

USING ACADEMIC SUPPORT SERVICES



What to avoid

Contract cheating, also known as ghost writing, occurs when a student knowingly submits work that has been completed by another person or agency. This guide explains how to detect such unethical services and why you should avoid using them. Note that any advertisement of these services is now [prohibited by law](#).

WHERE TO SEEK HELP

University study can present challenges. We know that students can benefit from support to ensure that they can achieve their potential. Assistance to help you complete your assessments is offered in an educative way from teaching and support staff at the university. They can assist you to better understand assessment requirements, help you to manage your time to complete assessments, help to unpack difficult elements of assessments, help to show you how to build your skills to take these tasks on successfully.

Swinburne's [Learning and Academic Skills \(LAS\)](#) centre provide helpful support for a range of different assessment types and in areas such as statistics and writing. Studiosity is available online for free 24/7 to help with your studies and to provide feedback on your writing. See the link to Studiosity in your units on Canvas.

Asking other people to complete your assessments is not acceptable, is not fair to other students who have done the work themselves and is not in your own interests as you will miss out on the opportunity to develop your skills. Engaging in academic misconduct can result in leaving university with fewer skills. This can lead to being less prepared for the workplace and can potentially limit career progression. You might also leave without a degree as you risk expulsion.

HOW CONTRACT CHEATING SITES ATTRACT STUDENTS

Students can access contract cheating sites readily through search tools, however often these services promote themselves directly to you through pop-up ads on social media. Contract cheating sites seek to gain credibility and your trust by making claims, but they cannot be relied on. These are some of their claims.

What they claim	Reality
Qualified writers	FALSE - Writers often lack any qualifications , are offshore and English is not their native language
Quality work	FALSE - They often do not comply with your assignment requirements
Payment security	FALSE AND DANGEROUS - You are often required to provide your bank account details as others forms of payment such as PayPal may be 'denied'
Affordability	FALSE - The premium services (which are sold as add-ons) are very expensive
On time delivery	FALSE - Often not the case including bad communication (no response to your emails and attempts to contact them)
Testimonials	FAKE - Rarely from genuine students or real customers
University approval (e.g. using Swinburne branding and colours to make them look like an official service)	FALSE - Only services using a Swinburne URL or Studiosity, are approved providers/services
Confidentiality	FALSE - They often share your details and may even report you to your university engaging in blackmail .
Satisfaction guaranteed	FALSE - They rarely able to meet your requirements and expectations
Refunds for substandard work	FALSE - These requests are often simply ignored

SITES AND SERVICES TO AVOID (NOTE: THIS IS NOT A COMPREHENSIVE LIST)

All Assignment Help	Edubirdie	Law Teacher	Student VIP	Transtutor
Chegg	Fiverr	My Assignment Help	Studoc	UK essays
Course Hero	Grademiners	Sparknotes	Study Bay	

CHECKLIST FOR DETECTING UNETHICAL SITES

If you are seeking support or assistance from sites with some or all of these features, you are about to engage in contract cheating and academic misconduct. BEWARE!!

- Asking for payment to complete assignment work for you
- Assurances that they offer good quality writers/writing
- An "Order" button
- Prices linked to assignment length and completion times
- Attempts to justify why buying assignments might be "ok"
- Testimonials from "customers", often accompanied by stock photos of people who aren't real students
- Guarantees of "plagiarism-free" work
- The need to create a personal account and login
- One of a number of nearly identical sites with different domain names
- "Terms of service" that disclaim responsibility if students are caught submitting work from the site
- Various service guarantees such as 24/7 support, live chat, feedback, money-back if unsatisfied (research shows they don't always deliver on these).

REFERENCES AND ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Ellis, C., Zucker, I. M., & Randall, D. (2018). 'The infernal business of contract cheating: Understanding the business processes and models of academic custom writing sites', *International Journal for Educational Integrity*, 14(1), 1

Rowland, S., Slade, C., Wong, K-S. & Whiting, B. (2018) 'Just turn to us': the persuasive features of contract cheating websites', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(4), pp.652-665

Sutherland-Smith, W., & Dullaghan, K. (2019). 'You don't always get what you pay for: User experiences of engaging with contract cheating sites', *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 44(8), pp.1148-1162

Yorke, J., Sefcik, L. and Veeran-Colton, T. (2020). 'Contract cheating and blackmail: a risky business?', *Studies in Higher Education*, pp.1-14

Many thanks to Dr Guy Curtis, UWA School of Psychological Science

PREPARED BY THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY WORKING PARTY

Find out about academic integrity, go to swi.nu/ai