



HOW ASSESSMENT TECHNOLOGY CAN DEVELOP TO ADDRESS THE CURRENT CHALLENGES OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

William Dorman, Kryterion Inc., Rick Shearer, Penn State University, United States of America

Abstract

Academic integrity is essential to the reputations of our institutions as well as the credibility and perceived value of our degree programs. Of particular interest in recent years has been the increasing use of online assessments for both distance education and resident instruction students and the associated challenges and opportunities this relatively new methodology might present. How can software systems streamline the assessment process, ease the burden on faculty and students while maintaining the high standards of academic integrity we require? Further, how can new test development and delivery tools, coupled with online proctoring services, present secure exams that surpass the assessment and measurement abilities of traditional multiple choice and short answer type strategies?

In general, criterion-referenced tests and assessments measure student performance against predetermined criteria or learning standards (i.e. specific written descriptions of what students are expected to know at a specific stage of their education). Typically these are used to evaluate whether the student can perform at or above the established expectations. For example, by answering a certain percentage of questions correctly, they will pass the test, meet the expected standards, or be deemed “proficient”. Further, our norm-referenced tests are designed to rank test takers on a “bell curve”. Thus what we end up with is a small percentage of students who perform poorly, most trend towards average performance, and a small percentage perform above the average (one standard deviation). This result would imply that test questions are designed to accentuate performance differences among test takers, rather than identifying whether students have achieved specified learning standards, learned required material, or acquired specific skills.

So how can today’s technologies help shift the assessment strategies from ranking test takers against each other to more meaningful assessments of knowledge gained? How can our systems employed in online proctoring expand to include essays, open-ended questions, and case-based learning that work to uncover levels of deep learning?

How Assessment Technology can Develop to Address the Current Challenges of Academic Integrity

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This session will explore assessment strategies and try to answer some of the key questions:

- How can technology address “open-ended” questions or a combination of question, or item, types?
- How can learning gaps or academic deficiencies be captured and analysed?

How can technology assist with the evaluation of a course by using “pre-tests” and “post-tests” to measure learning progress?