



## Is Social Distancing a Threat or a Chance for the Success of E-Learning?

PlagScan is concerned that through the current ad-hoc digitalization of education due to the COVID-19 pandemic, nurturing moral conduct might be overlooked. Therefore, with the introduction of Distance Learning tools, verification should be implemented through solutions.

**Cologne (April 2020)** - While schools and universities are rapidly implementing digital tools to ensure the continuity of education in digital classrooms, not enough attention is currently paid to similarity checks and authorship verification. If students discover that they can get away with cheating on their homework, assignments or papers, resetting their moral attitude remotely at a later stage might be a challenge. Therefore, with the introduction of Distance Learning tools, routine checks for missing references, and authorship verification should be implemented through solutions like the PlagScan software.

### Setting the Mindset Towards Moral Conduct at an Organizational Level

Donald McCabe, one of the founding fathers of research in the field of academic misconduct and 'cheating' in education, often highlighted in his work the importance for educational organizations of having implemented a code of moral conduct. Furthermore, he stressed the importance of faculty enforcing this code of conduct in their classes. In organizations where students felt that faculty did not live up to those standards, they were found to cheat more often. <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> McCabe, Donald & Trevino, Linda. (1993). **Academic Dishonesty: Honor Codes and Other Contextual Influences**. The Journal of Higher Education, 64(5), p. 522. DOI: 10.2307/2959991  
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## Social Distancing in the Classroom and the Role of Peer Pressure for Moral Integrity

Moving lessons from a physical to a digital classroom often weakens the students' perception of belonging to an organization where moral conduct is held high.<sup>2</sup> The result of that is being more vulnerable to taking shortcuts in their assignments by either not referencing phrases or passages, or even handing in/submitting documents that were not written by themselves.

With the missing support system by the faculty, peer groups have an increasing influence on the moral conduct of a student. If the peer group approves cheating, the student per se is also more prone to cheat himself.<sup>3</sup>

## The Importance of Creative Writing and Original Thinking in a Digitalized Education

Implementing originality analyses right from the beginning of switching from a traditional classroom to distance learning, significantly minimizes downward spiraling towards a mindset of cheating.

"We at PlagScan have always been promoting fair and equal education standards at single educational institutions, as well as on a nation-wide level. Having an originality checker at your institution has been proven to be an effective tool for preventing cheating. Our solution can help to ensure the quality of your education, and in particular the high standard of your assignments when everything is in motion. And that time is now - it's time to act," says Markus Goldbach, CEO of PlagScan. "This is a great chance to provide students with a basic moral security net. COVID-19 pandemic is a tragedy, which brings along many challenges. One virtue we can make of the necessities is promoting digitization in our classrooms. Let's help students to develop their full potential by providing a fair online assignment and assessment process."

**For more profound views on this topic, PlagScan's CEO Markus Goldbach is happy to discuss with members of the media how the PlagScan solution can have an impact on global education.**

<sup>2</sup> George, Joey F. & Carlson, John R. (1999). **Group support systems and deceptive communication.** DOI: 10.1109/HICSS.1999.772722

<sup>3</sup> Velliaris, Donna M. (2016). **Handbook of Research on Academic Misconduct in Higher Education,** p. 41. DOI: 10.4018/978-1-5225-1610-1

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General information on the technical background, further areas of application for companies and price models can be found at: [www.plagscan.com](http://www.plagscan.com)

## About PlagScan

PlagScan is an education software provider, creating award-winning tools to safeguard Academic Integrity and Copyrights. We develop high-tech solutions in compliance with strict data security regulations since 2009 and our solutions serve more than 2,000 organizational customers worldwide. PlagScan educates students on the topic of plagiarism and academic integrity to maintain quality of education helping to educate original thinkers and writers.

