

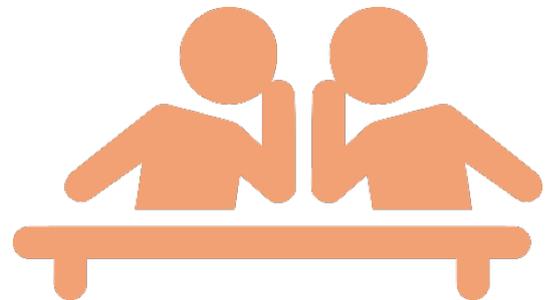
While assessment design cannot prevent cheating, it is a vital tool for fostering integrity. Assessment drives learning, so where assessment is poorly conceived, students will be more likely to rationalise or resort to cheating. Our data suggests that integrity is more likely to be compromised when educators or their institutions:

1. use or encourage assessment types primarily because they are *efficient* or *expedient*, or
2. use or encourage certain assessment types due to misperceptions they *alone* will ensure integrity.

Our findings indicate that three assessment types are particularly prone to this, so care must be taken to ensure they are implemented for learning, rather than efficiency.

## Use with caution: invigilated exams

Many staff reported using more invigilated exams, due to a belief that they are the best way to safeguard integrity. This is false. Among students who have engaged in cheating, exam cheating was more common than outsourcing assignments, and was detected *far less often* by staff. Moreover, students reported that cheating was more likely on a heavily-weighted, high stakes task than almost any other kind of task. In addition, students rationalised student cheating in assignments they perceived to be irrelevant to future learning.



*Exams and hard deadline assignments really **don't reflect anything to do with learning how to function in the real world**. They simply don't teach anything, they just show off a student's ability to rote learn and recall (Student 871, non-cheating).*

Unfortunately, many staff also reported they were *reluctantly* reverting to exams, for a range of reasons.

*Sadly, at least two academic units at my university have **mandated that every subject will include a final exam** as the major assessment item because of the belief that this prevents at least one form of third-party cheating. This is another example of a **complex problem being treated by a single simple solution** (Staff 155).*

## Use with caution: online quizzes



Student reports of cheating in quizzes *more than doubled* staff reports of detection. In addition, students' qualitative responses discussed cheating in online quizzes more than any other topic, highlighting a range of perspectives:

*It happens ALL the time for online quizzes ... **Everyone just does them together, even if they get different questions** ... It disenfranchises students who want to, and regularly do the right thing, and **incentivises you to buy into a cheating framework** (Student 286, cheating).*

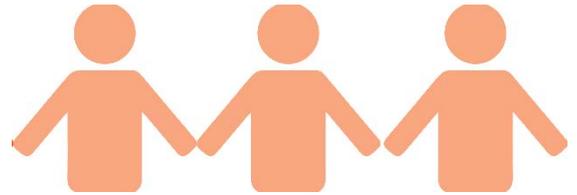
Despite this, many staff reported *increased* use of online quizzes. But, well aware of the prevalence of cheating, they also expressed concerns about the impact of online quizzes on academic integrity:

*My university requires me to provide several assessment tasks online (e.g. online quizzes). These are really difficult to develop in a way that prevents cheating (Staff 223).*

While online quizzes can be used to great effect for encouraging weekly learning – either individually or collaboratively – and for providing automated, formative feedback, there are clearly risks in using them for summative purposes.

## Use with caution: group work

Student reports of cheating in group work significantly exceeded staff reports of detection. Both students and staff also commented on the misuse of group assessment, suggesting it is employed by many as a means for saving time and money rather than teaching and assessing collaboration.



*Many courses nowadays try to save money on tutors by putting students into groups of say six students to complete projects that can be worth more than 50% of the course marks. Usually there is only one student who does most/all of the work, and yet all students receive the same group mark. In my opinion this is the same as cheating, but is condoned by the institution. (Student 292, non-cheating).*

### What can be done?

1. Avoid mandating invigilated exams as a way to ensure academic integrity.
2. Use online quizzes for formative purposes only.
3. Use group work to *teach* about the challenges and benefits of collaboration.
4. Give students strategies for responding to academic integrity issues in group work.

### References

- Bretag, T., Harper, R., Burton, M., Ellis, C., Newton, P., Saddiqui, S., Rozenberg, P & van Haeringen, K. (2018). Contract cheating: A survey of Australian university students, *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-20
- Harper, R., Bretag, T., Ellis, C., Newton, P., Rozenberg, P., Saddiqui, S., & van Haeringen, K. (2018). Contract cheating: a survey of Australian university staff. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-17.

Further resources available at [www.cheatingandassessment.edu.au/](http://www.cheatingandassessment.edu.au/)  
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