

Academic Integrity Policy

Definition & Purpose

This document highlights the Academic Integrity standards required by the International Baccalaureate (IB) and agreed upon by the International School Utrecht (ISU) community, who view learning not as achieving high grades but developing knowledge and skills for the future as lifelong learners.

The IB's Academic Integrity Policy (2023) states:

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. (p. 3)

By displaying academic integrity, ISU students reflect the above definition and the IB Learner Profile. Three main attributes that reflect academic integrity are:

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.

Caring: We show empathy, compassion, and respect for others.

Thinkers: We are curious learners who use critical and creative thinking skills to analyse and take responsible action on complex problems. We exercise initiative in making reasoned, ethical decisions.

By choosing to adhere to these attributes, students are choosing not to take part in academic misconduct. Instead, they value the process of learning. Students conduct themselves as principled, caring, and thinking individuals in all areas of their personal development and academic work.

With the emergence of wearable technology (e.g. smart watches) and generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as ChatGPT, the IB and the school have revised the Academic Integrity Policy to accommodate the authorised and appropriate use of such technology, which is further clarified below.

School Responsibilities

Teachers and staff play an important role in creating a culture of academic integrity within their classroom and beyond. Teachers foster learning environments that enable students to produce honest work by giving adequate preparation time, teaching appropriate research skills, and providing achievable expectations. It is the professional responsibility of all staff members to be fully aware of IB regulations, the content of this document, and all documents referred to in this policy, so as to communicate the information accurately to the school community. If more information is needed, it is the staff member's responsibility to contact the a best fit grade.

The IB advises that teachers are not punitive in approaches to academic integrity: "It is preferable to generate a supportive environment that allows students to learn while developing the required skills and understanding of good academic practice. Given that students have the opportunity to simultaneously learn and practise, they will be better equipped to grasp the significance of academic integrity" (p. 12). Through supportive pedagogical and didactical approaches, teachers can ensure that students have developed their own work authentically and have had sufficient opportunity for feedback in preparation for summative assessments.

Parent and Legal Guardian Responsibilities

ISU parents also play a crucial role in helping maintain the principles of academic integrity. Parents and legal guardians should aim to understand and follow all IB regulations that the school and students must adhere to. This can be done by communicating with their child(ren), attending parent information sessions, and reading all school policies and communication.

The IB emphasises that parents and legal guardians should enable their children to work independently by allocating study time effectively and encouraging them to use technology properly. Parents and legal guardians should not give unfair assistance such as writing or over-editing their work or misrepresenting language proficiency or learning needs for the purposes of inclusive access arrangements (p. 16-17).

Student Responsibilities

Academic integrity requires students to adhere to ethical approaches: being honest about the development of their own work, acknowledging the use of external sources/aids, and showing authentic learning. This requires that students have learned sufficient research skills to abide by these expectations. At ISU, we use Harvard Referencing except in previously approved DP internal assessments.

Examples of academic integrity include but are not limited to:

- Acknowledging the use of external work honestly and accurately through in-text citations and bibliographies:
 - direct quotes/copied texts
 - summaries and paraphrased materials (putting ideas in your own words)
 - other individuals who helped, such as parents, tutors, and external support
 - digital and print sources such as books, newspapers, magazines, ChatGPT or other AI tools, Google searches, Grammarly, Quillbot, websites, social media, translation aids, etc.
 - pictures, logos, graphics, advertisements from other people, books, or the internet, etc.
- Following teacher & IB requirements for each assessment (including examinations).
- Only using appropriate resources, referencing, and tools.
- Collaborating with other students only as specified by teachers.
- Submitting and taking assessments on time.
- Encouraging peers to follow the Academic Integrity policy.
- Reporting breaches of academic integrity to the teachers, mentors, or coordinators.

It is worth emphasising that while the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT are allowed by the IB, students are expected to reference properly. Any copied texts or paragraphs must have quotation marks and in-text citations in the body of the paragraph, and the prompt entered must also be included in the bibliography (p. 55).

Language Tools and Referencing

Specific guidelines for language tools and referencing requirements (Harvard format) are provided by ISU teachers and coordinators, in preparation for subject assessments and grade-level projects such as the PYP exhibition, MYP Personal Project, and DP Extended Essay. Please refer to the student media portal and relevant guide booklets for more information. For secondary students, plagiarism detection software (Turnitin) is used for drafts and summative work uploaded on ManageBac.

Academic Misconduct

The IB (2023) defines academic misconduct as “deliberate or inadvertent behaviour that has the potential to result in the student, or anyone else, gaining an unfair advantage in one or more components of assessment” (p. 22).

There are various categories, protocols, and sanctions for academic misconduct depending on severity. All cases are initially investigated by the school and if possible, resolved by the school. With serious infringements (such as official examinations), the school is required to report the misconduct to the IB who has the full authority to determine penalties. These can range from warning letters, zero marks for components/subjects, revoking the session diploma, and permanent disqualification from future retake examinations (p. 30-44).

Examples of malpractice include but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism, which is the representation, intentionally or unwittingly, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgment. The use of translated materials, unless indicated and acknowledged, is also considered plagiarism (p. 45).
- Taking shortcuts (such as unauthorised use of study aids and AI tools) that allows the individual to bypass steps of an assignment.
- Using unauthorised tools during an assessment, such as cheat sheets, phones, and wearable technology.
- Asking about and sharing questions and/or answers to quizzes and exams.
- Sharing answers to assignments/homework without permission.
- Submitting the same work for more than one assignment without the permission from the teachers. Duplication of work is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components (p. 22). Unless for the MYP eAssessments or DP Examinations, the student may receive permission from the teacher for the purposes of further learning.
- Altering corrections or scores with the intent of changing the grade.
- Hacking into other individuals' computers to change their work or school planning.
- Misrepresenting the work in any way to the teachers in regard to the work that was done, such as saying the assignment was turned in when it was not, or the time spent of the assessment took hours when actually it did not.
- Fabricating information to try to earn more time, more credit, or grading leniency on an assessment.
- Missing a class so not to turn in an assessment.
- Not being present or on time for scheduled assessments.
- Not working collaboratively with others. This means doing more or less than the students' share of a group project without permission from the teacher.
- Taking part in collusion of an assignment. Collusion is supporting academic misconduct by another student, such as allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another (p. 31).

Academic Misconduct in the Primary Years Programme (PYP)

The IB states that “five fundamentals—honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility—apply to all elements of learning, teaching and assessment” (p. 50). Our primary learners, along with their parents and legal guardians, are expected to develop an understanding of these concepts as it applies to their learning environment and interactions with peers. Should academic misconduct occur, then classroom teachers and coordinators will determine the next appropriate steps to enable students to learn the importance of academic integrity.

Academic Misconduct in the Middle Years Programme (MYP)

In grades 6, 7 and 8, if students partake in academic misconduct for the first time, teachers and mentors will discuss with the students why the misconduct took place. Students may be given afterschool detention but will be given another chance to redo and re-submit the assessment. Parents will be notified of the misconduct by the teacher via ManageBac Behaviour Notes, along with the agreements for the next steps. If, however, students continue to take part in academic misconduct, then parent meetings are required and the students' scores will be adversely affected. Teachers, mentors, and inclusion team specialists will take into account the learning needs of the students since students committing on-going academic misconduct may indicate the possibility of academic difficulties.

In grades 9 and 10, it will be up to the teachers' discretion, whether or not the students will be allowed to correct the academic misconduct. Either way, the students' scores will be adversely affected. On-going academic misconduct in the MYP will affect the student's chance of acceptance into the Diploma Programme.

MYP e-Assessments

There are IB-specified Academic Integrity requirements for the MYP e-Assessments. The MYP coordinator will be responsible for making sure all Grade 10 teachers and students are updated with these procedures.

Academic Misconduct in the Diploma Programme (DP)

Students must adhere to the current coursework and examination guidelines set out by the school and the IB, which varies per examination session. If there is a breach of academic integrity in Diploma Programme, the school investigates and if required notifies the IB who will conduct further investigations. Penalties could result in discontinuation of enrollment, no grade or diploma being awarded, or permanent disqualification from future retake exam sessions (p. 24, 30–44). Examples of academic misconduct include but are not limited to:

Coursework

- Plagiarism
- Facilitating plagiarism
- Collusion
- Submitting work commissioned, edited by, or obtained from a third party
- Inclusion of inappropriate, offensive, or obscene material
- Duplication of work
- Falsification of data

Examinations

- Possessing unauthorized material
- Exhibiting misconduct or disruptive behaviour
- Exchanging, passing, obtaining verbal/written information (or attempting to)
- Removal or secure materials such as examination papers and answer booklets
- Impersonating an IB candidate
- Failing to report an incident of academic misconduct
- Gaining access to IB examination papers before the scheduled time
- Sharing IB examination paper content before 24 hours has elapsed
- Not cooperating with an investigation
- Providing misleading information
- Attempting to influence witnesses
- Showing threatening behaviour to the investigators or witnesses
- Forgery or falsification of IB grades or certificates

Concrete Examples of DP Student Academic Misconduct

All examples were taken directly from the IB Academic Integrity Policy, published October 2019 and updated March 2023 (Cardiff, UK).

Example 1 Extended Essay: A candidate submitted an EE that contained two sections of verbatim copied text from two internet sources, more than 100 words in total; the correct links to the sources were included in the bibliography. Outcome: While the correct sources were included in the bibliography, the candidate did not include appropriate reference at the point of use in the body of the essay. Penalty level 3a was applied and no grade, an “N”, was awarded for the EE (p. 38).

Example 2 Visual Arts HL—exhibition: As part of the exhibition, a candidate submitted artistic work that was copied from a painter known for his sketches of renowned singers and actors. During the investigation process, the candidate claimed that they were inspired to work on similar techniques after attending an exhibition of the painter; however, the candidate did not acknowledge the source. Outcome: Penalty level 3a was applied to the exhibition component, which resulted in no grade, an “N”, being awarded for visual arts HL (p. 38).

Example 3 English A: literature HL—oral component: A candidate presented their oral assessment based exclusively on memorized material from internet sources. No reference was made at any point in the recording to these sources and the candidate stated that they were not aware that memorized materials had to be referenced during an oral presentation. Outcome: The candidate received a level 3a penalty for the oral component, which resulted in no grade, an “N”, being awarded for English A: literature HL. (p. 38).

Example 4 TOK—essay: Candidate A was working on their final version of the TOK essay and had a conversation with a friend, candidate B, who attended a different IB World School. Candidate B complained about the difficulty of the task; candidate A shared their draft advising it was fine to use part of it, as it was unlikely that any similarities would be discovered. Candidate B rewrote part of candidate A’s essay but left many sections unchanged. Outcome: Both candidates received the level 3a penalty for the component, which resulted in no grade, an “N”, for the subject concerned (p. 39).

Example 5 Chemistry HL—paper 1: After candidates had entered the examination room and the instructions had been read by the invigilator, candidates were asked to surrender any unauthorized materials or electronic devices that they may have in their possession. The invigilator insisted that all candidates check for a second time that all phones and devices were removed from pockets and clothing. Approximately halfway through the examination, an alarm from a mobile phone sounded. The device was located inside the sweatshirt pocket of a candidate. Outcome: There was no evidence that the candidate had used the device during the examination, the browsing history being reviewed by the school’s IT department. As the candidate was in possession of unauthorized material, they received a level 2 penalty: zero marks for the examination paper (p. 41).

Example 6 History SL, biology HL and mathematics SL: A candidate was part of a closed group on social media composed of candidates in different time zones. There were clear attempts by many of the group members to obtain live examination content from those candidates that had already completed the examination papers. While the candidate in question was not registered for any of the subject contents being shared, they failed to report the incident to the IB. Outcome: Candidate received a level 3b penalty for three parallel subjects and was not allowed to retake any of them in future sessions, being permanently disqualified (p. 44).

Revision of this Policy

It is the responsibility of the school to develop and maintain a policy review cycle, updating the information. Members of the community will be asked to take part in this review.

Communication of this Policy

The school will be responsible for providing copies of this policy to the school community through staff meetings, parent meetings, school newsletter, and website.

Further School Information

Admissions Policy
Assessment Policy
Language Policy
Promotion Criteria

Bibliography

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