

THE ROLE E-TOOLS PLAY IN SUPPORTING TEACHING AND ASSESSMENTS WITH INTEGRITY DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Zeenath Reza Khan¹, Shiva D. Sivasubramaniam², Pranit Anand³, Ajrina Hysaj¹

¹*University of Wollongong in Dubai, United Arab Emirates*

²*University of Derby, United Kingdom*

³*Queensland University of Technology, Australia*

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The COVID19 pandemic challenged the higher education (HE) teaching and assessment models. This needed constant restructuring of content, method of delivery and incorporating new assessment strategies without affecting student learning experience. Universities soon realised that this was not an easy/swift process (Belini et al, 2020)). Academics had to focus on how to get students engaged, promote active learning in remote teaching and ascertain the learning outcomes were achieved while maintaining academic integrity. This workshop presents a selection of teaching and assessment innovations that have been successfully implemented via online platforms to enhance student engagements, particularly to address concerns around academic integrity in remote teaching environments. Attendees will be able to explore the adaptability of these tools and strategies in different subjects.

Unlike political, natural and environmental calamities of the past where universities have risen to the occasion and moved teaching/learning to the digital platform (Meyer and Wilson, 2011; Creed and Morpeth, 2014; Lieberman, 2017; Lau, 2019; Padermal, 2020), used digital media to broadcast lessons (Manorama, 2020) or even used technology to send, receive and grade assessments (Hodges et al, 2020), this global pandemic was sudden and quick in halting student and staff mobility, accessibility to faculty and other physical resources. All we had was the online platform and whatever teaching

resources we had in our homes. While academia can be considered as the most easily adaptable profession, Covid-19 challenged their adaptability to the maximum. First, in mere days, teachers had to move to the online platform and conduct emergency distance learning; then they had to explore the possibility of assessments online, and finally cancelling assessments all together to rely on student aggregate performance (based on predicted grades).

Research/news published months after the pandemic related lockdowns on the experiences of remote teaching has highlighted the fact that maintaining quality and integrity was a challenge to many universities (Lederman, 2020). A study by Lancaster and Cotarlan (2021) showed an almost 200% increase in the number of students attempting to use essay mill sites. Two major cases among US universities also raised the concern over integrity during remote learning: (1) the Texas A&M university conducted a large scale investigation on online exams when students seemed to complete them faster than expected, tracing the answers to essay mill sites (Morris, 2021); and (2) the West Point Military Academy accused more than 70 cadets of cheating on online exam, calling it a “national security issue...[as the] cadets [would] become senior leaders” (Brook, 2020).

Although addressing academic integrity has always been challenging for educators, this has been compounded further during COVID-19 due to the

fact that the only tools for teaching, learning and assessments were through the Internet. Although there are many technologies available to detect (and therefore dis-incentivise) students' plagiarism (du Rocher, 2020), one of the most effective tools has always been engaging students in the learning and therefore discouraging them from engaging in unethical behaviours (Ellery, 2008). Student engagement often helps them feel more connected to their learning environments and to 'own' their learning processes and outcomes. While this is relatively easier in face-to-face environments, there are a number of online tools that can be used to engage students, that when used meaningfully can be a great way to engage students.

As we continue on this unstable and unexpected journey, this workshop traces the challenges faced by the authors, proposes to engage the audience in discussion to share collective hurdles and then proceeds to present practical examples of ways to use e-tools and innovative teaching methods that have helped them uphold integrity in their classrooms.

The presenters of this workshop have significant experience in effective teaching using active learning strategies, and are particularly competent with online teaching and learning to encourage integrity and proactively dissuade students from misconduct. Although the authors are from different institutions, disciplines and countries, they have come together over shared ideas around ways to address student engagement, and therefore academic integrity challenges. They will be presenting their collective ideas in this workshop, and because of their different disciplines, the ideas are likely to appeal to a wide audience.

The workshop aims to showcase and provide hands-on practical classroom strategies for attendees to apply in their own settings. The authors will present evidence for the effectiveness of methods

used in their classrooms that have contributed to reducing the likelihood of students engaging in misconduct. The workshop will also give the attendees an opportunity to share their own experiences with engaging students in online learning environments that has perhaps worked successfully in reducing the incidences of misconduct. Attendees will be engaged through deliberate, structured and collaborative activities, ideas will be recorded using appropriate platforms like Padlet and will be made available to all participants after the workshops.

It is expected that those who attend the workshop will benefit from the following takeaways:

- Ideas to deploy within own settings to address challenges associated with students engagement and academic integrity in online teaching environments using easily accessible, free or free for student use tools.
- Case study of challenges and barriers faced in classrooms when delivering lessons and conducting assessments, e.g. understanding ways of transforming assessments due to the pandemic and how they may either help or hinder upholding integrity
- Good practice guide using innovative teaching techniques and online tools in remote classrooms that are proactive to help encourage honesty and discourage misconduct, e.g. changing paper-based assessments to online assessments using online tools such as Padlets, Mentimeters, Digital Storybook

We believe the workshop will be beneficial to tertiary education lecturers, tutors, teaching assistants or anyone else involved in organising and delivering content, as well as conducting practical lessons/workshops, particularly within the online/remote/distance learning modes and grappling with issues of misconduct online.

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