

## Academic Honesty @ York

### Naomi's Scenario: Using Tools Dishonestly

Welcome to Academic Honesty at York: Naomi's Scenario (Using Tools Dishonestly).

Meet Naomi! Naomi is assigned a research paper for one of their classes. They are fluent in multiple languages but still feel most comfortable reading and writing academic work in their first language, which is not English.

While preparing research for the assignment, Naomi finds an article that will support their work in a perfect and unique way. This article says everything they want to say, but they know they can never say it like this in English. The assignment deadline is approaching, and they don't have time to spend on translation. Naomi feels very frustrated.

Naomi can't think of another solution or who to ask for help, so they decide to translate the article into English using an online tool. This way they can use it in their paper.

Once it goes through the translator, the grammar is quite poor, so Naomi uses a grammar editing software they heard about online to make it sound much better. By this point Naomi feels like the article is so different from its original source that they can't quote or cite it, so they decide to submit it as their own with a few small edits. No one will be able to know.

Did Naomi make an academically honest choice?

**Reflection Point:** Take a moment to reflect on Naomi's scenario and what you already know about academic honesty. What does academic honesty mean to you?

Grammar editors and translation software are useful tools that can be helpful during your time at York. However, by using tools in this way, Naomi was being academically dishonest. Academic dishonesty can have an impact on your assignment, class grade, or transcript. This type of academic dishonesty is called plagiarism. In this situation, plagiarism means taking someone else's work and paraphrasing their words and ideas and/or altering the grammar and sentence structures and submitting the resulting work as your own without providing credit to the original author(s).

But more than that, because York students are resilient:

- While Naomi has insecurities about their English they are forgetting how much they already know and that their multilingualism is a superpower!
- Naomi is relying on tools to do the work rather than think of them as supports to their learning.
- And lastly, Naomi is missing out on the chance to practice their skills and get helpful feedback on their work.

Now that we know what Naomi did is academically dishonest, let's think about why they used tools to pass off another's work as their own. Naomi feels embarrassed about their English skill level. They were frustrated at not being able to use research from their first language. The deadline was approaching very quickly, and they didn't know where to go for help. These are all understandable reasons to make that choice, but they still result in academically dishonest behavior.

Academic honesty is a set of practices that academics follow in their work, and which generates credibility, trust, and respect within the academic community. Knowing this, how can Naomi move forward to make more academically honest choices?

- *Naomi feels embarrassed by their English skill level:* Knowing more than one language is a superpower. Acknowledge your strengths and don't expect yourself to be perfect.
- *They were frustrated at not being able to use research from their first language:* It is so difficult to attend university in English when it is your second language. Instead of relying on tools, get strength from connecting with others and access support at York to build writing skills, and community.
- *The deadline was approaching quickly:* University takes up a lot of your time, if you're having a hard time keeping on top of things try seeking out time management help.
- *They didn't know where to go for help:* It's hard to know where to turn when you're feeling stuck. There are lots of places to get help at York. If you don't know where to start, contact your prof, TA, or a librarian.

If you get into Naomi's situation, here are some academically honest choices you could try:

- Visit the ESL Open Learning Center for support with reading, writing, and learning in English.
- For help with time management skills, visit Learning Skills Services.
- Don't expect yourself to be perfect, university is a place to learn and practice.
- And finally, validate how much you know and how far you've come.

Using tools to submit others work as your own is academically dishonest. This can result in academic consequences.

Because York students are resilient, remember how far you've come and keep looking forward!

**Reflection Question:**

If you were in Naomi's position, how would you move forward?

- a) By visiting the Learning Skills Centre for help with time management skills.
- b) By visiting the ESL Open Learning Centre for help with reading, writing, and learning in English.
- c) By remembering that university is a place to learn and practice, no one is expecting you to be perfect.
- d) By validating how far you've come and celebrating the work you have done.

**Responses:**

- a) Yes, because time management techniques can help you get assignments completed on time and help prevent you from feeling overwhelmed. The other choices are also good options for moving forward.
- b) Yes, because the ESL Open Learning Centre is there specifically to support you in developing English as a second language. The other choices are also good options for moving forward.
- c) Yes, because remembering this will allow you to act confidently and with resilience when encountering challenges. The other choices are also good options for moving forward.
- d) Yes, because acknowledging and celebrating your accomplishments will help you see the value in your work and scholarly contributions. The other choices are also good options for moving forward.