

# ASSESSMENT AND FEEDBACK TOOLKIT

## ASSESSMENT DESIGN

### DESIGNING OUT PLAGIARISM

This guidance is linked to Principle 7 & 9 in the CU Assessment Strategy and is underpinned by the CU Assessment Policy.

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*“What a good thing Adam had. When he said a good thing, he knew nobody had said it before.” Mark Twain*

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#### INTRODUCTION

Plagiarism is a complex issue that requires more than a reliance on policing and penalties, such as detection software or regulations and policies. It is important to understand that there are many contextual influences that lead to plagiarism. Assessment design can play a part in deterring students from plagiarism.

Carroll (2013) suggests that in order to design out plagiarism, we should focus on three levels:

- Task level: Designing **OUT** opportunities for easy copying, taking & faking
- Course / Programme level: Designing **IN** chances to learn and practice
- Policy level: Designing penalties that can shape decisions

This guidance document focuses on the first two levels, task and course/programme level. For policy and regulations dealing with plagiarism, please visit the Registry webpages.

#### HOW DO WE DESIGN OUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAGIARISM AT TASK LEVEL?

##### AVIOD REUSING THE SAME ASSESSMENT YEAR AFTER YEAR

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Using the same assessment task invites copying of previous work. Avoid using old/dated data/case studies which can be easily downloaded from the Internet and copying work from previous cohorts.

##### DESIGN TASKS THAT REQUIRE STUDENTS TO USE UP-TO-DATE RESEARCH

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Ask students to work on tasks that use up-to-date and recent case studies, data, or journal articles. However, avoid tasks that simply ask students to gather information/data, instead, ask students to analyse or rank the data/information using specific criteria.

For example, instead of asking students to write an essay on ‘smoking and public health’, ask students to find 3 ‘*stop smoking*’ campaigns. Rank them in terms of appropriateness worthy of government funding because they improve health. Justify the ranking, using their own criteria, and explain the criteria using data (Example from Carroll, 2013).

### INCORPORATING PERSONAL REFLECTION WITH SUPPORTING EVIDENCE

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Design assessment tasks where students have the opportunity to reflect on their development along with supporting evidence that is authentic and personal. For example, the PgCert in Academic Practice in Higher Education requires students to complete a number of teaching observations and other activities, creating a portfolio of evidence and complete a final reflective statement using their evidence in the portfolio, to support their reflective account.

### DESIGN TASKS THAT ASSESS HIGHER LEVELS OF THINKING

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Avoid asking students to simply ‘describe’ or ‘explain’ in your assessment design. Design assessment that assesses higher levels of thinking, which require critical thinking and encourage students to demonstrate more individual responses. When students are asked to evaluate, analysis, justify and create, they will present their own personal evaluation, analysis, justification and creation (output).

### INCOPORATE NON-WRITTEN EXAMS

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Incorporate oral exams (vivas), presentations or performance as part of the assessment where students are required to justify their work.

### SCAFFOLD APPROACH

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Design your assessment to allow students to scaffold their effort and work over a period of time, and submit their work in stages for formative feedback. This is often done in the creative arts or project work where students are required to submit draft/parts of their work before the final submission. Encourage students to keep drafts of their work as it progresses, to serve as evidence of authentic work.

### USE DIVERSE ASSESSMENT METHODS

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Consider using diverse assessment methods, and whether you can move away from the traditional essay, as many essay titles can easily be bought online from “essay mills”. Authentic and practical assessment tasks are also more engaging and meaningful for students.

### RESTRICT SOURCES TO USE

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Consider identifying the specific core resources you wish students to use as a minimum and then to choose one or more resources they have found in the assessment task. This will ensure the use of appropriate references and make identifying plagiarism easier if students used the same own resources.

## HOW DO WE DESIGN OUT OPPORTUNITIES FOR PLAGIARISM AT PROGRAMME LEVEL?

### CONSISTENT USE OF FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT LINKING TO SUMMATIVE TASK

Formative assessment allow students to practice and gather feedback on their work. It is important that such opportunities are available across the programme (course), rather than only at certain modules. Formative assessment can also provide an audit trail. Remind students to keep different versions of their draft work as they progress.

### CREATE OPPORTUNITIES FOR STUDENTS TO LEARN ABOUT ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

While students might have been told about plagiarism at induction, we all know that is simply not enough. Build in clear opportunities within your programme for students to develop their understanding on what plagiarism is and what constitute academic integrity. Introduce in-class discussion and or peer review exercises looking at examples of plagiarised work, could be a useful method. You can find some examples of activities/materials created by Jenny Moon via this link: [www.cemp.ac.uk/people/jennymoon.php](http://www.cemp.ac.uk/people/jennymoon.php)

For more examples of approaches and resources to support academic integrity, please see this guidance document by the Higher Education Academy and JISC:

[https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/supportingacademicintegrity\\_v2\\_0.pdf](https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/system/files/supportingacademicintegrity_v2_0.pdf)

## REFERENCES

Carroll, J (2013) Can assessment design deter students from plagiarism? Presentation presented at University of Kent. Available from: <https://www.kent.ac.uk/teaching/.../ltn/.../Sn-2-designing-assessment-16-01-2013.pptx>

## WANT TO FIND OUT MORE?

For more resources and guidance on deigning out plagiarism:

Carroll, J. (2007) A Handbook for Deterring Plagiarism in Higher Education (2nd ed.) Oxford Centre for Staff Development and Learning, Oxford

Get in touch with the Academic Development Team or visit our website for other guidance and resources:

<https://acdev.coventry.domains/>