

Contract Cheating Staff Guidance

Background

“Contract cheating happens when a third party completes work for a student who then submits it to an education provider as their own, where such input is not permitted.” QAA [Contracting to Cheat in Higher Education](#) 3rd edition 2022

Offering contract cheating services (i.e. operating an essay mill) is **illegal** in England, but not in Wales, since April 2022 ([Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, Part 4, Chapter 1](#)).

It is also an offence to advertise essays mills or arrange for people to use their services.

Using essay mills is **not** illegal. So, a student who submits an essay bought from an essay mill is not doing something illegal, but rather commits a breach of academic integrity, which is dealt with under UWTSD regulations.

UWTSD Regulations

Making use of contract cheating services is identified as Academic Misconduct (false authorship). See the UWTSD Academic Misconduct Policy ([UWTSD AQH](#)).

Operating a contract cheating service, being a representative of one, or advertising the services of one come under Non-Academic Misconduct. Specifically, it is an action “which may cause reputational damage to the University as a result of the misconduct of the alleged perpetrator”, and a breach of the Student Code of Conduct. See the UWTSD Student Code of Conduct, and the UWTSD Non-Academic Misconduct Policy ([UWTSD AQH](#)).

What to tell students

Everywhere:

Explain what false authorship is and its consequences according to the UWTSD Academic Misconduct Policy ([UWTSD AQH](#))

Warn that operating a contract cheating service, or advertising one on any of the university’s campuses, halls of residence, or online spaces is a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and can have severe consequences.

Only in the English Campuses:

Warn that operating a contract cheating service, or advertising one on any of the university’s campuses, halls of residence, or online spaces can result in being reported to the police under the Skills and Post-16 Education Act 2022, Part 4, Chapter 1.

What to do as staff

Everywhere:

Explain to students what false authorship is and its consequences according to the UWTSD Academic Misconduct Policy.

Warn students that operating a contract cheating service, or advertising one on any of the university's campuses, halls of residence, or online spaces is a breach of the Student Code of Conduct and can have severe consequences.

Ensure that you report any breach of Academic Integrity following the process identified in the UWTSD Academic Misconduct Policy.

If you suspect any student of operating a contract cheating service, or advertising one on any of the university's campuses, halls of residence, or online spaces please inform the Academic Office (secases@uwtsd.ac.uk) providing the following information:

Student's name and student number

Institute

Campus

when and where the incident occurred. Indicate any events, dates or times that you feel are relevant.

Any evidence, including photographs or screenshots, relating to the alleged offence.

In Campuses in England

In addition to the above:

You **do not** have to call the police if you observe a student advertising contract cheating services. Inform the Academic Office of the issue, and, if appropriate, the matter will be referred to the police.

If you observe a non-student advertising contract cheating services, please inform security and/or the campus manager. Please **do not** confront the individual directly. Care for your safety.