



JISC

## Cooking the books?

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## Sounds familiar?

*“I have heard so many excuses as to why people don’t bother cooking and it boils down to one of three things; can’t be bothered, don’t know how, don’t have the time. All of them are nothing more than excuses.”*

*Paul, S. (2008) Re: It’s a shame Deliaonline 15 March [Online]  
<http://www.deliaonline.com/messageboard/22/50512/thread.html>*

# And?

*“Of course a lot of the fundamental tasks are easy, but not everyone thinks like this, and precious condemnatory attitudes that we are seeing lately will only, I believe, serve to alienate people.”*

Rob (2008) Re: It's a shame Deliaonline, 15 March [Online]

<http://www.deliaonline.com/messageboard/22/50512/thread.html>

# But

*I have seen loads of criticism on here from people who say that you should make your own mash or mince. However, if you have no idea where to start this is almost impossible.*

*I can't be the only one out there who doesn't know what "browning" mince is....or am I?!?!?*

Absolute Beginner (2008) My first meal. Deliaonline 28 March 2008 [Online]

<http://www.deliaonline.com/messageboard/22/50512/thread.html>

# Issues

- Many students generally regard plagiarism as ‘no big deal’ (Park, C (2003) In other (people’s) words: plagiarism by university students – literature and lessons. Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education Vol 28 (5) p 471 -488)
- One in ten [students] confesses to looking for essays online (Shepherd, J (2006) 1 in 6 admits to cheating THES 16/03/06 p1)
- Found a student using ... an ‘essay bank’ source, but treating the purchase as any other reference and fully and correctly citing it! (Larkham, PJ. (n.d.) Exploring and dealing with plagiarism: traditional approaches <http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk/appage.cgi?USERPAGE=7492> )

# Suggested solutions

- Enforcement
- Engineering
- Ethics

(Underwood, J (2006) Digital Technologies and Dishonesty in examinations and tests. QCA & Nottingham Trent University)

# Enforcement

- Not appropriate for the ‘don’t know hows’
- Not always applied consistently
- Technology may be seen as a ‘magic bullet’
- “Treats the symptoms, not the cause” (Hanek, G. (2003)  
Plagiarism POD Discussion list 29 January [Online] <http://listserv.nd.edu/archives/pod.html>

# Ethics

- Culture change throughout the institution
- Long-term goal
- No empirical evidence in UK for approach

# Engineering

*“Research ... suggests that as many as 10 – 20% of students would qualify as habitual cheaters. Perhaps half of that number or less would fall into the category ... willing to cheat on just about any assignment.”*

*(McCabe, D (2001) Plagiarism and plagiarism detection go high-tech. Chronicle of Higher Education Colloquy 06/07/01. <http://chronicle.com/colloquylive/2001/07/cheat/>*

- *“Close to 50% of [236 users] have made between two and seven bid requests... Could be considered habitual and would suggest that they are using it for most of their assignments”*

*(Clarke, R & Lancaster, T (2007) Eliminating the successor to plagiarism? Identifying the usage of contract cheating sites in Duggan, F (Ed) 2<sup>nd</sup> International Plagiarism Conference 2006 Proceedings p52 Northumbria University Press)*

# Appropriately designed assessment

- An imperative not a desire
- No need to 're-invent the wheel'
- Will improve both the student and staff experience

# Consider

- How students work
- Information literacy
- Harnessing the power of technology

## In conclusion

- Students need to be discouraged from using a ‘frozen mash and tinned mince’ approach to their studies
- Lecturers need to be discouraged from using a ‘frozen mash and tinned mince’ approach to setting assessments
- We should be aiming to help students move from being ‘don’t know hows’ to being confident users of information

“Learning practical chemistry shouldn’t simply be about ‘taxing’ the student to follow a long and complex recipe. It should be about making the student think about the techniques they are using and why their chosen technique is superior for that compound.”

Farden, A (2007) in Swain, H Bin recipe book, THES 30/03/07 p 24