

DigiGuide: Options for plagiarism detection when running Online Exams through Canvas Quizzes

Background

The Canvas quiz tool is often used for running online exams, with a variety of question types to test different skills and knowledge, and a wide range of configurations options that mimic the exam conditions of on-campus delivery, aiming to reduce cheating and collusion.

However, if you would like to pass student responses through plagiarism detection (particularly with 'Essay' or 'File Upload' question types), currently there is no direct integration between Canvas quizzes and Turnitin. Therefore there is no easy way to generate originality reports, such as that provided by a Turnitin assignment, or an assignment submitted through Speedgrader with the [plagiarism framework](#) enabled.

There are '[Idea-Conversations](#)' on this topic open for voting within Instructure's global community, (a way of influencing the development of Canvas), so it is hoped that this feature will appear in the future. But it does not currently feature in Canvas yet, (or the other major VLEs).

So, we are looking to make staff aware of this consideration to enable them to make an informed decision around assessment approach or design. Through discussion within school teams you may decide that you are prepared to forego plagiarism detection on exam submissions, but if this is not the case then we set out three alternative approaches below for you to consider.

Alternative Approaches

1. Use other quiz settings such as randomised questions to counter collusion

When creating a quiz to serve as an exam in Canvas, you can randomise the selection of questions that students see - randomly selecting questions from a larger bank thereby giving each student a personalised test paper to reduce the opportunities for collusion. You may consider that this feature goes some way to reducing cheating and collusion, but please contact your schools' assessment team to talk through the options.

You may view further details of how to do this in our other guide 'Best Configuration Options for running Online Exams through Canvas Quizzes'. [\[INSERT LINK\]](#)

2. Technical Workaround

A number of '[workaround](#)' processes have been identified on the global Canvas user community, which involve exporting raw data from quiz submissions and manually passing the data through a Turnitin dropbox. We mapped out the process with school staff and lecturers and found these approaches to be beyond the abilities or resources of staff or school teams. However, if you did want to explore the workaround, then please see the following guidance:

- [Passing 'Essay' submissions through Turnitin](#)
- [Passing 'File Upload' question types through Turnitin](#)

3. Splitting the assessment

Where the options above prove unfeasible or unsustainable, but originality reports are a requirement for your department on exams, staff may consider splitting the online exam on Canvas

into two parts, with one part being carried out via the Canvas Quiz tool and a second part with submission via a standard assignment (for example a Canvas Assignment or Turnitin). [Assignment Groups](#) can be used to apply different weightings to each of the elements of the assessment, (although final grade calculations are likely to be carried out outside of Canvas). Please talk to your school assessment teams to make a decision about the right approach.

- [Setting up a Canvas 'Online' assignment](#)
- [Creating a Turnitin assignment](#)

Summary

One final consideration is that some students may find the use of the 'Essay' question type within Quizzes restrictive, especially if they use assistive technology and are asked to write answers at length within a quiz response. The Centre for Innovation in Education (CIE) are able to provide ideas for alternative forms of assessment that are inherently inclusive - please see our Spotlight guide on the [Inclusive Curriculum](#) for an introduction. But our best advice would be to talk to your school exam office with regards to best supporting those students who require reasonable adjustment, and consider how you would provide those students with an alternative means of assessment if required.

For getting started advice around using Canvas Quizzes for online exams including the best settings to choose please see our wider range of [resources](#) in this area. If you require technical support, please use the Canvas Support available through the Help icon in Canvas. For wider curriculum or assessment advice please email us at cie@liverpool.ac.uk

Collated by Will Moindrot,
Centre for Innovation in Education

Version 1. 14 May 2021

