Managing authenticity when assessing remotely

Authenticity is the assurance that evidence of achievement is valid because a student's work is their own.

Teachers must be clear the work to be assessed has been produced by the student. This includes when performance is in a group context or conditions allow for open book assessment.

Authenticity challenges

The three challenges to authenticity that need to be managed during any assessment process including when gathering evidence remotely, are the potential for students to:

1. copy from another person or source (plagiarism)
2. have too much guidance from the teacher or supervisor (over scaffolding)
3. access publicly available specific answers for the assessment activity (such as NZQA exemplars of student responses and Ministry of Education/Te Kete Ipurangi activities on the internet).

How teachers already manage these challenges

Teachers manage these challenges and verify the work submitted for assessment has been produced by the student. They:

- change specific figures, measurements or data sources in published assessment activities
- set a different context/topic to be investigated or a different text to read or perform
- take care to avoid over assistance / over guidance / over scaffolding
- use their knowledge of publicly available material (like exemplars, model answers, commonly used websites) to detect plagiarism
- follow-up when a student's submitted work doesn't match the teacher's expectations for that student.

Remotely collecting authentic evidence

When planning how to gather authentic evidence from remote teaching and learning, consider these strategies:

Before you start:

- Review and revise your teaching learning and assessment programme
- Defer assessment of standards that can't be done validly in a remote environment
- Consider how you can use conventional assessment of standards, or evidence gathering to:
    - modify assessments available from publicly available sources
    - use the Assessment Evidence Gathering templates to identify standard-specific evidence
- Become familiar with or control the resources available to students
- Plan for checkpoints (via phone, Zoom, etc)
- Only assess students already enrolled at your school and therefore known to your teachers

- Teach students about academic honesty and their obligation to present their own work for assessment
- Highlight to students and parents the importance of presenting authentic work.

During teaching, learning and assessment you could:

- Use verbal and/or written questioning at evidence gathering checkpoints to confirm understanding
- Require a repeat performance where there is doubt
- Require plans / drafts / notes / working to be available for checking (sharing screens, sending photos, etc)
- Keep on-going work in a shared document
- Use digital tools such as revision history, plagiarism checkers, 'googling' content
- Use peer review to validate the contribution of one student to a group
- Control group / collaborative work by breaking the task into group and individual components
- Talk with the student to check their understanding of what they have written/submitted before awarding a final grade.

Remember

It is appropriate for students to learn from others and to gather information from a variety of sources, provided they acknowledge the source.

Make sure the student is ready to be assessed, and you are confident they could repeat their performance on their own.

To help them present their own authentic evidence of achievement, make sure your students understand the requirements of the standard. This will lead to richer conversations about their learning and achievement.

Parents may be more involved in their student's learning in this environment but ensure they know not to assist or over-guide students completing work for assessment.

Below are two resources; one to help schools check their authenticity practices are comprehensive, the other an authenticity checklist for teachers.

Self-review of authenticity management best practice

Stakeholders	Actioned by	Date complete
Senior Management (including Principal's Nominee) • Do all stakeholders have a common understanding of the school's authenticity policy and processes? • Have all stakeholders been informed about the school's authenticity policy and processes? Action		
Subject Leaders (HOLA/HOD/TIC) • Do all leaders of learning areas actively promote best practice to ensure authenticity when assessing students? • How does the school know that learning areas are using best practice when managing authenticity? • Does the subject leader's moderation of internal assessment work for their learning area include authenticity checks? Action		
Subject Teachers • Do all teachers follow authenticity procedures in their assessment practice? • Are all teachers consistent in dealing with authenticity issues in their assessment practice? • How does the school know that teachers are following best practice when dealing with authenticity issues? • Do teachers teach students appropriate authenticity methodology for their subject area including referencing? • Do teachers follow check point processes to monitor authenticity in long term assessment activities? • Do teachers signal authenticity issues to other stakeholders? Action		
Students • Do all students understand the implications of signing an authenticity statement for assessment activities? • Does the school help students to understand what authenticity means? • Do students feel comfortable reporting breaches of rules for assessment opportunities? Action		
Parents/Whānau • Are parents/whānau aware of the appropriate support they can give to their children when helping them with assessment activities? (consider the role of paid Tutors) • Are parents/whānau aware of the potential consequences if their children's work is deemed to be not authentic? Action		

Self-review of authenticity management best practice

Authentic work checklist	Y/N (Comment)
Content	
Work relates to the agreed topic	
Personal response shows the student understands what they have produced	
Evidence shows student has collected and interpreted own data where required	
Comments/observations/points are consistent	
Ideas include those in the discussion or resources	
Oral questioning shows student can sustain the ideas from evidence presented	
Student has not copied another student or allowed their evidence to be copied	
Structure	
Structure and style are coherent, sections and paragraphs flow logically	
No important link is missing, no section or paragraph is irrelevant	
Final version is consistent with early drafts	
All checkpoints were met (eg brainstorm, raw data recording, first draft)	
Language	
Vocabulary and syntax are appropriate for the student	
Spelling and paragraphing are appropriate for the student	
Submitted work is consistent with the student's other work for the course	
The *voice* is the student's own, not that of an academic or a professional writer	
Sources	
References and quotations are appropriate and acknowledged	
Sources are referenced	