Five tips for promoting academic integrity in online assessments

Set and communicate expectations early

Set expectations early regarding online assessments including the do’s and don’ts for completing the assessment. Provide as much information as possible regarding the process to allay anxiety. Consider a practice test including a follow-up discussion on how students engaged with resources during the assessment.

Consider students’ motivation

Students are less likely to engage in academic misconduct if they are motivated to learn. They need to see value in the materials and process of learning, including assessment tasks. Motivation is greater if they have control over what is coming and an understanding of tasks and expectations. Continue to promote the value of assessment and student self-efficacy in the lead up to undertaking assessments.

Review the assessment type and the associated risks for misconduct and mitigating strategies

Open tasks (Type 1)
Risks: Student identity; plagiarism (if referencing guidelines are not clear); collusion.
Mitigating strategies: Include personal reflections and/or higher order thinking; clearly stipulate referencing requirements; consider googling your questions – can they be answered on the web?

Flexible online exams (Type 2)
Risks: Collusion is the greatest risk due to the ability for students to complete the exam in succession; student identity; plagiarism
Mitigating strategies: Include personal reflections and/or higher order thinking; ask students to show their processes; inform students of expectations – the value of being able to complete an assessment in their own time versus an awareness of the opportunity to collaborate/collude.

Timed online exams (Type 3)
Risks: Staggered starts to manage Moodle load is a risk for collusion; student identity; plagiarism; be careful regarding the release of answers – ensure all students have completed the task.
Mitigating strategies: Time is restricted which minimises students’ ability to peruse resources/collude although take care to not allow too much time; consider randomising, re-ordering and/or the use of a question bank to personalise exam papers; avoid knowledge level questions that can be searched on the web.

Promote academic integrity practices

Reinforce the completion of MAP100 to foster a good understanding of academic integrity practices
Promote a culture of academic integrity in the online environment. All online exams are non-invigilated and open book/open web. This aspect should be clear however students may be unclear on whether answers to questions should be referenced as per an assignment or how materials can be utilised during an exam, including collaboration with other students. Encourage Q and A on the process of new online assessments to promote a culture of academic integrity in student groups.

Remind students that any instances of academic misconduct will be investigated

Academic misconduct is taken very seriously, and penalties can include failure of the assessment item.