

The high-tech cheats
Cheating is on the up

Have you ever been tempted to cheat in an exam? Last year in the UK, teachers caught 4,400 school students cheating in official exams.

Cheating is still a rare occurrence. It only happens in 0.03% of all exams taken, but it is on the up. Examiners have seen a 6% increase since the previous year.

The most common offence is smuggling electronic devices such as phones or MP3 players into exams. Nowadays, so many students have very small MP3 players that can easily be concealed or phones with access to the Internet. There are even websites that sell specialist gadgets aimed at helping cheats. One website, selling concealed earpieces, contains this testimonial from a satisfied customer, "I'm a student and last term I had just NO time for memorising all the information for the exam. Now I'm a top student in my group! Thank you so much!"

Clearly, electronic items like these are banned from the exam hall. Daisy, a school girl from London, explains: "They ask you to put all your things in a clear bag and to leave your phone at the front, but I'm sure it's possible to sneak a phone in. It's for people who don't work who feel **they** have to cheat."

Schools are looking for ways to stop **this type of cheating**. Concerned schools can buy equipment to detect mobile phone signals and block signals from the exam room, but **they** are always one step behind the cheats.

But is it realistic to stop students from using the Internet in exams in this day and age? Some schools in Denmark have started allowing students to use the Internet during exams. The Danish Education Minister says that exams should reflect daily life and the Internet is a part of daily life. Could this be a smarter way of stopping students from cheating with their mobile phones?

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A. Say true or false. Justify.

1. Cheating is common in the UK. _____

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2. Cheating is increasing in the UK. _____

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3. A student can be the best or among the best in their group thanks to cheating.

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B. Answer these questions on the text.

1. Are schools able to stop students from smuggling electronic devices into exams?
Why or why not?

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2. Where is it possible now to access the Internet during an exam? What do you think about such a step?

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C. Find in the text words that mean nearly the same as.

1. hidden (par.3):
2. stopped (par.4):
3. letting (last paragraph):

D. What or who do the underlined words in the text refer to?

1. It (L 3):
2. that (L 8):
3. they (L15):