



## Academic Plagiarism

The use of custom essay writing services

### Summary Writing

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# Student

## Two types of lesson

### **Lesson#1:** [Easy] \*\*\*\*\* [B2/C1]

1. Try to predict the content of text / write down key terms / ideas.
2. Read text – check words and meanings with a dictionary
3. Fill in the outline to identify key points and support
4. Write the summary – only one paragraph (200-250 words)
5. Check key points & model answer (try to achieve 4 key points and 4 support points)
6. Answer critical thinking questions & check answers

### **Lesson #2:** [Hard] \*\*\*\*\* [C1]

1. Read text – no dictionary
2. Fill in outline to identify key points and support / or take notes from text
4. Write the summary – only one paragraph (200-250 words)
5. Check key points & model answer (try to achieve 4 key points and 4 support points)
6. Answer critical thinking questions & check answers

# Teacher

## Two types of lesson

### **Lesson#1:** [easy] \*\*\*\*\* [B2/C1]

1. Give out text a week /day before the test – students read, check vocabulary and meaning.
2. Test day – give out a new copy of text and summary question
3. Set 1 hour to read text, take notes and write the summary
4. The summary – only one paragraph (200-250 words)
5. Feedback<sup>1</sup>: take in and mark [use correction code\*]
6. Feedback<sup>2</sup>: give out key points & model answer
7. SUMMARY: Should contain at least 4 main ideas with support – see Summary Key Points
8. Extra: Answer critical thinking questions / group discussion (30 minutes)

### **Lesson #2:** [hard] \*\*\*\*\* [C1]

1. Set 1 hour to read text and write the summary
2. The summary – only one paragraph (200-250 words)
3. Feedback<sup>1</sup>: take in and mark [use correction code\*]
4. Feedback<sup>2</sup>: give out key points & model answer
5. SUMMARY: Should contain at least 4 main ideas with support – see Summary Key Points
6. Extra: Answer critical thinking questions / group discussion (30 minutes)

Correction code\*: [www.academic-englishuk/error-correction](http://www.academic-englishuk/error-correction)

## Academic Plagiarism: the use of custom essay writing services

By C.Wilson (April, 2019)

1. Plagiarism at university is a form of cheating and is a serious academic offence. It arises from work submitted that is not the [redacted] a lack of referencing, poor paraphrasing or complete copying. The most common forms of plagiarism are: copying, collusion, [redacted] and commissioning work / buying essays. The focus of this article is on buying essays.

2. Universities use Turnitin plagiarism software to identify copying and collusion but plagiarism has recently evolved into the use of 'custom essay writing services' or 'writing mills' which circumvents Turnitin completely. A basic explanation of a [redacted] company with their assignment brief and is offered a price for a fully written essay that is guaranteed to be '100% plagiarism free'. [redacted] and at this time of writing (April, 2019) they are legal in the UK. In fact, the scale of the problem seems to be severely underestimated with figures varying from [redacted] of possible graduates using writing mills a year (BBC News, 2019). What is clear is that paying a third person to write an essay for you is considered 'contract cheating', a fraudulent behaviour that is a serious academic offence. This [redacted] cheating as the same term.

3. A quick search on Google will highlight that there are pages and pages of custom essay writing services available. They also aggressively advertise on social media, in and around universities and even on direct transport links to education establishments. [redacted] PhD. The process is quick and simple. For a 3,000-word fully written custom business essay with Harvard [redacted] upper 1<sup>st</sup> ([www.newessaysuk.co.uk](http://www.newessaysuk.co.uk)). The sites all claim to have a pool of professional academic writers, offer complete confidentiality and are 100% plagiarism free. With regards to ethical rationalisation on contract cheating, this is often in the small print whereby many (but not all) state '*our papers are for research purposes only and not to be submitted as your own work*', and/or [redacted]. Research by Medway et al (2018) found that some sites did acknowledge that their essay could be handed in as it was. Overall, with claims that the essays have 100% originality or 100% plagiarism free, it seems reasonable to assume that these [redacted].

4. Unfortunately, there is not one specific answer. Generally, poor time management and multiple deadlines are considered the main reasons (Rogerson, 2014). There is also the pressure of such a high investment and fear of failing (Medway et al., 2018). Of course, it is also seen as an easier option to obtain a higher grade especially [redacted]. Research by Mostrous & Kenber, (2016) suggests that international students are four-times more likely to use these than native students. The evidence suggests key factors are differing cultural interpretations on what is considered cheating and/or not being [redacted]. A key point here is that many universities are accepting international students with lower English abilities and thus [redacted] else write your essay (ibid).

5. The key problem is that using custom essay writing services is academic misconduct and is becoming deemed an ever-present threat to academic integrity. The QAA Report (2016) states that when a student [redacted], brings the validity of the qualification into question and poses a threat to the reputation of that university. What seems much more significant is that students are paying [redacted] learning which is based on having a series of lectures / seminars and then extensively researching that given area to independently and individually shape that knowledge and understanding. This experience and comprehension is then [redacted] of self-discovery, then they have failed to thoroughly educate themselves and maximize their investment. Thus, when graduating they are falsely claiming to be a competent qualified professional. Furthermore, The Times (2018) warns that students who have used [redacted] leaks or even future software that identifies patterns and similarities in the way the shadow author has written contracted essays. This would lead to a degree being formally revoked and ending their career.

6. It is true to state that it is incredibly difficult to prove that a student has used a custom essay writing service or handed in a contacted essay. Students can claim a variety of reasons why their essay is above their usual standard of writing; 'a friend checked it for me', 'I had a professional proofread' or 'I've used translation software'. [redacted] all U.K. universities strongly condemning all forms of plagiarism but in particular focusing on the use of custom essay writing services. It seems fair to suggest that universities need to play a much more leading role in discouraging custom essay services by firstly providing [redacted] supporting students in understanding contract cheating and proofreading rules. This information should be clearly visible around [redacted] Unfortunately, much tougher penalties need to be applied with instant expulsion for any type of work expected to be not the student's own. Coughlan (2018) emphasises [redacted] deterrent whereby students sign a declaration of plagiarism and are completely clear on what is plagiarism and the consequences of contract cheating. In addition to awareness building, as plagiarism has evolved so should writing procedures. A possible change would ask for a closer working academic relationship between students and tutors. [redacted] of their essay writing (outline, first draft, second draft, final draft) to the extent of even providing the sources and content where they had paraphrased certain elements if questioned. Assessments should also evolve to clarify a student's understanding of their work through the student presenting their essay to a group of tutors or a 'viva voce'. A simple guide would be if [redacted] what they had written, this would constitute as a fail. A final point, is that legislation needs to be brought in to shut down writing mills in the UK. The QAA Report (2016) and leading Russell Group Vice Chancellors are presently calling [redacted]. This would follow similar regulation in line with New Zealand and America.

7. Whether custom essay writing services can be completely controlled remains to be seen. The recent media attention and a [redacted] to stop focusing on ratings and rankings and start to show more commitment in tackling fraudulent academic misconduct that is becoming [redacted] affect academic integrity, the fairness of assessment processes and the reputation of the U.K Higher Education system.

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**Outline: Summary note-taking** – take notes on the key points of the article

1) main idea:

Support:

2) main idea:

Support:

3) main idea:

Support:

4) main idea:

Support:

5) main idea:

Support:

6) main idea:

Support:

7) main idea:

Support:

## **Summary Key Points ANSWERS**

A good summary should have 4 main ideas and 2 points of support for each main idea

<p><b>1) main idea: plagiarism</b></p>
<p>a) Plagiarism = cheating &amp; serious academic offence.          b) Not the student's own / another source / lack of referencing, poor paraphrasing or completely copied.          c) Copying, [REDACTED], commissioning work / buying essays.</p>
<p><b>2) main idea: evolution</b></p>
<p>a) Turnitin plagiarism software = identify copying and collusion.          b) Evolved - 'custom essay writing services' or 'writing mills'.          c) Writing [REDACTED] written essay '100% plagiarism free'.          d) Legal in the UK / 20,000 known bought essays a year (Yorke, 2017).          e) Hundreds [REDACTED] (BBC News, 2019).          f) Third person writer = 'contract cheating'.</p>
<p><b>3) main idea: writing services</b></p>
<p>a) Google / social media / transport links.          b) A piece of computer code through to a full PhD.          c) [REDACTED] (<a href="http://www.newessaysuk.co.uk">www.newessaysuk.co.uk</a>).          d) Professional academic writers / confidentiality /100% plagiarism free.          e) Ethical rationalisation &gt; small [REDACTED]          f) Medway et al (2018) research = essay could be handed in.          g) 100% [REDACTED] written to be handed in as the student's own work.</p>
<p><b>4) main idea: why students cheat</b></p>
<p>a) Time management / multiple deadlines (Rogerson, 2014).          b) Investment / [REDACTED]          c) Easier option &gt; higher grade / lack of legality over the use of writing mills.          d) International [REDACTED]          e) Cultural interpretations on cheating / academic conventions / language competence.</p>
<p><b>5) main idea: problems</b></p>
<p>a) Academic misconduct / academic integrity.          b) Fairness of the assessment process, validity of the qualification /reputation of that university (The QAA Report, 2016).          c) University [REDACTED] knowledge &amp; understanding &gt; experience &amp; comprehension &gt; written paper. Student fails &gt; process of self-discovery &gt; [REDACTED] &gt; false competent qualified professional.          d) Future = confidentiality &amp; patterns of shadow author. Degree revoked &amp; end career (The Times, 2018).</p>

6) main idea: **solutions**

- a) Difficult to identify.
- b) Multifaceted approach to solutions.
- c) Universities > leading role in discouraging custom essay services > clearer rules.
- d) Visible [REDACTED]
- e) Tougher penalties = instant expulsion.
- f) 'Honour [REDACTED]
- g) Procedure: process of their essay writing / sources / paraphrased if questioned.
- h) Assessments = [REDACTED]
- i) Legislation to shut down writing mills in the UK. The QAA Report (2016) / leading Russel Group [REDACTED]

7) main idea: **final thoughts**

- a) Universities focusing on ratings and rankings.
- b) Commitment [REDACTED]
- c) Academic integrity, the fairness of assessment processes and the reputation of the U.K Higher Education system.

## **Summary Model**

**Task:** Write a 200-250 word summary on the key elements of the custom essay writing services.

Word count: \_\_\_\_\_

## **Custom Essay Writing: Model Summary**

**Task:** Write a 250-word summary on the key elements of academic integrity.

According to Wilson (2017), a new form of plagiarism has emerged whereby students are using online custom essay writing services or writing mills. These website services write essays [REDACTED] hundreds of thousands of graduates per year (BBC News, 2019). At present these sites are legal in the UK and justify their essay [REDACTED] to be rewritten to be handed in. However, by advertising 100% plagiarism free essay service, Wilson (2019) argues [REDACTED] sites state their essays can be handed in as they are. The rise of 'contract cheating' is due to students' poor time management, fear of failing and [REDACTED] & Kender (2016) claim that international students are more likely to use these services due to cultural misunderstanding of cheating and language competence. According to QAA (2016), exploiting [REDACTED] qualifications and a poor reputation of the university. Wilson (2019) emphasises that fast-tracking essay writing [REDACTED] fraudulent professional. Overall, such practices are difficult to prove but UK universities need to play a much more committed [REDACTED] in using writing mills. More complex writing procedures and physical appearance assessments in the form of viva voces to examine students [REDACTED] to shut down these writing mills will be beneficial in combating this plagiarism epidemic (QAA, 2016 and Russel Group Vice chancellors).

[261 words]

### **Critical thinking Questions**

i) What's the stance of the author? Does he think that custom essay writing services will be controlled?

[2 points]

ii) Is this a credible article? Yes /no – why?

[2 points]

iii) Highlight four key parts of information in the text you would use for an essay on 'custom essay writing services are having a negative impact on university education'.

[4 points]

iv) Highlight two areas in the text that you question, disagree with or lack evidence

[2 points]

## Critical thinking Questions

i) What's the stance of the author? Does he think that custom essay writing services will be controlled?

Completely against custom writing services. The writer seems doubtful. He states universities will have to make a lot of [redacted] assessment is done and would add much more work to lecturers. Universities are too focused on ranking.

[2 points]

ii) Is this a credible article? Yes /no – why?

Yes, good source choice.

But who is the author [redacted] Probably a good idea to use the primary sources

[2 points]

iii) Highlight four key parts of information in the text you would use for an essay on 'custom essay writing services are having a negative impact on university education'.

P1: A definition

P2: Legal in the UK / 20,000 known bought essays a year (Yorke, 2017).

P2: Hundreds of thousands of possible graduates using writing mills (BBC News, 2019).

P3: Google / 3,000- [redacted] P3: Professional academic writers / confidentiality /100% plagiarism free.

P4: Easier option > higher grade / lack of legality over the use of writing mills.

P4: International [redacted]

P5: Academic misconduct / academic integrity. Fairness assessment/ validity qualification /reputation.

P5: University education & knowledge learning.

P5: Future = [redacted] career (The Times, 2018).

P6: Difficult to identify. universities > leading role in discouraging custom essay services > clearer rules.

P6: Procedure: process of their [redacted] P6: Assessments = presenting their essay to a group of tutors or a 'viva voce'.

P6: Legislation to shut [redacted]

[4 points]

iv) Highlight two areas in the text that you question, disagree with or lack evidence

P2: Why are they legal? How did the BBC (2018) discover 100's of 1000's students are using writing mills?

P3: Can students really afford these prices? (is it mainly the wealthier students?) Who are the writers? How is the work done? How can these [redacted]

Would you take a chance with handing in one of these essays? How do we know that most people are not rewriting them?

P4: Is legality really a problem? What about just being lazy? Are international students really more likely and how did Mostrous & kender (2016) do their research? (is this outdated 3 years ago?). Do I agree that universities are [redacted]

P5: Are students more focused on the grade rather than the educational journey? Could the Times (2018) be correct in software could identify shadow writers and degrees will be revoked?

P6: are [redacted] Will lecturers have time to follow students process writing? Will physical assessments help? Will legalisation work? (won't these services just go overseas but still be accessible?) Is it working in New Zealand & USA?

P7: Can universities commit?

[any 2 of these – obviously subjective: any credible student answer too]

[2 points]