



PRESS RELEASE:

TUTORS CALL ON TEACHERS AND AUTHORITIES TO HELP ELIMINATE PLAGIARISM

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“The peak teaching bodies and the authorities such as BOSTES need to work closely with tutors in order to effectively manage the issue of plagiarism on HSC Assessment Tasks” said ATA CEO, Mohan Dhall. Speaking following a Fairfax investigation that Mr Dhall welcomed, he said that working with the tuition sector would help all parties understand the nature of tutoring and the reasons why parents seek tutors to assist their children. He said that assessors need to understand what tutors do: *“by ignoring the tuition sector, dominated as it is by teachers working after hours, the authorities are not ensuring that robust systems are in place. It is appropriate for all mainstream educational authorities to work closely with the tuition sector. In this way the best interests of students can be placed first, issues articulated and addressed. However, by ignoring the growth of the supplementary education sector there are real risks - as can be seen.”*

A need for an assessment of the “All My Own Work”

The NSW Board of Studies defined plagiarism as:

“Plagiarism is when you pretend that you have written or created a piece of work that someone else originated. It is cheating, it is dishonest, and it could jeopardise your HSC exam results.”

From a tutoring perspective plagiarism occurs when tutors create dependencies by doing the work of the student. Whilst the NSW Board of Studies does make explicit reference to tutors doing the work of students as an example of plagiarism it does not address the issue of rote learning and how this can overlap with plagiarism.

How teachers and authorities and tutors can work together

There are strategies that can help ensure Year 11 and 12 assessments are more robust and less likely to be subject to plagiarism. Such strategies include:

- Ensuring that all externally done assessments are subject to a level of internal review by schools. Thus assignments written outside of the school could be subject to an in-school task that would moderate the effects of outside help
- Asking students to declare whether or not they have a tutor or tutorial assistance with a subject
- Specifically educating students about the appropriate role of tutors
- Creating less predictable assessments and examinations, thus better balancing the amount of rote learned and content specific elements of assessment and increasing the thinking and cognition aspects of assessment
- Re-assess the range of assessments including whether there should be a small aspect of assessment in Year 11 that can draw from acknowledged outside sources. This type of task would mirror research in the real world outside of school.

“Clearly the tuition sector has much to offer in assisting the mainstream educational sector”, ATA CEO Mohan Dhall said. *“As parents continue to seek tuition for their children at an increasing rate then these issues will only get bigger over time. We think it is time for tutors, mainstream educators and parents groups to get together and properly address these issues for the benefit of students and also educators. Perhaps even a licensing scheme could be created such that only ATA accredited tutors are allowed to tutor.”*

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