



ASSESSMENT DESIGN FOR INTEGRITY

USEFUL TIPS & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

Safeguarding academic integrity has become a particularly pressing issue in the age of the Internet and social media. Students who feel overwhelmed or struggle with instructions that are unclear or too broadly defined often feel tempted to violate principles of academic integrity, leading to frustration among students and instructors.

HOW CAN YOU OPTIMIZE THE DESIGN OF YOUR ASSIGNMENTS TO PREVENT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?

Here are eight easy tips to assist you in your effort:

1. **Provide clear instructions and expectations for the assignment.** Identify the purpose of the assignment and explain how it aligns with the course learning outcomes. This will ensure the students feel that the assignment is doable.
2. **Design assignments that are specific.** Instead of asking students to write about a specific text, provide step-by-step instructions for how to proceed. Focus on aspects of a topic that are not typically written about in the research literature or online. For more ideas, see the York Academic Integrity Resources (link below).
3. **Design unique assignments each year.** This will ensure students can't simply get the answers from a classmate who took the course in previous years or from a professional vendor.
4. **Design assignments that require the students to relate to and apply their own experiences to the concepts and content being studied in the course.** This will make the course material more meaningful for students and give them a unique perspective to discuss in their assignments. Focusing on the quality of the argumentation or reflection also removes the pressure to find the "correct" answer because there is no such thing.
5. **Focus on the process as well as the product.** For example, include information gathering or a reflective component as part of the assessment. This encourages students to develop original ideas and fosters metacognitive thinking skills.
6. **Require the assignment to be prepared and submitted in stages.** For example, ask students to submit a 200-word proposal, a rough draft, peer feedback, and a final draft. This will encourage them to start early and prevent them from making bad decisions out of stress.
7. **Use alternative assessments.** Possible assignments include podcasts, videos, posting or publishing work online, reading or presenting work in class, etc.
8. **Integrate peer assessment.** If students know that their work will be on display, they are less likely to engage in academic dishonesty because their peers may realize it.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Carroll, J., & Appleton, J. (May 2001). *Plagiarism: A good practice guide*. Oxford Brookes University. Retrieved September 6, 2022 from <https://tinyurl.com/huvkpcnx>

If you would like to explore this topic further, consider these York University events and resources:

- York Academic Integrity Resources: <https://tinyurl.com/58eb4zxa>
- Teaching Commons workshops on Course and Curriculum Design: <https://tinyurl.com/5n7bhpt6>
- Teaching Commons Guide to Alternative Assessments: <https://tinyurl.com/2p84r5va>
- Teaching Commons Guide to Alternative Assessments for Remote Teaching: <https://tinyurl.com/w44f6t3x>

**Would you like to learn more?**

Contact us at Teaching Commons for additional resources, handouts, applications, courses, workshops, examples, advice, assistance, one-on-one consulting, and everything else related to teaching and learning. We are happy and eager to assist you!



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[TC Homepage](#)

[BOLD Going Remote](#)

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