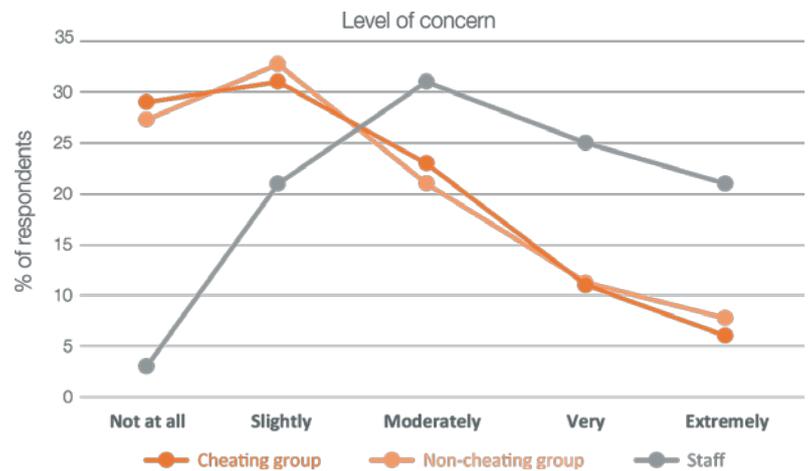


Findings from a survey of 14,086 university students showed that students were *not particularly concerned* about contract cheating – even if they had never engaged in cheating behaviour themselves (Bretag & Harper et al. 2018). Staff, on the other hand, reported being 'moderately' to 'very' concerned (Harper & Bretag et al. 2018).

Perhaps you think that cheating is a 'victimless crime', or that students who cheat are 'only cheating themselves'? Perhaps you haven't considered the potential harm involved, such as risk to public safety – imagine an engineer or doctor who paid someone to take their exams for them – now, are you worried? Have you thought how you might feel if you were competing for the same job with someone who cheated their way through their degree? What if they got the job? Worse, what if they got the job, made a mess of it, and the employer decided never to employ anyone from your university again?



Ultimately [...] the people which do cheat will probably fail later on anyway (Student 118, Non-cheating).

I do not get personally upset by others cheating as I focus purely on my own studies (Student 102, Non-cheating)

*I find it really disappointing that I have met several people in my industry that are studying their undergraduate degree and have **openly told me that they have purchased papers**. My grades are not the best, however I know that it is my work and I am learning the material. (Student 235, Non-cheating)*

Why should you care?

It matters! You want your degree to be worth something. You want to feel proud of your university and all of the effort and time that went into earning your degree. You want to be able to trust other students to do their share of the work when you are in a team or group. You want to know that employers trust your university to have trained you properly for your career. Most of all, you want things to be fair.

What can you do?

1. Speak up! When you see students around you obviously cheating, let them know that their cheating impacts on you directly.
2. Be brave! No-one likes a dobber, but no-one wants a worthless degree either. Tell your unit/subject convenor if you have witnessed cheating and trust your university to treat the information confidentially and fairly.
3. Encourage your friends and classmates to see why cheating is harmful to themselves, to the university and to you.

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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