

and Feedback Guide for Staff

2022-2023

# **Contents**

Ass	essme	nt and Feedback Guide	4	
1.	Assessment and Feedback Guide Alignment  1.1 Alignment to Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges			
	1.2	Aligning Outcomes, Learning Activities and Assessments		
2.	Your 2.1 2.2	View on Assessment Your views Share and support	6	
3.	SQA 3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4	Assessment Guidance Key points Pre-verification service Contact with SQA regarding assessment SOLAR		
4.	City and Guilds E-volve			
5.	Comi 5.1 5.2	nunicating with Students about Assessment Assessment Schedule Learning Plan (Unit, Course or Project)	10	
6.	Master Folder for Assessment and Internal Verification (IV)			
7.	Integ 7.1 7.2	rated AssessmentWhat is it?Why do it?	15	
8.	Common Assessment Types		16	
9.	Diagnostic Assessment		17	
10.	10.1 10.2	ative Assessment  Key features of Formative Assessment  Impassive Assessment  Learning checks	18 19	

11.	Summative Assessment		
	11.1	Key features of Summative Assessment	20
	11.2	Conditions of Summative Assessment	21
	11.3	Selection of Summative Assessment instrument	21
	11.4	Preparation for Summative Assessment	22
	11.5	SQA Graded Unit	
	11.6	Invigilation	
12.	Feedback		
	12.1	Key features of Summative Assessment	
		Feedback	
	12.2	Marking Schemes	
	12.3		
		Peer Feedback	
	12.5	Triadic Assessment and Feedback	27
13.	Assessment and Feedback Tools		28
	13.1	Video and/or Audio	28
	13.2	Written	28
	13.3	Quiz	28
14.	Assessment Malpractice		29
	14.1	Contract cheating	29
	14.2	Ten reasons why students cheat and how to	
		minimise it	30
	14.3	Turnitin	33
15.	Assessment Evaluation3		
16.	Contribute to this Guide		34

# Assessment and Feedback Guide

This guide aims to support Lecturers to assess and provide feedback on assessment. This document should be viewed with the Assessment Procedure and Policy, Malpractice Procedure, Student Guide to Assessment and Making an Appeal.

This Guide is updated annually to reflect the changing nature of assessment and share best practice across the College.



# Assessment and Feedback Guide Alignment

Assessment at Borders College aims to be digitally rich, varied, relevant and aligned to the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges.

# 1.1 Alignment to Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges

These describe the professional practice and knowledge that we are expected to develop, maintain, and enhance. They specify that the Lecturer:

- Plans, develops, and uses a range of assessment strategies to meet the different needs and learning preferences of students
- Adopts creative approaches to embed appropriate digital technologies for effective assessment of learning
- Engages with and evaluates critically, the use of technologies and their impact on assessment

 Promotes and facilitates wider access to assessment through the effective application of digital technologies

# 1.2 Aligning Outcomes, Learning Activities and Assessments

There should be a strong, clear, and constructive alignment linking the assessment to unit outcomes and the knowledge and skills that students demonstrate via learning activities. This alignment should be overtly understood by lecturers and students.

#### **Key Question**

What learning types, activities, digital tools, and assessment support will lead students to pass?

## 2. Your View on Assessment

### 2.1 Your views

The statements below voice changes in assessment and feedback that are taking place across the College. Reflect on how much you agree or disagree with these statements.

I provide asynchronous assessment to allow student to prepare better.

I adapt closed-book exams to be invigilated remotely, online.

My assessments rely more on explaining, arguing or reflecting than on recall and memorisation.

My task-based feedback on assessment helps students learn.

My units no longer rely on traditional closed-book assessment.

# 2.2 Share and support

To support you and your colleagues in making these changes, post examples of good practice from your Course teams, e.g. Canvas Assignment

Schedule, learning plans, tips and advice, and innovative assessment ideas and practice. Create a channel on your staff Team's page to start a dialogue about assessment and feedback.

## 3. SQA Assessment Guidance

# 3.1 Key points

In addition to aligning assessment and feedback to the Professional Standards for Lecturers in Scotland's Colleges, we are also required to comply with guidance from the relevant awarding body.

If you are assessing students for SQA qualifications, the following guidance applies for assessment:

- Innovative and flexible assessment
- Reduce face-to-face assessment
- Combined assessment, to reduce the volume of assessment
- Significantly reduce invigilated closed-book assessment to allow openbook, remote, home-based assessment, unless SQA instruct you otherwise because of your specific qualification
- Collaborative assessment design

- Reduce the volume of evidence required where the candidate demonstrates a skill multiple time.
   Only ask students to do something to demonstrate evidence that meets subject-specific guidance and requirements
- Assessments must continue to be valid, reliable, practicable, equitable, fair and secure, with integrity and credibility



# 3.2 Pre-verification service

SQA have issued resources to support you to comply with these guidelines:

- Use the Combined
   Assessment Toolkit and
   Combined Assessment
   Request Form to plan
   combined assessment with
   SQA support
- Use the Adaptations for Conditions of Assessment Form to check if your adapted assessment meets requirements, e.g. when moving from face-to-face to remote
- Use the wide range of preverified assessments from across Scotland's Colleges, e.g. useful to access these before starting your assessment

# 3.3 Contact with SQA regarding assessment

 To ensure better coordination with SQA, contact should only be via the College coordinator, Wendy Bell: wbell@borderscollege.ac.uk  Wendy is available to support staff with any guidance from the awarding bodies, on the sourcing and development of assessments

## 3.4 SOLAR

SOLAR is SQA's e-assessment platform, which can be used to deliver secure, online, quality-assured, and pre-verified assessments on a range of devices. These assessments do not need to be externally verified by SQA.

#### **Key SOLAR resources:**

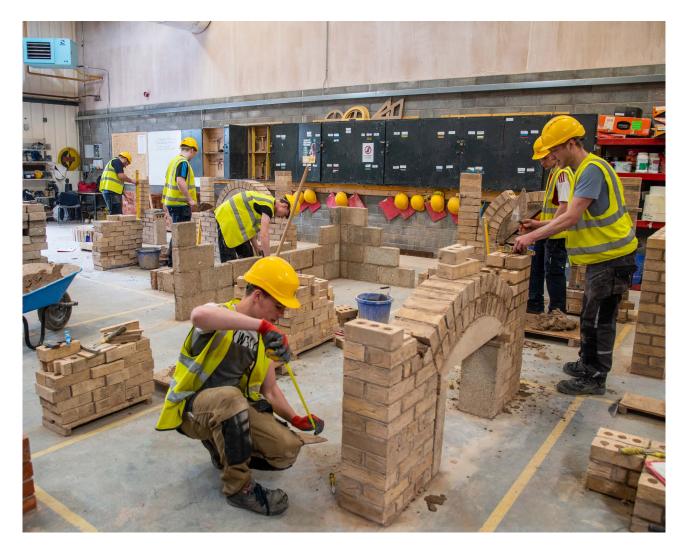
- Learning Technologies
   Guides: How to Use SOLAR
- Guidance on how to use SOLAR
- Videos on how to use SOLAR
- Support tailored to you and your team



# 4. City and Guilds E-volve

- E-volve helps students sit online, summative assessments securely
- Each student has a unique code
- The system can set different, relevant questions to different students
- Lecturers can manage and monitor student progress and performance
- Exams can be downloaded and used online

- Key information from City and Guilds:
  - E-volve is the City and Guilds online assessment platform
  - E-volve FAQs
  - To ensure better coordination with City and Guilds, contact should only be via the College coordinator, Wendy Bell: wbell@borderscollege.ac.uk



# 5. Communicating with Students about Assessment

Lecturers should ensure that students are familiar with the following at the beginning of each unit, project or course and have access to these on Canvas, as standard:

- Assessment Criteria
- Learning Plan (also known as scheme of work and unit plan)
- Assessment overview (how they will be assessed and receive feedback)
- Access to Assessment Information on the Student Portal
- Scheduled assignment dates in Canvas Calendar and Assignments

# 5.1 Assessment Schedule

Lecturers must plan the Canvas Assignment Schedule. It may be possible to do this in collaboration and consultation with students, which will ensure that the assessment burden for students is as low as possible and provides a greater variety of intrinsically motivated assessment and feedback tasks and tools.

The Canvas Assignment Schedule should be updated during the course to reflect any necessary changes, e.g. to ensure sufficient formative work prior to assessment.

- As a Course Team, plan the assessment for the course as a whole, rather than unit by unit. Map out all the assessments that students have over the year for every unit they do on their course
- Identify and eliminate overlap, where students produce the same evidence in different assessments
- Schedule assessments to remove overload and hot spots so students can better manage their time and reduce stress
- Further support on how to do things in Canvas can be found by contacting Pitra McNeill, Quality Improvement Manager, on pmcneill@borderscollege.ac.uk

# 5.2 Learning Plan (Unit, Course or Project)

#### What is it?

This also commonly called "Scheme of Work", "Unit Plan", "Project Plan". It describes the learning and assessment activity that will take place for a whole period of learning, e.g.:

- a unit
- a project
- a short course



#### Features of the Learning Plan

The Learning Plan is:

- Regularly updated to reflect the learning progress of the students
- Live, collaborative, and accessible to all course staff
- In an engaging and clear format
- Accessible to students on Canvas when the course, project or unit starts
- Created and reviewed by the Course Team in collaboration with students and stakeholders, e.g., as part of the course team meetings
- Constructively aligned, linking learning outcomes, knowledge, and skills that students demonstrate via learning activities and assessment

The Learning Plan contains:

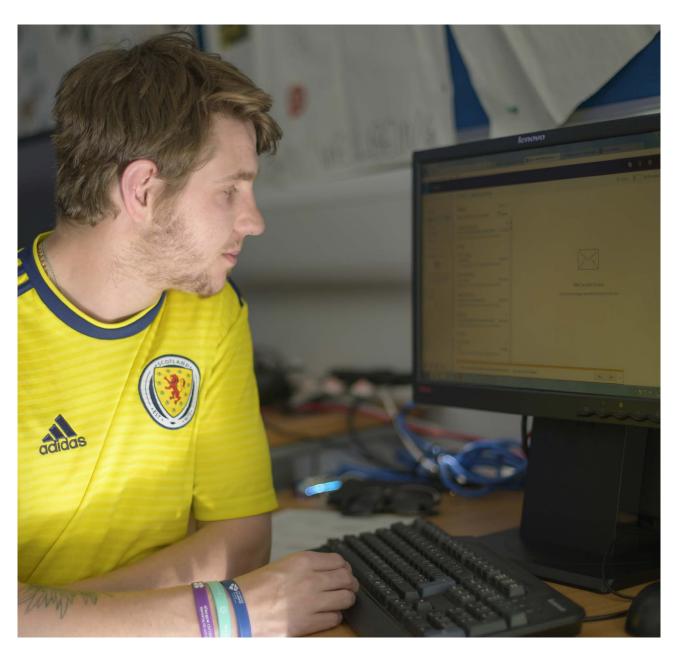
- A link to the Unit
   Specifications or unit
   information provided by the
   awarding body, e.g. SQA,
   City and Guilds
- Dates or week numbers, and duration of all learning and assessment activity
- Topic or subject area for each learning chunk

- An appropriately varied range of learning and assessment activities.
- Clearly labelled
   asynchronous (in your own
   time, or with a deadline
   for completion) and
   synchronous (live, online, or
   face-to-face) student activity
- Varied, engaging, motivating, and challenging learning and assessment activities that encourage independent learning, deliver on the Curriculum for Excellence, and promote health and wellbeing
- A summary of the digital learning technology, assistive technology, and resources to be used in each learning block
- Links to how to use the digital learning technology and access support
- Formative assessment
- Summative assessment, including timing, conditions of assessment and alternative assessment arrangements

#### Why do it?

The Learning Plan works in conjunction with the Canvas Assignment Schedule. It provides a clear overview of learning and assessment for the students, allowing them to plan their study time, but also providing support for the Lecturer. The Learning Plan is created collaboratively by

Course Teams, describes what to teach and what activities and tools can be used. This is especially useful for Lecturers who are new to the College, new to the course being taught, or as part of any handover when the class is being covered for staff absence. Learning Plans should be reviewed regularly by the Course Teams and kept up to date.





# 6. Master Folder for Assessment and Internal Verification (IV)

This online folder contains key documents related to the unit being assessed. It is accessible by relevant lecturing staff, Curriculum and Learning Managers (CLMs) and Internal Verifiers (IVs). It is also made available to External Verifiers (EVs) and contains links to the following online resources.

N.B. Course variations may be required, to comply with external body regulations:

- Canvas Assignment Schedule
- Learning Plan

- Internally verified summative assessments
- Internally verified summative re-assessments
- Internally verified summative marking schemes, checklists, criteria for every assessment
- Examples of pass standard summative assessment work, where applicable
- Link to the Canvas learning course or unit being summative assessed
- Evidence of adherence to the retention timeline of assessments

# 7. Integrated Assessment

Integrated, synoptic assessment should be used where possible.

#### 7.1 What is it?

Integrated assessment combines units and/or outcomes in one assessment. Outcomes for different units are grouped to avoid duplication of generated evidence. This is commonly achieved through project-based learning.

# 7.2 Why do it?

To lower the number of assessments for assessors and students, which can result in deeper learning through the integration of subjects. When used with project-based learning, it can provide vocationally relevant, project-based assessment.

#### **Key Question**

Consider the units in a course you teach.

How could the outcomes for different units be grouped to avoid duplication of evidence and lower the assessment burden for students?



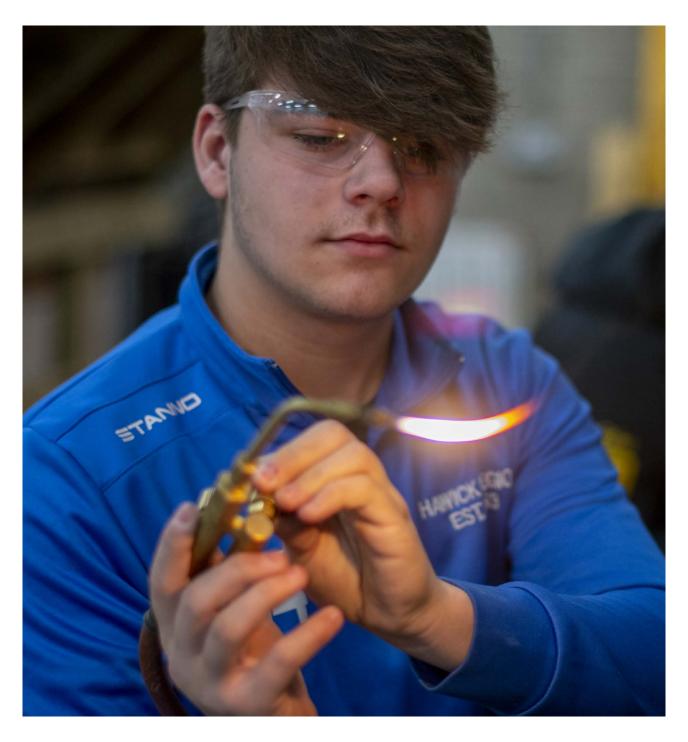
# 8. Common Assessment Types

- Diagnostic
- Formative
- Summative



# 9. Diagnostic Assessment

- Identifies student's existing skills and knowledge
- Forms a baseline to build each student's personalised learning journey to summative success
- Identifies future opportunities for peer teaching and peer support
- Example: level testing on ESOL, baseline testing in technical subjects



## 10. Formative Assessment

An activity, which generates evidence of learning. This evidence is not used to count towards a unit outcome and does not contribute to getting the qualification. It includes practice tests, questions and what the student says or does to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills.

# 10.1 Key features of Formative Assessment

#### **Feedforward Digital** Recorded, digital Synchronous and feedforward (task-based asynchronous digital activities, using an feedback) using tools appropriate range of agreed with the student, learning types e.g. audio, video or text **Evidence** Evidence of learning Rich and varied generated is not counted as evidence to achieve an Innovative, varied and outcome or unit. Identifies challenging activities weaknesses before summative assessment **Practice** Ensure multiple opportunities to **Aligned** demonstrate the development of vocationally Aligned to assessment relevant skills and outcomes knowledge, to approach the standard for summative assessment process

# 10.2 Impassive Assessment

- A tailored, individualised way to formatively assess
- A means of comparing student's current performance with their past performance
- Ensures that students develop confidence in their ability to progress towards the level of skills and knowledge required for summative success

 E.g. give "+" if better than previous work, a "-" is not as good as previous work, and "=" is the same level as previous work. This reward and acknowledge progress, encourages struggling students as well as challenging those students who commonly achieve high marks

# 10.3 Learning checks

- Regular online "learning checks" to track and monitor student progress
- Lecturers may set a pass mark before students can continue



## 11. Summative Assessment

Summative assessment produces evidence which counts towards a unit outcome. Commonly an SQA unit has 3 or 4 outcomes. Each outcome could have a different summative assessment, or you might combine outcomes and have one summative assessment which generates evidence from several outcomes for the same or different units.

# 11.1 Key features of Summative Assessment

#### Robust

Fair, secure, with integrity and credibility. Internal Verification process ensures appropriate, collaboratively designed assessment

#### st Compatible

Designed using Collegesupported online assessment tools, compatible with students' devices

# Asynchronous, remote, online

Innovative, varied, flexible, pre-recorded presentations, portfolios, essays and project work, where possible

#### Evidence

Evidence generated to achieve an outcome or unit, with more than one possible attempt. Reduced volume of evidence required. Students demonstrate evidence that meets unit requirements once

#### **Aligned**

Combined assessment, to reduce volume of assessment, aligned to outcomes and learning activities

# Alternative assessment arrangements

May be in place for some students as recommended by Learning Support team and actioned with Lecturer

# 11.2 Conditions of Summative Assessment

- Prior to the assessment, Lecturers should provide students with details of materials and resources that are permitted
- The conditions for assessment must be in line with the conditions specified by the awarding body in the Unit Specification, e.g., 'open book' (free access to resources), 'closed book' (no materials other than the assessment instrument are available to candidates, but the assessment instrument may contain, for example, a vocabulary list or datasheet)
- A student may be entitled to Alternative Assessment Arrangements (AAAs) which specify alternative conditions of assessment
  - Lecturers are required to check any Personal Learning Support Plan (PLSP) requirements and to ensure that these arrangements are in place before the assessment event, in liaison with the Learning Support team

- Students who have a PLSP do not always require Alternative Assessment Arrangements
- More information on SQA Conditions of Assessment

# 11.3 Selection of Summative Assessment instrument

- Lecturers select assessment instruments and solutions, which have been verified by the Internal Verifier before use
- Assessments may be prior verified by the awarding body. This is recommended where the Course Team would benefit from further support in assessment development
- Assessments may be devised by:
  - Course Teams
  - Awarding body, e.g. SQA
     Assessment Support Pack
     (ASP)

# 11.4 Preparation for Summative Assessment

- Lecturers prepare students adequately for summative assessments to give the students the best possible chance of success
- This is commonly achieved by incorporating an appropriate variety of learning activities as well as diagnostic and formative assessment into the Learning Plan
- When preparing for summative assessment, students generate their own questions and then practice answering them. This ensures that students think explicitly about the underlying structure of the assessment as well as the subject matter being assessed

# 11.5 SQA Graded Unit

To further increase flexibility with assessment and reduce the time on assessment-related activities, SQA has removed the need to complete the assessment of Graded Units.

A small number of exceptions have been advised where the qualification is linked with registration to a professional association or has mandatory responsibilities under a Qualification Partnership Agreement. Where the Graded Unit (GU) is removed grading will be determined by teaching staff directly involved in delivery and assessment.

Grading of GU for HNC and HND learners should be based on a holistic view of evidence throughout the session from the contributing or mandatory units in the group award, in line with the principal aims of the qualification. When contributing units are not listed, Course teams should refer to the mandatory units. When gathering learner evidence for the GU course teams should:

Use the Internal Quality
 Assurance (IQA) procedures
 and templates on the
 College shared area. This
 can be accessed by the
 CLM

- Identify the units contributing to the GU identified in the GU specification. If these are not specified, identify the mandatory units within the HNC/HND framework, as appropriate
- Refer to the A-C grade related criteria in the GU specification

Regardless of the approach to GU, Course teams are required to grade learners for the GU in the HNC/HND framework. Assessors should engage in professional discussion with their course teams in reviewing outcomes of learning across the qualification to identify and assess, for each learner whether outcomes in the GU have been met.

If you need further guidance on this, please contact Pitra McNeill, Quality Improvement Manager, on pmcneill@borderscollege.ac.uk

# 11.6 Invigilation

SQA (2020) Advice for Centres in Using Technology to Invigilate Assessments Remotely.



## 12. Feedback

# 12.1 Key features of Summative Assessment Feedback

#### Detailed and positive

Encouraging and motivating students to understand where they are, where they have to be to pass and what they have to do to close the gap

#### Accessible, Inclusive

Recorded, digital feedback using tools agreed with the student, e.g. audio, video or text

#### Rich, Reflective

Frequent, vocationally relevant feedback, variety of engaging and appropriate feedback tools and activities, meaningful opportunities to reflect on feedback

#### Digital

Audio, video or text, with online feedback on Canvas

#### Prompt

Within 15 days of the assessment submission deadline. Students are notified when digital feedback is available

#### **Feedforward**

Task-based, vocationally relevant, developmental feedback, focusing on "what next?" And goal setting

#### Aligned

Aligned to assessment criteria and learning activity, industry standards and work practices

# 12.2 Marking Schemes

Lecturers should use verified, digital assessment, criteria or checklists:

- To provide feedback against assessment criteria
- In accordance with the Awarding Body requirements
- As part of the preparation for the summative assessment
- Accessible to Lecturers, Internal and External Verifiers
- Digital assessment, criteria, or checklists accessible to students

# 12.3 Embedding Feedback in Learning

- Make regular and routine use of low-stakes, formative assessment
- Maximise opportunities available from auto-marking, self-assessment, and peer assessment
- Extract common assessment issues, postassessment, and use these in class learning tasks

- Plan activities, which support students to develop their own skills in understanding, using, giving, and receiving feedback
- Assessment for learning rather than an only assessment of learning (generating evidence of what has been learnt)
- Comment-only marking:
   It may be appropriate, in some circumstances, to avoid marks and grades, and only give comments on their work or learning journal on how to improve
- Feedback sandwich: Positive comment – constructive criticism with an explanation of how to improve – positive comment



### 12.4 Peer Feedback

The following are examples of peer feedback activities:

#### 2 stars and a wish

2 stars = 2 things that are good about the piece of work. A wish = something they can improve to make it even better.

#### Student marking

Student self – or peer – mark homework or assessments. Done in pairs or individually with a student-made or 'official' mark-scheme or assessment criteria.

#### **Response Partners**

Students invite a partner or a group to discuss or comment on their work. Students refer to learning outcomes and success criteria. Students have assessment skills training in peer assessment to prepare them to give positive, constructive feedback around the learning goals. Students are given prompt questions to ask the person who has done the work.

#### Student mark-scheme

Students produce their own mark- schemes individually or in groups. They peer- or self-assess work in accordance with these schemes. For assessment skills development, discuss purposes of marking schemes with students.

#### **Group feedforward**

Group feedforward to a lecturer concerning peer assessment of work. This draws more attention and presents information that has already been ordered and sorted (this means less repetition for the lecturer).



# 12.5 Triadic Assessment and Feedback

Triadic assessment involves formative feedback three ways, on the same piece of work:

- Peer assessment: students design marking criteria collaboratively and evaluate others' work against it
- Self-assessment: students are supported to develop their ability to self-assess, constructively reflect on feedback from others and apply this to their learning
- Lecturer assessment:
  lecturers provide task-based
  feedback (feedforward) to
  complement self and peer
  assessment

How could triadic assessment (assessment 3-ways) be used for formative assessment?

What digital tools would you use to achieve it?



## 13. Assessment and Feedback Tools

The following examples show some of the College tools which are commonly used for assessment.

#### 13.1 Video and/or Audio

#### Video in Studio in Canvas

Give a personalised, motivating 2-minute video feedback segment, in addition to detailed written comments on Canvas Studio

#### 13.2 Written

#### Canvas/Turnitin

Set tasks, which allow students to upload attachments to submit work.

Give feedback against criteria and from your personal bank of comments for quick marking.

Students get feedback against criteria and from your personal bank of comments for quick marking.

Lecturer and students can see similarity scores and sources of possibly plagiarised elements in submitted work

### 13.3 Quiz

#### Canvas Quiz

Variety of question types, within Canvas

# 14. Assessment Malpractice

Lecturers all need to consider how to prevent and detect cheating, especially in open book, asynchronous assessments and remote, online, synchronous examinations.

# 14.1 Contract cheating

This is usually when a student pays an online company to do their work. The student then submits it as their own. This includes writing essays and assignments (known as 'essay mills'). Research indicates that up to one in seven students could cheat like this. Having a short deadline may increase rather than decrease the likelihood of students using contract cheating.

Contract cheating also includes doing research and impersonating the students in exams. It also applies to students asking friends to do work for them. In this case, it may not even involve payment.

Online tutoring sites also enable contract cheating. These sites answer questions in real-time

and are of particular concern when used in remote, online, closed-book assessment.

# 14.2 Ten reasons why students cheat and how to minimise it

Build the ideas below into your Learning Plan. This should take place at the point of need, rather than only in the initial induction at the start of the course.

Use a variety of plagiarism awareness activities, which are relevant and interesting. Use quizzes, discussions and forums to discuss the issues of plagiarism, how to avoid it and what will happen if they do it.



Why students cheat	How to minimise it
1. Opportunity and habit	<ul> <li>Choose an assessment that is difficult to complete using contract cheating, e.g. students reflect on how they apply knowledge in authentic contexts</li> <li>Use oral and video assessments, practical work, context-specific and personalised assessments</li> <li>Asynchronous assessment evidence can be further validated by recorded follow-up questions in short live sessions</li> <li>Teach students not to post information about their assessments on social media, as this can prompt contact from contract cheating companies</li> <li>Set formative tasks where students submit early drafts of a summative assessment and discuss research</li> <li>Require complex responses to specific questions that can't be found by Googling</li> </ul>
2. Learning, teaching and assessment satisfaction	<ul> <li>Use a creative, intrinsically motivating variety of assessment types</li> <li>Construct and review the Learning Plan in collaboration with students</li> <li>Regular synchronous and asynchronous communication with students</li> <li>Structured, scaffolded learning and assessment with rich, embedded support activities</li> </ul>
3. Referencing, research and essay writing skills	Build activities overly into the Learning Plan, at the point of need, e.g. How to  • study effectively  • stay relevant to the assessment question  • writing evaluatively, critically, academically  • reference  • do research

	Confidence	<ul> <li>Break down one large daunting assessment into several, smaller low-stakes, manageable assessment tasks.</li> <li>Assign study teams, study buddies and peer mentors</li> <li>Build on reflection activities on the experience of doing the assessment</li> <li>Put in place long term, synchronous and</li> </ul>
	language other than English, unable to ask for support	asynchronous language support, tailored to the linguistic needs of the subject and the assessment
6.	Interest or ability	Early identification so that, where necessary, students are ability supported to transfer early to a more suitable course
7.	Understanding of assessment requirements	<ul> <li>Students confirm digitally that their assessment submission is their own work, e.g. by ticking the statement on Canvas</li> <li>Teach students how to unpick assessment questions and provide regular practice, to hone this skill</li> <li>Practice the assessment format in advance, without breaching the confidentiality of summative assessment instruments</li> </ul>

#### 8. Time Reduce the assessment burden by integrating assessment, reducing overlap, and eliminating management hot spots Provide mini-deadlines or 'touchpoints' for feedback and motivation, rather than focusing on one main deadline Provide a Canvas Assignment Schedule at the start of the unit, project, or course. Remember, having a tight deadline may increase the likelihood of students using contract cheating • Set competitive Study Teams, to provide peer support to keep to the Team schedule Clearly state times/deadlines for learning and assessment at the start of the unit or course, using the Learning Plan • Build-in skills development activities on how to stay focused, and maintain flow Peer mentoring and discussions via Canvas **Forums** 9. Health or Signpost the student to support, including assistive technology, to help mitigate personal personal, environmental, and other barriers to issues learning in the home • Teach students about the dangers of contract 10. Understanding cheating, where companies use bank fraud and that it's blackmail after the purchase has been made wrong Ensure students are familiar with the and the likelihood and consequences of detection consequences Ensure students are familiar with the College Malpractice Procedures or a simplified version of these, appropriate to the level of the students Teach students how to use Turnitin effectively to check for plagiarism and analyse similarity reports Ensure students are aware and avoid essay mills, which can pose as proofreading or plagiarism-checking services

#### 14.3 Turnitin

Turnitin can be used by Lecturers and students to check for plagiarism and analyse similarity reports. Where applicable, Turnitin must be used to upload any online assessment that includes textual content. The benefits of Turnitin are that it:

- Provides similarity report (for plagiarism)
- Shows where similarities are and the original sources

- Stores reusable, sharable sets of written feedback attached to assessment criteria
- Allows you to give audio feedback
- Allow you to create rubrics
- Allows you to set up peer assessment

It is worth remembering that Turnitin alone will not guarantee that there has been no cheating. Custom written contract cheating cannot usually be detected via Turnitin as the work is made to order.

## 15. Assessment Evaluation

- Lecturers participate in regular course evaluation, which includes assessment
- Lecturers encourage students to take part in the evaluation of assessment at Student Experience meetings and Focus Groups meetings
- Lecturers guide students in reflection on the experience of taking the assessment
- Lecturers gather regular informal feedback on assessment
- Lecturers use anonymous end-of-unit questionnaires

- Stakeholders, lecturers, students, and support staff regularly review assessments online
- Student reflection on assessment is an integral part of the regular review of the assessment instruments and the Canvas Assignment Schedule
- Lecturers participate, as required, in Internal Verification
- Lecturers prepare assessment evidence in accordance with Internal Verification Procedure

## 16. Contribute to this Guide

This Guide is regularly updated. To contribute to this Guide contact Pitra McNeill, Quality Improvement Manager, or pmcneill@borderscollege.ac.uk Post examples of good practice from your Course Teams, e.g. Assessment Schedules, Learning Plans, tips and advice and innovative assessment ideas and practice. A selection of these will be collated and shared as best practice by Lesley Johnson - Quality and Development Specialist: <u>ljohnson@</u> borderscollege.ac.uk







#### **Scottish Borders Campus**

Nether Road Galashiels TD1 3HE 01896 662600

#### **Newtown St Boswells Campus**

Newtown St Boswells TD6 0PL

#### **Tweedbank Construction Hub**

Unit 4:2 Tweedbank Industrial Estate Tweedbank TD1 3RS

#### **Centre for Business Development**

Buccleuch Road Hawick TD9 0EH 01450 361030

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