paper based exams e.g. they do this at secondary school.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I don't believe there is any more secured assessment than an in-person, paper based exam. Again, I am only referring to exams. I think most students would see this as a serious approach to exams, signifying that Massey takes student assessment very seriously. This would show that Massey does have a culture that values secured assessments. Placing students together in a room shows the students that all are treated equally and rules are applied to all. With students taking digitally based assessments, individually wherever they are, students may feel that others are not playing by the same rules that they are.

If thinking about overemphasising surveillance, I can't think of anything that would make students feel more overly surveilled than online digital assessment with online proctoring. For this the student needs to install software on their personal system, be video recorded during the entire assessment, and have the installed software essentially take control of their machine. The student does not know what will happen to any recordings, which are likely to be recordings in their home setting.

Apologies for the very long email.

CoS

In my capacity as the Chair of the Selection Committee for the Veterinary Programme, I felt it important to provide some feedback. Unfortunately, since I am heading overseas tomorrow, my comments will have to be brief, and perhaps a little less well-formed than they otherwise should be.

The default position of vet selection has always been to trust the validity of the course grades for the four CoS pre-requisite courses sat by the majority of those students applying each year to Vet. That position was challenged this year by the release of the University position on use of AI in assessments. This led to the rapid adoption of the Science Selection Test in 2025.

With respect to the return to secured assessments, I would strongly support this be done as early as possible echoing Liz Norman's comments that this be as early as possible, even 2026.

A return to secured assessments would allow the Selection committee to again have faith in the validity of course grades and would obviate the need for Science Selection Test in the future – a test that added significant additional stress to students and staff in 2025.

The added advantage is that secured assessment is still an important part of the assessment strategy in the Vet Course and so we can have greater certainty that those who enter Vet are well set up to succeed.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this feedback

Nga mihi

CoS

21

I am of the view that every course MUST have at least one physical assessment, let it be an exam or a face-to-face interview. I cannot think of any other way of authenticating a student's work. This way, students would really see the need to achieve the intended learning outcomes, rather than simply using Gen AI to do their assignments. Having said that, we should not entirely discourage the use of Gen AI tools, because they are a great learning tool. Rather, we should make sure students use those tools for learning, rather than simply to pass the assessments. In my courses where computer programming is involved, I would really like to have face-to-face interviews. However, such assessments are challenging in large classes. Therefore, you will need to invest of more human resources.

Before implementing anything, Massey can collect information from individual lecturers on how they run assessments currently, how they would like to change the assessment structure to increase authenticity, what challenges they foresee and what additional resources they might need.

Regards

School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

22

I have read the Discussion paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments. I was rather concerned at the timetable proposed. In Science and Specifically in Mathematics, we really

miss having closed book examinations. Surely we can go back to pen and paper examinations next year as an interim measure?

Most of my colleagues in other universities restarted examinations soon after the pandemic.

Apart from the issue of ensuring the validity of our qualifications, cognitive science research indicates that closed book examinations and tests can play an important role in learning in science. We should be trying to improve our learning environment to be as good as we can make it, even if this just means going back to what we did before the pandemic in the first instance. We want to teach our graduates to be as good as they can apart from validating their qualification.

I would also be surprised if moving back to our old system was not cheaper for the university as the present system is very costly in academic staff time apart from the other issues.

Massey took 4 years to attempt to produce a secured (online) assessment. I don't think it should be another 4 years before we try again. Our response should be more agile. It is too late for the current semester but we should be starting next year. Setting up a committees and working groups may be helpful, but in the mean time we should re-establish what worked prior to the pandemic. There certainly would be value in having the capacity to run secure closed book class tests online even before they reach a level appropriate for a final examination.

There is still expertise among academic staff in writing Tests and Examinations. If there is not expertise within the university for administration of this, then there is plenty of expertise to call upon around us in other universities, colleges and schools.

Best regards

CoS

23

I'm writing to offer my support for the feedback submitted by the College of Sciences regarding the reintroduction of secured assessments. My observations and data are in full alignment with the College of Sciences' formal response, and I hope they will help strengthen the case for urgent action. As the course coordinator of 123.271 Molecules to Materials, I've observed firsthand the impact that assessment modality has on both academic integrity and student equity. From an evidence-based and pedagogical standpoint, I believe the most pragmatic and equitable approach is to return to in-person, paper-based examinations wherever feasible.

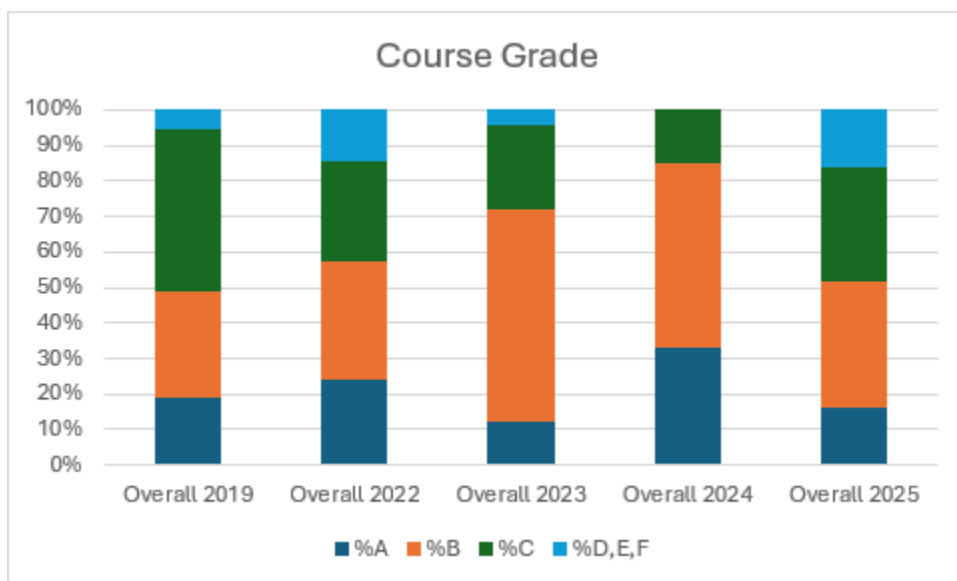
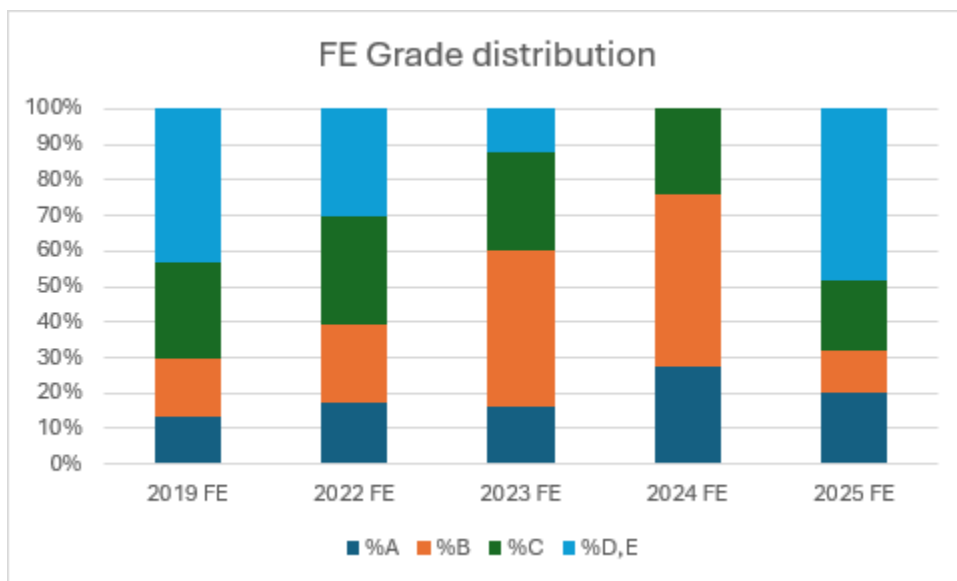
Online proctoring systems have proven unreliable, often adding stress to an already high-pressure environment. Students are required to log in early to troubleshoot technical issues, and disparities in home environments (ranging from quiet studies with stable internet to noisy kitchens with limited connectivity) create an uneven playing field. Meanwhile, un-proctored, online assessments make it difficult to confidently detect or deter academic dishonesty. The threshold for accusing a student of cheating is necessarily high, given the potential legal and relational consequences. This creates an environment where cheating can go undetected, encouraging behaviour that disadvantages honest students and contributes to grade inflation.

To illustrate this, I've attached two grade distribution graphs from the 123.271 course:

Final Exam Grades — 2019 and 2025 (in-person, paper-based) show balanced distributions, while 2022–2024 (online, un-proctored) show inflated A/B grades and a near disappearance of D/E grades.

38

Overall Course Grades — A similar inflationary trend appears across all assessment components, indicating the issue is systemic, not confined to exams.



These grade distribution graphs show a marked shift during the years when online, un-proctored assessments were used, with higher proportions of A grades and fewer lower grades. While there may be multiple factors influencing this pattern, it is consistent with the risks to academic integrity identified in the College of Sciences' feedback and the discussion paper. This reinforces the need for robust, authenticated assessment methods.

I strongly support the College recommendation that $\geq 80\%$ of course assessments be authenticated and compulsory. Reinstating in-person assessments is a necessary step to restore trust, fairness, and academic rigour.

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

Mathematics

1. [Name] endorses Ray Geor and Simon Hall's submission.
2. [Name] endorses Liz Norman's submission.
3. Summary of this submission: The proposal to reintroduce in-person invigilated assessments in 2028 is too slow and puts the reputation of Massey and all its qualifications on the brink of a fatal collapse.

The credibility of Massey's qualifications is being put at risk by the university having no means of forming trustworthy judgements of student learning.

As such, most grades and/or qualifications from Massey University for work done during almost a decade in the 2020s will be essentially worthless as there is no way to authenticate who did the work for the qualification, because no trustworthy judgements of student learning have been in place.

Given the lack of secured assessments, how can Massey vouch that a student has any of the attributes in its "Graduate Profiles"?

The "Future of Examination Requirements Working Group" has had more than 12 months since the failure of Online Supervised Examinations to address Massey's absence of in-person, on-campus (or exam centre) invigilated assessments. Why has there been so little progress to date? This work should have been done urgently in Semester 2, 2024, and in-person invigilated assessments should have been ready to go in Semester 1, 2025. The fact that this core feature of operating a university is now regarded as "cannot be done as BAU" is a significant failure of SLT. Massey needs to ensure that the team in charge of this process can implement it. The lack of progress to date poses an urgent threat to the authenticity of Massey University as a whole.

Answers to the questions at the end of the Discussion Paper:

- (i) For most courses, the cheapest and most practical assessment type is an in-person invigilated exam. Once this is up and running, then the university can take up the luxury of looking into other types of assessments and consider this question again.
- (ii) Every course on a student's academic transcript should have some type of secured assessment, and those assessments should typically make up approximately 80% of the weight for the course. Otherwise, there is no way that students can claim they have reached the learning outcomes for the course. Nor can the university vouch that its graduates meet any of the attributes in its graduate profiles.

- (iii) I am not sure what is meant by “minimum standard”. This question appears to be a red herring in the context of the urgent crisis the university is facing by not having invigilated in-person exams.
- (iv) Distance students should have the option of attending exams at one of Massey’s campuses, or perhaps at an exam centre (e.g., in Christchurch).
- (v) Massey has had more than 12 months to investigate online proctoring since the failure in Semester 1, 2024. Why is this question still being asked?
- (vi) Why is the question of resourcing even being asked? Has the “Future of Examination Requirements Working Group” not even thought about resourcing in the last 12 months? If that’s true, then a check should be done to ensure there are enough classrooms on the Albany Campus to schedule exams, before the proposed leasing arrangements go ahead.
- (vii) The “additional supports needed for this transition” are whatever it takes to restore secured in-person exams as business as usual.
- (viii) The question about support for academic staff is disingenuous. Academic staff need a competent administration that can deliver secured, in-person exams as a matter of business as usual.
- (ix) The present culture of open-book, open-AI, open-friends “assessment”, i.e., no trustworthy judgements of student learning, is the worst possible culture and continues to put Massey’s credibility at risk.

25

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this document and the proposed plan. I am responding personally and also in my role as the Chemistry Group Lead in SFTNS.

As you may know, Ray Geor circulated a response to CoS staff from himself and dpVC Prof Simon Hall and also from CoS DTL A/Prof Liz Norman. I’ll start my feedback by giving my strongest endorsement to the responses given by Ray, Simon and Liz. Ray, Simon and Liz’s responses have captured the key issues and have highlighted the significant risks to University associated with the proposed plan contained in AC25-08-308.

The Chemistry Group has already recognised the issues outlined in the document and have already implemented changes to our assessments, more or less as described in the plan. And we have done this in less than 12 months (i.e. following the OSE debacle in Semester 1 2024). So I am struggling to understand why it will take until 2028 (!) to fully implement any proposed changes. The plan seems to imply that we will be starting from scratch with in-person assessments – this is clearly not the case, in the chemistry group at least, it was simply a return to a mode of assessment that nearly all of us had been running for many years prior to 2020. My guess is this is true for the rest of the University (including key academic support staff who were involved in the preparation of in-person examinations prior to Covid).

Please find below my responses to the questions:

o What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

Any type of assessment where the examiner (or invigilator) and student are physically present in the same space e.g. in-person examination, oral interview, assessment of practical work and skills

o What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

I would allow some formative assessment to be unsecured, but to have any confidence in the validity of the total course grade, I would suggest a minimum of 80% of the assessment of *every course* should be secured assessment

o Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Minimum standard across all disciplines. And see the response above as to what the minimum standard should be. And the minimum standard needs to meet the criterion of validating student achievement in every course.

o What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

Without authentication and validation our qualifications are worthless. Cost should not be a consideration because we should be prepared to spend whatever it takes to protect our qualifications. Please see the Ray Geor / Simon Hall analysis regarding accessibility, I fully their conclusions regarding accessibility for distance students

o Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

We should be doing both – I cannot understand why this question being framed as a choice – *all* of our assessments need to be robust and secure

o What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

1). In-person assessments. As noted above, the chemistry group have returned to in-person assessments. This includes in-person assessments for large pre-vet courses. The staffing issue was easily handled. And again as noted above, the University has successfully managed in-person assessments for many years prior to Covid, so I see no new challenges for running them again. For student support, our 100-level students have done only in-person assessment this year and we have had no issues with student support. Our 200-level and 300-level students have also adapted to a return to in-person assessments.

2). Distance. This is clearly more challenging. One innovative solution that we also introduced in one of the pre-vet courses was online oral examinations. We are aware that technology does exist to defeat the oral examination format but the protocols that we designed made it very challenging for students to implement these technologies. Having a reliable online proctoring system would be a good step forward here.

o What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Once again, this question seems to be based on the assumption that we are starting in-person assessments from scratch. We have years of experience and knowledge base (and we would be more than happy to share this experience and expertise with CET if requested), and our former (very

experienced) academic administrative support staff can provide the necessary admin support. Regarding workload allocation, our experience that moving from online to in-person assessments is cost-neutral regarding workload.

o What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

The chemistry staff regularly read chemical education literature and attend meetings of chemistry professional bodies where assessment best practice and new developments are regularly discussed i.e. the chemistry staff develop their own disciplinary literacies and assessment skills (it is part of our job description) . The University could support this effort by dispersing the generalist approach offered by CET and embedding the learning specialists in the teaching units across the University.

o How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

As noted by Liz Norman, the trust culture is largely driven by the students themselves. It is up to the teaching staff to provide the teaching and assessment environments that support the student's trust culture. An approach to avoid the feeling of surveillance is to focus on the entire educational process (teaching and assessing) rather than the assessment process alone. The same tools that can be used for surveillance can be used to provide detailed feedback and support for learning. If teaching staff provide students with feedback at various steps throughout an assessment, the teaching staff can survey the students progress (and use of AI for instance), provide feedback (which builds trust) and the overall outcome is a win-win for both students and teaching staff.

CoS

26

I'm writing with some brief feedback on the secure assessment discussion document.

I strongly support a return to secure assessments as a matter of urgency, to protect the credibility of our qualifications. For courses in my discipline (mathematics) I would like a return to in-person pen-and-paper supervised examinations, by the 2026 academic year if at all possible. The cost of this should be understood as simply part of the cost of carrying out our core function.

All courses should have a secured assessment component, comprising 60% or more of the total assessment. There should be a common standard required across all programmes. We should concentrate on in-person assessments, not online proctoring: I see online proctoring as unproven technology, that will be subject to ongoing efforts to circumvent it.

At present the courses I teach have no secured assessments whatsoever. I've caught more students cheating since we made the move to unsecured assessments (on what we understood to be a temporary emergency basis!) five years ago, than in my 13 years at Massey prior to that - and I know I'm not catching everyone. I have doubts that all of the grades I award are correct, and I'm increasingly feeling that I will be unable to write meaningful letters of recommendation for students who request one. A return to secured assessment is urgently needed to restore our own faith in what we're doing.

Thank you and best wishes,

43

CoS

27

Please find below my comments on the Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment:

The plan outlined in the discussion paper woefully under addresses this enormous issue. A "possible" 2028 implementation is completely inadequate. We need secured assessment in some form (written, online, oral), available to every course by the end of semester 1 2026. The academic integrity of our courses and programmes have been undermined for many years now, with multiple cohorts of graduates completing without adequate levels of secured assessment. Whilst staff have strived to be creative in an attempt to make assessment as effective as possible given the multitude of limitations, the continued failures, delays and lack of investment and action in this area undermine our reputation as a quality University. The longer this is delayed the more students are increasingly losing sight of the fundamental purpose of secure assessments—as safeguards that uphold academic integrity, ensure fairness, and validate genuine learning within higher education.

Kind regards,

CoS

28

I support the reintroduction of secured assessments.

- There must be a secure component in every course. Otherwise an unacceptable proportion of students will advance to a subsequent course without having reached the required standard.
- The proposed timeline should be accelerated as the University faces a critical risk if news about the non-security of our courses and qualifications, and the widespread unauthorised use of AI, were to become public knowledge.

At present the situation in mathematics is that AI-based solutions are undetectable; its use provides a huge incentive to students to use AI without declaration and a corresponding unfairness to students who do not do this.

CoS

29

College of Sciences Board passed unanimously.

This board has no confidence in, and does not support the discussion paper, “An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessment”.

The board is of the view that unless the proposed volume of secured assessment is significantly increased to include availability for every course, and the delivery timeline is urgently revisited (aiming for complete roll out of secured assessments by the end of Semester 1 2026), the reputation of the College of Sciences and University more generally will be irreparably damaged by the loss of public trust in the veracity of our qualifications.

 30

CoCA supports the proposal and looks forward to the working group discussions indicated in the proposal. Although CoCA has less immediate concern than other Colleges in terms of defining and prescribing secured assessment, we are keen to engage in the work.

 31

I thoroughly agree with the comments that Liz Norman has made in her response (and with the comments of Ray Geor and Simon Hall, but I think Liz has hit the nail on the head). A prompt return to assessments is essential for Massey's reputation and hence survival. While I accept that a return to a full exam schedule is not business as usual, conducting exams is one the most fundamental operations that a university does, so a delay until 2028 is unwelcome. Upfront costs running large numbers of exams and setting this up quickly will easily be off-set by the costs of other issues as explained by Liz.

CoS

 32

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: Reintroducing Secured Assessments

I welcome the plan to reintroduce secured assessments, but I am very concerned about the proposed timeline. Spending 2026 in discussion, trialing in 2027, and introducing them in some courses in 2028 is far too slow. Massey needs to act more quickly—secured, in-person assessments should return as standard much sooner.

Secured assessments are essential to the credibility of our qualifications. Without them, we cannot reliably claim that graduates have achieved the learning outcomes of their degrees. Many current students will finish their studies having never sat a single secure assessment. Employers and society may begin to question the value of a Massey degree.

45

The issue is not only about AI. At present, we do not verify the identity of students in exams, and we allow them to sit within 24-hour windows, which makes question-sharing inevitable. Limiting secured assessments to only some courses would also undermine integrity, as students could complete degrees by avoiding the secured ones.

The reputational damage from the OSE system failure in 2024 should not be repeated. But the greater risk is continuing with our current approach. If it became widely known that Massey has had no secure assessments since 2020, and plans none until 2028, the impact on our reputation and graduates would be severe.

The solution is to return to on-campus, invigilated examinations, which Massey successfully managed for many years. Distance students can reasonably be asked to attend exam centres, and most offshore students are already assessed securely through partner institutions.

Recommendations

- Reinstating in-person, invigilated assessments as standard.
- Using handwritten exams as the practical default, given the lack of computer labs and difficulties with bring-your-own-device setups.

33

Professor Jenny Weston – Academic Lead, Veterinary Science

And on behalf of:

Professor Eloise Jillings – Associate Academic Dean, Admissions and Students

Professor Wendi Roe – Deputy Head of School

Associate Professor Dani Aberdein – Associate Academic Dean, Clinical Training Hayley Hunt
– BVSc3 Year Coordinator

Introduction

We fully endorse the submissions made by College of Sciences Leaders – that by Professors Geor and Hall (PVC and DPVC) and that by Associate Professor Liz Norman (DTL).

Specifically:

The assessment of learning outcomes is critical for the public and other stakeholders to have faith in the qualifications that are bestowed on our graduates.

Verification of the identity of who has completed an assessment is critical to signing off on the adequacy of training in professional programmes.

The reduced capability to provide secured assessments is a critical issue that must be addressed urgently (i.e. for the 2026 academic year).

All compulsory assessments that contribute to the final grade for a course should be secured and secured assessments should comprise at least 80% of the assessment in any course. This should be standard across all qualifications.

The university should prioritise investing in resources to provide onsite / in-person authenticated assessments rather than online proctoring solutions.

The remainder of this submission focuses on assessment in the Bachelor of Veterinary Science programme.

BVSc Programme Overview

This flagship qualification is internationally accredited by:

- The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council
- The American Veterinary Medical Association Council on Education
- The Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons

The BVSc is currently ranked 19th globally for Veterinary Science in the QS Rankings 2025, making it the highest-ranked veterinary programme in Australasia and South-East Asia. It is also the second highest ranked programme across all New Zealand universities.

Assessment in the BVSc

The Australasian Veterinary Boards Council accreditation standards explicitly outline expectations for assessment:

11.1 The Veterinary School has a comprehensive, coherent and robust assessment strategy. The validity, reliability and educational impact of assessments are appropriate to their purpose and evidenced through relevant evaluation data and processes

11.3 Progressive development of each student towards entry-level competence across the program can be demonstrated. Only students who have fully met Programme Learning outcomes and Day One Competencies are permitted to graduate

11.6 Assessment must be planned and managed to evidence achievement

Assessment in the BVSc is multi-faceted including assignments, group-work, skills sign-offs and performance on clinical rotations, with in-person, invigilated exams a critical component. These assessments ensure that graduates meet international standards and are eligible to register as veterinarians in multiple jurisdictions without further licensing. Ongoing accreditation provides assurance to students, employers, and the public that Massey is producing competent, practice-ready graduates.

Over the past ten years we have progressively moved from invigilated exams where the students handwrite their answers to online platforms where the students are invigilated in the computer labs on the Manawatū campus. This has been necessary as class size has increased from 100 to 175 students as it became impossible to have exams marked in a timely fashion with handwritten answer books. Online exams also had the benefit of incorporating some auto-mark questions, negated the need to decipher student handwriting, were easier to assess for plagiarism and were better accepted by students who no longer spend much time making handwritten notes.

Changes since 2020

Except for the most stringent periods of COVID restrictions, we have continued to run in-person, invigilated, online examinations. The fact that most of the rest of the university was using online remote proctoring or Time Constrained Assessments (TCAs) meant that we mostly did not have to compete with other programmes for access to the computer labs on campus.

Selection for the BVSc involves students meeting a specific GPA requirement in Massey university science courses and it has been concerning that the grades used to derive this GPA have not relied on in-person, invigilated assessment since 2020.

Recent Infrastructure Failures

The release of the August discussion paper *AC25/08/308Rev1: An Initial Plan for the Reintroduction of Secured Assessments* was initially encouraging. However, subsequent events have highlighted serious infrastructure limitations:

- 25 August: A mid-semester exam for BVSc4 (146 students) was abandoned due to apparent 'network failure'.
- 10 September: The same cohort experienced another failure, revealing that Massey's Virtual Desktop Interface (VDI) can only support ~200 students across Manawatū and Auckland campuses at any one time.

This marks a regression from 2024 and even mid-year 2025, when exams ran successfully. These failures have caused significant stress for students and placed undue burden on staff, who had to rapidly convert exams to Time-Constrained Assessments (TCAs) which involved changing some content and setting the exam up on a different platform and accepting that the open-book format and lack of verification of identity could compromised the integrity of the results.

The remaining semester two tests/exams prior to the end-of-year exam period have been changed to 'bring your own device' using wifi in some of the large lecture theatres. The students and staff are understandably concerned about the end-of-year final exams running from 28th October to 13th November where we will again be using the computer labs.

Limitations of Current Computer Lab Facilities

Even when functional, the Manawatū computer labs present challenges with cramped seating and close proximity of desktops meaning that it is difficult to avoid seeing the screens of other students. The desktop machines in the rooms are old, slow and a proportion do not work on any given day. Using lecture theatres for invigilated assessments is also problematic as the tiered seating compromises exam integrity. Aside from assessment, most current teaching spaces have limited power outlets which hinders device use in a blended learning environment.

Summary

Given the current limitations, Massey must urgently explore alternative solutions for secured assessment. Options may include:

- Investment in upgraded IT infrastructure and exam facilities
- A temporary return to printed, handwritten exams (not preferred due to declining handwriting legibility and stamina)
- Avoiding reductions in Massey Printery capacity
- Enhanced IT support and services

Reliable IT infrastructure is essential to uphold the integrity of in-person, invigilated assessments - ideally delivered online with lock-down browsers. Valid, verifiable assessment is not only a cornerstone of academic quality but a non-negotiable requirement for BVSc accreditation.

34

Feedback on “Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments”

School of Psychology

I strongly support the reintroduction of secured assessments. I've organised my feedback according to the questions in the discussion document.

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

I think the document already identifies the most obvious candidates and I don't really have any other great options to suggest. One point I'd make is that I don't think videoconference interviews or presentations should count, since it's pretty easy for students to surreptitiously use AI in those contexts.

By the way: It's great that you're considering a broad range of secured assessments, but most of these are only feasible in a small subset of courses; invigilated exams clearly need to be a major part of the plan.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

It's hard to put a number on this, but it should be something substantial enough that students who put in enough hard work to succeed even without AI are meaningfully rewarded. 20%?

As a sidenote, I would suggest that secured assessments carry percentage weights (not just pass/fail) but *also* that it is only possible to pass a course with a secured assessment if you pass the secured assessment. We need the former so there's a meaningful reward for very good

students over average ones who over-rely on AI. We need the latter so there isn't a pathway to passing qualifications relying solely on AI.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Typically, I would say it's best to leave it up to disciplines, but I think that could produce some problematic incentives (i.e., disciplines that offer less/no secured assessments might temporarily pull in more students despite incurring substantial costs for integrity and reputation of the university in the long term). So a minimum standard seems a good idea.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

I'd prefer reinstating our old system of external examination centres available globally. It was pretty amazing. No doubt it would be costly, yes – but we would surely be running much *fewer* exams than we did in the past, so we'd already be applying *some* relative cost savings there.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I would suggest investing most heavily in-person assessment. Yes, it is costly. But it comes with a stronger assurance of integrity, and less risk of unpredictable technical failures. It's also generally perceived by students and the public as something that's stressful and challenging but a conventional part of university life. In contrast, online proctored examinations don't offer the same assurance of integrity while simultaneously having a worse public image: People hate the intrusive software and unreliability.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

I think the question of how much to lean into pen and paper vs. in-person invigilated examinations with computers is an interesting one and I don't know the right answers here. In my discipline, probably like a lot of others, using a computer would be more *convenient* for both students (and for us when marking!), but arguably not *essential*.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Unsure

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

I think a big part of what needs to happen is the central university taking care of the "secured" part for a substantial majority of secured assessments (e.g., with invigilated assessments). There'd still be assessment construction challenges even then, but they'd arguably be "business as usual" ones that might not require a ton of extra resourcing.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I think a big part of this is emphasising the benefits to students. Secured assessment is fairer for those students who are actually doing the work rather than using AI ways that breach the rules (and we still do have many such honest students!) Secured assessments also help protect the reputations of our qualifications and their signalling value to employers.

Any other comments as appropriate.

I think you're probably on the same page here, but I definitely think that secured assessment should occur within individual *courses* (even if we are applying some qualification-level thinking to the reintroduction as a whole). In contrast, trying to set up individual assessments that apply to multiple courses within a qualification would be a logistical nightmare.

I think one of the main challenges to solve will be Aegrotats and Impaired Performance applications. In the past, we essentially treated internal assessments and secured exams as interchangeable, such that if a student missed an exam we would happily just predict their mark based on their internal assessments. This obviously wouldn't work now since it'd be an easy "out" for students relying purely on AI to get by (especially when we don't currently require evidence for AGs or IPs). Yet at the same time, we do need backup plans for students who genuinely can't attend a secured assessment due to illness/injury/etc. So *unlike* the old system, I think we probably need a method for re-sitting/extending secured assessments.

I imagine you'll get some feedback suggesting we need this done faster, but the draft timeline seems realistically about as fast as this can possibly be done.

Yet at the same time, it worries me that we have almost no method for protecting the integrity of our qualifications until this is done. I don't know what the solution to this is, but we probably need to do something about that (however imperfect) while we (re)build a secured assessment system.

35

Feedback on the Initial Plan for the Reintroduction of Secured Assessment from CoHSS Teaching and Learning Committee.

The CoHSS Teaching and Learning Committee would like to thank Academic Committee for the opportunity to provide feedback on this consultation document. The committee would also like to acknowledge the work being undertaken on this project by Education Futures, and Jean Jacoby in particular. The committee recognises the importance of this proposal and is highly appreciative of the careful work that underpins it.

The committee was joined for this meeting by Professor Bryan Walpert, who has particular concerns for the implications of the reintroduction of secured assessments for the Creative Writing programme. Below is a summary of key points raised by members of the committee in our August meeting.

The possibilities for secure assessment will look different for different disciplines, so whatever solution comes out of this process will need to be flexible.

AI is a bigger issue for some disciplines than it is for others. In Creative Writing, for example, it is a relatively minor problem. Occasionally a student will panic and use AI, but those students can be helped. Most students are engaged in what they are doing because they like what they are doing. In

this context, an imposition of secured assessments may be addressing a problem which does not exist.

It would be difficult to create a legitimate exam which tested a student on writing creatively within a fixed timeframe, and it would displace more useful assessments.

Exams may be a useful form of assessment in some contexts, but the linear writing required for exams no longer reflects how people write or think. As a college, we have moved a long way from reliance on examinations, and for sound pedagogical reasons. There is a danger that in moving back to formal exams, we will cease to measure learning and instead measure simply the student's ability to pass exams – these two are not the same thing.

The implementation plan for the secure assessments is over three years, but that is a long time in the current technological environment. What is finally implemented may look very different from what is now proposed. How responsive will the proposed plan be to developments which may occur within the three years leading up to roll-out 2028?

It is not clear in some contexts if the term programme means a subject area within a qualification (e.g. Creative Writing), or if it means the qualification itself (e.g. BA).

If students have to pass secure assessments at specified points in their study to be awarded a degree, will those assessments will have to be in core/compulsory courses?

There are some media production courses where there is no issue about students using AI.

A suggestion endorsed by several members was that specialisations/majors decide for themselves how they want to deal with this issue. The secured assessments/exams would not be mandated, but be available if needed. The programmes would work with the College to produce a reasonable solution.

Dr Tony Fisher

Chair, College of Humanities and Social Sciences Teaching and Learning Committee.

36

Feedback on the Discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

Overall, I agree with the need to ensure our assessments can be validated and authenticated and the need to do this as quickly and effectively as possible. I am concerned that the plan laid out moves too slowly when the issues we face around assessment are very real and happening now. A delay in making change in the order of years could cost Massey University in terms of its credibility and frustrate staff in terms of their ability to address increasing concerns about the authentic nature of assessments being submitted. We need to move at pace to ensure that the degrees that we award are credible and the knowledge that students leave with can be validated as being developed and applied based on their own merit and deep and critical learning. This is important for our students, so they know their degrees are respected and for employers to know that our students have achieved necessary learning outcomes themselves and personally achieved high standards in their discipline. The issue we face with assessment is pressing and is escalating and so needs an emergency type response. We might not be able to do it all at once in a timely manner to keep pace

with the need, but we need a phased plan of action that starts as early as next year whilst ensuring that in the long term we are future proofing our education base.

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

A broad range of assessments should be considered secured – the key should be associated with validation and authentication but within that the scope should be as broad as possible and not just move back to the exam as the main form of secure assessment. The danger with a move towards secured assessment is that the emphasis switches back to in person paper examinations. In many disciplines however there has been a move away from examinations because there are pedagogical reasons why exams aren't the most effective way to assess student learning. For example, exams can often reward rote learning and memorisation rather than critical thinking and problem solving with students cramming facts rather than really understanding concepts and application. Exams are also incredibly stressful for some students, so not all perform well under this time of situation, so performance doesn't always equate to actual understanding. Exams also favour certain learning styles whilst disadvantaging others and can have limited real-world relevance. It will be important therefore to explore innovative ways of assessing students in a secure way that still support creativity, collaboration and application of knowledge to real world problems. This potentially means exploring oral presentations, validated group work, field and lab-based activities that can be authenticated as well as new methods of assessment that can be authenticated in an AI world. The concept of the 'sandwich programme' as practiced in the UK might be something worth considering for some disciplines. This could take the form of what is known as a thick sandwich - this being the idea of spending a one continuous year on placement or work experience in between other years of study or a thin sandwich where multiple shorter periods of work experience are interspersed throughout the degree.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

Most assessments in a course of programme should be secured in some way otherwise the validity of the students' achievements in a given course might not be able to be achieved.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Standards should be similar across all programmes. If this doesn't occur, then some programmes will be seen to weaker or less credible than others. All Massey programmes should aim for higher than a minimum standard and be recognised for high standards.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

I am a firm believer that distance students should be able to complete their studies totally via distance i.e. not have to come on campus at all if they don't want to. Students studying via distance often have big constraints on their time that make travel difficult. Cost is a factor if they have to travel but I would imagine that time is the biggest limiting factor. We also need to validate distance students' assessments as much as internal students, so I think we need solutions where we try to validate remotely as much as possible. So, if students have to sit exams they do so in close proximity to their place of residence. But I think exploring innovative ways of assessing remotely should be explored as well as considering collaborations with local relevant industry or local government where distance students could connect, gain valuable relevant experience and be validated in the practical application of what they do.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I think we need to think outside the box. This is a good opportunity to rethink assessments for the future. What ever we do should be trying to future proof the institution so investment should be in innovative solutions not quick fixes or backward moves to old ways of doing things. The future should hold a mixture of assessment types as it currently does so we shouldn't put all our eggs in one basket.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

The main resourcing challenges are probably mostly to do with staffing. To do this quickly and effectively it will be important to cost the change and roll out appropriate and allocated additional support to staff.

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

There will inevitably need to be some training when introducing new ways of doing thing. Also, workload allocations need to be calculated to accommodate the changes needed so staff don't become more overloaded. Technical support is also probably necessary depending on the type of changes being implemented.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Time is important. So often staff have to develop courses and make changes without being given adequate time to do this and space in their workload. This means that important changes and developments shouldn't just be an add on to existing workload. Compensation in terms of freeing up time needs to be given to staff to allow change to be made appropriately and implemented effectively. Hence this might need additional staffing to help roll out more innovative options. Alongside this access to educational designers who can advise on appropriate assessment types that assess against learning outcomes and cover different ways of learning and applying knowledge in an authentic and valid way.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I think we already have this culture. What needs to happen is a change in what is normal in terms of assessments. It is a transition and one that is happening globally as other institutions grapple with this so I think it will be some thing that is progressive and that students will recognise as important to validate their degrees.

CoS

37

Response to: Discussion paper An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

Assoc. Prof. Tammy Lynch, Academic Group Lead – Mathematics, Deputy Head School of Mathematical and Computational Sciences

I appreciate the opportunity to provide feedback on the initial plan. Having said that, I am disappointed with the stated plan and believe we must move toward secured assessment in all courses with urgency (for the 2026 academic year). This will require ensuring the allocation of sufficient resources as any University worldwide must do. It is the cost of providing reputable qualifications.

Employers, funders, students, staff all have the right to expect that each course grade we award is earned by the student it is attributed to. While most would be understanding that authentication processes were necessarily suspended during COVID isolations, there is little excuse for the lack of return to authenticated assessment this many years later. The rest of New Zealand, and the world, has moved on and are now not only returning to many of the secured authentication processes of pre-COVID, but are in fact strengthening these processes in the time of AI. Allowing any course to have no secured assessment should no longer be allowed.

The statement that “*ensuring that there is no pathway through a programme without some form of authentication at key stages*” is not strong enough. It implies that there will be courses where grades are not authenticated and this will in turn lead to reasonable scepticism about the value of any grade awarded. It also leads to the reasonable question: How can we ensure a student has the pre-requisite knowledge required when entering a course if the pre-requisite course was not authenticated? Mathematics, and I am sure many subjects, requires a building up of layers of understanding often visualized as a brick wall of concepts. When concepts are not understood (bricks are missing) the understanding (wall) falls down. If we have whole courses (many bricks) in our programme (wall) that are not authenticated (structurally sound), the whole programme (wall) collapses.

It is my strong view that there should be authentication for the majority of course assessments and that these assessments should be compulsory. Authenticated assessments can take many forms including invigilated tests and exams, laboratories, practicals, presentations, and field trips, as examples.

I am strongly in favour of the return to in-person invigilated assessments, such as exams, for distance as well as internal students. We did this for many years pre-COVID and I do not see any reasonable reason why we cannot return to this. Digital assessment is seriously compromised in the age of AI making in-person invigilation even more important. As an Academic Group Lead in touch with other Mathematics Heads of

Department, I am not aware of any other New Zealand University offering a Mathematics degree that has not already done this as they recognize the risk to their programme reputation if they were not to do so. I appreciate there is both an inconvenience and added cost for distance students in this return to in-person assessment, but this was managed for many years pre-COVID and the reputational

risks to the perceived validity of course grades and qualifications of not doing so are too high and offset any cost and inconvenience. For mathematics, I would argue that the return to in-person exams would also eliminate many student concerns in working with scanned hand-written solutions submitted through timed online systems with AI statement requirements all of which have created anxiety. It would certainly be welcomed over the many issues with the online invigilated systems employed post-COVID.

Response to questions

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

In science obvious options are in-person invigilated tests and exams, practicals, field trips, labs, and presentations. But there will be others. The key here is that the assessment ensures it is the identified student sitting the assessment and that they only have access to the allowed resources. It is also extremely important that Massey provides a return to in-person invigilated exams as an available option. This is the authenticated assessment type that best meets the requirements in many subject areas.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

The number is likely course dependent. A lab based subject may have many labs, for example. What is more important is that all courses have a *majority* of assessment as secured assessment and that this assessment is *compulsory*. An amount of 75% or greater would seem reasonable.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

Authenticated assessment standards in terms of amount of secured assessment should be the same across all qualifications to ensure that a Massey degree is seen as a reputable degree. The types and number of authenticated assessment should vary according to their subject relevance.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

We achieved in-person onsite invigilated assessments for distance students for many years pre-COVID and there is no reason we cannot return to this. It is the cost of gaining (for the student) and providing (for the University) a reputable University degree.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

In-person must be prioritized. Online has significantly more risks from the risks associated with the reliability of software/systems used and their associated support to the management of AI use. As a mathematician I believe hand-written in-person assessment works best and causes the least anxiety for our students. This will be true in other subjects as well. I understand that there may also be subjects that want an in-person solution that involves, for example, bringing your own device, and that this will likely require verifiable lockdown software.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

As I am proposing the return to in-person invigilated exams, the resourcing

“challenges” should be largely known. We did this as recently as 2019 and it should be possible to put together a Team to manage putting much of the old system back in place. This will require providing a venue, trained staff to do the invigilation, and staff to manage the process and distribution of exams. It may also require a bring your own device and associated lockdown of device solution for subjects that wish to continue digital exam options. Again for mathematics, handwritten student work and handwritten staff marking is what is required. Digitising student work only involves extra work on both the student and staff members part.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

There will be significantly less staff needs in any return to in-person invigilation than there would be in any digital solution. And time is always one of the things staff need the most when it comes to designing and moderating assessment.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

I believe when we do not invigilate assessments we create more undermining of trust. More questions arise about what is the students work, what is AI being presented as student work, and what is being shared amongst students over the 24 hours online

TCAs are open for. Students have easy access to many online communication platforms where they can share any number of things while completing these assessments. Students also share information about how or if they have used AI or other methods of “cheating”. This all undermines trust. By returning to in-person invigilated assessments, it is clear who has done the work on the assessment. It is clear to “competitive” students that they are being judged and compared on a fair playing ground. It also decreases their temptation to use circulated assessment information or AI. And it provides boundaries on when it is appropriate to work collaboratively and when you must show your own work.

As a University we should be able to provide clear communication to students regarding the need for authenticated assessment to ensure the quality of the degree. This is not “overemphasising surveillance”. It was an expected and almost unquestioned standard until 2019 and in fact still is at the many universities worldwide that have returned to authenticated assessment.

38

FROM: Associate Professor Elizabeth Gray, on behalf of Massey Business School

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on this proposal. The proposal was discussed at MBS Teaching and Learning Committee, at College of Business Academic Programmes Committee, and at College of Business Board, and was also discussed at the School of Management and Marketing conference. Our feedback is summarised below.

Overall response

It is heartening to see the university planning specific action in response to the need to ensure the validity of our qualifications. In MBS we feel keenly the need to secure assessments in order to protect the reputation of our university and safeguard the valuable international and national partnerships we have, partnerships to which the continuation of all-non-secured assessments poses the gravest risk. We emphatically feel the university has no choice but to proceed to reinstitute secured assessments *wherever they are required*.

Additionally, a sense of urgency was articulated by a large number of staff, who note that the timeline for fully introducing a university-wide system for secured assessment seems overly cautious, and exposes the university to further risk.

On the other hand, student feedback strongly supported that the university take sufficient time to ensure any solution is sound and stress-tested before full implementation, and we appreciate the importance of ‘getting it right’. Thus the idea of staging the solution seems sensible, but to respond to the urgency of the need for at least some verified assessments, MBS feels an interim solution for a select number of courses should be provided in 2026: this would almost definitely need to be an online invigilated system.

We note and support the proposal's requirement that *all* qualifications – including those that may have for various pedagogical reasons moved away from invigilated exams – include well-planned and staged secured assessment.

Collated feedback on specific questions

What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?

We note and endorse that secured assessment may take a number of forms, including in-person invigilated exams (both computer- and paper-based); online invigilated exams using a suitable tool; practica, demonstrations, labwork etc; oral exams; and the completion of an in-person placement or contact course. Suggestions included:

In person, invigilated written exams; oral interviews. Exams are sometimes easier for ESOL students who may be more comfortable writing than speaking.

To be considered 'secured', we must be able to see the student completing the assignment without technological or human help. It is difficult to imagine how any form of online or take-home assessment could be considered 'secured'.

Traditional proctored hand-written exams, with a requirement to pass the exam to pass the course.

Authentic assessments such as problem-based, case-based, workplace-related, etc. Use of proctoring software for large first year course test/exams. Oral synchronous tests/exams.

Applied in-class tasks – short, open-book case analyses or problem-solving exercises, submitted under time constraints.

Assignments undertaken in dedicated assignment rooms, with restrictions on Internet access, blocking of mobile and wi-fi, bookable for students to complete their assignments. This would be a problem with distance. Oral assessments, but this would be a problem with distance (they can get an AI to listen and provide answers to read out).

Online supervised exams with robust proctoring

In-person practical assessments, labs, workshops, placements, and oral examinations.

Secured assessment should have significant weighting and carry a subminima (e.g. must achieve a minimum "pass" in the secured assessment to pass the paper overall).

It was suggested that not secured/verified assessments be compulsory and receive feedback, but not count heavily towards the final course grade. That would include any out-of-class essay, case study, take home test, etc – anything that can be delegated to AI or a human helper.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

While there was a diversity of views, it was felt secured assessment may not necessarily be indicated for all courses, and not for all assessments. There was a diversity of views on how many points of verification were needed with a programme. Views included:

For programmes like BBus, all 100-level core courses that have final exams should be run as secured assessments. This is the gateway into the programme, where we can set expectations and standards (and secured assessment settings that will be very familiar to school leavers in any case).

Students should have a minimum of one secured assessment at each major level (e.g., 200- 300-level) across all programmes. If there is no compulsory 200 or 300 level courses in a major (but must take X or Y options at 200-, 300- level), then multiple courses will need to have secured assessments. Some programmes may need more, depending on the subject (e.g. professional programmes may require a higher frequency of secured assessments for industry credibility).

From second year onward, every course should include at least one secured assessment component that can determine whether a student passes that course, focused on short, practical demonstrations of applied knowledge. This approach balances assurance of learning with feasibility, discipline-specific flexibility, and student fairness. This would ensure that students demonstrate mastery of key concepts, not just their ability to submit polished written work (which may be supported by AI or others).

30 -40 percent of assessments, over a programme.

At least one per course and only the secured ones count substantially toward the grade.

Verification should relate to (most) courses rather than just qualifications, which would equate to a reasonable portion of the qualification as a whole.

In general, most courses should have one exam or oral although there are some courses like Consultancy/Professional Practice that are done via groups and are very hands on – they don't need to have a proctored exam as they are relatively secure as they are.

I believe there should be one worth 50% for each paper. My view is that this creates incentive to engage with the material rather than being assessment-oriented

Having enforced exams would increase engagement as students would need to engage across the board. This would also increase student satisfaction because they feel like they have engaged and it will generate a deeper understanding of the topics that they have engaged in. This would further ensure students are better placed for work, and institute an understanding of the workplace and academic environment, which is not necessarily about getting automatic answers, but sometimes having to work your way through ideas.

It was noted that secured assessments will cause some students considerable pressure and stress; aegrotat arrangements would need to be carefully considered. It was suggested no individual assessment be so heavily weighted as to doom students who don't perform well in that given format.

Should there be a minimum standard (ie number of verified assessment points) across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

We do not support a blanket requirement that a stipulated number of secured assessment points be applied to all qualifications across the university: rather, we think that should be decided by the particular subject group, subsequent to a careful mapping process.

There was almost unanimous agreement that, while *a minimum baseline should apply* across all programmes and all Colleges, there should be allowed flexibility for discipline specific needs (e.g., performance-based, lab-based, written). i.e. some degrees may rely more on one type of secured assessment than others.

Yes, a minimum of 30 percent verified assessment across a programme.

While a common principle is important, secured assessments should not be “one size fits all.” Each discipline should have flexibility to choose the format that best aligns with its pedagogical needs

It was noted that disciplines such as aviation and accountancy would have their own minimum standards according to their specific professional bodies’ requirements.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication/validation with accessibility and cost?

It was broadly supported that regional exam centres should be instituted (along with campus-based exam centres).

We recognise that having to travel to an exam centre will cause challenges for a number of students.

NZ-based students with compelling reasons for not being able to travel to an exam centre should have to apply for permission to sit online. Reasons might include accessibility, cost, family or work commitments, etc. Assessment Services would make a judgment on these in the first instance, with difficult cases referred to the College to adjudicate.

Students overseas may have to participate in online invigilation.

Below are a range of expressed views:

Regional exam centres (national/international), with invigilation, and secure online proctoring for those unable to physically attend an exam centre.

Have a centre where students can sit proctored exams or use proctoring software.

Expand use of oral component in assessment.

If distance is treated differently to internal (and assuming a process is put in place for internal student work that does enable verification), then we should simply accept that distance qualifications are not verified.

I would assume some kind of secure server would achieve this. The overall cost would presumably be worth it in Massey’s ongoing reputation as an educational leader and good source of degrees.

There are difficulties with two-tier system between internal and distance; would need really good online invigilation system and even then some inequity; it was noted that rural broadband is actually quite bad in some areas of New Zealand

Students outside NZ must sit their exams using online invigilation.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

Both – there will always be some students who CANNOT do an in-person – there would need to be arrangements for exceptional circumstances

Both are required. Underinvestment in the name of cost saving in the recent past has led to the current situation.

First priority should be on bringing back in-person assessment. On-campus AND regional hubs would need to be set up to examine NZ-based students

I think on-campus assessment for people internal is a great idea because it also works to build a sense of shared experience for students, even though they may not like it. For those with anxiety, it means they can see and experience people who are in the same boat rather than being online.

Requiring in-person examination may help with the current challenge, that many students are unengaged and producing poor work due to the convenience of automated answers.

Internal students should ideally be examined in-person.

We should do both of these. In-person assessment most immediately, and invest in proctoring solutions over the medium and long term.

Given my experience looking at student work produced using an online proctoring system, we should prioritise on-campus/in person assessment.

Invest in *reliable/user friendly* online proctoring due to dispersed cohorts, noting the majority of our students study via distance and will have particular access needs. Having said that, there should be an equivalent alternative for students with privacy concerns, disability etc.

An unanswered question: What about students who are outside of NZ or who can't travel to an exam centre AND who object to online invigilation?

In MBS, where we have instituted a replacement exam situation, we note that all replacement exams must continue to be offered online only. We recognise that there would be a risk that some students might deliberately miss an in-person invigilated examination, in order to be offered an online replacement examination. The implications would need to be carefully considered.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

The biggest challenges are space and staff.

We would need to hire people to proctor, and find spaces. Student support would probably remain about the same.

Technology.

For in-person invigilated exams, it will be necessary to continue to administer these in a digital format ie students must be able to complete on a computer. Not all students have suitable devices – how will they access them?

Supplying laptops to students who can't make in-person exams and who don't have suitable equipment

If sitting examinations in-venue means BYOD, browsers must be able to be locked down.

Online invigilation must be provided by a trustworthy provider; this will need to be thoroughly piloted and tested, with associated costs

More in-person assessment for on-campus students costs us nothing other than class time and staff time (eg, for oral assessments). Technological solutions for the distance students are more costly.

\$\$\$ to support an acceptable process, staffing to implement it, space to enable it, technology to support it, and student support. All will be challenges. Added to that is a willingness across all levels to really to be prepared to stand by a process.

Boosting Assessment Services capacity to administer a dual system – in-person and online invigilation

Setting up a system to manage exemptions/special exam circumstances

Enhancing technical support availability for students sitting online invigilated exams (ie not in regular business hours)

Costs of setting up sufficient spaces on campus for hundreds of students to sit secured exams simultaneously; we don't presently have the computer lab facilities to enable this.

Costs of setting up at least two South Island exam centres

Hardship grant to enable students to travel to exam centres

Costs to students – travel, parking, childcare, broadband; digital divide and would we need to supply laptops; computing and broadband costs; how could pen and paper be sustained for three hours, if handwritten exams are required...

What additional supports are needed for this transition (e.g., training, workload allocation, technical support)?

Some updates on best practice would be good.

Work allocation, training, and technical support

Depends what is implemented.

Most needed is IMMEDIATE acceptance/permission for staff to change assessments rather than going through a 1-2 year process to get assessments changed. Then put resource into technical solutions to allow a broader range of assessments.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Once decisions are made on what's allowed, some meetings explaining options and alternatives.

Training in designing robust but efficient secured tasks

Clear marking rubrics and moderation processes

Workload allocation and technical support to handle scaling challenges

Teaching and learning training modules. But it shouldn't be too hard to get up to speed as we are all heavily invested in creating authentic assessments.

Again, depends on what is implemented. If, for example, there was a return to face-to-face exams, then staff would design assessments in accordance with the support that used to be available. If any form of online / open book type assessments is used, we know that most (all?) assessment including Zoom orals, multi-choice, short answer etc can be prepared with AI.

We DO need help to redesign assessments that test what we want to test; more resourcing for CET staff members to help us; benchmark to global standards; differentiate assessing between what doesn't and does require securing...

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Communication with students will be vital. We will need to frame the reintroduction of secured assessments as essential to protecting degree credibility and fairness. And we need to have positive messaging in terms of ensuring the credibility of students' degree(s), enhancing employability of students, and retaining professional recognition.

"It's in your benefit to have a robust qualification that people can rely on"; culture change with staff as to what we're assessing and why; "why this is relevant to what workplaces need and how this will support your own goals"; this move supports the international reputation of our qualifications – secure qualifications are WORTH more.

Managing expectations is key – being very clear about what this is will mean for students in terms of travel, technological requirements, etc

Ensure everyone, including staff and students, knows what's happening, and they should expect invigilation. We know 'trust' doesn't work. Requirements need to be rock-solid.

It will be important to frame secured assessment as a professional standard, not a punitive measure. Students should see these assessments as akin to client presentations or job interviews — authentic demonstrations of their competence.

This 'culture' used to exist. For instance, staff knew why there was an exam and students knew why too. Maybe it needs to be turned around and instead phrase the question as "how we build a culture that does not value insecure assessment that undermines the value of our qualifications".

This should not be about surveillance or mistrust but about validating student achievement in ways that reflect professional practice.

At the moment we have some students getting annoyed with other students for lack of effort. Reintroducing secured assessment does not undermine trust; it builds trust by showing there is an equal playing field. The idea that this is more surveillance than putting one's personal details and thoughts into an ongoing digital trail that cannot be deleted is really not a private option - AI is not private; it is less secure than other platforms; it frequently leaks.

Through communication of why we are doing this. Emphasising the benefits to learning and analytical skills. Scaffolding all assessment to ensure that secured assessment is not viewed as an insurmountable obstacle but rather the culmination of a learning journey.

Include different students' voices, especially our priority students in this important conversation, and employers maybe. Feedback through the MOST survey for continuous review.

Ensure students with disabilities are listened to in the consultation phase, in relation to their particular needs.

I wish to endorse and agree with the feedback stated in Associate Professor Liz Norman and Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor Professor Simon Hall's letters as attached. I agree with the points stated and the importance of secured assessment within the university and its programs.

CoS

Formal response to the discussion Paper: An initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments.

The School of Built Environment (SBE) has considered the discussion paper through its forums and committees. There is strong support for strengthening assessment integrity, provided the approach is practical to deliver, equitable for distance and disabled learners, and properly resourced. The prevailing concern is that prolonged ambiguity and an extended schedule will absorb effort without delivering the necessary assurance for students, employers, accreditors, and external reviewers. Immediate decisions are required; each semester of inaction heightens the risk of inconsistent practice, increased integrity incidents, and erosion of confidence among students, employers, and external reviewers. Prolonged uncertainty also jeopardises accreditation readiness and may force costly, reactive remediation under external scrutiny.

Secured assessment is urgently required to protect the University's credibility, uphold academic integrity, and meet professional accreditation and best-practice expectations. While authenticated checkpoints at early, mid, and capstone stages are a sound feature already embedded in well-structured, accredited programmes they are not, on their own, a substitute for secured assessments in courses where identity and authorship must be verifiably assured. As drafted, the working definition of "secured assessment" remains too loose, inviting uneven application and confusion. The proposed timeline is also excessively long; this work should be completed in the shortest practicable timeframe, not over multiple years.

Accordingly, SBE recommends immediate, decisive steps. First, approve a precise definition and typology of secured assessment explicitly in scope: invigilated in-person (paper or locked-down digital), supervised online, viva/oral examinations, verified practica/studios/placements, and authenticated coursework coupled with oral verification each with minimum controls for identity checking, authorship assurance, accessibility, and auditable records. Secondly, mandate secured assessments (in addition to existing authenticated checkpoints) where learning outcomes warrant them and set a clear compliance deadline within the current academic planning cycle. Thirdly, compress the timeline: complete definition, policy changes, and equity safeguards; establish a technology sandbox and conduct mock sittings immediately thereafter; and pilot at scale in the next available semester with firm phase-gate criteria (platform reliability, accessibility incident rates, student fairness ratings, invigilator capacity). Finally, resource the work explicitly named owners for rooming and timetabling, platform operations, accessibility services, and academic development with workload allocation and CET support.

SBE recognises the University's procurement processes and statutory requirements. However, the risk profile here justifies a compressed timetable and greater urgency in actions and decisions. Within policy, this can be achieved through early market engagement, the use of pre-qualified panels where available, adoption of other organisations' best practices, and clear identification of appropriate processes, tools, and platforms, with staged contract milestones tied to pilot readiness. The goal is not to bypass controls but to run them in parallel so that essential capability is available for pilot use at the earliest opportunity.

Accreditation note (SBE). For SBE programmes, secured assessment is not optional. Accrediting bodies expect clear definitions, consistent application, transparent student communications, and auditable evidence of identity and authorship assurance, implemented equitably. Acting now on an accelerated timetable is essential to protect accreditation status, credibility and graduate standing.

41

Feedback on the discussion paper:

An Initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments

AC25/08/308Rev1

Overview:

I support the reintroduction of secure verifiable assessments as soon as possible. This is essential for protecting both the actual and perceived value of Massey University qualifications. The value of unsecured online degrees has already been in question for a number of years now. China has not recognised online/distance degrees from international universities since the start of 2023

<https://www.universityworldnews.com/post.php?story=20230131132149728>

and with the widespread availability of AI this is an even more significant issue.

At the centre of a University's core mission is in teaching and learning. Assessment is the mechanism by which staff and students can measure learner progress against the learning outcomes that define a program of study program. Assessment provides the accountability that is both expected and required by students, staff, other stakeholders (funders employers) and society of a teaching institution. The value (perceived and actual) of Massey University is linked to its quality of teaching and assessment is a measure of that; this value is at risk if student learning cannot be verified.

Non-secure assessment has always been a part of university assessment and will

continue to do so. Any piece of work that is a take-home assignment, project or test not performed under supervision could have been written/created by an individual who is not the student (distance or internal) that submits it as their work. This was the case before AI, but AI now makes it so much easier for students to cheat. We can verify student achievement against learning outcomes in person by various assessment types including exams, test, practical tests/experiences, presentations, oral test/quizzes/exams

Response to Assumptions (top of page 2):

1. Assumption 1 is an incorrect assumption and statement. Digital does not, and does not need to, underpin all operational workflows, quality assurance and student support. This takes a very narrow view of learning and assessment across the diverse disciplines at Massey University.

2. The demand for secure assessment amongst staff is not an assumption, it is genuine. This demand is evidenced by secure assessments already having been incorporated, as staff teaching and learning initiatives, in some CoS courses including large 100 level courses with distance offerings.

Massey has not operated under any kind of business as usual mode since 2020, so this is not a justification for slow action. The impact of AI on higher education has been devastatingly fast, an equally fast response is required.

3. This is an incorrect assumption (if it is one). There is no correlation between implementation of increased secure assessment and the amount of assessment, so this is not a risk. The resourcing limitations mentioned will more likely limit the amount of assessment employed. Resources are only as limited as decided in the budgetary process; to address this huge problem urgently and effectively, resources must be made available.

Response to The Plan (pages 2-3).

The plan is much too slow over too long a time frame. In 2025 we have (semester 1) and will run (semester 2) secure invigilated in-person exams and semester tests including 100 level courses with many hundreds of students. The distance offering test and exam assessments were online-proctored via Zoom (in real time, no recording, no ITS involvement) requiring significant cooperation from students and academic staff. All involved appreciated the benefit of secured assessment despite the increased workload. Zoom proctoring of distance students by academic staff is not a sustainable long-term mechanism for off-campus student invigilation as it is too workload intensive for staff but as a 'pilot' it shows that with a free software product, staff ingenuity and student cooperation it can be done. In future years invigilators must be recruited and trained for this process. Our experience shows that the pilot phase of the plan can be brought forward; our teaching staff are happy to share their experience and the student cohort can be readily surveyed. The students appreciated the level-playing field offered by a secure assessment and there were no complaints (to my knowledge) of them feeling over-surveilled, although we haven't asked students directly yet.

A major concern for students regarding their assessment is that other students in their course are/maybe cheating so they feel they may be disadvantaged, which increases the motivation otherwise honest students to cheat. Using secure assessment removes this concern even at the expensive of increased staff time and other resources.

For internal only courses, which are the majority in our area, moving to in-person Invigilated exams and tests from TCAs is not difficult, we are doing it now and this transition shouldn't be held up by the slow-moving plan detailed in the document. I acknowledge that finding a long-term solution for those disciplines that teach in distance-only mode or mixed mode will take longer. This may include an improved software solution or in-person testing centres for distance students. I don't know

whether there is / will be a completely effective exam-proctoring software solution, but the second option of testing centres is certainly achievable, it requires organisation and resourcing.

This problem we are dealing with is largely a technical and a logistical one, so requires a technical and logistical solution around the implementation of secured assessment. Too much of the stated plan is pedagogical resulting in the overly long timeframe. The

continued improvement of assessment is important, but that is not the fundamental issue under consideration here. If the current assessments for a course are pedagogically sound, but unsecure, then there is no reason for redesign during the process of securing them.

I support the joint submission of Ray Geor PVC and Simon Hall DPVC, as well as the submission of Liz Norman Director of Teaching & Learning, College of Sciences.

▪

CoS

42

Feedback on the Reintroduction of Secured Assessment

This feedback is in my capacity as Academic Lead for the School of Food Technology and Natural Sciences.

I fully support the submissions made by Liz Norman, (Director of Teaching and Learning, College of Sciences), Simon Hall (Deputy Pro Vice-Chancellor (Academic) for the College of Sciences) and Ray Geor (Pro Vice-Chancellor, College of Sciences).

My main message is we need secured assessment to be reinstated, and the proposed timeline is far too slow. We need university-level support for secured assessment for 2026, not for 2028 at earliest.

In my school, course coordinators have been innovative in providing secured assessments for students in 2025, including for distance students, but they are doing this on goodwill and the understanding that it is a temporary solution. The additional workload on academic staff is not sustainable long term, and support must be provided by the University to maintain secured assessment.

All courses must include secured assessment. Grades in different courses must be equivalent; some cannot be seen as less than others otherwise our reputation will suffer.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification to validate student achievement?

All Course grades must be credible. Therefore there should be sufficient secured assessment within each course to justify the grade and the learning outcomes. Grades are publicly available and are used as recognition of prior learning. If other Universities cannot be confident some of our grades are credible, they will assume all grades are not credible and will not accept our students into their programmes, whether that is when moving during a degree or for subsequent postgraduate study.

Should there be a minimum standard across all programmes, or should this vary by discipline?

There should be the same standard across all disciplines. We cannot have some programmes cheapened by the perception they have a lower standard than others. It is not good for individual programmes nor for the reputation of Massey as a whole.

What are acceptable options for distance students that balance authentication /validation with accessibility and cost?

In SFTNS this year we have managed to use zoom invigilation for distance cohorts, where up to 12 students share both their camera and screen while doing the assessment at the same time. This does require time management to fit students into slots in larger distance cohorts. In our school these are up to 80 students per course. While it works successfully for now, we do not know what products out there in the future may invalidate this form of secured assessment.

Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment, or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?

I have no confidence in Massey's ability to consistently deliver online proctored exams, as evidenced by the repeated failure of the system in the vet school assessments this month. In addition, I have no confidence that online proctored systems can confidently be secured. AI is moving at such a pace that every time we think a proctoring method is secure, by the next semester AI can get around this. There is no reason to think this advancement wouldn't continue, and above all we need confidence any system chosen will work for a significant period of time. Therefore, the university should prioritise in-person assessment. For at least some assessments, this would likely require distances students to travel to another location for assessment.

What key resourcing challenges do you foresee (staffing, space, technology, student support)?

We already know the resource challenges of in-person assessment. Currently much of that cost is borne by academic staff and the schools as they manage assessments themselves. This is not a good allocation of resourcing and will lead to inequitable assessment between courses as staff come up with their own methods of assessment. The costs are still there; they have just been moved.

What support would academic staff need to design assessments that are both secure and pedagogically sound?

Academic staff will always need support for this, regardless of the assessment type or new challenges. This should be business as usual.

How do we build a culture that values secured assessment without undermining trust in students or overemphasising surveillance?

Our staff and students already value secured assessment. Feedback from students in our school since the return of in-person on-paper tests and exams has been positive. They value the knowledge that everyone is in the same situation and that the resulting grades are fair. Students dislike the idea that classmates may have achieved higher grades through presenting work that is not their own and this creates greater stress and distrust.



TE KUNENGA
KI PŪREHUROA
MASSEY
UNIVERSITY
UNIVERSITY OF NEW ZEALAND

**TE KURA
HAUORA
TANGATA**
COLLEGE OF HEALTH

Memo To: Fiona Coote, Director, Office of Academic Quality, Reporting and Assurance
From: Professor Jill McCutcheon, Pro Vice-Chancellor and Chair of College of Health Board
Date: 16 September 2025
Subject: Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment

At the College of Health Board meeting held on 19 August 2025, the Board discussed the Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment.

A discussion was held with the following feedback and comments:

Recognise that we will reconsider secure assessments, like oral assessments, but we should not exclude proctored online assessments. For example, we can't do oral assessments for a large number of distance students.

Resourcing limitations – what does this mean, what is the support going to be?

There needs to be checkpoints in regard to students having the required knowledge. Good to see that on-campus exams will return – will this be on all three campuses? What support will be given and how will it work. The downside to handwritten exam answers is that it can be difficult to read.

Glad that we are being asked for ideas about what we can do, but don't want resourcing to be a limitation.

We operate in a binary of secure/ unsecure. It is instead a continuum across a degree – of high, medium, low security. Plagiarism tools and different ways of securing and mapping assessments all contribute to the level of security.

High levels of secure online assessment, for example the state exams for Nursing Council, would like to see students sitting this at home in the future. Every institute will need to look at this. Concern with assessing clinical skills and the difficulty for people to go out to assess. We have had issues and complaints for not providing that level of assessment and support to students, it is a major issue. We can make assessments as secure as we can, but we can't keep giving multiple opportunities to allow to re-sit, especially with large cohorts.

Not explicit about GenAI – idea of secure assessment, controlled use of AI, allow particular tools to be used as part of assessment, will be more important than an uncontrolled space where people use it.

When students use AI to write their essays, then it becomes evident that the student is lacking the knowledge when going into placements. Competencies that are required for each profession need to be met.

Postgraduate nursing has a wide variety of clinical assessment, simulation, and placements. We expect people to use AI but own it, failure in clinical vs passing assignments clearly shows.

How much do people know about clinical assessing, what is the minimum core knowledge they must have. They can use AI but when it comes to assessing on placement they can't do this in remote places all around the world. Repeat experience and observations. Need to use it as a good source of info, rethink professions and what the core knowledge is needed.

Need certain expectation of training for staff and also to students what we expect of them.

Need to expand on academic integrity. Alongside secure assessment, we need to look at and align with the academic integrity policy. Students can use genAI in one course and receive a warning, but we don't know what the student is doing in other courses. Need to be able to look across courses otherwise the student will do the same thing in the next year, and their knowledge is not at the level it should be.

Communication and clarity about what students are allowed or not allowed to do is key, especially as this can, differ between certain courses.

Students find it hard to navigate the use of AI and it can cause a lot stress wondering if they are doing the wrong thing.

AI is the future in workplaces and research; it can revolution some tasks. We want researchers to use AI well, but the challenge is detecting cheating. There needs to be more education about AI usage and navigation around adding AI.

So evident in the news these days, with the use of AI how things are developing. If we are mapping what is the process, what is the intent, we assume there is a level of AI engagement. Having assessments in the programme reflect on what we are doing. We should ask the students what we can do.

At a recent demonstration of AI use in Singapore, there was a robot that helped students learn empathy and there was a grading tool that went with it. Students who were inexperienced with interacting with clients were able to use this alongside assessment. Use of AI in this profession is great.

Phases and timeline – seem to be a very drawn-out process, February-June 2028? Staff want more security around what we are doing now – genAI is continually changing, we need to offer confidence to staff now.

Extended nature of timeline – longer it takes more challenging it will be to decide what tool to use. Things are rapidly moving in this space, procurement process takes a long time and then the best tool might not be the right one.

Recognising resourcing imitations – previously when there were person exams, we would contract people (often retirees) to come in and invigilate exams. As we have moved into distance space this is no longer requires, so that cost should be available to reinvest the money into more modern ways. Could we have those people sit in zoom rooms and monitor the process?

Limitations on how many large classrooms and computer labs that students could use, as we have recently lost a lot of space. Resourcing is also looking at space and equipment. Accommodation in our resources needs to be looked at. Overseas students are another issue.

44

Feedback from the School of Health Sciences on the Discussion Paper: Reintroduction of Secured Assessment – 16 September 2025

Overarching comments

Overwhelming support for the document and the school acknowledges that Massey requires a means of securing assessments and this is a matter of urgency. Also agree that secured assessment and “exam” are not synonymous and secured assessment(s) includes a wide range: wānanga, oral presentations, fieldwork etc.

It is difficult to lead the document with concerns around resourcing, as it immediately implies restraint. The issue of “secured assessment” is not new (predates the advent of AI), but one that has become prominent following the enforcement of the digital plus strategy. Therefore, the onus is on Massey to implement strategies and resources to ensure that assessments are secure. Appropriate and rigorous assessment is a core function of the university to uphold the value of awarded qualifications. Thus, providing methods of securing assessment is urgent. Phase 1 should be starting now, not in March 2026. Phase 2 - Colleges should start to look at their programmes now and have a greater sense by April 2026 of which courses need secure assessment or what secure assessments they already have. Colleges will already have in-person and online exams that could be set up for Sm2 2026. Assessment mapping of programmes completed by December 2026 and those courses needing online secure assessment can be identified for Sm1 2027

As a school with a large distance, and part-time cohort, this document does raise several questions regarding operationalisation:

Defining what secure assessment means for our distance delivery. This includes balancing costs and logistics against current student expectations of distance study.

Maintaining the perceived/actual value of a Massey distance degree in a context where online delivery may not be perceived as sufficiently secure.

Procurement of an online assessment platform to support modern online assessment practices.

Re-establishing large-scale in-person secured assessment infrastructure and processes after more than 5 years in abeyance. Including how this will be managed for international students.

And

“Recognition of resourcing limitations and the risk of over assessment (Pg 2 of the document)”.

What do other universities do in this space? Is there fit-for-purpose software that can provide a reliable proctoring service for distance secured assessment – is it currently possible for an online secured assessment?

If secured assessment are implemented there would need to transparency and clear communication with students as to why we are securing assessment(s) i.e. framing secured assessment around manaakitanga and trust, whilst protecting student mana and ensuring qualification integrity. It should be clear that this is not about surveillance. Furthermore, it is important for students to understand what academic integrity is, and the current ease in which academic integrity can be breached (use of AI and/or third-party assistance), whether this be intentional or not. As mentioned above, these are not new issues, but the ease at which plagiarism can occur is “new”. Further education may be required here.

Exam centres on campuses, around the country and overseas that will support digital online assessment will be invaluable.

45

Feedback on the initial plan for the reintroduction of secured assessments and the draft teaching foundations framework Submitted from:

CoHSS-Institute of Education

- BA (Ed) Programme
- BSLT Programme
- EdPsych Programme
- Counselling & Guidance Programme
- MEd Programme
- Specialist Teaching Programme

Regarding secured assessments, we comment and ask:

- What would the enactment of secured assessment look like at postgraduate level?
- What would the enactment of secured assessment look like for our Distance students?
- What would the enactment of secured assessment look like for our Distance students who are located internationally? Where is the equity?
- What would the enactment of secured assessments look like for professional programmes and practicum?
- How would secure assessments work in courses where there is a strong link between research/literature and practices, especially for students who are teachers or psychology interns, and where assignments are competency-based and applied?
- How would secured assessments meet the work-integrated learning requirements of including sector partners in assessment validations?
- How would secured assessment ensure that students feel safe and affirmed to express their unique cultural identities?
- How would secured assessments be resourced?

- Do personalised portfolio-based assessment with videos of students, recorded discussions and artefacts of evidence of practical work in context not already ensure AI is not being incorrectly used?
- How can staff be supported with resources to design and enact creative and authentic approaches to assessment that will address the issues identified by the university?
- Can assessments be designed to enable and upskill students to use AI (which is ubiquitous) in a critical, purposeful, and beneficial way-more advanced assessments?
- Has Universal Design for Learning been considered?
- Can this not be more holistic? Considering questions such as: "What assessment types should be considered 'secured'?" or even "Should we prioritise on-campus/in-person assessment or invest more heavily in online proctoring solutions?" misses the point on the fundamental role of assessment. There needs to be a discussion of assessment and if we are truly Te Tiriti led to embrace ideas from Aromatawai that emphasises a holistic approach to assessment. We have the opportunity to be more innovative at this juncture, let's look beyond the status quo to reimagine how our assessment practices might truly be innovative.
- The ITE programme Capstone project of Oral examination, the resources needed are huge. Seeing glass as half full, there are huge opportunities here to do something creative.
- It seems to be a step backwards to consider face-to-face large-scale exams. The more fundamental issue is what are the kinds of knowledge, skillsets and values we need our students to develop and how might assessment practices support this. Will going back to large scale face-to-face physically secured exams address this?
- Having a degree of 'base level' of expectation across the university is important, but how this plays out within schools and programmes will 'look' differently. Therefore, it is important that staff are enabled to continue to have creativity to work with these guidelines, rather than a one size fits all.

Students

No I don't think it's a good idea as it is not a good representation of someone's knowledge and understanding. It would be like going back to exam based learning which will prevent many people from studying and obtaining a degree and is inaccessible for those who have anxiety, ADHD or any other learning difficulties.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important? - Not in professions where you learn more on the job than in theory.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification? Only in those professions where the theory matches the practical sides of things but in fields like education, where you are often taught varying information, I would be hesitant to make this a requirement.

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam? Sit an online test

Maybe the professors should put some effort into trying to create problems that students purposely cannot use AI on. Maybe they should embrace AI, because that's what employers want of their employees these days.

I don't have much of an opinion regarding most of the questions raised around the issues with secured assessments, but one question is very relevant to me as a distance student in a remote location. I live in a small rural community approximately five-hours from the nearest campus, so if I

were required to travel to a campus for assessments, it would have a significant impact on my life in terms of time, and also expense. I would not be in favour of any options that required distance students to travel to campus at any great frequency. Once in a blue moon, if there were no suitable alternative options, might be achievable, but frequent trips would be a prohibitive factor for me when choosing courses... or even when choosing whether or not to undertake further study.

I am a mature distance student who previously studied ten years ago. A lot has changed in the workplace and university assessments are both a practical and rigorous way for students, like me, to get ready for the workplace. I believe that from 200 level onwards, more assessments in the style of presentation, workshop, codesign workshop, simulated client/practitioner sessions (e.g. I am studying nutrition, from 200 level I could do more assessments as if I were running a client/patient consult), for example. As a distance student I would be more than happy to pay for flights or travel to a main centre for an in person workshop - as long as I knew the dates in advance (i.e. upon enrolling in the course) so that I could book flights while they were still affordable. The zoom invigilated exams that I have taken are also a practical way to take exams without cheating - its hard to see how some students cheat on these exams. I also think that open book tests which have an element of time pressure are still a valid form of assessment - to achieve a high grade in an open book test (usually with an short answer/essay element), you must already know the content to a high level. Open book tests also reflect the reality of the modern workplace - you can always look something up via a device online...what's important is knowing the principles and where to look up credible sources. I do think that from 100 level its important to ease students into any online invigilated assessments...my first one felt very stressful and I had no idea what to expect, my nerves took a long time to settle during the first one. Also, 100 level and 200 papers don't give people degrees, so I think at 300 level, that's when doing more "secured assessments" would have the most impact - and is the best opportunity for people to show their level of knowledge in a way that also prepares them for the workplace (e.g. seminar/workshop/presentation style) - which can't be copied from AI.

I am doing a Web Development and a Mobile app development paper at Massey. I have found that I am not even sure why we are learning this anymore. I haven't used AI at all because I want to do it the old fashion way of searching for the answers I need, but to be honest, those are getting fewer and further between where I can find new sources on new things from developers in the wild. The more this happens the harder it will be to get the help you need without consulting with an AI resource. Yet the university is very Anti AI and I feel by the time I finish the paper. If I wanted to make a mobile app or an HTML page, I wont need to know what you are teaching to do this. In my honest opinion, either a change from the university to adopt a more strategic approach to integrating their courses with AI is needed, or just don't bother teaching these courses in the future as students wont see any reason to do so. It's feels like these courses are quickly becoming redundant.

I can see the value of secure assessment, but I think it's important to recognise that not all methods work equally well for everyone. For example, I feel that interviews would be quite difficult from a neurodivergent perspective. Personally, when I'm under pressure in that kind of situation, my brain tends to "freeze," which means I wouldn't be able to show what I actually know or can do. Because of this, I don't think interviews are always the fairest measure of ability. On the other hand, I think including work experience as part of assessment is a really good idea. It provides a more natural and practical way to demonstrate skills without the same level of pressure, and probably gives a better picture of how someone could perform in real settings.

I think supervised assignments are fine, I think secured assignments is a good way to ensure that the grade you get is accurate and fair. As long as the programme doesn't crash on us as I was apart of the semester last year that crashed during my exam and I had to re do the exams- was a very stressful time of my life which was unnecessary. Just completed a supervised test online via zoom, was great talking to the lecturer before hand made it less stressful for some reason. I think that there could be more presentations and questions which show that you know the content. Maybe at least one big secured assignment like exam or something and the rest can be written assignments and things.

I am a distance student however I don't live that far away from the Albany campus so going in would be fine but I know that's not the case for many people.

As a distance student, I cannot easily access an exam centre. The idea of having secure assessments would heavily depend on the course. Having any type of monitoring software for assignments sounds invasive and unnecessary, and seems like it could cause issues with people's work process.

Well as AI is the present and the future I think it's important to have practice in using it ethically and I think it can be a great way of learning relationally by having a conversation with ai to refine understanding and thinking. So I don't think every assessment should be secured. At the same time it is also important to be able to think independently. So observed handwritten exams or oral discussions should be part of assessment too to show what students know and can do on their own. I think there could also be a mid ground where students are provided with an ai that is observed in some way so their interactions with it can be assessed - not about policing but about identifying their skills in using ai effectively - that would be another form of secured assessment that would fit with the reality of today. No one wants someone who has submitted something that really isn't their work or their thinking but also I imagine most employers want people who can use ai to make their work efficient and thorough and can think critically throughout that.

Not all assessments need to be secured.

Prefer sitting online test or exam as a distance student.

You say you don't want it to become a surveillance of students, yet the very act of introducing it suggests that it is. This has got to be the silliest idea Massey has come up with in recent memory. A conversation about the course topics could be interesting, not an interview or interrogation. This whole idea gives off the impression that Massey does not trust its students, and it also reinforces that Massey is out of touch and far behind in its attempts to establish and maintain relationships with its students. This comes across as another wedge that drives staff and students further apart, not closer together.

More in person contact is important. The assignments sometimes don't really feel like they are a good example of the learning. It often feels like regurgitation. Rather than being about secured assessments perhaps there could be more interactive projects. Demonstrations on how people connect with clients rather than just talking about it. People can be great on paper but no good in person and conversely people can be amazing in person but have lower grades because they're not great on paper. If universities are genuinely interested in producing quality graduates then consideration for different learning styles should also be incorporated. AI is a great tool to help with structure and planning. It is great for helping to ensure flow and clarity but not generative. Writing assignments is already difficult and we can't get feedback on flow, content and clarity from pre reading services or even lecturers. Sometimes the lecturers expectation and articulation of the assignment in class is different to the markers understanding of this. Exams are no good as its also regurgitation. Real time with people with equal opportunity to present skills and abilities would be great. Some people will hide behind the leaders and some leaders won't give others air time if they feel they need to prove their worth. A balance of these is critical and marks should be considered not just based on an individual assignment but on how the rest of the interactions were upheld in class as well. Also if classes are not just about attendance but about engagement and they are graded it holds much more incentive to show up. Some don't even show up to class or they are late that to me shows character traits that I wouldn't want as an employer. Rather than putting so much focus on whether students are using AI for generative purposes consider the character and attributes through in class engagement alongside written output. Have clear pathways for those more interested in research versus those who want to practice on the front line. I personally have hated the last assignments and I've done 4 different courses through universities because site that help paraphrase or analyse flow of content have been really helpful for reducing stress. Im one of those people who excels when you put me in front of clients but doesn't excel on paper. I was thinking about PhD until this year but I won't do it anymore because uni politics and making assignments too difficult with the added stress of being

questioned for my output is not worth it. I wouldn't recommend uni to people if it continues to be like it has become.

I am studying Master of Management - Professional Practice. I believe that this course should definitely have a secured assessment - for example - the final semester could be more practical, hands on work with the industry. Courses like Current Issues in Business can also have more practical components rather than a pure research base. Currently we do have a test in one course which I believe acts like a secured assessment - AI is not permitted and since it's timed, this doesn't really allow for use of AI. Course ID for reference: 114761.

Not necessary and a waste of time for discussants, students who already do presentations anyway, you would just be making our already short on time lives harder. And besides, most of the distance students, myself included, work in our chosen field already and are just trying to upgrade our qualifications to get a promotion at work.

I feel it depends on the qualification. For example, research papers - I don't think these need to have a secured assessment due to the nature of the paper. For all others - I definitely this this is necessary. I feel the types of assessments that are classed as 'secured' are needed in most papers. I think for far too long lecturers have been able to get away with too many low-involvement class activities such as using previous recorded lectures and basic assignments and tests. For future secured assessments, I think there should be at least one component per paper, however it is important to look at the existing assessment to determine what the new type of secured assessment should be. For example - if a paper has three assignments as their current assessment - do not add in a test or an exam as the secured assessment. I think there should be a lot more use of presentations, contact workshops, interviews, placements etc. These are all activities that most people need to do in the real world and it would be great to incorporate these assessments. In terms of distance papers, I feel that the flexibility of assignments needs to be maintained as this is one of the reasons many people study by distance. In-person contact workshops and invigilated exams are not inline with this. Other online options, or ones were they can seek out their own placements/work experience, should be considered for these papers. Happy to discuss this feedback further if required - please contact me at kelly.tissink@gmail.com

I'm currently enrolled in a psychology course, so my feedback is related to psychology courses.

I think online workshops/assessments via zoom is a good option. I've had this in one of my courses with a different intstitute which worked really well. There were evening options available for these assessments which fit in with those of us that were working during the day.

Placements could be another option, however I have found this difficult to manage when working fulltime so not quite sure how this would fit in or work for everyone.

I definitely think secure assessments are a good idea. I know the work I submit is my own, but this would go further in showing prospective employers that my qualification is valid & included quality learning

Supervised online exams do not work; Massey has already tried and failed... usually, AI is pretty unreliable. If students use AI to generate their assignments, it is gonna be very obvious and simply not good. That's on them.

I do like oral "interview" assessments (call or meeting with the lecturer who asks questions) but you can't replace all normal written assignments.

As a distance student the freedom to be able to study within other priorities helped me to choose Massey and having conversations around AI in class has been fascinating. There should be some sort of block course option of one to two days where we have to meet for the course and discuss and perform some work. This would be helpful to get to know other students yet also ensure the 'credibility' of our work. Also I have found it helpful with the AI guidelines on how much we can use if we choose to, yet I also feel it may be beneficial to have a course on how to use AI as it seems the

younger students would be at a advantage when it comes to this. The future like you say will be digitalised and AI skills is something that should be taught and available to all.

I would prefer the option as a distance student of coming in and sitting the exam. I am a distance student and i find when doing group assignments it can be so problematic when different people are across the world and i work full time so can only do weekends and after work time

Mastery of foundational skills that can easily be automated is sometimes needed so that we can build capabilities that employers value. But if AI can do the things that deliver value to companies, why would they hire us? If we are being assessed on skills that are made redundant by technology then the value of the qualifications isn't going to be in employability (degrees aren't all about that though). But if a first year student can't write code without assistance, they're unlikely to be a discerning coordinator of coding agents in their third year. So, I think secured assignments in the final year of a qualification might be a red flag, but in the first year, it might be a green flag.

Luckily, skills that can be replicated by LLM driven systems are generally easier to accurately measure because they don't really involve deep or unconventional thinking that is hard to assess under strict constraints. Where this isn't the case, please be careful about drifting away from generating valuable capabilities in students in favour of skills or assessment types that are easier to secure.

If we think about assessments as being secure or insecure against the threats of external assistance we might overlook ways of reliably measuring and developing skills in concert with external assistance. For instance, if we think about assessments as having sufficient transparency for us to reliably approximate how much the students or their external supports contributed to an assessment, we might consider options like assessing monitored conversations with LLMs, which has the added benefit of seeing how well they can utilize the technology to their advantage. Another might be having a student produce an assignment in an unmonitored manner, but then examine them on the thought process that went into it and their understanding in a secured way, because students that just got chatGPT to make something for them won't know that, but if they bothered to study the essay for a test at least they're demonstrating understanding of the process of producing it. You could even take this a step further and explore the possibility of using LLMs to conduct via voce for undergraduates at a scale that would be infeasible with staff constraints.

Every course should have some form of secured assessment. As an employer, I have already seen some behaviors in my first semester that make me question the legitimacy of some of the work produced. I now have a bank of questions to ask future job applicants relating to their studies.

As someone who studies by distance and struggles in tests I find assessment based grading to be one of the huge reasons I enjoy studying under Massey. I avoid AI usage in my assignments personally because it's such a hassle to report the usage. I would not travel for exams. I do not think that secured assessments should be mandatory at any level I think it should be course dependent. I don't see the merit for memory based exams as this is not the real world we work and live in.

I think Massey needs to be able to check our work to see if it has been done honestly so everyone has a fair and even chance. The present AI needs some work though - its very inaccurate!

I think that integrity is an important aspect of education and that systems which punishes students despise understanding the subject well such as a word count requirement or specific conditions which are quantitative instead of qualitative should be prioritised.

Secured assessments seems like a sensible way to approach verification of authenticity. However, I have found Cengage in its totality to be extremely unworkable, as well as costly. The use of electronic milestones using an application such as Cengage would be very restricting, because it requires a very specific manner of learning and thought processing. In order for secured assessments to be authentic, as well as non-constricting, there would need to be a much higher standard of computer application than Cengage as it currently stands. Perhaps Massey could use systems such as are used in other branches of education, such as students submitting planning documents, initial lists of references, and

early draft documents. I do not like to learn using a computer application that is the main portal to my learning.

Ok

This is unneeded. A response to a changing environment. The advent of AI means that universities will no longer be able to rely on the written word, which is advantageous to the students, as the learning derived from writing is

Minimal. It was time to change. The 'requested validation from employees' is nothing short of a lie. Clearly this is the universities own concern.

In short, start thinking about how you can teach us more appropriately, and the assignment type will follow the thinking. AI is a tool. Much like paper once was. How can the university use it to assist the learning process?

I think the secured assessments, would be a breach of privacy for students. At Massey all students are at least over the age of 18 and mature adults. It would be unfair to not trust students like this.

Even with AI Statements, students have ended up with a paragraph stating that they have not used any or have handed in a 20 page document for whatever they may have used. This shows honesty and shows how the students value their studies, they would never breach themselves like this as we are paying for this education and it certainly isn't cheap.

I would be extremely disappointed if Massey University would take these actions as we are not school student who need discipline, but in fact matured and skilled adults who want to study with the passions we have for it.

The AI Statements and even the little turnitin marks are much better and definitely preferred to this. I am strongly opposed to this proposal.

Massey has been a leader in distance education, and that flexibility is a lifeline for many of us—neurodivergent students, disabled students, those returning to study later in life, and students balancing work and family commitments. This proposal feels like a step backwards from that proud tradition.

The idea of secured assessments creates unnecessary barriers for students who don't learn or demonstrate knowledge in "typical" ways. Neurodivergent students, for example, often find exams, proctoring, and live observation especially difficult because of the sensory load, unpredictability, and time-pressure involved. Even when accommodations are technically available, they rarely level the playing field, and often come with a burdensome time and financial cost to accessing those accommodations.

On top of this, I am concerned about who gets singled out when universities try to police assessment integrity. Neurodiverse students and ESOL students are already disproportionately accused of misusing AI or receiving unauthorised assistance, simply because their work doesn't fit narrow expectations of what typical writing or problem-solving looks like. Adding more "secured" assessments risks compounding this inequity, not solving it.

I agree that maintaining the credibility of a Massey degree matters. But credibility won't come from surveillance or forcing everyone through standardised exams. It comes from thoughtful, authentic assessment design: project-based work, scaffolded assignments, reflective components, or oral defences that let students show their process and their understanding.

Please don't take Massey backwards. The trustworthiness of our qualifications should come from fair,

inclusive teaching and assessment practices, not from blanket requirements that disproportionately harm the very students Massey has historically done so well to serve.

Ok

As a distance student I would prefer an interview type examination over anything. This is showing your pure knowledge

He uaua mā ngā kaiako kite ai e mahi pono ana te katoa o ngā aromatawai kia tukuna. Tino rerekē te ao ōnaianeī, ā, ko te tini o ngā tauira e ako tawhiti atu, pērā I ahau.

Ko te manako ka whai mātou, ngā tauira, te ara pono hei whakakaha te tohu mā mātou e hiahia. Māna, māngere tonu ana ētahi ka kimikimi ngā rangatira i a rātou.

1. To enhance security during exams (e.g., in the EAP2 Final Test, two students were observed using phones without the tutor's awareness), it may be helpful to implement stricter monitoring procedures.

2. It is recommended that tutors carefully review and verify student responses during marking, rather than relying on assumptions or guesses, to ensure a fair and accurate assessment of the students' understanding.

I think this is really important. I also think here is an opportunity for massey to shine and lead the way.

Potentially a non gpt or limited assist ai could be built into the course work. If someone is going to be dishonest it doesn't matter what the format is.

I think that class room experiences could carry a weighted input.

For distance students: Keeping the tests to online. It would be too difficult to travel to and sit it in a testing hall as we have other commitments, family, or in a remote location. Keep the distance courses accessible completely by distance.

I think having unsecured assessments are unavoidable and still hold an important place in gaining a qualification, for example writing a report over a number of weeks that mimics a real life work situation. However, I feel my finance major doesn't hold much 'trustworthiness' as you can manipulate your results for every assessment very easily using AI. I think having secured assessments is a good way to avoid people 'cheating the system' and retain the integrity of a degree. I think every course should have at least one secured assessment, rather than a one a year sort of situation or something similar as that can place a lot of pressure on students for that one assessment. For online students this should be in some form an interview over zoom or some other way that doesn't involve travelling to a campus as this is highly impractical for many online students.

I think secured assessments are a great idea, as long as the assessments remain different from each other (different formats) - for example, I wouldn't want every assessment to turn into an exam. I think that's important so that students who struggle with certain things are still able to get good grades in other assessments. Personally, as a distance student, I would prefer to keep being able to complete assessments online, even when that means online exams, or zoom meetings. I think it would be smart to have at least one secured assessment in every course. Potentially instead of having assessments themselves be secured, certain assessments could require the student to be able to converse with a lecturer about their assignment, to prove that they understand what they turned in?

what happens with post grad, masters and doctorate students which do independent research and cannot do secured assessments or anything like that. even with 300 level papers how would that work as they are expected to be independant thinkers

I prefer closed book in person assessments to online TCA's. Online proctoring for distance students seems like a better option than going into campus, especially for students in rural or remote areas. Labs are already compulsory for many courses so this would not have a big impact in the sciences.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

Yes

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? 100% secured

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? Travel to campus is fine or video call with appropriate measures

How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

Don't worry about surveillance - just focus on upholding your mana as an education provider and do what it takes

I feel as that secured assessments arnt required but I feel that universities should focus more on the learning to remember in the long run. Currently with education students are basically forced to only remember to pass the assessment, but then once the assessment or course has finished you don't remember it as you need to learn the next courses. We learn to pass not learn to remember.

support TCA.

As a distance students living outside of NZ, I believe secured assessments can make our results more fair. However, it should not be done as a group project because it will cause a lot of stress and anxiety. For my majors (finance and economics), I'm not sure how these can be carried out. But going to campus is certainly not available for me. Maybe the lecture can schedule a Zoom session and ask students some additional questions, so that the lecture can know if students actually understand the content.

The courses should be designed so that learning is tested in multiple ways to ensure student understanding. I would not want learning observed in my home (where I study the most) through technology. It would be an invasion of my home. Also, people who are going to cheat will cheat anyway and spying on people isn't going to stop that. If tutors wish to have discussions over teams to check understanding or discuss points with an assignment that would be ok.

Assessment without any open book ability does not test learning, it tests memory. Therefore students like myself with a disability that affects memory will be punished before we even start. In the real world you are not required, and in my field actively discouraged, from relying solely on memory because it can be wrong. Pilots and doctors use checklists for a reason!

I believe that secured assessment are good for one assessment per paper - but in todays society the way the tests are done you don't have the time to use AI or look things up - if you haven't done your homework you will not pass easily or thats the experience I'm finding. So having a secured assessment is not always going to prove to an employee that the degree is their own. An employee from my point (having worked in the work force for a number of years + employed people) we look at work ethics and how they have done getting there degree - good marks come from some hard work. Also another thought in the work force today if you unsure you doing it right you research to find your answer or ask - does this also go with a degree???

I think there should be secured assessments for every paper. As a distance student, having a place to sit a supervised exam or assessment would be great. I know I have 100% completed my assessments without the use of AI and it would be great to have that hard work and dedication acknowledged.

If this secured assessment can establish more trust in others, employers, or others, yes, it is important.

I personally think there should be a secured assessment in every course.

If I am a distance student, I prefer an online test or exam.

Reinforcing trustworthiness is more important.

As a distance student, I'd prefer to take an online test as I am not local to any campus and travelling would be difficult

Every assessment being secured is overkill. At present we're bombarded with assessments. Being a distance student, if I had to travel every time there was an assessment then study with Massey wouldn't be feasible. Even one per semester per paper is difficult. At present I'm about 4 hours away, so is that 4 separate trips if they're on different dates? and if they're not, then you're going to be under a lot of pressure to be prepared for multiple exams on the same day.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

Yes, definitely.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification?

I think all assessments should be secured.

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam?

I'm a distance student and travelling wouldn't really be viable, but I'd have no problem with Zoom interviews, this would be straightforward - or online exams/tests.

How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

I don't think this is something the university needs to dwell on too much. AI is everywhere - everyone has accepted that. I wouldn't have even considered that this is some kind of surveillance. It's not surveillance. The university is simply adapting to change. You have to obtain students authentic work - you don't really have much choice.!

I agree that students completing secured assessments is important. With the rise of generative AI, I expect requiring some form of proof I genuinely completed my qualification will become necessary, and I agree that providing proof I completed all parts of my qualification should be available to me. However, I do not think that secured assessments are necessary until the later stages of a qualification, as students may not complete the qualification due to changing interests, and it may introduce unnecessary stress at levels 1 and 2. I would propose the most ideal times to introduce secured assessments would be from level 3 in a bachelors degree, and then in further study following that.

As a distance student myself, I juggle a lot in my personal life alongside my study, so the most convenient secured assessment route for me would be via an online test/exam, of which I am given the details at the beginning of or very early in the semester, so that I can plan well in advance. This would save travel time, and I imagine would save the university having to organise around distance students who live in different time zones.

I don't think secured assessments are necessary in every paper, however I do think there should be a certain number per qualification, so that the university can maintain the trustworthiness of its degrees, but the students don't feel as if they are being surveilled. I think the best way to introduce this would be in compulsory third level papers for each degree, so that every student close to finishing their degree has completed these secured assessments, but that students can still switch qualifications in the first or second years without any added stress.

I think that a mix of invigilated assessments where students have to attend and be observed undertaking work provides a standard which cannot be anything but the students knowledge and effort. Assignments could have progress dates so a lecturer can see how a student has gone through a couple of drafts and not just send a finished product. A percentage of marks could be given for drafts and then completed assignments: just completed assignments and then invalidated assessments. For those people who do distance learning arrangements with a school for a place to sit the exam in their city is easy to arrange.

I support secured assessments

I understand the need due to AI, particularly as I work in education myself. However, this may make distance learning for people like me inaccessible. I study distance because I don't have the time to go on campus due to working full time. I'm not sure how an online exam type scenario will work. Not to mention how Eurocentric that model of assessment is compared to putting together an assignment.

You are now calling generative AI unauthorised assistance yet you have been allowing it for the last two semesters. No wonder students are getting confused with what they can and can't do. I can see if you attempt secure assessments it will fail dreadfully. All universities are having this problem and AI is only becoming more prevalent. and will soon have its long tentacles into every part of our life and will be used in the workplace as a matter of of course. What the implications will be down the road I have no idea but I do know that we cannot stop this runaway train. You will lose students if you come up with the wrong system.

It's going to make distance study even more expensive and inaccessible, but for on campus students it makes complete sense.

I believe for secured assessments they probably are worthwhile however for distance students it is probably not feasible to travel to a site unless it is easy for the student. There needs to be another option if this is not feasible as there is a reason students study via distance.

While secured assessments aim to uphold academic integrity, overly restricting the use of Generative AI runs counter to technological trends and weakens students' ability to thrive in the future job market. Here's why universities should encourage, rather than limit, responsible AI usage:

1. The Job Market Demands AI Proficiency

Employers across sectors—from technology and finance to healthcare and creative industries—are increasingly prioritizing candidates who can leverage AI tools. For example, marketing roles now require expertise in AI-driven data analytics, and software engineering positions value proficiency with AI-powered coding assistants. By barring students from using AI in assessments, institutions risk producing graduates ill-prepared to meet these industry demands.

2. AI is a Catalyst for Learning, Not a Shortcut to Cheating

Generative AI should be viewed as a learning tool, not a threat. It can help students brainstorm ideas, refine writing, analyze complex datasets, or even simulate real-world problem-solving scenarios—tasks that complement their critical thinking and domain knowledge, not replace them. Restricting AI use deprives students of the chance to develop digital literacy skills that are now as essential as traditional literacy.

3. Ethical AI Use Can Be Taught, Not Just Policed

Instead of outright restriction, universities should focus on teaching students to use AI responsibly. This includes training on distinguishing between ethical AI-assisted work and academic misconduct, as well as integrating AI tools into coursework to demonstrate their legitimate applications (e.g., using AI to draft a research outline and then refining it with original analysis). This approach preserves academic integrity while equipping students to excel in an AI-driven workforce.

In summary, banning AI in assessments is a shortsighted approach that ignores the realities of modern work. To ensure graduates remain competitive, universities must embrace AI as a core component of education—teaching students not just what to learn, but how to learn and innovate with the tools that will define their careers.

I think there should be at least one secured assessment per course, but not all of them.

Definitely think secured assessments should be included.

Certainly for final exams, it is too hard to distinguish what is being done by people vs AI even with detection mechanisms in place.

But also for assessments during the semester, unsure of the workload or how to do it - but the student actually verbally explaining their work, maybe through video call, recorded video or just a phone call.

It would be very hard to work your way through a phone call with no actual learning in the subject / although time intensive

All the ideas mentioned are good. As a part-time distance (working) student, I am not able to travel to a Massey campus, but potentially could book a room at work and have a manager or someone sign-off that I have completed a short assessment without outside assistance. I remember doing this once many years ago, but it was on a computer and we didn't have AI then. Online seminars, where you need to present something, or be part of a group discussion could be good. Do something in handwriting? Do a field visit or work experience and have a person in charge sign-off that you have contributed and are engaged? As a mature age student, I haven't bothered to use AI much (mainly for coding syntax) and wish to pass on my own merits anyway.

I am a bit in two minds about the secured assessment. I absolutely get that the quality of Massey degrees need to be protected. I think secured assessment is definitely a way to do that. Also, I believe that assessments often help to support the learning process. On the other hand, I think Massey University should focus on educating students on how to use AI in a legal and functional way. The development of AI can't be turned back anymore. Platforms like chat gpt and Gemini can support students work and I feel that I don't know enough about his legal potential to improve my studies. There must be more to it than only using AI for writing full drafts. How can we actively work with AI and integrate that in our learning without risking to cheat. I know there are some principles and guidelines out already. But for me that is by far not enough. I want to be educated in a way that I can really compete with the new generation that will use AI very smart without stepping over any legal borders. I would love more courses, workshops and expertise about that. And I believe if students would be educated more in this regard, there would be a fewer percentage of abuse and breaching rules with these tools.

I think that secured assessment should be used at each level of a qualification and should be a major component of the final part e.g. for a masters the final course/thesis should have a significant secured assessment or the final part of a bachelor's degree should too. Careful thought into how it's done is needed, I use a work computer and can't download other programs which makes it difficult for some test taking software. Particularly at postgraduate level having something that involves interaction

between the professor and student would be good, particularly as building those relationships is important as people move into the professional world (when I did my bachelor's 20 years ago I needed to use one of my lecturers as a reference to start work as a paramedic).

No matter the measures, you will create an atmosphere of servaillance. Some distance students live too far away to travel to a campus and to change the system for existing students is too disruptive and unfair. I appreciate that this is a hard time for universities but trying to fight the tide of AI is probably impossible. In five years time who knows how people will be using it? It may be like saying "dont use a computer"

100% Agree with secured assessment, being able to recall information and explain it in a concise manner shows an understanding of the material and also shows the students which subject areas they may need to focus on.

In-person closed books tests also provides closure across student cohorts that no particular individual is advantaged.

I don't think secured assessment is a good idea. But I think if you had to have secured assessment, then only 1 per paper such as exam. I haven't done labs, but I would assume the teacher can watch you participate and mark it down as good learning, not have to do a scrutinized assessment beyond what they are already doing. For exams, if they are closed book then I would suggest having an option to either use proctoring software and sitting the exam at home, or you can go to Massey and sit your exam in person (still online) but there are supervisors. I think having this option would ease a lot of anxiety for students, as some prefer the comfort of their home, but some find proctoring software very stressful.

I think it is definitely challenging times for educators but we do need to move along with new technology. I agree with secured assessments for students to have an opportunity to lock in all that theoretical knowledge. I think the proportion depends on the degree and the field. For example PG degrees I would make it maybe 20-30% whereas in an undergraduate degree I would say 50% should be secured assessments.

Courses/qualifications where you do not test the student's native ability are pointless. In some cases, you might genuinely want to test the student's ability to use AI to help solve a problem, but even then you need to be testing the student - not the AI.

Some people cheat, and always will. Therefore, some form of invigilation over a substantial proportion of the total marks is essential. Maybe 40%?

As a distance student, I would *far* rather travel to an in-person examination than be at the mercy of some piece of rubbish software that may or may not work properly. Back in the day, I remember taking a Massey distance exam at Vic. They just sat me at the back of some other exam being held at the same time, and gave me different papers that Massey had supplied to them.

I agree that it's very important to address negative perceptions about the validity of qualifications, and secured assessment will need to be part of that. However, as someone who lives an hour's drive from the nearest town, and can't drive for medical reasons, I also know how critical it is that distance study remains accessible for remote and homebound students. While I could attend a testing centre (probably, I don't know where they are) on occassions when needed, I have a strong preference for online forms of assessment. It would be prohibitively expensive for me to attend any on-campus examination. It seems likely that the best method of improving perceptions of trustworthiness will be unique to the degree or major, however my preferences would be: more assessment that involves direct interaction with tutors, like oral assessments online, and perhaps online internships, placements or projects that involve interaction with subject matter experts. That time will probably

be costly, but qualifications are already costly. I would pay more for a more respected qualification that was held only by people who were capable and understood their subject intimately.

I support this, It's actually really disappointing as a student when you work hard on an assignment or preparing for a test and your peers take the easy option and get the same grade or better, there are people using it and not getting flagged while others don't and do ? I know we've just moved away from turnitin but we need something! As a mostly distance student invigilated testing is a preferred option but going into uni a extra day or 2 wouldn't be so bad - I'm only an hour away but would need to take time of work and I know others are in a similar position so it would be an added stress but worth it for the validity I think.

Universities have had a solution for this problem for *thousands* of years. People travelled from around the world to the Takshashila before Christ was said to have walked the Earth.

If it worked then, there is no reason it can not work now.

Yes, there can be inconveniences for distance students using the historic solution - but a degree is not supposed to be a convenient thing to receive!!!! Regardless, options can be explored - anyone overseas is likely to still be somewhere near a campus for some reputable university. It seems Massey has not even considered the possibility of exploring invigilation on external/foreign campuses. You could also consider offering the historical solution alongside the horribly broken, insecure, and anti-privacy invigilation software that we all know you are hoping to bring back - despite the fact that 90% of anyone with a modicum of digital security knowledge would refuse to download it. Or you could consider something more reasonable, like simply having a student switch on a webcam while they take the test - yes this is imperfect, but no university has ever *completely* mitigated cheating. It's better than nothing, and not *that* much worse than the historic method.

If *anybody* can get a degree with little to no sacrifice, that degree is not worth much. At that point there is little value to guaranteeing that tests were taken under invigilation.

If invigilation must be done, rather than adapting the material to our current world (a world where no reasonable employer will ever complain that you used AI or Google to complete a task, or explain a concept, so long as the task is completed to a high standard) then sacrifice should be accepted as a part of the archaic process of invigilation.

A good tradesman is expected to know how to use a handsaw, but they will not finish an apprenticeship if they don't also know how to use powertools. Tools are important to a persons skills, and modern LLMs are incredibly powerful tools. Stop seeking to punish students for learning how to use tools - it's Masseys job to design the material in a way that means the students learn *regardless* of what tools are available.

There is no 'one size fits all' solution here. Massey *really* needs to stop pushing for one, because it is *decimating* the value of a Massey degree. The inconvenience of travelling to university has been an issue before Christianity was a concept - don't be so naive as to think that we suddenly have a solution for it simply because we now have the internet.

The internet gives us more options, it does not fundamentally solve the issue. Look through the options as alternatives, don't try to push one solution on everyone - lest you just push the inconvenience on to those who are local to a campus.

I bought my home specifically because it was closer to Masseys campus, in an effort to make my studies easier. This is the kind of sacrifice that often needs to be made for a degree.

If I can make that level of sacrifice, the average distance student can sacrifice a day or two to travel to a campus - be that a campus of Massey, or some other reputable university. If they can't make such a

small sacrifice, yet can still complete the degree, their degree is worth about as much as a certificate from Coursera.

Stop trying to implement a one-size-fits-all solution. It will never work. Accept that sacrifices must be made.

It is, however, my opinion that the software used last year is too much of a sacrifice - it requires that computer science students go against anything they learned with regards to computer security.

Massey teaches us why kernel level access should not be given out to *anyone*, so don't be so silly as to demand students give kernel access to a piece of software that has been clearly demonstrated as far from perfect.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

-Yes its very important.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification?

-Every course should have at least one secured assessment, third year and above should have predominantly secured assessments.

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam?

-I am happy to travel to a testing centre. However many students are overseas and so the best option is some kind of online testing and invigilation process.

How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

-Well, surveillance is a normal part of taking exams.

Couple of things: in the future it is likely that AI will be welcomed as an important tool for university students to assist their learning and in preparation for appropriate ways to use it when they enter the workplace. At what stage will AI usage stop being policed in the tertiary system and considered a bad thing?

Secondly, as a distance student, the time factor is an issue. I work full-time so I complete my studies and readings at a time that suits me. If I am required to attend workshops, interviews, etc, that would mean time off work and negate some of the bonuses of being a distance student.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

No, I don't believe secured assessments are necessary. I think the real focus should be on teaching students how to use tools like AI responsibly and ethically, since these are the same tools graduates will encounter in the workplace.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification?

I don't think any secured assessments should be required. Instead, universities could consider embedding reflective or process-based components in assessments (e.g., learning journals, drafts, or

project logs) to demonstrate authentic engagement, rather than restricting access to tools.

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses?

I don't feel there are acceptable secured assessment options for distance learners. Traveling to campus or testing centers adds financial and logistical burdens, and online proctoring creates surveillance concerns. Instead, assessments could be designed to encourage original thinking and practical application, which are more effective ways to show authentic learning than monitoring.

How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

In my view, introducing secured assessments risks creating an atmosphere of mistrust and surveillance. AI is already a standard tool in many workplaces, just as the internet became an accepted research tool decades ago. Rather than restricting AI, the university could focus on teaching students how to critically evaluate and integrate AI into their work. Students who over-rely on AI without developing their own skills will ultimately face challenges in employment, but that is a personal responsibility issue. Punishing all students with restrictive secured assessments would limit academic growth and innovation, rather than preparing us for real-world contexts where AI is part of everyday work.

I feel that a university that wants to attract, and have a reputation for, excellence, should make use of secured assessments as often as possible. Churning out students who relied too heavily on AI will damage the universities' reputation, students from that university will suffer because employers won't look favorably on them, and students who aim to be high achieving students will go elsewhere because what is the point of working hard when your fellow classmates can use AI and do half the work, especially the work of thinking and figuring things out, and also get high marks.

Requiring evidence of learning (and thinking!) is not surveillance, it's simply a natural part of the learning process. Learning and achieving a degree is about thinking, and working things out for oneself, and then demonstrating that one can do it. Just because surveillance is a currently a favoured word, it does not mean that all forms of control or restrictions are automatically surveillance, or that it is bad. Sometimes, it's just part of the process.

Students are proud of being at a university with a good reputation and high standards. Such universities attract better students, better researchers and more grants. Secured assessments are an integral part of maintaining the quality of the university.

Kia ora koutou,

I am currently enrolled in PGDipCounGuidSt via distance learning. While I completely understand the concerns of universities and future employees over authentic learning and accreditation, I have to say that my use of ChatGPT as a sounding board for my learning and assignments has been invaluable. Because lecturers are so busy with so many students and because I am unable to come to our digital hui topa sessions due to family responsibilities, I've found ChatGPT to be my own personal tutor. I have attempted to complete courses in the past and have dropped out midyear because I felt stuck and lost - and a disconnect from my peers. This year, I began using ChatGPT as a motivator and organiser for my thoughts about what I've been learning. There were times when I was in the middle of writing an assignment and felt like giving up. I'd tell ChatGPT and it helped motivate me to finish the course. I even went so far as asking it if it was even worth getting a qualification in counselling. It told me it definitely was and reminded me of my future counselling goals.

There will always be people who misuse technology - just as there have always been people who plagiarise or borrow someone else's work. There will always be those people who just want to get the qualification without doing the work with integrity. I think employers should design interviews with

prospective employees in order to gauge a genuine sense of the knowledge base and training they possess. With the 90 day trial period, that should also give employers enough time to fully assess new employee capabilities. That being said, a person can come out of university being genuinely qualified in their degree, having completed every aspect with genuine academic integrity - and simply not be "good" at their occupation. The qualification only gets people so far.

That being said, especially from the viewpoint of a distance learner, I think it would be amazing to have either one on one zoom sessions with a lecturer or tutor to just have a korero around the learning, or, even better would be to have the opportunity to attend a wananga over a few days in order for kanohi ki te kanohi with kaiako and other akonga in my subject. I know these pose extra planning and responsibilities for staff and for learners, but I think it would be such a fantastic opportunity for assessment. Not everyone is "good" at academic writing and that does not mean that they won't be "good" at their intended profession.

These were just some initial thoughts. I honestly think without the use of ChatGPT I would have dropped out of my studies this year - and that is not to say that I cheated or cut corners in any way. I think it has immensely helped me to deepen my learning and also foster even more passion for my study - and for my future career path. Thank you for taking the time to read this, and thank you also for being so open to this korero in order to shift with our changing world.

My experience with online exams sat at home has not been particularly favourable - there is a lot of system setting up etc to ensure the environment is suitable etc, however it's much more difficult to control factors such as outside noise that are more easily controlled in a classroom environment. My preference would be for invigilated exams sat at the university campus.

Presentations with the option for lecturers/other students are a good way to test knowledge without AI influence - or something similar depending on the study area. If Massey is able to offer options such as internships, I think that would be great also.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

Yes, this is not only a good way to ensure students actually learning the knowledge that it is designed to, but also encourage the education providers to align better with industry related measures on quality and performance. i.e. KPI measures. Ultimately, students learning the knowledge to help them to secure a job or at least to apply these knowledges. By writing essays of how they will do it is never can compete with to record how they actually did it. So yes, all supports on the secured assessment to ensure the best learning and teaching quality.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification? All assessments to be secured.

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam? Probably online interviews, plus supplement evidence could be a good way to assess, keep in mind some of the students doing the distance courses are not even in NZ, to ask them to travel it could defeat the purpose of enrol the distance course. Also, some people attend the distance courses could due to their disability, or other barriers that they can't attend in person. Travel to campus again is not going to be fair to those students.

How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance? change they way of how you assess, such as explore of the secured assessment is a great start. The education providers need to consider the learning habit with

different generation, the "old school" way may not suitable anymore, and the use of AI should not be treated as the way of students trying to "cheat" but a way of students trying to learn, just like when the internet first introduced not long ago. Would it be fair to say" all students who use the internet shall be treated as they are treating? "

On the authenticity of students work, there needs to be an embrace on both physical and digital work. In some of my classes, the final hand in is expected to be online rather than a physical workbook. The concern of authenticity in students work yet drifting from physical work proves an odd juxtaposition.

Tools like Grammarly that aid students, rather than do the work for them, should probably be allowed. I personally used Grammarly when it was a computer programme, but now it has gone to AI I stopped using it. Using AI assistance with grammar shouldn't equal to complete AI usage and AI made work.

Using an AI tool to see whether a student had used AI in their work is troublesome, as AI is not right all of the time, actually hardly any of the time. It often mismarks work as having used AI when they had not.

Yet I believe there should still be a complete AI ban in making the work.

For context, I am about to complete an graduate diploma in arts (mathematics).

Considering recent advances in generative AI, I think it is essential that some sort of secured assessment is offered.

The latest models like ChatGPT 5 are fully capable of scoring full marks on most undergraduate mathematics assignments and tests. It is now even possible to upload the course notes as context to ensure that the generative AI agent only uses allowed material in its answers.

The way mathematics assessments are currently conducted allows for generative AI use for planning. However, considering how good these AI agents are becoming, there is absolutely nothing stopping a dishonest student from using an AI to do every single assignment and test.

I am concerned that this will make mathematics degrees and diplomas from Massey less valuable: they cannot be considered a proof of competency due to the lack of invigilation.

I believe each course should have at least one invigilated assignment worth a significant percentage of the final grade.

I would have absolutely no problem traveling to a regional testing centre to sit a test or examination.

There is also another alternative. My partner is currently completing a Master's in Fire Safety Engineering at the University of Queensland. That degree is entirely delivered online. The way the university ensures that the students do the work themselves is by using a one-on-one interview as a final assessment for each course. This allows the lecturers to ensure the students know the course material.

Group based assessment/work could be another option to ensure validity of work.

Distance papers should not require in person testing. Online testing is fine.

I first want to point out that I do not have any hidden agenda or specific interests on my views about AI and I am not fully aware about the processes required or what method in place currently used on academic grading. I am just a distance student with simple views.

Now, my first question is, and it goes with the most ultimate respect for Tutors and Professors, where does responsibilities about existent internet research contents should lay on? Shouldn't our Professors be aware of what are the types of materials and written styles out there (internet) to grade us efficiently? For this argument sake, let's say: No. It's impossible to know it all. Well, then it raises the argument that if they do not know how AI delivers their own specialised material themselves, is it then a subject to be discussed at all? Furthermore, is it possible to see it as a lack of efforts on their part for not keeping up with current technology modifying their chosen specialised subject? Secondly, is it fair to punish students to use Internet content when most courses contents designed by Professors normally require us to further our knowledge doing so? Possibly there are the "lazy" cases of students copying and pasting internet material however, I, amongst many others, am not one of them. Finally, modifying assessments procedures inserting fear and insecurities not only affect student confidence which is counteracting, but also make no difference on the learning outcome and the responsibility of adapting to rules should be beared by both parties. Sometimes, no changes is the only option.

Regards. JB

yes there should be to know what level each student is up to and atleast 1 secured assessment each course to then evaluate the students level of study
and i would prefer to go into campus for the test

Q: Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

A: Yes. It is vital that Massey employs some sort of secured assessment to protect the degree, and the reputation of the university as a whole. As it stands right now, Massey university has no countermeasures against detecting whether a student has used AI or not jeopardising any degree as a whole. As Massey University has discovered, AI detection is unreliable and will pick up false positives regularly, destroying teacher and student confidence in any work submitted. The answer is simple: physical examinations need to be reinstated.

Q: What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification?

A: At the bare minimum, at least ONE assessment per course needs to be secured. This will force students to engage in the course throughout the semester and not completely rely on AI to do the work for them.

Q: What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam?

A: I am not a distance student, but my sympathies go out towards them. Unfortunately, the only answer is for them to travel to a campus or testing centre.

Q: How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

A: Simple. In-person examinations. No spyware will need to be installed on peoples computers and all work can be verified by examination watchers. The return to how things were done back years ago is the only way forward to protect the integrity and reputation of the degree and university as a whole. You do not want the university to be put in a position where potential employers ignore any resume that lists Massey University as their education. That is the potential future that we must avoid at all costs.

I believe that ultimately, whether or not secured assessment is important comes down to the nature of the subject itself. My main suggestion is to not use a one-size-fits-all approach to secured assessment. What works well for an exam that involves writing an essay will not work the same for a

maths exam. Ultimately, trying to prevent different methods of cheating is a never-ending task as technology improves. What provides more longevity than figuring out a specific method for secured assessments is designing the assessments themselves in a way that requires the student to show their knowledge. This could look like less focus on memorisation and repeating facts, and more focus on demonstrating an overall understanding of the topics covered.

I do not believe that all assessments should be secured. For example, in the Computer Science field, it is a logistical nightmare to try and organise a programming exam to be closed book. It is simply the nature of some fields that, even in the workplace, looking things up is not only commonplace but expected. Instead, a good assessment is one that cannot be easily googled or provided to an AI tool to get an answer. I have had several assignments that have provided, for example, a unique framework to work within. This meant I had to think critically about how to apply what I had been taught, and would make it near impossible to find ways to get outside help.

For secured assessments, I cannot recommend enough an in-person alternative if the exams are offered online. Internal students who attend lectures and tutorials on-campus should also be able to sit tests and exams on-campus. It creates less of a "surveillance" atmosphere, avoids security issues, helps keep online traffic clear for distance students who cannot make it on-site, and is much less stress for students. I have had in-person exams at this university and I found them great. In-person examination has many years behind it and has shown itself to be the best way to avoid cheating.

Do you think introducing some form of secured assessment is important?

No, as the paradigm shifts further and further the skills people need are changing, if you aren't good at using the current tools available your skills aren't really worth anything.

What number or proportion of secured assessments should be required in a qualification? For example, should all assessments be secured, or should there be a secured assessment in every course, or at every level of a qualification?

I don't think it's worthwhile, I genuinely believe that as time goes on the requirements for education needs to change, not how it's monitored.

What are acceptable options for secured assessment in distance courses? For example, if you are a distance student, would you prefer to travel to a campus or testing centre near you to complete a secured assessment, or would you prefer to sit an online test or exam?

If a student is signed up for distance, they should be able to complete their assessment at distance, there should be no need to appear anywhere physically.

How do we balance the need to reinforce the trustworthiness of our degrees with a desire to avoid creating an atmosphere of surveillance?

The trustworthiness of all degrees will take a hit.

The best solution along the lines that Massey wants to implement is probably something like an exam which directly monitors your browsing tabs during the duration of the assessment while recording the student as well to ensure they don't use a peripheral device. Anything beyond this is probably a big breach of privacy.

Extract from Learning and Teaching Committee Minutes April 2024

3.3 Future of Examinations Requirement Working Group (FERWG) memorandum **LTC24-04-42**

3.3.1 FERWG – Response to feedback from Te Tira Ahu Pae **LTC24-04-43**

3.3.2 FERWG – Revised Report **LTC23-09-92 Rev1**

Peter Rawlins (Chair FERWG) joined the committee to discuss the response to Te Tira Ahu Pae's feedback.

At the March Academic Committee meeting, the Future of Examinations Requirement Working Group (FERWG) was asked to respond to feedback provided by Te Tira Ahu about the FERWG report. The Working Group met and worked synchronously online to consider the feedback provided. As a result, some changes were made to the report. These changes were primarily around issues of clarification, and the essential direction and the recommendations of the report remain the same.

LTC was asked to review and discuss the feedback and revised report.

The Chair thanked Peter for his time.

The following points were noted as part of a general discussion:

- It would be useful for students and staff if the changes made were highlighted within the report or a supplementary document of the changes appended to demonstrate to Te Tira Ahu Pae where we have adopted changes.

Resolved: This response will now go to the April Academic Committee for feedback.

Memorandum

To: Chair, Learning and Teaching Committee

From: A/Pro Peter Rawlins, convenor Future of Examination Requirements Working Group

Date: 3 April 2024

Subject: Response to feedback from Te Tira Ahu Pae

At the March meeting of Academic Committee, the Future of Examinations Requirement Working Group (FERWG) was asked to respond to feedback provided by Te Tira Ahu in relation to the FERWG report. The Working Group met once via Teams, and then continued to work asynchronously online to consider the feedback provided and the Working Group's response to it. As a result, some changes were made to the report. These changes were primarily around issues of clarification, and the essential direction and the recommendations of the report remain the same.

We have provided two documents: the amended report and a document that outlines Te Tira Ahu Pae's main concerns and our responses to them.

Recommendation: That Learning and Teaching Committee receive the revised FERWG report.

Feedback from Students	WG response.
That the identified benefit of students not needing to travel to an examination can only be realised if the software is stable	We acknowledge and agree that the student experience is paramount. This will be reflected in procurement criteria that will place significant weight on simplicity, stability, and resilience to factors students cannot control.
The need for a standard approach to the 24-hour window for undertaking CAEs	We agree with this. We have not adjusted the report as we feel that the existing wording indicates a standard approach of a 24 hour window for CAEs, but certainly work can be done to ensure increased clarity of communication to students around this window.
Whether remote proctoring would be available to all students who wanted to apply and not only to those located overseas	We have adapted the report to indicate that this will continue to be available to all students who genuinely need it, through existing supplementary assessment provisions coordinated by Assessment Services
Whether it is possible for the external IT platform provided (currently PSI) to provide the level of exam support needed by students undertaking OSEs	We agree that appropriate levels of support should be provided. In part this may be through the external provider but we feel it is important that student have a support person that they can contact to solve any issues. Please see recommendation 7.
Whether students partway through their degree would be allowed to use an alternative examination method if it wasn't clear to them that OSEs would be use in their degree when they originally enrolled.	This is not really a question that the WG can answer as it is a University general regulations question. We have noted that transparency is an important principle, and that students should be provided with as much relevant information as possible. That said, circumstances change over time and the University currently reserves the right to make reasonable changes to programmes (e.g. schedule changes, progression regulations etc.) during a student's period of study.
That a comparative, detailed cost analysis be undertaken of in-person examinations and digital methods before any final decision is made to move away from in-person examinations.	We have indicated in our recommendations that a cost analysis be undertaken (see recommendation 13); however, our recommendation to continue with CAEs through an online/digital platform (recommendation 1) is not based solely on cost as outlined in our report.
The perception that disability students were being used as a justification for switching to digital exams without consultation and lack of recognition that digital platforms can also present problems for disability students.	We accept that the use of an online/digital platform for assessment will not suit all students with disabilities. The University remains committed to supporting students with disabilities, and Assessment Services will continue to provide appropriate support in relation to assessment through the Specific Circumstances framework.

Whether domestic distance students who are not located close to University campuses will be provided extra accommodations similar to those who live near University facilities.	We have recommended the provision of in-person proctored examination centres although the number and location of these is a resourcing issue that is beyond the scope of the WG to determine. We do note that students have historically had to travel to examination centres. The University is committed to working one-on-one with students with genuine circumstances or concerns that might impact them successfully completing a CAE.
Within the functional table requirements, it is recommended the following item be changed to a 'MUST' have rather the "SHOULD' have: 'Students should be able to continue taking the CAE if network connectivity is lost, either by continuing offline, or by being able to continue when network connectivity is restored with work done automatically saved and time adjusted for the disruption'	We broadly agree with this and have changed the report accordingly. Network resilience is covered under FR.019.
That the report does not adequately reflect the associated problems with online exams such as installation issues, bad technical support, and hard-to-use interfaces.	We acknowledge that some students have had sub-optimal experiences with the present platform, which have contributed to stress and anxiety. As such the WG has recommended the investigation of possible better providers, as well as provision of adequate technical and administrative support for both staff and students both prior to and during the exam period. (see recommendation 7)