

## Academic Honesty Policy

### Purpose – Why do we need an academic honesty policy?

The IB Academic Honesty Policy of ISoB for the Middle Years Programme is based on the general philosophy of the International Baccalaureate and considers ethical qualities of paramount importance. It is intended to form the guidelines for the whole school community: students, teachers, administrators, and parents. Thanks to academic honesty students show respect for others and their work, and the whole school community (**IBO. Academic integrity. IBO, Cardiff, 2019, p. 5).**

The IB Learner profile aims to create students who are **reflective thinkers**, who are **inquisitive** and **open-minded**. But first of all IB students must be **PRINCIPLED**.

***Thinker** – “We use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.”*

***Inquirer** – “We nurture our curiosity, developing skills for inquiry and research. We know how to learn independently and with others. We learn with enthusiasm and sustain our love of learning throughout life.”*

***Open-minded** – “We critically appreciate our own cultures and personal histories, as well as the values and traditions of others. We seek and evaluate a range of points of view, and we are willing to grow from the experience.”*

***Reflective** – “We thoughtfully consider the world and our own ideas and experience. We work to understand our strengths and weaknesses in order to support our learning and personal development.”*

***Principled** – “We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences.”*

**(IBO. IB learner profile. IBO, Cardiff, August 2013)**

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We need an academic honesty policy to promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. It is important to develop approaches to teaching and learning like self-management, and social, communication, thinking and research skills.

Having a clear academic honesty policy helps to maintain fairness, trust, and credibility, and develops respect for others.

In view of the fact that academic honesty tends to be affected by such external factors as peer pressure, family, and cultural background, it is essential that learners understand the basic meaning of relevant concepts, especially those of authenticity and intellectual property. However, it is also important to note that there is more to academic honesty than original authorship and ownership of creative material: it also relates to proper conduct in written examinations, tests or quizzes. It is reflected in all types of work submitted by the student for assessment, as well as in ethical work in and outside of the classroom.

In short, IB defines academic honesty as “making knowledge, understanding and thinking transparent” (IBO. *Academic honesty in the IB educational context*. IBO, Cardiff, 2014).

### Definitions - What is academic honesty?

Academic honesty is a set of values and skills which reflect principled actions, personal integrity and good practice in acknowledging the ideas of other people.

The most commonly used terms, in relation to Academic Honesty, are intellectual property, proper conduct, and authenticity.

Academic integrity - “Academic integrity is a guiding principle in education and a choice to act in a responsible way whereby others can have trust in us as individuals. It is the foundation for ethical decision-making and behaviour in the production of legitimate, authentic and honest scholarly work”. (**Academic integrity, 3**).

Intellectual property - There are a wide range of intellectual property rights, such as patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyrights. Students must be aware that forms of intellectual and creative expression (for example, works of literature, art or music) must be respected and are normally protected by law. The faculty of the school should make every effort to prevent students from intellectual property infringement.

Proper conduct - Good academic conduct reflects the values which underpin academic life, such as:

- honesty
- integrity
- a shared community of ideas and respect for others’ work

When students work on tasks, they will be expected to draw on the work of others, and they will gain higher marks for doing so. ISoB expects the students to be scrupulously honest about where ideas have come from.

Authenticity – According to IBO: “An authentic piece of work is one that is based on the candidate’s individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Therefore, all assignments for assessment, regardless of their format, must wholly and authentically use that candidate’s own language, expression and ideas. Where the ideas or work of another person are represented within a candidate’s work, whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrasal, the source(s) of those ideas or the work must be fully and appropriately acknowledged. (Academic Honesty, 2)

### Definitions - What is academic misconduct?

The IBO regulations define malpractice as behaviour that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment component. (Academic Honesty, 3) Academic misconduct also refers to breaching the good practice of providing authentic work and is commonly referred to as cheating. “Results cannot be fair if some students have had an unreasonable advantage over others”. (Academic integrity, 1).

“When a student seeks and receives assistance from others such as teachers, peer students and parents, beyond what is recommended in the subject guidelines during the completion of a piece of work, that student is receiving assistance that, in the first place, not everyone has at their disposal. This also affects the assessment process since the work is not entirely produced by the student in question. As stated before in this document, the assessment process can only be fair if it truly and effectively reflects the genuine and authentic effort of the student, and not the work of those who helped in the process of creating that piece of work” (Academic integrity, 23).

Malpractice includes:

- **plagiarism:** this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate’s own. ISoB identifies a case of plagiarism if it is at least 40 words from another text or more than one visual source (map, table, picture, recording etc.) are not credited. “(...) plagiarism varies greatly and can stretch from word-for-word, or verbatim copying, to poor paraphrasing attempts through simple word substitution”

(Academic integrity, 46). “Plagiarism even occurs when students memorize text and then reproduce it in written or oral examinations or when a source is translated and used in the target language of the assessment” (Academic integrity, 46-47),

- **collusion**: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another candidate,
- **duplication of work**: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements,
- taking work from the Internet, including websites offering “finished pieces of work in exchange for another”. Both the individuals responsible for uploading the work and the individuals who copy it are guilty of academic dishonesty (Academic integrity, 23),
- “Submitting work commissioned, edited by, or obtained from a third party” (Academic integrity, 32),
- falsifying a SA/CAS record,
- taking unauthorized material into an examination/test room, such as a cell/mobile phone, written notes, rough notes, or an electronic device other than a permitted calculator) – “regardless of intent or if the material is used” (Academic integrity, 24),
- leaving and/or accessing unauthorized material in a bathroom/restroom that may be visited during an examination/test,
- misconduct during an examination or test, including any attempt to disrupt the examination or distract another candidate,
- exchanging information or in any way supporting the passing on of information to another student about the content of an examination or test,
- failing to comply with the instructions of the teacher/invigilator or other member of the school’s staff responsible for running the examination/test,
- impersonating another candidate,
- stealing examination or test papers,
- obtaining and sharing “examination materials... (i.e) live examination content or coursework that has reached the internet through fraudulent practices” (Academic integrity, 23),
- using an unauthorized calculator during an examination or test, or using a calculator when one is not permitted for the examination or test paper,
- “Behaviour that may disadvantage another student is also regarded as academic misconduct” (Academic integrity, 23),
- “Writing offensive or obscene and/or irrelevant comments” on an examination/test paper (Academic integrity, 23),
- “Assisting other students in the same or a different school to commit academic misconduct also represents a serious offence” (Academic integrity, 23),

- “Inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, or obscene material” in submitted work (Academic integrity, 33),
- “Failing to report an incident of academic misconduct” (Academic integrity, 34),
- Disturbing an academic misconduct investigation in any way (Academic integrity, 35-36),
- irresponsible use of social media, which can leave a digital footprint and risk materials becoming public (e.g., sharing exam papers/assessments in groups on social media platforms),
- “Forgery or falsification of IB grades or certificates” (Academic integrity, 36).

### **School action - How does the school enforce its academic honesty policy?**

ISoB works toward strengthening the integrity of its students by implementing a unified policy which includes strengthening good practices and supporting the students, as well as setting up rules for the consequences should the AH policy be breached.

During the IB investigation of an incident of academic misconduct in school, the school administration will support the process. “All individuals under investigation will be given the opportunity to present a written statement where they can document their version of events. If a student is the subject of an investigation, the school must ensure that adequate support is given, such as inviting parents or legal guardians to the interviews needed to complete the investigation” (Academic integrity, 19).

### **Strengthening good practices**

The whole school community works toward supporting students with understanding what Academic Honesty is and how to implement it in their work.

### **Teachers - How do the teachers support AH policy?**

All subject areas must contribute to the development of academic honesty. Therefore, each teacher is responsible for helping students gain the skills necessary to complete assigned summative tasks. Necessary skills may include, but are not limited to:

- conducting research,
- writing academically so as to fulfill the expectation of authentic authorship,
- acknowledging sources through the use of citations,
- working collaboratively,
- establishing timelines so work can be proof-read and edited by knowledgeable sources prior to the assessment submission deadlines,
- It is forbidden for teachers (or other individuals) “to prepare a template to ensure that all candidates follow a clear pattern or model to complete a task” (Academic integrity, 29).

These skills can be promoted in a variety of ways, including, but not limited to:

- thorough assessment explanations including preferred citation formats,
- informal reminders,
- providing a list of conventions for acknowledging sources,
- highlighting the importance of academic honesty and explaining the risks of violating it in the context of each subject,
- supporting students in preparing work for assessments to ensure they comply with relevant requirements,
- *if in the process of preparing work for assessment the teacher suspects plagiarism or collusion, drawing students’ attention to the risk of violating academic honesty,*
- direct instruction about research steps and citation procedures,
- checking students’ work for authenticity before submission for assessment.

## **Students – How do the students exhibit Academic Honesty?**

### **How students can avoid committing plagiarism**

- Read and understand their school’s academic integrity and honesty policy.
- Design time schedules or plans to manage tasks sensibly.
- Maintain organized notes, including sources consulted during the production of work.
- Seek guidance and support from their teachers or tutors when doubts arise about referencing.

- Cite sources by making clear which words, ideas, images, and other materials are from other sources, including maps, charts, musical compositions, films, computer source codes and any other material.
- Give credit for copied, adapted, paraphrased, and translated materials from others.
- Make sure that information used is acknowledged in the body of the text and is fully listed in the bibliography using the referencing style agreed with the teacher or tutor” (Academic integrity, 47).

### Students are expected to:

- have a full understanding of their school’s and the IB’s policies
- respond to acts of student academic misconduct and report them to their teachers and/or programme coordinators
- respond to acts of school maladministration and report them to their teachers and/or programme coordinators
- complete all assignments, tasks, examinations, and quizzes in an honest manner and to the best of their abilities
- give credit to used sources in all work submitted to the IB for assessment in written and oral materials and/or artistic products
- abstain from receiving non-permitted assistance in the completion or editing of work, such as from friends, relatives, other students, private tutors, essay writing or copy-editing services, pre-written essay banks or file sharing websites
- abstain from giving undue assistance to peers in the completion of their work
- show a responsible use of the internet and associated social media platforms” (Academic integrity, 16).

- GIVING CREDIT

Each student is responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is in compliance with the Academic Honesty Policy requirements. Every time students prepare work, they need to acknowledge “the sources of information that were used and the help they have received from third parties during the process. In collaborative projects, they must exhibit balanced behaviour by recognizing the collaboration of other team members and granting fair recognition of their participation” (Academic integrity, 15).

- CLARIFICATION

If, at any point, a student is concerned that his/her behaviour may be interpreted as malpractice, he/she needs to seek clarification regarding academic honesty expectations. Attempts to gain clarification prior to submission of work will never be penalized, as this demonstrates the student's desire to act in a principled manner and serves as a learning opportunity. Therefore, students should feel comfortable asking for clarification and remember that all questions concerning academic honesty are welcomed.

- PRINCIPLED ACTION

1. REPORTING

Students who may know of a potential act of academic dishonesty, or of an act that has already occurred, are required to report it to a teacher immediately. Students who report these incidents are maintaining policy, acting with integrity, and helping their peers see the importance of academic honesty. The names of students who bring forth information regarding situations of academic dishonesty will remain confidential.

2. ACCEPTING CONSEQUENCES

Students "must bear the consequences if they submit work for assessment that is not their own, regardless of whether the plagiarism was deliberate or the result of poor research skills" (Academic Honesty, 12). It is our hope to avoid situations of malpractice, but should a situation arise, we expect students to cooperate with staff, take responsibility for their actions, and use the experience as a learning opportunity for the future.

### **Families/Guardians – How do the families support the AH policy?**

Families are expected to support the school's Academic Honesty Policy. Therefore, it is essential that, when requested, families come to meetings to discuss the academic honesty of their children. Furthermore, they are requested to "report any potential cases of student misconduct or school maladministration to the school's directorate and/or the IB" (Academic integrity, 18). Families can also encourage academic honesty by helping students understand the expectations, thereby preventing malpractice.

Good ideas for helping your child (examples)	Bad ideas for helping your child (examples)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- explaining what is academic honesty - what is right and what is not (based on IB and the school's internal policies and procedures),</li> <li>- giving suggestions on how to work on the project - e.g. where the student should look for sources to help complete a task,</li> <li>- asking the student if she/he is sure what to do to meet all the outcomes for the task.</li> <li>- supporting your child "in planning a manageable workload" so she/he "can allocate time effectively" (Academic integrity, 17)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- correcting your child's work,</li> <li>- asking another adult (e.g.. a private teacher) to help in doing a project, homework, or an assignment,</li> <li>- advising your child to copy work from the Internet or to consult with another student.</li> </ul>

### Central record of incidents

The school maintains a central record of incidents of academic dishonesty, which contains: the names of students involved, descriptions of the incidents, and the consequences which the students had to face. Each case will be treated individually, but this document will help to provide an overview of problems with specific students.

### Students' rights when accused of academic dishonesty:

1. Students have the right to explain all their actions.
2. Students have the right to request the presence of their parents during discussions about the incident.
3. Students have the right to request the presence of other witnesses (e.g. classmates) during discussions about the incident.
4. Students have the right to ask for the MYP coordinator's presence.

## Consequences of academic misconduct

In the case of a violation of AH policy, the relevant subject teacher may consider lowering the final subject grade. Each incident will be recorded in the central records. The teacher needs to inform the school administration and parents/ guardians about the situation.

Should a breach of the Academic Honesty policy be detected, the following procedures will take place:

- **In the first instance of misconduct -**

- Warning letter to the student
- A meeting for parents/guardians, relevant teachers, the MYP Coordinator, and the student takes place to make sure the student understands his actions and the consequences if the AH policy is breached again.
- The submitted work receives N/A status and a note recording the offence is placed in the student's school documents.
- A "no grade for parallel subject" penalty can be applied to ISoB students whose misconduct benefits another student rather than themselves)
- Parents receive the copy of the minutes from the meeting.
- The offence results in lowering the student's behaviour grade by one mark.
- The DP coordinator is notified in the case of G10 students.
- A "No grade for parallel subject

- **In the second instance of misconduct -**

- A meeting of parents/guardians, teachers, the MYP Coordinator, the student, and the Principal takes place to make sure the student understands his actions and the consequences if the AH policy is breached again.
- The work receives 0 points and a note recording the second offence is placed in the student's school documents.
- The student receives a written reprimand from the Principal.
- The offence results in the student's behaviour grade being lowered to unsatisfactory.

- **In the third instance of misconduct -**

- The student faces expulsion from school.

## **Actions which will be taken by the school/IBO in instances of student misconduct during DP examinations**

1. (...) The school's Diploma Programme coordinator must inform the IB Organization if he or she identifies any malpractice (for example, plagiarism) in relation to a candidate's work after the candidate has signed the cover sheet to the effect that it is his or her own work and constitutes the final version of that work. In such cases, or when an examiner or the IB Organization suspects malpractice, the school will be required to conduct an investigation and provide the IB Organization with relevant documentation concerning the case. If questions arise about the authenticity of a candidate's work before the cover sheet has been signed, that is, before the work has reached its final stage, the situation must be resolved within the school.
2. Candidates suspected of malpractice will be invited, through the coordinator, to present a written explanation or defence.
3. Cases of suspected malpractice will be presented to the final award committee. After reviewing all evidence collected during the investigation, the committee will decide whether to dismiss the allegation, uphold it, or ask for further investigations to be made.
4. If the final award committee deems evidence of malpractice insufficient, the allegation will be dismissed, and a grade will be awarded in the normal way.
5. If the final award committee decides that a case of malpractice has been established, no grade will be awarded in the subject(s) concerned. No IB diploma will be awarded to the candidate, but a certificate will be awarded for other subject(s) in which no malpractice has occurred. The candidate will be permitted to register for future examinations at least one year after the session in which malpractice was established.
6. If a case of malpractice is very serious, the final award committee is entitled to decide that the candidate will not be permitted to register for any future examination session.
7. If the candidate has already been found guilty of malpractice in a previous session this will normally lead to disqualification from participation in any future examination session.
8. An IB diploma, or a certificate, may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established (...)"

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(‘General regulations: Diploma Programme’ , IBO, March 2011)