

Cheating in Tests/Exams!

There are many ways students can cheat in test/exams. Here are a few:

- Using cheat sheets
- Bringing formulas into the exam on the back of a calculator
- Copying answers on multiple-choice tests (working collaboratively).
Students have various methods of communicating during exams, e.g., tapping or coughing noises, moving erasers in patterns, marking the correct answer in large print so others can see it, etc.
- Hiring another student to write the test for them
- Using technology, e.g., sending each other text messages on cell phones, Palm Pilots, etc., during the test
- Switching versions of a multiple-version exam to enable students sitting close to copy answers
- Altering a marked and returned test and then submitting it for more marks
- Stealing the test/exam
- Leaving the test room without handing in a test and later applying for a deferred test/exam, claiming the test was missed

Test Cheating Prevention Techniques:

- Book an appropriate room for the test, e.g., a room large enough to space the students out; a flat floor room is best; a room with numbered seating is helpful
- Prepare a test that works well according to the room, e.g., if you have to book a room with sloped seating and plan on having a multiple-choice test, a multiple-version test is recommended (see below for more information on multiple-version tests)
- All personal belongings should be left at the front of the room (including cell phones, any kind of electronic device, etc.)
- Require students with baseball hats to turn the brim to the back (the brim is a common place to keep a cheat sheet)
- Keep a seating plan
 - if the room does not have numbered seating, create your own seating plan (the Registrar's Office has seating plans for many of the classrooms as well as a generic plan)
 - have students sign in (if you catch students collaborating, proving where they sat is often a critical part of later charging them with dishonesty)
 - for large classes it is recommended that Mac ID is mandatory, that invigilators check for impostors, and that the signature is correct
- Change test questions frequently

- Protect the security of your tests, e.g., lock your office door, protect your computer files, etc.
- Keep track of how many copies of a test are made, how many are handed out at the test and how many are handed back in so you know if one is stolen
- Use a randomized assigned seating – post student ID numbers and the seating arrangements outside the test room or on an overhead in the room. This is a good strategy if you suspect a group of students are cheating together and you want to spread them out.
- Have students write tests in pen rather than pencil so answers cannot be changed later and re-submitted for more marks (Scantron sheets require pencil for the multiple-choice section however)
- If you suspect a student is tampering with his or her test after it has been marked and is re-submitting it for a higher grade, photocopy the test before returning it
- When marking tests, draw a line through any blank space following an answer so a student cannot later add material and claim it was not marked
- Use a consistent style when marking tests so that if a student alters your grades you may notice it
- If you receive a note from the Faculty Office approving a student to make up a missed test, first check the sign-in sheets to ensure the student was not present at the scheduled test date – if they were, the student should be charged with academic dishonesty (contact the Office of Academic Integrity)

Multiple-Choice Exams:

- Multiple-version tests and exams are quite effective at preventing collaboration – the Registrar’s Office can manage 4 different versions
 - To create multiple versions, switch the order of answers and/or questions of the test, creating 4 different tests using the same questions and making it much more difficult for students to copy from one another
 - Multiple-version tests should be laid out in a pattern in the classroom in advance, ensuring that the same version is not within students’ viewing distance
 - To prevent students from switching the version of test they are writing, photocopying each version on different coloured paper makes it easy for invigilators to note a switch

Invigilation:

Proper invigilation can be quite effective at preventing cheating. It is important that invigilators know what is expected and what to do if they suspect cheating is happening.

- Make sure invigilators move around the room throughout the entire test
- Invigilators should look for cheat sheets and should check the back of all calculators and any allowed material, etc.
- Any suspicious behaviour should be documented in detail
- Students suspected of cheating should not be prevented from finishing the test, but rather should be moved and allowed to finish – an investigation and decision regarding the suspected cheating can happen after the test is complete
- Confiscate and do not return any cheat sheets or calculators with writing on them since they are important evidence – for a student with writing on his or her person (e.g., hand), copy out what is written before it can be rubbed or washed off
- For students who ignore time limits, make a note on the test and inform them nothing further will be marked

Final Exams:

If a student is caught or suspected of cheating in a Registrar-invigilated final exam, you will receive an e-mail from the Registrar Office describing the incident – please contact the Office of Academic Integrity if you have questions on what to do.