



Academic Integrity Council of Ontario

Avoiding Contract Cheating Student Tip Sheet

Your journey through post-secondary education will have its ups and downs. When you graduate post-secondary school, you want to know that the quality associated with your certificate, diploma, or degree will mean something. Studying with the values of academic integrity (honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, courage) can help to protect your academic credential. Acts of academic dishonesty give some students an unfair advantage, jeopardize the value of the work you do, and place you at risk. One specific form of academic dishonesty is *contract cheating*.

What is contract cheating?

- Outsourcing academic work (e.g., essays, assignments) to pay-for-profit sites (e.g., homework sites, essay mills, tutor sites) OR personal acquaintances (e.g., friends, family or classmates).

Is contract cheating a problem?

- Contract cheating is an act of academic dishonesty
- You can face an academic penalty from your school (up to & including expulsion)
- You risk being blackmailed or having your personal information shared by pay-for-profit sites

Are homework or tutor sites OK?

- Some sites ask you to upload course PowerPoints, notes, assignments, tests, syllabi or course outlines that are copyright protected and are not yours to share
- Accessing the solutions or answers from a tutor site does not help you learn the course content
- Beware that information provided on such sites may be incorrect and cannot be validated

What if I see an advertisement for a for profit site on my social media accounts or school accounts (Instagram, twitter, or Facebook)?

- Contact the owner of the site so that they can take a posting down or intervene to stop the posting
- Consider posting your own message to alert other students about the risks of contract cheating
- Contact your professor/instructor/TA for the course so the school can take action

What if a friend asks me for answers to a test, my old assignments, or a copy of an essay?

- You run the risk of your work being copied which puts you at risk for being accused of academic dishonesty
- Talk to your friend about how you completed the assignment or how you approached studying
- Refer your friend back to the professor/teacher/TA for help

How can I avoid contract cheating?

- Plan out your schedule - time crunches can lead to increased pressures and bad choices
- Reach out to experts in your school that can help – look at your school's website, talk to your professor, instructor, or TA about resources that might help (e.g., library services, school tutors, writing centres, accessibility services, international student services etc.)

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