

Validating Students Work

As educators we are challenged with discerning whether the classwork and assessment items presented to us are the genuine work of the student or partly or entirely enhanced or developed by an Artificial Intelligence (AI). There is no single approach that will provide educators with a definitive answer to the authenticity of their students' work, but there are a number of processes and steps that educators can undertake to support this process. Using the different procedures and processes here will support their decision making.

Authentic Tasks

The assessment and learning tasks should be set and developed in an authentic context. Generic tasks which lack the real-world setting and the application to knowledge and process that have been deliberately and intentionally taught are simple for an AI system to address and difficult for us as teachers to identify.

Developing authentic assessments, linked to real world scenarios and intentional content and context are more difficult for an AI to replicate and easier as educators to identify if an AI was used.

Scaffolding the students assessment and setting clear milestone dates will support the development of the outcome.

Observation

Observing the students as they develop their assessment piece or project is an effective way of validating the students' work.

Moving around the classroom and observing how students develop their work, while making yourself available to support their learning is also an effective strategy.

Using a class list, and making notes as you move round the room alongside engaging in learning conversations will provide you with indications of which students may need further support in the task, or those who may be using AI tools inappropriately for the set task.

Students should also be providing a clear bibliography of sources including AI stems and outputs.

Portfolio of Student Work

Having examples of the student's prior work and assessments provides you with a great base to compare the current assessment piece to older exemplar pieces.

Looking for changes in the language the student uses, the length and complexity of the sentences and paragraphs. Along with the idiosyncrasies of the students writing like the use of capitalisation, punctuation and grammar.

Changes in spelling between New Zealand English and American English, quantity and writing style may also be indicative of generated content.

Discussion

Having group and individual discussions around their understanding of the task and their progress on the assessment/set work will provide clarity. The student who has struggled with the task but whose assessment is comprehensive may have used AI tools to support their development of the solution.

A framework like the “*Daily Stand-up*” used in Agile project management is useful in these techniques. In the Daily Stand-up the person/student answers three questions:

What did you do yesterday?
What do you plan to do today?
What is stopping you?

Noting down the students' responses to these questions, can provide a genuine basis for ongoing discussions.

Versioning

Being able to see when part of the assessment piece was written or developed is a powerful indicator of the students assessment process.

Tools such as, Google Documents have features that record when changes and edits were made to a document,. Educators can create a template document that they control the sharing of, enabling the educator to observe when the changes occurred and if all of the changes appear at once. Establishing ground rules for the assessment task that ensure that all work is done in the medium is essential.

For practical tasks, simple versioning can be as easy as creating a folder that the work is saved in and at the start of each day duplicating the latest folder and renaming it. For Example a folder containing student work called “*project@12-3-25*” is duplicated and renamed “*project@13-3-25*”. This gives creation and modification dates for the content.

Digital Tools

There are a range of authenticity checkers that will compare the students work to the database of exemplar materials and give an indication of authenticity. There are new tools continuously being developed. Some of the tools do have features that will evaluate whether the material is AI generated or not.

While these are useful tools they are not a definitive answer.

The output does provide a starting point for discussion with students in regard to the authenticity of their work.

Some tools will also enable the student to self-submit their work and gather feedback about how the product views the authenticity of the piece.