

Effective practice for preventing and detecting academic fraud

Assessment provides the opportunity to: give and receive feedback on learning, measure learning, and ensure accountability. Academic fraud by students is most commonly related to assessment. The most effective practices for preventing and detecting academic fraud lie in the form and management of assessment.

In achieving the above, good assessment design considers the activities associated with carrying out an assessment, validity of how the assessment is conveyed to students and carried out, equity, and integrity of the assessment*.

An organisation's overarching assessment design policy should consider how instances of cheating by students can be prevented or detected. Prevention and detection activities are best focused where learning and teaching occurs. The following summarise activities that, when used together, help actively prevent and detect cheating by students:

- **Actively preventing cheating by raising student consciousness**

The first step in preventing dishonesty is raising student consciousness. Organisations' should ensure learners have the opportunity to think about, be reminded of, and understand the need for honesty and integrity *before* they are assessed.

- **Actively preventing cheating through using well designed and administered assessment**

Assessments that are well-designed and administered will deter students who are tempted and minimise opportunities for cheating. Students should understand what the requirement and purpose of assessment is.

- **Actively detecting cheating by staying alert for the potential for it to happen**

Detection should be undertaken as a matter of course – active detection keeps tutors alert to situations where a student may have cheated.

- **Actively detecting cheating through exploring suspicions**

The relationship tutors have with students is vitally important in good assessment practice. However, if a tutor has suspicions that students may be cheating, they need techniques to help them take a closer look.

Further detailed suggestions are provided in NZQA's Guide to Effective Practice in Preventing and Detecting Academic Fraud.

* Further information on effective assessment practice is available from the Ako Aotearoa website: <http://ako.aotearoa.ac.nz/> key words: "Tertiary teaching and learning through assessment"

Key concepts

1. Providers use clear learner-centred assessment design policies.
2. Students understand the relationship honesty and integrity has for ensuring assessment is fair and valid.
3. Students understand the requirements and purpose of assessment.
4. Tutors are supported to develop and carry out assessments.