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**Improving student learning**

**by combining accessibility/inclusion with academic integrity**

This project brings together inclusion and academic integrity. We define inclusion as follows: **Inclusion involves celebrating differences in all aspects of who we are as individuals with every person respected, valued and supported.  We aim to integrate it within our practice to enhance engagement, participation, learning and choice for all.**

# **Academic Integrity - Student Dialogue**

## **Information for instructors**

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| **Type of activity** | Dialogue.  |
| **Mode of delivery** | In-person, hybrid, online. Suggestions for adaptations for hybrid and online modes are marked with an icon of a computer screen in instructions below. |
| **Aim** | To give students the chance to discuss and reflect on issues surrounding academic integrity in a critical and collaborative way. |
| **Suitable for** | * students who have already developed understanding of the issues surrounding academic integrity.
* students of any discipline.
* small and large groups.
 |
| **Resources** | Handout. |
| **Time** | Approx. 45-60 minutes. |

## **Rationale and Inclusivity**

Students are often given the rules surrounding academic integrity and told to follow them. However, due to cultural or personal differences, they may not have considered various issues and aspects of academic integrity very deeply. The purpose of this dialogue activity is to give voice to any thoughts students might have on the issue. Through engaging with this topic on a critical level, students will be able to understand not just the what, but the why of the rules, and will also have the opportunity to consider wider implications.

The task encourages students to engage in a collaborative activity in which students listen to each other, value each other’s opinions and work towards a shared understanding.

## **Activity structure**

1. The instructor welcomes the class and provides an overview and aims of the activity.
2. Warmer. The instructor distributes the handout for Task 1 from the Resources section below. Students work in pairs or small groups to decide which statements describe a debate and which describe a dialogue. This is followed by a whole group check and summary of the main rules for the dialogue.
3. Main task. The instructor presents the topic for the dialogue. See Task 2 from the Resources section below.
4. Students are divided into pairs or small groups to prepare for the dialogue. Students are asked to generate ideas and arguments related to the given statement, and to consider different aspects of each point. Students take notes and may do some research online if possible.

With less confident groups, the instructor may decide to provide some prompting questions to facilitate student preparation (e.g., What could the arguments in support of this statement be? What are their weaknesses? What about arguments against? Is this opinion supported by any facts or figures?); the instructor may also give examples of arguments for students to consider.



In online or hybrid learning environments, students prepare in breakout rooms and record their ideas on a shared document or in a learning technology application which allows group work.

1. The instructor mixes students and creates larger groups. If possible, groups sit in a circle (ideally without a table). Depending on the size of the class, the instructor can create several groups (6-8 students) or hold a whole group dialogue. The instructor reminds students of the rules for the dialogue to students and asks students to talk about the main statement. The instructor specifies the time limit for the dialogue (e.g., 20-30 minutes).

With less confident groups, the instructor may want to employ a method of encouraging all students to participate (e.g., taking turns, nominating some students as ‘chairs’ who will help ensure equal participation etc.).

In online or hybrid learning environments, where there are multiple groups, students complete the activity in breakout rooms. If possible, the instructor may decide to apply the together mode/immersive view mode to place students in one shared virtual background (e.g., theatre, chairs in a circle etc.) to create a sense of space for the dialogue.

In teaching English for Academic Purposes, academic or communication skills, you may want to distribute cards with useful phrases for students to use (e.g., phrases to emphasise a point, examples of questions asking for clarification, cards with specific vocabulary etc.).

1. The instructor asks the whole group to share reflections from the activity (e.g., How did your dialogues go? Has anyone changed their opinions? What have you learnt from this activity?).

## **Resources**

### **Task 1. Warmer. Handout for contrasting a dialogue and a debate.**

Instructions for students:

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| --- |
| Read the following statements and mark with a tick (√) which statements describe a dialogue, and which describe a debate. |

| **Statements** | **Dialogue** | **Debate** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Participants with opposing views try to prove each other wrong. |  |  |
| Participants listen to understand and to find common ground. |  |  |
| Participants with opposing views work together towards a shared understanding. |  |  |
| Participants understand that many people have parts of answers, and that cooperation can lead to a greater understanding. |  |  |
| Participants focus on spotting differences and on generating counter arguments. |  |  |
| Participants have an open mind. They understand that they might be wrong. |  |  |
| Participants deny opposing positions and may belittle other participants. |  |  |
| Participants search for weaknesses in opposing points of view.  |  |  |
| Participants are looking to confirm their own point of view. |  |  |
| Participants respect all the other participants and aim not to alienate or offend.  |  |  |
| Participants search for strengths in all points of view. |  |  |
| This activity can remain ‘open-ended’. |  |  |
| This activity demands a conclusion and a winner. |  |  |

### **Task 2. Main task. Topics for the dialogue.**

For instructors: The below are examples of possible topics for the dialogue. Choose one for your class. The instructor may decide to adapt or provide another statement for students to focus on.

Example topics:

* The rules surrounding academic integrity at our institution are too strict.
* The penalties for breaches of academic integrity are too severe.
* Assessment tasks encourage students to cheat.
* Assessments are not suitable for diverse groups of students, and this leads some to cheating.
* Module contents and assignments are tailored for UK students only. This leads international students to cheat.
* Academic integrity rules are not explained properly to students.
* Academic integrity needs to reflect equity not equality, as students have different needs.
* It is teachers’ fault that students cheat.
* [Literature/history disciplines] William Shakespeare – was he the greatest plagiarist of all?

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This exercise is an output from a Collaborative Enhancement Project supported and funded by QAA Membership. The project is led by Oxford Brookes University in partnership with Bloomsbury Institute, University of Southampton and University of Westminster. Find out more about Collaborative Enhancement Projects on the [QAA website](https://www.qaa.ac.uk/membership/collaborative-enhancement-projects).