EDITH COWAN UNIVERSITY

Centre for Learning and Teaching

This quick guide provides advice, drawn from the latest research literature on academic integrity and contract cheating.

Assessment design for Student Identity Verification (SIV)

As ECU progressively moves more of its teaching and assessment online, a key focus is how to achieve Student Identity Verification (SIV) to ensure assessment integrity. This quick guide provides advice, drawn from the latest research literature on academic integrity and contract cheating.

Many believe that invigilated exams are the best way to ensure assessment integrity, because they involve an explicit process for verifying students' identities (ie. checking ID cards). Research shows this is not the case. A large-scale Australian study of contract cheating surveyed 14,086 students and 1,147 staff across eight universities. Its findings should inform ECU's response to changing conditions for teaching, learning and assessment[1]:

- exam cheating (particularly in multiple-choice exams) was more common among students than cheating on written assessments;
- staff detection of cheating in written assessments was far higher than in exams;
- text-rich assessments (whether invigilated or not) had the highest rates of detection relative to student reports of cheating (see figure below).

The key message: exams do not assure integrity, and text-rich forms of assessment remain valuable.

Designing for Student Identity Verification (SIV) in online assessments

Look at your Unit assessments *and the learning activities* collectively: can they do the following?

Integrity strategy	Guidance
Enable tutors/markers to get to know each students' abilities *early*	Combine live video sessions and Canvas discussion posts so tutors/markers can understand each student's written and oral capabilities. Ask tutors/markers to monitor student activity in Canvas to identify students who are not engaging in the learning activities. Advise tutors/markers to flag for investigation any assessment submissions that are inconsistent with their observations of students.
Ensure students are not too overwhelmed by new arrangements	Avoid introducing too many new platforms, tools and processes. Focus on developing students' confidence and competence in core, authentic skills. Scaffold students' skill development in any new online tools and processes (e.g. collaboration). Include reflective opportunities (written or oral).
For written tasks, use known integrity strategies	Prescribe unique constraints (e.g. designated readings, contemporary events), then advise tutors/markers to flag any generic, off-topic submissions for investigation. Educate all staff to know the signals of contract cheating, and in using Turnitin

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Integrity strategy	Guidance
For Canvas quizzes use known integrity strategies	Use timed assessment and randomised questions.
	Ensure the Quiz is set to release answers AFTER the quiz has closed.
	Minimise the use of Multiple-Choice Questions and use short-answer and essay questions instead.
	Minimise the use of 'question pools' from supporting text publication resources, as often these will have solution sets available on the web. Consider creating a smaller set of bespoke unit questions.
	Stage short follow-up video vivas to check student understanding, such as asking students to provide a one minute summary of their two best answers.

[1] Harper, R., Bretag, T., & Rundle, K. (2020). 'Detecting contract cheating: examining the role of assessment type'. In *Higher Education Research & Development*, DOI:10.1080/07294360.2020.1724899