

Academic honesty policy – IB world school no. 3885

(Based on IB Academic Honesty)

IB mission statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring and caring young people who help to create a better and more peaceful world through intercultural understanding and respect.

To this end the organization works with schools, governments and international organizations to develop challenging programmes of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programmes encourage students across the world to become active, compassionate and lifelong learners who understand that other people, with their differences, can also be right.

The aim of academic honesty policy

This document aims to define academic honesty and forms of malpractice, such as plagiarism, collusion and duplication of work in the context of the Diploma Programme. It states the responsibilities of the school, teachers, students and their parents in the process of honest and principled learning, emphasizing these features that constitute the IB learner profile. Therefore, the Academic Honesty Policy encourages students to be principled, caring and reflective. Moreover, its aim is to provide information on the IB procedure if a candidate is suspected of malpractice and subsequently found guilty.

Definition of Academic Honesty

Academic honesty manifests itself in disapproval of all malpractices on the field of academic study which include plagiarism, collusion, duplication of work and the usage of unauthorised materials during assessment.

Definition of malpractice

Malpractice manifests itself in all forms of forbidden behaviour that gives a candidate an unfair advantage over other candidates or that affects the results of another candidate. Examples of malpractice are:

Plagiarism – intentionally or unintentionally using intellectual property of other people as one's own by failing to correctly acknowledge the author in candidate's work.

Collusion – supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted to assessment by another candidate (projects, commentaries, investigations, homework assignments, etc.) or failing to report to the teacher acts of malpractice committed by another, for instance using unauthorised materials during assessment.

Collaboration - as opposed to collusion, collaboration means working together towards a common aim with shared information, which does not result in allowing one’s work to be copied and used for assessment by another candidate, and as such not only is it not considered malpractice but is encouraged by the school.

Duplication of work – presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements.

Other forms of **malpractice** may involve:

- taking unauthorised materials (such as cell phones, written notes, copied notes, etc.) into an examination room/ classroom in which the test or other form of assessment is conducted,
- leaving and /or accessing unauthorised material in a bathroom/restroom that may be visited during an examination,
- misconduct during an examination or other forms of assessment, 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 candidate about the content of an examination,
- impersonating another candidate,
- stealing examination papers,
- using an unauthorised calculator during an examination, or using a calculator when one is not permitted for the examination paper.

Academic negligence – being careless when recording sources, or displaying a cavalier disregard for the origin of material within their work. Academic negligence cannot be used as an excuse for plagiarism.

Responsibilities of the school

It is the school responsibility to design an academic honesty policy and familiarise the candidates with it. It is also the school responsibility to fight against malpractice and therefore support the IB fully in the prevention, detection and investigation of malpractice. The head of the school must ensure that the candidates receive proper guidance on honest practices (how to conduct research and acknowledge sources) as well as what constitutes malpractice (plagiarism, collusion, duplication of work, etc.).

Responsibilities of the teachers

It is the responsibility of the teachers to confirm that, to the best of his or her knowledge, all candidates' work accepted or submitted for assessment is the authentic work of each candidate. The teachers are also to support and act on the school's policy on good academic practice and provide candidates with advice.

Responsibilities of the candidate

The candidate is ultimately responsible to ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is authentic, with the work or ideas others fully and correctly acknowledged. Candidates are expected to comply with all internal school deadlines; this is for their own benefit and allows time for revising work that is of doubtful authorship before the submission of the final version.

Responsibilities of candidates' parents/ legal guardians

It is the responsibility of candidates' parents/ legal guardians to promote academic honesty, good academic practices and consistent standards.

Anti – plagiarism actions undertaken by the school

The school willing to ensure that all candidates are familiar with the definition of plagiarism, consequences and ways to prevent it organises *workshops and lectures* for the candidates on academic honesty. It also employs a system of plagiarism detection *Turnitin*. Candidates are also instructed on how to correctly acknowledge sources in their assignments.

Any proper system of citing resources (e.g. *MLA - Modern Languages Association or APA - American Psychological Association*) are allowed to use. Students are provided with guidance concerning the systems by the EEC and the school librarian.

The detection of malpractice and the procedure for an investigation in case of IB assessment

1

The following circumstances are those that most commonly give rise to an investigation.

- A coordinator informs IB Cardiff that he or she suspects that work submitted to the IB for assessment (or as part of a sample for the purpose of moderation) may not be the authentic work of the candidate.

- A coordinator informs IB Cardiff that malpractice may have taken place during an examination.
- An examiner suspects malpractice and provides evidence to justify his or her suspicion.
- An IB member of staff randomly checking assessment material identifies possible plagiarism using a web-based application.

2

If the IB initiates an investigation into malpractice it will do so soon after the evidence of malpractice is brought to the attention of the IB manager for academic honesty who will inform the relevant coordinator by email that a candidate/candidates is/are being investigated for possible malpractice. It is a requirement that the coordinator acknowledges receipt of this email and without delay informs the head of school that a candidate/candidates is/are suspected of malpractice.

3

For all cases of malpractice by a candidate the coordinator will be asked to provide a report after he or she has conducted an investigation. In the case of suspected plagiarism the coordinator's report, which must be prepared and handled in a manner that respects the need for confidentiality (such as referring to a candidate's registration number rather than her/his name), will normally include:

- a statement from the teacher of the candidate for the subject concerned (or supervisor in the case of an extended essay)
- a statement from the coordinator
- a statement from the candidate
- a summary of an interview with the candidate regarding the allegation of plagiarism, if an interview is conducted.

It is not mandatory to include a summary of an interview with the candidate; this is left to the discretion of the coordinator.

4

It is essential that the investigation and subsequent reporting to the IB are undertaken without delay; otherwise a decision on the case by the final award committee will not be given until after the issue of results. However, to avoid distracting a candidate from examination preparation, it is acceptable to delay raising the issue with the candidate until after the candidate's last written examination. To protect the candidate's personal rights the investigation must be discreet and all information relating to the investigation must remain confidential.

5

It is normal practice to interview the candidate, with a relative or friend in attendance as an advisor or observer. The candidate must be shown the evidence and be invited to present an explanation or defence. Accusatory statements about the candidate, whether written or verbal, must be avoided.

(In cases of suspected collusion, a helpful procedure is to interview the candidates separately but simultaneously so they cannot collude on a "story" to explain whatever occurred.) With the candidate's permission, a transcript of the interview may be taken and submitted to the IB as part of the coordinator's report on the investigation. The candidate must be given the opportunity to provide a written statement that is sent to the IB on the candidate's behalf by the coordinator.

6

The content of a coordinator's report will depend on the nature of the alleged malpractice. The report may include a seating plan (in the case of written examinations), rough notes produced by the candidate for the work concerned or early drafts of the candidate's work. If appropriate, a coordinator may be asked to submit examples of the candidate's coursework for comparison with the work under investigation.

7

If a statement from the candidate is not included with the coordinator's report and no evidence of an interview is provided, the coordinator will be asked to confirm in writing that the candidate has been given the opportunity to be heard and to provide a statement. The IB will not resolve a case of suspected malpractice until either this confirmation or the statement itself has been received.

8

The IB will normally make available to a school all evidence relating to a case of possible malpractice. Evidence may be withheld to protect the identity of an informant or if the disclosure of that evidence compromises the privacy of another person.

9

The IB reserves the right to withhold the results of a candidate or group of candidates until an investigation is completed. In practice this tends to occur when the IB has not received all requested statements.

Occasionally, suspected malpractice by a candidate is brought to the attention of the IB after the issue of results. In compliance with the Regulations, which state that an IB diploma or Diploma Programme courses results, may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established, the IB will still initiate an investigation. Although the candidate may no longer attend the school, the IB will seek advice and support from the school in resolving a late case of alleged malpractice.

The detection of malpractice and the procedure for an investigation in case of non-IB assessment

A document for the national curriculum is applicable in the above circumstance.

Offences and their penalty

1

Penalties are imposed on a candidate found guilty of malpractice in order to:

- ensure that the candidate does not gain an unfair advantage
- maintain the integrity of the examination session by excluding those candidates who have abused the system
- deter other candidates from taking the same action.

2

The committee will not take into account the consequences of imposing a penalty; the penalty will be imposed according to the nature of the offence. However, the committee will take into consideration all the information presented by teachers and the coordinator in their statements on the case. This information may include mitigating circumstances.

3

When judging a case of alleged malpractice the committee will disregard the registration category of the candidate. If a candidate is found guilty, the aim is to penalize the candidate only for the subject in which he or she has been found guilty of malpractice. For example, if a retake candidate is guilty of malpractice in one subject the grade for that subject obtained in a previous session will be carried over

to the current session and any higher grades in other retake subjects will be counted in the current session.

4

Work submitted by a candidate for assessment may contravene standard academic practice by failing to acknowledge the ideas or words of another person using quotation marks (or some other accepted practice). However, if there is some attempt by the candidate to acknowledge the source in the bibliography or in a footnote, the final award committee may designate a case of this type an academic infringement and not malpractice. The judgment as to whether "academic infringement" is the appropriate decision will be partly based on the quantity of text (or other media) that has been copied by the candidate.

5

If the final award committee decides that an academic infringement has been established, no mark will be awarded for the component or part(s) of the component. The candidate will still be eligible for a grade in the subject or diploma requirement concerned. No further penalty will be imposed and the case will not be recorded as malpractice. In such a case, the decision regarding academic infringement will be notified in accordance with section 13.1 of Academic Honesty, IB.

6

If the final award committee decides that a case of malpractice has been established, no grade will be awarded in the subject concerned. (No lesser penalty for malpractice is available to the final award committee.) In the case of a Diploma Programme candidate the consequence is that no diploma will be awarded to the candidate. However, a Diploma Programme courses results will be awarded for other subjects in which no malpractice has occurred.

7

If a candidate is found guilty of malpractice in his or her third attempt at achieving the diploma or improving the number of points for the diploma, the candidate will not be permitted a fourth examination session in which to achieve the diploma or improve the number of diploma points.

8

If a candidate is found guilty of malpractice the candidate will be permitted to register for future examinations sessions in which malpractice was established, including the session that follows six months later (subject to the provisions of sections 11.7 and 11.10, and other restrictions stated in the Regulations or Handbook of procedures for the Diploma Programme).

9

If a candidate is found guilty of malpractice in the production of one (or more) of several assignments required for a component, the candidate is not eligible for a mark based on his or her performance in the remaining assignments for the component; no grade will be awarded for the subject. For example, the internal assessment requirement for a subject may require a portfolio of four separate assignments. If a candidate is found to have plagiarized all or part of one assignment, a mark for his or her internal assessment will not be based on the remaining three assignments: no grade will be awarded for the subject.

10

If a case of malpractice is very serious, either because of its nature or because the candidate has already been found guilty of malpractice in a previous session, the final award committee may decide that the candidate will not be permitted to register for examinations in any future session.

11

An IB diploma, or a certificate, may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established. This includes the enquiry upon results service when, for example, a senior examiner may identify plagiarism in a piece of work that previously went unnoticed by the teacher or other examiner.

12

Although a case may not warrant a penalty against one or more candidates, on occasion a letter may be sent to the head of school on behalf of the final award committee insisting that greater care be taken to avoid a similar incident occurring again.

The rights of the candidate

1

As stated in section 4.1 of Academic Honesty, IB, when a student enrolls for the Diploma Programme in an IB World School (or entity) it is the expectation of the IB that the school will use its best endeavors to ensure that the student and his or her legal guardian(s) receive a copy of the General Regulations: Diploma Programme and understand its content.

2

If a candidate is under investigation for possible malpractice, the coordinator must inform the candidate. Whether the candidate's legal guardians are informed of the allegation and involved in the investigation is left to the discretion of the school, bearing in mind any relevant circumstances such as whether the candidate has reached the age of legal majority.

3

The candidate and his or her legal guardians have a right to see evidence, statements, reports and correspondence about the case. Any decision to withhold such information rests entirely with the head of school or coordinator. Evidence may be withheld to protect the identity of an informant.

4

It is the policy of the IB that any candidate being investigated for malpractice is given the opportunity to be heard and to submit a written defence to the final award committee. The school has no right to prevent this process, to edit or unduly influence the candidate's statement. The candidate is expected to make the content of the statement available to the coordinator, but may request that the statement remain confidential to the IB.

5

The candidate must be given sufficient time to prepare a response to the suspicion of malpractice. The IB information desk must be contacted for advice if the candidate may not be able to meet the deadline imposed by the IB.

The role of a grade award meeting

1

In preparation for the meeting of the final award committee, a case of suspected malpractice may be referred to the appropriate grade award meeting for a recommendation from the chief examiner, chief

assessor or examiner responsible (henceforth “senior examiner”), as appropriate to the subject. A case is normally referred to a grade award meeting when subject expertise is required. A senior examiner will be asked to review the work and recommend whether the allegation should be upheld or dismissed.

2

In cases of suspected collusion or plagiarism during an examination, a senior examiner will be asked to review candidates’ scripts and consider whether the candidates’ similar or identical answers are, for example:

- a coincidence
- a result of misinterpreting the information or questions in the examination paper
- the result of a particular technique taught by their teacher
- so unusual that they can only be accounted for by collusion, plagiarism or some other form of malpractice.

In the case of a candidate who has produced a correct answer without showing any working or method of achieving the answer, a senior examiner will consider how likely this is without malpractice in view of the candidate’s performance on other parts of the paper and in other papers for the subject and level.

3

In a case of suspected malpractice where a senior examiner finds no grounds for establishing malpractice, the recommendation of a senior examiner will be accepted, resulting in no further action. The case will not be presented to the final award committee. Where grounds for establishing malpractice are identified, the case will then be presented to the final award committee.

4

In cases where the allegation of malpractice is supported by a senior examiner, he or she submits to the final award committee:

- the work under suspicion
- evidence to support the allegation of malpractice

- a written report on the case
- a recommendation on the action that should be taken by the final award committee.

The role of the final award committee

1

According to the Regulations the final award committee considers and makes the final decision in all special cases with respect to the award of IB diploma and Diploma Programme courses results, which includes cases of suspected malpractice. In practice, the task of resolving the majority of cases is delegated to a sub-committee comprising chief examiners, senior IB staff and representatives from IB World Schools (usually coordinators). Decisions are ratified by the full final award committee and, where appropriate, cases are escalated to the final award committee for consideration.

2

After reviewing all evidence collected during the investigation, the committee will decide with full discretion whether to dismiss the allegation, uphold it, or ask for further investigations to be made. 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. If no consensus is reached about a case, the decision will be that of the majority of the final award committee.

3

In reaching a decision on each case of suspected malpractice, the chair of the final award committee will ensure that:

- all evidence is reviewed in an objective manner before a decision is reached on the innocence or guilt of the candidate (or candidates)
- discussion is coordinated, impartial and relevant to the case
- a clear majority decision is reached regarding the action to be taken.

4

Any member of the final award committee who has a personal interest in a case, and is therefore not independent from the case, must declare that interest and not take part in any discussion or voting. The chair will ask the colleague to leave the meeting while the committee discusses the case.

5

Where appropriate, in reaching a decision on whether a candidate is guilty of malpractice the committee will take into consideration any similar cases that may have set a precedent for a case of its kind. Nevertheless, each case of suspected malpractice will be judged on its own merit, taking into account all the evidence and information that is available about the case. Where appropriate to the case under discussion, the committee will comply with certain well-established precedents.

6

If the investigation of a case is incomplete, or the committee requires additional information, no result will be issued for the candidate (or candidates) in the subject under investigation until all inquiries are complete and a final decision has been reached. This includes any candidate involved in the case. If statements and any other information requested by the IB are not received by the close of the examination session (15 September for a May session and 15 March for a November session) no grade will be issued to the candidate(s) concerned.

7

No final decision regarding the guilt of a candidate accused of malpractice will normally be reached unless a statement from that candidate has been received and considered by the committee. In cases where a candidate has not been heard and produced a statement, the coordinator must state in writing that the candidate declined the opportunity of being heard and of producing a statement. In these circumstances the coordinator is advised to consider whether a colleague should witness the candidate declining the opportunity to be heard or to produce a statement.