



ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY and GUIDELINES

Policy, Philosophy, and Guidelines

Students at the International School of Kenya are encouraged to be principled learners by acting with integrity and honesty, including taking responsibility for their own learning and the consequences that accompany their actions as learners. Academic Honesty guidelines are defined in divisional handbooks, guided by Board policy expectations for student conduct. Overall, ISK places significant emphasis on academic honesty as a core value in an academic environment and foundational to effective student learning.

Academic honesty broadly refers to the production of 'authentic' pieces of work and assessments that reflect student learning, proper conduct in relation to the conduct of examinations, the full acknowledgement of the original authorship and ownership of material, and the protection of intellectual property (including all forms of expression, as well as patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyright).

School Practices in Support of Academic Honesty

ISK applies a range of practices that are aligned with the IB learner profile in an ongoing effort to help students to complete accurate, legitimate and well-researched work. Through a recently developed and now commonly agreed *Research Process and Standards*, ISK librarians and teachers partner to teach students the skills they need to be researchers in the 21st century. Students address authentic problems and questions that matter, using authoritative information, critical thinking and creativity in an ethical manner, and use technology effectively and responsibly in their learning.

The High School Librarian is a very useful resource for all students and teachers, who helps to ensure the continuity of learning and consistency of application with research process and standards across grades 6-12. She is an expert in the area of academic honesty, and provides ethical guidance alongside information on the correct use of citations. The librarian is also the Extended Essay coordinator, provides support and assistance in terms of research methods, and also assists through push-in co-teaching with classroom teachers in some cases. Starting in middle school and continuing through high school, English teachers in collaboration with the Librarian offer training in the MLA documentation system. Students are also taught to use NoodleTools as the agreed upon program for students to use when referencing sources. In addition, in the upper grades, students are taught to use the annotation feature of *NoodleTools*.

[Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) is a plagiarism prevention program that allows students to upload their written assignments, which are checked against a database of print and electronic sources. All ISK high school students are expected to use this resource. [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) requires all users to complete a consent form. Students who are 18 or older can do this on their own, but students between 14 and 17 require parental consent and supervision. By agreeing to the school rules laid out in the school's handbook, parents provide their consent by signing and returning the consent form, allowing their children to sign on to the site and use it under the supervision of their teacher in the course of completing their school work.



Faculty members have the responsibility of training students in the proper use of source material. Students learn to understand the technique of quotation and the need for referencing sources or ideas in their text or bibliography. All assignments set and completed by students in school or at home, ranging from basic pieces of homework to formal assessments must be their own, authentic work. The librarian and teacher responsibilities for educating students include:

- Guidance on the distinction between legitimate collaboration and unacceptable collusion
- Training for citations for specific field of study.
- Correct use of technology.
- Specific reminders on how to use other people's work, referencing and citation for all assignments and assessments.
- Guiding students around the proper attribution of varied and emerging sources (eg. audio-visual material, text, graphs, images and/or data published in print or in electronic sources)
- Showing students how to use [Turnitin.com](https://www.turnitin.com) for submission of work.
- Vigilant attention to students during assessments and submission of assignments
- Follow through on suspected violations of academic honesty, including reporting to an administrator and the IB coordinator if appropriate.

Teachers assess student learning frequently so as to inform and adapt future instruction. Frequent and varied formative assessment also allows teachers to become familiar with student work in general and individual student work in particular. Teachers become skilled at discerning students' original and authentic work from that which is in violation of academic honesty.

School Practices in Support of Academic Honesty in IB Diploma Programme (DP)

The high school divisional handbook incorporates some key information from the *Academic honesty in the IB educational context* (International Baccalaureate Organization, 2014) guide. IB faculty apply the guidelines in this handbook in conjunction with the *Academic honesty in the IB educational context* guide, the *IB Coordinator Handbook of Procedures*, and the *IB General Regulations*.

IB DP Academic Honesty posters are displayed in all IB classrooms and the school's academic policy is incorporated in all forms of assessment related to the IB Diploma Programme. IB teachers are familiar with the guidelines outlined by the IB Subject Guide for each subject they teach pertaining to all appropriate behaviors during the creation and submission of internal and external assessments.

An orientation session for all IB DP families is held at the beginning of the two-year program, with the IB coordinator and CAS coordinator. At this orientation session all IB candidates and guardians are directed to the contents of the *IB General Regulations: Diploma Programme* and the consequences for students that are suspected of academic misconduct. All candidates and parents are required to sign a declaration of academic honesty and consent when commencing the IB DP. All candidates and families receive an electronic version of the *Conduct of Examinations* prior to the May exam session. The basic meaning and significance of academic honesty is also discussed at the general IB DP presentation evening that is held in February for grade 9 and grade 10 students and families.



The IB coordinator trains and prepares invigilators to attend to issues of academic misconduct while supervising IB examinations. All invigilators are expected to understand and adhere to the policies set forth in the *Conduct of Examinations*, and report any evidence of unauthorized objects or inappropriate behaviors during exams.

Definition & Student Expectations (as delineated in the ISK HS Student Handbook)

Academic misconduct primarily refers to the practice of deceit when completing work, normally in order to gain an unfair advantage for self or others (e.g., in order to enhance a grade). Often academic misconduct is incontrovertible. For example, if a student steals a paper from an Internet source and presents it as his or her own, it is deliberate dishonesty. Academic misconduct also includes any inadvertent behaviors that breach academic honesty expectations or may lead to an unfair advantage. Sometimes students may be confused as to what is permissible to do or borrow, however this is not an excuse for inappropriate conduct. The intent of written exercises is to encourage students to be creative in their thinking and to find their own ways of organizing and expressing their ideas. If students depend on other minds for the conception of their papers, for the order of ideas or events, and for their phrasing, they may not be receiving the necessary training in developing their own abilities and are asking for an evaluation of something that belongs to somebody else. Those students are, then, circumventing a central purpose of the educational process and violating school expectations. Ignorance, haste, carelessness, or the pressures of other work or grades are not acceptable excuses. All students are expected to avoid academic misconduct - whether intentional or inadvertent - by asking the teacher in cases when they may be in doubt about how to complete work appropriately.

All assignments set and completed by ISK and IB DP students in school or at home, ranging from basic pieces of homework to formal assessments, must be their own authentic work. Acts of academic misconduct that do not meet expectations include but are not limited to:

- Giving or receiving aid that has not been approved by the teacher on or for any assessments
- Using outside materials or support on an assessment, except when authorized by a teacher (including for example unauthorized assistance by an external tutor)
- Unauthorized prior possession (including pre-viewing or being informed about in any format) of assessment materials or taking unauthorized material into an examination/assessment.
- Fabricating or falsifying data, citations or other information, for example, falsifying a CAS record
- Paraphrasing another person's story or the repetition of critical judgments without credit
- Representation, intentionally or unintentionally, of the ideas, words, or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgement (aka plagiarism)
- The presentation of the same or substantially similar work for different assessment components and/or DP core requirements for which a grade/credit has already been given (aka duplication)
- Copying or tampering with the academic work of others.



- Facilitating another's academic misconduct, for example providing other students with homework answers, assessment answers, original or photocopied essays, and related activities (aka collusion)
- Any behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate, for example, behaviour that disrupts the examination or distracts other candidates.

Investigating Suspected Cases & Applying Consequences

When a case of academic misconduct appears to have occurred, the teacher meets with the student to discuss the incident. If the teacher finds that misconduct has not occurred, no further action is required. If the teacher believes that the student has violated academic honesty expectations, the teacher records the incident and initiates the following process:

1. The teacher contacts a parent and communicates the nature of the incident.
2. The teacher submits a report of the incident to the high school assistant principal.
3. The assistant principal will gather data relevant to the case, come to a finding, and determine a course of action. This process will normally include feedback from a meeting with the student and a written account of the incident from the student. Other pieces of data such as reports from other students may be sought, and the student will have the opportunity to submit any additional information that may be relevant to the case. The assistant principal will also consult the teacher, counselor, and any other relevant faculty members, prior to determining a course of action. Minimally, the student who is found to have violated academic honesty expectations will receive a grade of 1 for all of or part of the assessment task depending upon its nature, given that it is impossible to accurately measure student performance against any standards when misconduct has occurred. The student will normally still be required to redo the assignment or complete an alternate task. Additional consequences are normally dependent on the seriousness and type of incident, though the overall aim in implementing consequences is to make the incident a learning experience and help the student to understand how to complete work appropriately.

In the most serious cases or in cases where a student has a record of previous instances of academic misconduct, the assistant principal may refer the case directly to the principal who will treat the case as a potentially major violation of school rules.

The IB coordinator, with the support of school administration, applies the specific guidelines outlined in the *IB Academic Honesty* booklet as well as the specific guidelines outlined in the *IB Coordinator Handbook of Procedures* and the *IB General Regulations: Diploma Programme* guide when misconduct claims arise. For cases involving potential student misconduct relating to IB DP courses or components (including the CAS program for example), the school is committed to supporting investigations conducted by the IB organization (IBO) and also reserves the right to inform the IBO of incidences concerning academic misconduct. The IBO may impose sanctions or penalties above and beyond those of the school; for example, conduct found to be in breach of regulations or guilty of misconduct may result in no grade being awarded to the student by the IBO.