



## **14 Strategies to Reduce Cheating in Online Exams**

1. Create questions that require higher order thinking. It will be more challenging to ask a friend or “Google” the answer when the questions require students to explain, analyze, infer, create, compose, evaluate, and authentically demonstrate their mastery of course content.
2. Use varied question types. Refrain from having an exam with all multiple choice or true and false questions and include open-ended questions. It is more difficult for students to give the same response as their friends verbatim for open-ended questions, and students would be forced to explain their responses using specific details and supporting narratives that are unique to their own understanding of the course materials.
3. Creatively remind students of academic integrity policies. For example, create and post a video explaining the guidelines for the online exam and review the institution’s academic integrity policy and consequences that are listed in the course syllabus.
4. Require students to sign an academic integrity contract. After reviewing the academic integrity reminder video, have students electronically sign a contract that lists what the university considers cheating. Include a link to the university website that houses the academic integrity policy and require a signed contract prior to beginning the exam.
5. Restrict testing window time limits. This works for ‘open book’ tests, but the length of time to answer is calculated for a student who knows the information, but not long enough to allow for searches on the Internet or other sources.
6. Set-up the exam to show one question at a time. To avoid students quickly looking over all of the test questions and having multiple tabs open to research answers to questions, choose the test setting that only allows one question to appear on the screen at a time.
7. Prohibit backtracking. Prohibiting backtracking can reduce students from using extra time at the end of the test to try to locate the correct answer and force them to answer the question to the best of their already learned knowledge.
8. Change test question sequence. In the test settings, re- order test questions to be different for each exam along with the order of answer choices for each test question.

9. Offer different versions of the same test. For example, use different sets of tests for students in different time zones, but in general, it is recommended to have many different versions of the same test so that in the event that students are taking the test in the same physical space, it will be less likely for them to have all of the same questions.
10. Allow for only taking the test once. There is typically not a chance to retake an on-campus final exam, and the same practice should be followed for online exams.
11. Plan for “technical issues”. Offer a practice exam with a few questions, not pertaining to the actual test, that would provide students with the chance to become familiar with the online testing features to reduce possible complications during the actual exam. Also, set the test to automatically end the exam when the student exits or if the time runs out. If a student says their computer crashed, you can see the questions they already answered, and if you choose to allow them to complete the exam, they can begin where they left off, with the correct time remaining.
12. Delay score availability. Avoid making the score available for immediate view after test completion. This prevents the spread of answers if it is taken at different times.
13. Refrain from using publisher test banks verbatim. It is convenient to have access to complementary test banks that come with course textbooks; however, students may be able to get access to those textbooks when they are housed online, including the answer keys. Modifying questions and/or answers can help.
14. Protect test question answers. If students request to review their exam, only show them the questions they answered incorrectly.

*Adapted from:*

Smith Budai, S. (2020, May 5). *Fourteen simple strategies to reduce cheating on online examinations*. Faculty Focus | Higher Ed Teaching & Learning. <https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/educational-assessment/fourteen-simple-strategies-to-reduce-cheating-on-online-examinations/>