

Based on responses from 14,086 Australian university students, 15% of students reported buying, selling or trading notes and 27% of students reported providing a completed assignment to someone else (for any reason). Both behaviours were classified in the research as 'sharing' behaviours. However, the research also found that those students who reported engaging in 'cheating' behaviours (eg. obtaining an assignment with the intention to submit it as their own work) were twice as likely to also report engaging in 'sharing' behaviours (Bretag & Harper et al., 2018).

Scenario

Thomas Anderson is a highly motivated, third year Commerce student who has consistently achieved excellent results throughout his university studies. His younger brother, Andrew, is less academically oriented, but with Thomas' encouragement has just enrolled in the Commerce program. Having spent most of the first few weeks of the semester enjoying Orientation activities, Andrew finds himself confused by the requirements of the first assignment just days from the submission due date. Thomas looks at the assignment and is pleased to see that while the questions are different, the content is very similar to the one he did in first year. He offers it to Andrew to give him an idea of structure and style. Andrew has every intention of completing the assignment himself, but having missed some critical classes is still unable to make much sense of the assignment. He does his best to paraphrase Thomas' work and submits the assignment with just minutes to spare. Two weeks later, Thomas and Andrew receive separate invitations to meet with an Academic Integrity Officer to discuss the similarity between their two assignments.

Points for discussion

1. What are some of the critical issues in this case?
2. Has Thomas engaged in 'sharing' or 'cheating' behaviours?
3. According to the policy at your institution, how should the Academic Integrity Officer respond to each student?
4. How can Andrew be supported in his studies to ensure that he completes his own work and achieves the learning objectives?

References

- Bretag, T., Harper, R., Burton, M., Ellis, C., Newton, P., Saddiqui, S., Rozenberg, P & van Haeringen, K. (2018). Contract cheating: A survey of Australian university students, *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2018.1462788>
- Harper, R., Bretag, T., Ellis, C., Newton, P., Rozenberg, P., Saddiqui, S., & van Haeringen, K. (2018). Contract cheating: a survey of Australian university staff. *Studies in Higher Education*, 1-17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2018.1462789>

Further resources available at www.cheatingandassessment.edu.au/
Supported by the Australian Government Department of Education and Training.



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