

CRADLE suggests...

How to detect contract cheating



THE RESEARCH

In 2016 and 2017 the CRADLE team worked with markers from across Deakin on experimental research to improve the detection of contract cheating. Together, we identified the following recommendations on how to improve the detection of contract cheating.



Tell markers to look for/be aware of contract cheating when marking

Our study shows markers are much more likely to detect contract cheating if told to be aware of it and to look for it when marking.

Tell students you know contract cheating is out there and your markers are looking for it

Advise them that under Deakin policy it is regarded as a serious breach of integrity.

Ask markers to use their discipline knowledge to spot contract cheating

Expertise in contract cheating detection is not enough.

Look for lack of appropriate discipline theory

For example, when an assessment task asked for psychological theory on development, contract cheating sites used medical development theory instead. Contract cheating assignments often lacked key theorists covered in unit.

Look for missing sections

Contract cheating assignments particularly lacked tables, figures & reflections. Reflections were done especially poorly (if at all).

Think about assessment task structure

Essay tasks are the easiest for contract cheating sites to produce; consider setting non-traditional tasks.

Contract cheating sites often did not follow instructions well; consider using templates or providing helpful guidance to students.

Consider vivas (or alternate assessment)

Follow-up studies show that it was much harder for students to contract cheat when they were asked to engage in a dialogue with markers about their work.

FIND MORE

1. Dawson, P., & Sutherland-Smith, W. (2018). [Can markers detect contract cheating? Results from a pilot study.](#) *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 43(2), 286-293.

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Centre for Research in Assessment and Digital Learning

CRADLE suggests is a series of briefings from the [Centre for Research and Assessment in Digital Learning \(CRADLE\)](#), which translates our own research into practice-based possibilities.

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