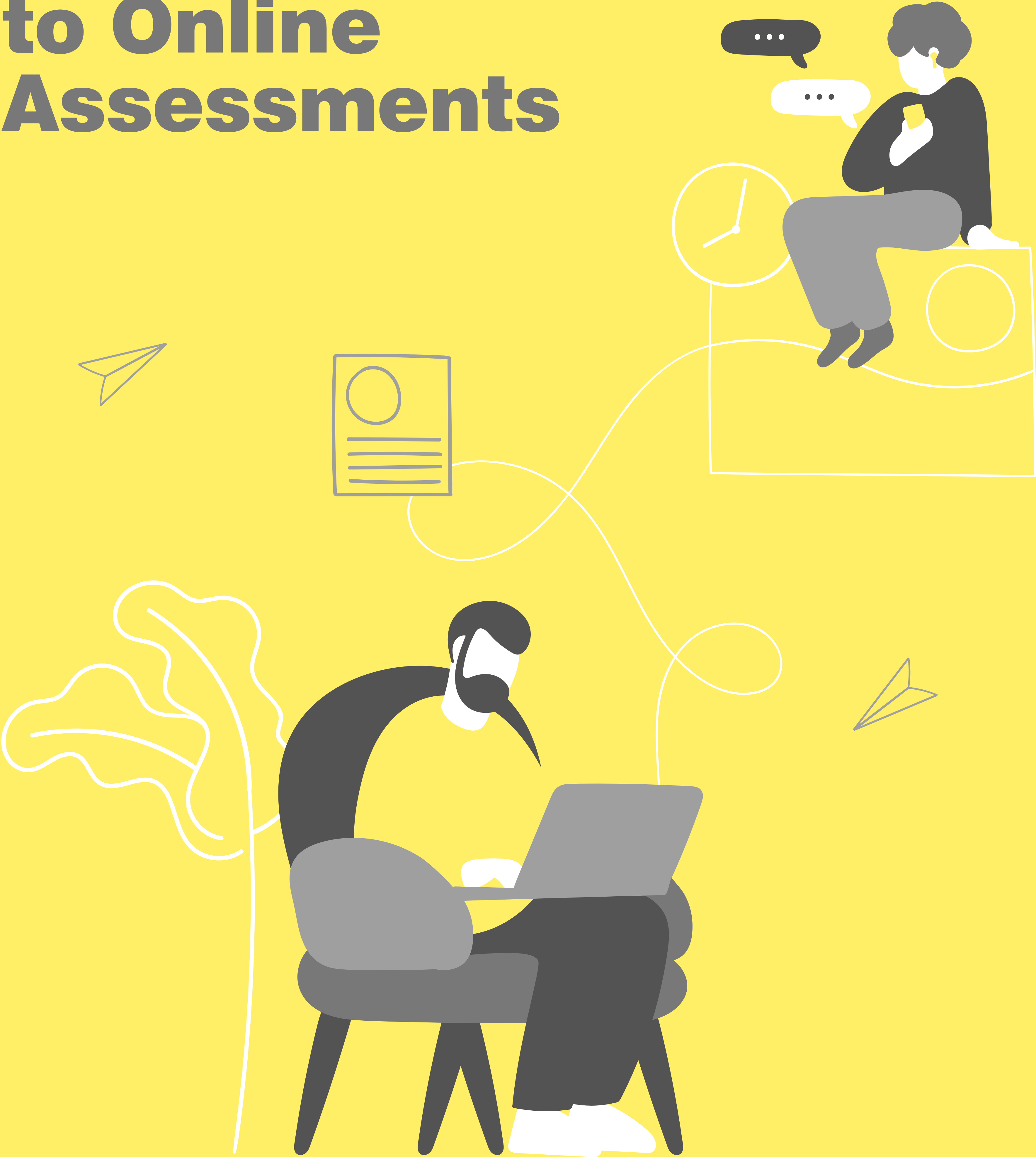


Transitioning from Paper to Online Assessments





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introduction

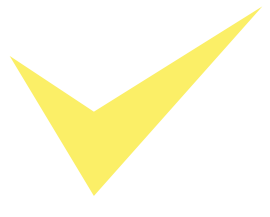
Many higher education institutes are making the switch from hard copy to electronic.

While there was already a strong trend in this direction before the pandemic, the dramatic increase in remote learning over the past year has accelerated it.

Many institutions that had not prepared for the transition are now making it under time constraints and with limited resources.

While the process can be challenging, it ultimately provides many benefits.

There are steps you can take to make the switch easier and to guarantee great results.



challenges

There are many challenges in transitioning from a paper system to an electronic one.

resistance

Some staff members may be reluctant to change to a new system. The process may also have to be managed with many still working remotely.

time & cost

The switch can be very time-consuming. It can also be expensive due to the number of staff hours required and any costs associated with the new system.

accuracy

It can be difficult to maintain accuracy and organisation in your records during the transition. Data may become disorganised or difficult to locate.

new system

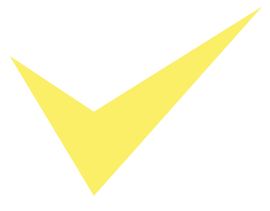
You may be moving to an entirely new data management system as well as a new format. It is a common mistake to assume that physical course materials can seamlessly transition into an electronic format. The two systems function very differently.

security

You will have to choose a platform that provides reliable data security for your institution and your students. It's important to ensure that your electronic system will comply with regulations around data protection.

assessment

Electronic assessments function differently to paper-based ones. They require specific types of question and response. Managing invigilation and maintaining the integrity of assessments can also be challenging.



benefits

While transitioning from paper to electronic is a difficult process, it ultimately provides many benefits. If you plan the process carefully, you will end up with a more reliable, efficient and user-friendly system.

records

Electronic systems allow for more accurate, comprehensive record keeping than paper. Records are stored securely and accessibly. You can access and share them quickly and reliably. This saves you time and allows you to provide information efficiently and securely for students and staff.

time

The transition from paper to electronic is time-consuming, but you will quickly make this time back once the process is complete. Good electronic platforms provide fast, reliable search functions that let you find the information you need when you need it.

security

A good electronic platform provides strong data security. Data protection issues are extremely important in the education sector. Electronic platforms offer various forms of protection to help you avoid problems around security and confidentiality.

cost

Electronic systems are much more cost-effective than hard copy. You'll save many staff hours otherwise spent searching through or storing hard-copy records. You'll also need much less physical storage space.

integration

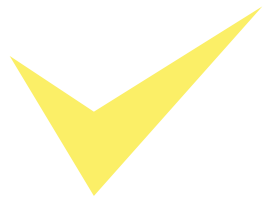
Electronic platforms integrate all your data into one system. This makes searching for, storing, sharing and editing information much easier.

data quality

Electronic systems offer better data quality. You can store more detailed, accurate and up-to-date information. It's also much easier to correct or update information in an electronic system.

student experience

Students rightly expect straightforward, reliable and user-friendly processes around courses and assessment. An efficient and reliable electronic system helps to ensure a positive student experience.



tips for the transition

Following a few tips on electronic course provision and assessment will help you to make the switch successfully.

preparation

Prepare thoroughly and make a detailed plan for each stage of the switch. You may have to alter this plan as you progress, but a clear idea of your overall process and objectives is essential.

choose the right system

There are many electronic platforms available. Choose the right one for your specific requirements. Do your research and consider all relevant criteria, such as the technology required, where the platform is hosted, and its overall reliability.

collaboration

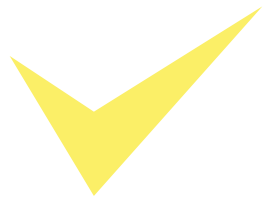
Switching from hard copy to electronic impacts everyone at an institution. Some may be reluctant to engage in the process. However, making the transition successfully requires collaboration. Listen to concerns and take input from everyone involved. Explain the benefits of going electronic and the process required to achieve it. This will help to ensure a smooth transition that will ultimately benefit everyone.

process and timeframe

Design a detailed, realistic strategy. Do your research on each phase of the switch. Find out how long each step should take so you can prepare adequately.

sustainability

While it's easy to focus on meeting immediate requirements, you should plan to accommodate changes and growth over time. Make a sustainable plan and use a system that can adapt to new developments.



tips for assessments

Following a few tips on electronic course provision and assessment will help you to make the switch successfully.

platform

Your platform must be reliable for assessments. Any issues around assessment or marking will lead to complicated, time-consuming problems. Delivery and invigilation of assessments is also extremely important. You must ensure that assessments carried out electronically are still taken under secure exam conditions.

format

Choose a format that is accessible for students and suitable for electronic assessment. Multiple choice or selective answering formats can focus on the essential information, testing critical judgement, recall, and analysis. Free response with blocks of text or data is generally not suited to electronic assessment.

duration & item count

Electronic assessments should generally last no longer than two hours and should have a number of items appropriate to this timeframe.

questions

Questions should be designed for electronic assessment. They should be concise and easy to understand. All exam information should be provided at the outset in a clear, accessible manner. The questions should hit the critical points, focusing on the main subject areas of the course.

response

Response functions should be intuitive and straightforward, like clicking a button or selecting an option. Figuring out the mechanisms of the test should not be part of the challenge for students.



Following these steps
will ensure a smooth
and successful transition
from paper to electronic.



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