

An academic speed awareness course: Developing FREE resources for prevention/probation of academic offenders

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Abstract:

Research has shown 'repeat offenders' are common, and traditional measures might not be effective; students often react by 'attempting to avoid capture', like drivers reacting to speed cameras, rather than long-term behaviour change. However, we can learn a great deal from how the DVLA have reacted to curbing speeding offences, by offering Speed Awareness, as an alternative to fixed penalties. A number of commercial academic integrity courses exist, but controversially these costs are often passed on to guilty students. Evidence of effectiveness of such courses is often limited to testimonials, and no significant research has been done to confirm whether such interventions are a suitable deterrent to repeat offending. Furthermore, many institutions are not able to pay, or are unwilling to double punish financially constrained students, and often duplicate effort by creating (often several) 'in house' courses. Therefore, there is scope for designing free activities and resources, which address the need for re-educating offenders, reducing re-offending, and evaluating the effect on the attitudes of students found guilty of academic misconduct. This working paper will address psychological and academic approaches to speed awareness courses, and whether this can be applied to academic misconduct. A set of free resources for activities for academic offenders is in development, which attempt to centre upon the student experience, rather than the academic perspective.

Keywords: Plagiarism prevention, speed awareness course.