

How do I write a rationale for final internal student ratings?

Frequently Asked Questions

Purpose

To support teachers and schools to develop clear, consistent, and defensible rationales for determining final internal ratings. A well-written rationale explains how ratings are reached, the principles and considerations that guide teacher judgement.

Commonly asked questions

- **What is the rationale for final ratings?**

This rationale is a short, written explanation that outlines how students' final internal ratings are determined. It describes the rules or considerations and how they are applied consistently across judgements. Where there are multiple classes of the same course in a school, the rationale should be the same. The rationale should accompany the assessment record.

- **Why is the rationale important?**

A clear rationale:

- supports consistent teacher judgement
- provides evidence for reviews
- enables TASC verification if required
- supports transparency for students, particularly if staff change.

- **What do I need to consider when writing a rationale for final student ratings?**

You must consider any possible influences on your determination which may include:

- task weighting (e.g. major, minor or they are all equal)
- the significance of work requirements or culminating tasks
- student consistency and progress across the year, with consideration to end-point achievement
- the nature of work, whether it is individual and/or group work
- the validity and reliability of different assessment types
- missing assessment or limited achievement
- professional judgement, including specific or individual circumstances.

- **What are the features of a rationale?**

All statements in the rationale should be clear, and easy to consistently apply. They should also be contextualised to the course and any school expectations and priorities. Examples of the type of statements that may be included in a rationale are:

- Major tasks assessing multiple standards carry the greatest weight. Minor tasks provide supporting evidence only.
- Two or more similar results in the same criterion indicate consistent achievement; a single result cannot determine the overall rating.

For example, a full rationale for final internal student ratings *may* look like:

- "Final ratings reflect an on-balance judgement of the evidence for each criterion. Major summative and culminating tasks carry the greatest weight, supported by individual and recent evidence. Minor or formative tasks may clarify borderline decisions. Work Requirement tasks hold particular significance and may require reassessment opportunities. A 'z' notation indicates missing evidence, and multiple 'z' ratings limit the achievable rating. A 'z' on any major summative task caps the final criterion rating at a maximum of 'C'. Teachers apply professional judgement to determine the rating that best represents the student's demonstrated level of achievement."
- Note: *TASC expects rationales to differ depending on the course and school context.*

Alignment to [Standards for Providers](#)

Providing a clear rationale supports:

- **Standard 2 – Assessment Validity and Reliability:** ensuring consistency of assessment judgements
- **Standard 5 – Assessment Review and Appeal:** ensuring clear evidence for review purposes

Where to get more information

Refer to [Quality assurance - TASC](#) for further information and resources.

Your TLO can contact TASC through TRACS for support or clarification.