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# BULETIN FAKULTI PERAKAUNAN

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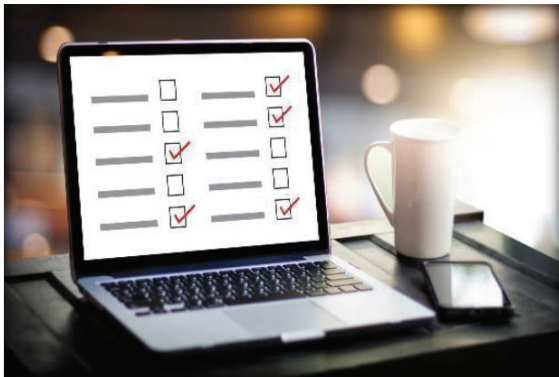




## Online Assessment: Is It Too Good to Be True?

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Over the past few years, education has undergone a major makeover, due to COVID-19 situation. One of the big game-changers in this educational revolution has been the rise of online assessments. These days, teachers are swapping out their old-school paper exams for fancy digital tools that let them check out what students know and can do. It's not just about convenience – online assessment is making waves for all the cool things it can do. Teachers and students are totally vibing with it, and there's a lot more to it than typical pencil-and-paper tests.



This phenomenon has affected all levels of educational institutions, but the changes may be more comfortable for tertiary students. Considered as a more independent and better tech-savvy, those students are experiencing

relatively smoother transitions. The changes from face-to-face to virtual assessment appear to be more time-saving and efficient. Fatima et al, (2021) assert that one significant advantage lies in the immediacy of feedback, enabling students to promptly assess their performance and implement necessary improvements. Receiving immediate feedback is a great benefit while adopting independent learning as continuous improvement can be done by any students at their own convenient time. In addition, those students who are taking more credit hours can easily manage their time without missing any important assessment. The flexibility offered by online assessment also enables students to complete assignments and exams at their convenience while accommodating diverse learning styles (Alsalhi et al, 2022).

Nevertheless, despite all the advantages, the lack of monitoring and proper supervision has led to other issues that may jeopardize the quality of the assessment, ultimately hindering the development of erudite and knowledgeable students. The primary concern raised regarding online assessments revolves



around two issues: integrity and humanity. Online assessments, while offering numerous advantages in terms of convenience and accessibility, have sparked debates about the potential for cheating and the impersonal nature of computer-based evaluation. According to Verhoef and Coetser (2021) some of the reasons students commit academic dishonesty during online assessment are due to students feel overwhelmed and stressed, lack of monitoring mechanisms, struggling with technology, and lack of time management. This circumstance is even worse for critical courses which triggers students to pass at all costs. The poor monitoring has become a triggering factor for them to violate the principle of academic integrity. If this unethical behaviour is not properly controlled, it may become a norm in future education systems, which could lead to a disastrous moral issue. None of us can ever imagine what will happen to the future leaders who in fact lack good moral values.



Other than academic integrity issues, online assessments also pose challenges to educators' humanity and discretion. In the context of evaluating students' online assessments, the credibility to make sound and intuitive decisions has become a crucial part of the evaluation process, especially when the students' performance does not reflect their efforts. The possibility of cheating or hiring someone else to complete the assessment could lead to such unpredictable results. At the same time, educators should also consider the limitations and obstacles faced by hardworking students with limited technological facilities. If the evaluation solely relied on the result without considering other factors, it can demotivate hardworking students as they think about bias and unfair assessment. Besides that, the students who consistently achieve high scores with minimal effort will start taking the assessment given for granted and they will never really learn from the lesson.

Despite the challenge of conducting objective evaluations in the absence of face-to-face learning and teaching sessions, educators are strongly encouraged to make their best efforts to reduce the likelihood of cheating during assessments. Amongst the alternatives that can be taken into consideration in enhancing





the fairness in evaluations are clear assessment guidelines and rubrics. In addition, maintaining open and often communication is another way to capture the level of effort and students' engagement in completing the task given. Peer review and systematic continuous assessment data can also be applied to enhance transparency and trace drastic changes in students' performance. Besides all the alternatives, integrity should be upheld by both students and educators to dispel the stigma that online assessment is too good to be true.



## References

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