

# Activity . . . . . ➔ 95

## Recognising ethical issues and dilemmas when using the internet

### STUDENT HANDOUT

Discuss the scenarios given below with your group members, answering each question as fully as possible. After 40 minutes of group discussion we will hold a class discussion to talk about the issues raised.

#### Scenario 1

A student is sent an email from a friend about a course assignment. The email contains a string of emails from other students that include suggestions for information to include in the assignments, useful references, research reports and text that has been cut and pasted from a variety of websites, journal papers and blogs. The student finds the information extremely useful so she emails it to a couple of her friends.

1. Could this student have infringed copyright? If so, in what way?
2. What do you think is, and is not, protected by copyright?
3. What should the student have done to ensure that copyright was not infringed?
4. What can you, as students, do to ensure that you do not infringe copyright?

#### Scenario 2

A student has found an essay on the internet that is in the public domain. One section is of particular relevance to his latest assignment so he copies and pastes the section into his assignment. He changes a couple of words here and there so that it reads better and fits his writing style.

1. This student is guilty of intellectual dishonesty. But what, exactly, is his crime?
2. What is the difference between plagiarism and copyright?
3. How would you define plagiarism?
4. How can you, as students, avoid plagiarising the work of others?

#### Scenario 3

A student keeps a blog about her experiences at university. She wants the information to be freely available to anyone who wants to read, use, publish, quote or pass on the information to other people. However, she understands that, once her blogs have been written, they are protected by copyright.

1. What can this student do to make her work freely available for anyone to use, publish, quote or pass on to others?
2. How can you tell whether or not you can use the work of others without infringing copyright?

## Scenario 4

A student is concerned about how to use the internet ethically. He doesn't want to be accused of intellectual property theft, nor does he wish to act unethically when using social media, emailing and joining chat groups. He feels it would be useful to have a simple 'Code of Ethics' when using the internet that would help him to act responsibly.

1. What issues would you include in a 'Code of Ethics' for using the internet?
2. How would you ensure that students are able to access, and abide by, your Code of Ethics?

**Learning outcome:** By the end of this activity you will have a raised awareness of ethical issues and dilemmas when using the internet and know how to recognise, avoid or overcome such issues as your course progresses and in life in general.