



Book review: Bertram Gallant, T. and Rettinger, D.A. (2025) *The opposite of cheating: teaching for integrity in the age of AI*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma Press.

Integrity as design: rehumanising higher education in the age of AI

Rebecca Upsher

King's College London, UK

Keywords: academic integrity; artificial intelligence; assessment; pedagogy; learning development.

At a time when the higher education (HE) sector is anxious about generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), *The opposite of cheating* arrives as a calm and constructive voice. Rather than treating GenAI as an existential threat, Tricia Bertram Gallant and David Rettinger invite us to consider how our teaching, assessment design, and institutional cultures may themselves create conditions for academic dishonesty. Bertram Gallant and Rettinger are long-standing leaders in the academic integrity field, and their collaboration draws on decades of empirical research and practice. The book's tone is pragmatic, optimistic, and relational, qualities that will resonate with educators who view integrity as integral to the learning process rather than as an adjunct to it.

Across seven chapters, the book reframes academic integrity as a systemic, designable feature of HE. The opening chapter explores why students cheat, introducing foundational principles that shape the remainder of the text. Subsequent chapters address how to communicate integrity, design courses and assessments that encourage honesty, promote student success, and protect assessment security in an AI-enabled world. Each chapter concludes with targeted recommendations for individual educators and institutional leaders, reinforcing the idea that integrity cannot rest on individual effort alone.

The structure is clear and modular, allowing readers to access the sections most relevant to their context. Instructors seeking practical guidance can draw immediately on the checklists and examples, while researchers and learning developers will appreciate the

synthesis of evidence spanning self-efficacy, moral development, and social motivation. The through-line is pedagogical rather than procedural: integrity is something that must be cultivated through design, dialogue, and relationships.

The book's central contribution lies in its refusal to moralise. Cheating is presented not as a personal failing but as a predictable human response to stress, confusion, or misaligned incentives. By framing dishonesty as a symptom of wider pedagogical and cultural issues, the authors shift attention from detection to prevention. This approach resonates with the academic literacies' perspective, interpreting student behaviour within its learning context rather than through deficit assumptions (Lea and Street, 1998).

The argument is grounded in a range of psychological and educational evidence. The discussion of self-efficacy, belonging, and perceived fairness draws on established research while translating theory into actionable strategies, including work on mindset and motivation (Dweck, 2006). Later chapters explicitly connect these constructs to relational pedagogy and to ideas consistent with Self-Determination Theory (autonomy, competence, and relatedness, see Ryan and Deci, 2017) as foundations for academic honesty. The conceptual work is rigorous, though some examples are necessarily US-centred, such as the emphasis on American-style honour codes and campus-based judicial processes that are less common in UK or international contexts. Nonetheless, the principles of inclusive design, formative feedback, and transparency are globally relevant. A few sections, particularly those outlining classroom interventions, rely more on professional insight than on empirical validation. The authors acknowledge this, positioning the book as a bridge between research and practice rather than a purely theoretical text. The openness about evidence gaps underscores the need for further pedagogical research into integrity and assessment in the age of GenAI.

The opposite of cheating extends a lineage of scholarship that reconceptualises academic integrity as developmental rather than disciplinary. It builds on Bertram Gallant's earlier work (*Academic integrity in the twenty-first century*, 2008) and echoes Lang's *Cheating lessons* (2013) in asserting that assessment design is moral design. Where Lang focused on classroom-level strategies, Bertram Gallant and Rettinger expand the discussion to programme and institutional scales, offering an integrated model that combines leadership, policy, and learning culture. The book also aligns with learning development scholarship

concerned with authentic assessment, metacognition, and student agency. Its emphasis on belonging, transparency, and inclusive pedagogy complements the field's focus on dialogic learning and universal learning design. By framing integrity as learned through relationships, the authors contribute meaningfully to current debates on co-creation and partnership in HE.

For practitioners, the book provides both conceptual language and concrete strategies for aligning integrity policy with pedagogy. The chapters on assessment design and promoting student success are particularly valuable. They present ways to reduce opportunities for misconduct through scaffolded tasks, authentic assessment, and formative revision, while simultaneously enhancing inclusion and motivation. Notably, the book addresses GenAI with nuance rather than alarm. Instead of advocating bans, the authors encourage educators to plan for cognitive offloading, identifying which learning objectives should be achieved with or without technological support. They suggest helping students reflect on their GenAI use and evaluate the quality of generated outputs, transforming what might be a site of misconduct into one of critical engagement.

The discussion of teacher presence and metacognition is another strength. By encouraging educators to model curiosity, transparency, and ethical behaviour, Bertram Gallant and Rettinger link integrity to teaching identity. The call to 'teach with integrity' extends beyond course design to self-reflection: how instructors communicate care, structure learning, and respond to failure all signal values that shape students' ethical development. At an institutional level, the authors call for investment in quality teaching and assessment infrastructure, positioning integrity as a collective responsibility. Learning developers will recognise parallels with sector frameworks such as Advance HE's Education for Mental Health Toolkit (Hughes, Upsher and Shaw, 2022) and Universal Design for Learning (Bray et al., 2024), both of which align with the book's emphasis on autonomy, competence, and belonging.

The opposite of cheating offers a timely framework for navigating assessment and integrity in the GenAI era. Its insistence on trust, transparency, and design contrasts sharply with punitive or surveillance-based approaches that have dominated recent discourse. The text's greatest achievement is its relational stance: it repositions integrity as a shared, educative endeavour rather than an enforcement regime. While some institutional and

international nuances could be developed further, the book's clarity, theoretical grounding, and pedagogical optimism make it a compelling contribution to global discussions on academic integrity. For learning developers and educational leaders alike, it demonstrates how conversations about GenAI can become conversations about pedagogy, belonging, and the purpose of HE itself. *The opposite of cheating* ultimately serves as both a guide and a reminder that integrity begins not with policy but with how and why we teach.

Acknowledgements

The author did not use generative AI technologies in the creation of this manuscript.

References

- Bertram Gallant, T. (2008) *Academic integrity in the twenty-first century: a teaching and learning imperative*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Bray, A., Devitt, A., Banks, J., Sanchez Fuentes, S., Sandoval, M., Riviou, K., Byrne, D., Flood, M. et al. (2024) 'What next for Universal Design for Learning? A systematic literature review of technology in UDL implementations at second level', *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 55(1), pp.113–138. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13328>
- Dweck, C. (2006) *Mindset: the new psychology of success*. New York: Random House.
- Hughes, G., Upsher, R. and Shaw, S. (2022) *Education for mental health toolkit*. London: King's College London. Available at: <https://educationformentalhealth.kcl.ac.uk>
- Lang, J.M. (2013) *Cheating lessons: learning from academic dishonesty*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Lea, M.R. and Street, B.V. (1998) 'Student writing in higher education: an academic literacies approach', *Studies in higher education*, 23(2), pp.157–172. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079812331380364>

Ryan, R.M. and Deci, E.L. (2017) *Self-determination theory: basic psychological needs in motivation, development, and wellness*. New York: Guilford Press.

Author details

Rebecca Upsher is a lecturer in Psychology Education at King's College London. Her work explores the intersection of wellbeing, pedagogy, and curriculum design. She leads research on academic integrity, inclusive teaching, and the role of generative AI in student learning and assessment. Rebecca has contributed to sector-wide initiatives on mental health in education, including the Education for Mental Health Toolkit, and works closely with students to co-create pedagogic interventions that support student learning and wellbeing in higher education.

Licence

©2025 The Author(s). This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC-BY 4.0), which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original author and source are credited. See <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>. Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education (JLDHE) is a peer-reviewed open access journal published by the Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE).