

BISC policy on Academic Honesty

Purpose of policy

The British International School of Cracow is of the opinion that academic honesty promotes the values in our mission statement, in particular that of self-confident learners. Confidence in oneself and in one's ideas are founded on honesty. Academic honesty also promotes the 'principled' attribute of the IB learner profile - to value one's own ideas means to value those of others. Of all the attitudes that an IB education instills we believe that honesty is the foundation upon which meaningful action can take place. It is the means by which a deeper goal is achieved: that of integrity. At the same time, in a world where there is an "information glut" (Postman: 1995) combined with the pressures of academic performance we recognise that there are challenges. We are not naive to think that academic honesty is a disposition by default; instead, it is a work in progress. Academic honesty requires explicit mechanisms so that it can become a conscious act. It is precisely this policy that endeavours to guide the IB community here at BISC.

Details and advice on student responsibilities

According to the IB, "all coursework—including work submitted for assessment—is to be authentic, based on the student's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged." (Diploma Programme From Principles to Practice, 2015: 33) This imposes an obligation on all students to submit work that is not only 'authentic' but that acknowledges 'ideas and work of others' if these have been used.

It is an IB requirement that non-authenticated work must not be submitted. Authentication imposes an expectation on teachers to vouchsafe that a given work be a student's own. However, that expectation is shallow if it does not clarify to students what constitutes academic 'honesty' and academic 'dishonesty'. It is equally insufficient to expect that only submitted work be subject to scrutiny. Therefore, BISC is of the belief that any work - whether internally assessed or externally assessed - should abide by rigorous standards from the very start of the programme. These will be promoted in the following way:

- Students will be sent an e-copy of the IB's General Regulations – Diploma Programme (2016)
- compulsory attendance of an introductory session on academic honesty during IB preparation course, following which students will be given a copy of this policy with an annex that we ask students sign
- a certificate of attendance following the session
- a review of progress in form tutor interviews (three per year), which are filed
- a module on academic honesty as part of the Academic Skills course (first year only)

- a signed statement ('candidate consent' form) certifying that any work submitted to the IB for assessment is a student's own work (work will not be sent unless such a statement is signed).
- vive voce interviews for each internal assessment submitted, including the extended essay and TOK essay

At the end of the day, it is only through the habitual exercise of such standards that expectations about what it means to be academically honest can be met.

To help the school community understand what constitutes academic misconduct, we think it worthwhile quoting in full from the IB publication General Regulations: Diploma Programme (2016:12-13):

"The IB defines academic misconduct as behaviour (whether deliberate or inadvertent) that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more components of assessment. Behaviour that may disadvantage another candidate is also regarded as academic misconduct. Academic misconduct is a breach of these regulations and includes, but is not restricted to:

- a. plagiarism—this is defined as the representation, intentionally or unintentionally, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgment
- b. collusion—this is defined as supporting academic misconduct by another candidate, for example, allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another
- c. duplication of work—this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or DP core requirements
- d. misconduct during an IB examination (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination, behaviour that disrupts the examination or distracts other candidates, or communicating with another candidate)
- e. unethical behaviour such as the inclusion of inappropriate material in any assessment materials or the breach of ethical guidelines when conducting research
- f. any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (for example, falsifying a CAS record, disclosure of information to and receipt of information from candidates about the content of an examination paper within 24 hours after a written examination via any form of communication/media)"

Details and advice on teacher responsibilities

All teachers are responsible for cultivating an environment where academic honesty is a shared goal. This challenging goal cannot only be left to those members of staff who like the teacher of Academic Skills make it an explicit part of the curriculum. In view of the fact that subject teachers are responsible for preparing their students to submit assessed work to the IB, teachers also have a responsibility to model and teach academic honesty. It is expected that this be done formally when teachers plan for the internal assessment component of their subject. Provision for this is made in each subject guide, which contains a section on academic honesty or guidance and authenticity.

In addition, as this policy impacts teachers as well as students a school-wide emphasis on approaches to learning will make this more visible, as skills can only be developed in a broad context. However, like students teachers will need to be given explicit instruction on what constitutes academic honesty. BISC will promote this in the following way:

- Teachers will be sent an e-copy of the IB's General Regulations – Diploma Programme (2016)
- compulsory attendance of an introductory session on academic honesty during teachers' working day
- a review of progress in monthly IB meetings
- Teachers to remind students to maintain standards of academic honesty when assigning written work
- ongoing communication with form tutors on student progress
- the integration of academic honesty as part of research skills in the internal assessment and school-based assessments for each subject
- monitoring of student work, recording and reporting in the case of academic misconduct
- arranging a vive voce for any work submitted, to be carried out during lesson time

It is our aim that BISC makes academic honesty a conscious act among both students and teachers.

Details and advice on school responsibilities

The rationale above recommends responsibilities that the school takes on in order to develop a culture of academic integrity. Aside from the actions taken by teachers, the school will nominate a member of staff to be responsible for academic honesty, someone whom teachers and students can turn for support. This member of staff will be available to meet for consultation on matters related to academic honesty. No student will be expected to apply the above standards without having undergone training in the form of the academic honesty module in the Academic Skills class. Students will be presented with real-life examples of dilemmas, which will gradually lead them to an awareness of honesty as a skilful means to protect oneself and to protect others.

BISC's policy on academic honesty will be communicated to all stakeholders, including parents, the school's owners, the advisory board and heads of section (primary, secondary) in the following media: the staff handbook; the parent handbook; the school website and via Schoology, our online platform. It is important that the policy be known and understood so as to promote consistency as well as having shared expectations.

Furthermore, as part of our action plan it is envisaged that our commitment to academic honesty will be shared by the whole school and not just the school's IB programme.

Details and advice on parent responsibilities

We believe that in order for students to behave with integrity they will need role models to help them. We as a school are committed to providing these role models but this requires complementary efforts by parents. While we believe that 'modelling' academic honesty is the most effective means to educate, there are other ways in which parents can help us to build such a culture. For example, if one of the reasons for academic misconduct results from a lack of confidence in one's voice, parents can help students by encouraging them to express their own ideas and opinions. We do not ask or expect that parents teach students a style for citations/references - this is the school's responsibility. We do however ask that parents praise where praise is due, and that they hold up honesty as a goal worth aspiring towards. The culture of the home is as if not more important than the school in cultivating the learner profile.

To this extent, the school will invite parents at the start of the school year to discuss such matters and to offer practical guidance on how to cultivate such a culture.

Measures taken to provide education and support

BISC's academic honesty policy will be communicated, as per above, to all stakeholders and will be included in our handbook. In addition, the General Regulations of the Diploma Programme will be sent to parents, students and teachers so that they are fully cognisant of what the school's responsibilities are vis-à-vis the provision of the IB diploma programme in the school. Any questions regarding the policy should be directed to the IB coordinator who can be contacted at ibhead@bisc.krakow.pl

As the first port of call, teachers will provide support to students in their subject classes and will formally include academic honesty in their planning for the internal assessment.

All first year students will attend an Academic Skills class for the duration of the year in which academic honesty forms an inseparable component. Provision will be made that this takes place in the first term. The aim here is to provide an element of consistency across the subjects.

The Academic Skills teacher will offer one period a week in which he/she can consult with students who have questions about academic honesty.

The TOK teacher will formally include academic honesty in the delivery of the TOK programme

The CAS coordinator will stress academic honesty throughout the CAS programme, in particular in the reporting and reflection of projects

Finally, the IB coordinator will include a session on academic honesty to be delivered during a lesson on Academic Skills at the start of the second term (first year) prior to students embarking on their extended essays.

Any work that is to be submitted as part of the internal assessment component for each subject will be vetted by individual teachers by means of a *vive voce* which will be carried out in class. The *vive voce* of course already forms a fundamental component of the EE process in that its authentication is derived from scrutiny of the student's initial proposal, the first draft, references cited, style of writing and analysis of work by means of a web-based plagiarism software.

If malpractice is found, the student will face our defined consequences for academic misconduct (see below)

As this policy aims to establish transparent and fair standards, we have drafted a short handbook (titled '*do it right, remember to cite*') which can be found on our digital platform Schoology. This handbook aims to recommend a style for citations/references. It is important to bear in mind that this is not prescriptive as there exists a number of other styles. We ask however that any style used be used consistently in any given piece of work.

In addition, the IB has made the following publication available for reference:

Effective citing and referencing: <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/brochures/effective-citing-and-referencing-en.pdf>

Age-appropriate guidance on expected behaviour

The following are examples of appropriate behavior:

1. Ideas in the extended essay are acknowledged as belonging to somebody else and citations are used to show this
2. Research findings in the individual investigation for Environmental Systems and Societies must be based on data obtained by the student and not another student.
3. The historical investigation in History is on the same subject of the Extended Essay provided there is no overlap in the sources used

The following are examples of what is considered inappropriate behavior (with the type of academic misconduct in brackets):

1. A student works with another student and allows his/her work to be submitted for assessment by another (collusion)
2. The extended essay while containing citations does not state the page number from which text was quoted (possible case of plagiarism)
3. During an IB examination, a student refuses to listen to the invigilator's instructions (misconduct during an IB examination)

Scenarios and/or frequently asked questions (FAQs)

What areas fall under academic misconduct?

Any areas as defined by the IB, including "plagiarism", "collusion", "duplication of work", "misconduct during an IB examination", "unethical behavior such as inappropriate material in any assessment materials or the breach of ethical guidelines when conducting research", "any other behavior that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (General Regulations: Diploma Programme, 2016: 12-13)

Who is responsible for academic honesty in the school?

Academic honesty is a 'behaviour' and we expect that the school community work together to promote this. As such, the expectation is that each member of the school community has a responsibility. Responsibilities for students and teachers are detailed in this policy. A member of staff will be appointed to whom students and teachers can turn for guidance.

Who should I contact in case I have questions

Please contact the IB coordinator at ibhead@bisc.krakow.pl

Where can I find guidance on citations?

Please see our guide 'do it right, remember to cite' for a list of frequently asked questions regarding citing/referencing.

What happens if a student is suspected of academic misconduct?

Please see section 'procedures - reporting, recording, and monitoring'

What consequences are in place if a student is suspected of academic misconduct?

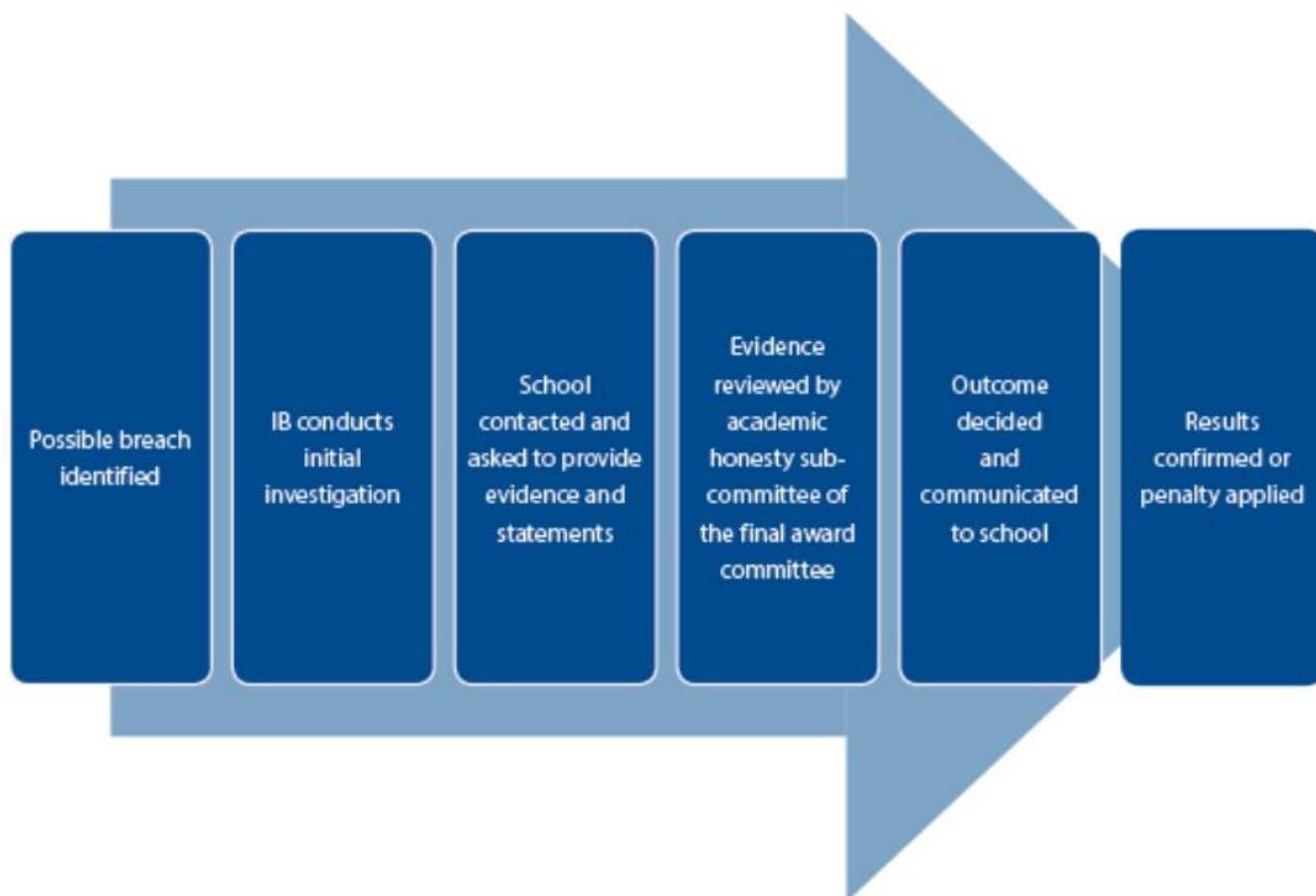
Please see section 'Consequences of academic misconduct'

What happens if externally-marked work is suspected of academic misconduct?

A panel will be convened and will determine the allegation. If evidence for academic misconduct has been found, the work will not be uploaded on IBIS and a letter will be sent to the IB detailing the case of academic misconduct.

What procedure does the IB follow if my work is suspected of academic misconduct?

Please see diagram below



Source: IBO, 2019. Diploma Programme Assessment Procedures

Procedures – reporting, recording and monitoring

It is imperative that any case of academic misconduct be communicated through the appropriate channels as well as recorded.

If a teacher suspects a case of academic misconduct, both the form tutor and IB coordinator will be notified via email with a statement. The case will be investigated as per IB definitions of what constitutes academic misconduct and action will be decided collectively. The email will be filed by the IB coordinator.

If the same student is suspected of breaching academic honesty again the process is repeated but the headmaster, the school owners and parents are briefed and appropriate action taken (see section consequences of academic misconduct)

If it has been established by the school that academic misconduct has taken place with regard to any work that will contribute towards the diploma the

teacher will not authenticate the work and the incident recorded. The parents will be informed, as will the headmaster and school owners.

If it has been established by the school that academic misconduct has taken place with regard to any work already authenticated and submitted the IB the IB coordinator will write a report to the IBO. The parents will be informed, as will the headmaster and school owners.

If academic misconduct is suspected of having taken place during an IB examination, the invigilator will record the incident and inform the IB coordinator who will then write a report and submit to the IBO. The headmaster will be briefed on the incident and will be sent the report prior to submission. The parents will be informed, as will the school owners.

The rights of the student, if suspected of a breach of academic honesty

Any case of alleged academic misconduct with brought to the student's attention. The student will be given an opportunity to 'defend' themselves before the panel. The student will be encouraged to visit the members of staff responsible for academic honesty (i.e. Academic Skills teacher / IB coordinator).

Consequences of alleged academic misconduct with regard to school work

1. If a case of alleged academic misconduct is suspected, the member of staff concerned will communicate this to the IB coordinator and the form tutor. The IB coordinator will then assembled a panel committee comprised of the teacher, the member of staff responsible for academic honesty and the IB coordinator. If it has been established that academic misconduct has taken place, no grade will be awarded. The student in question will be asked to re-write the assignment and the student presented with a verbal warning. The form tutor and IB coordinator will record the incident.
2. The second case of alleged misconduct will also result in a panel committee. If academic misconduct has been established, as well as rewriting the assignment in question the student, the headmaster and the student's parents will be notified. The student in question will receive a written warning stating that any subsequent cases will result in failing the subject.
3. The third case of alleged misconduct will also result in a panel committee. If academic misconduct has been established, a letter will be sent to the student, the headmaster, the school owners and the student's parents stating that the student in question has failed the subject.

As per above, any assessment that will contribute towards the Diploma will be vetted by means of a vive voce. If it has been established that the assessment manifests a case of academic misconduct the teacher will not authenticate the assessment and will follow procedure stated above (i.e. convening of a panel).

Review of policy

Our policy on academic honesty will be reviewed yearly in a teachers' meeting at the end of the school year (June). This will be preceded by a meeting of the Steering Committee (which comprises interested teachers and parents, together with IB student representatives) which will have as its remit suggestions to make on the policy, and to be subsequently communicated to all members of staff. A decision as to whether changes are required will be made by the IB coordinator and headmaster.

References

Postman, Neil. Neil Postman on Cyberspace, 1995.
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IBO, 2014. Effective Citing and Referencing. <https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/digital-toolkit/brochures/effective-citing-and-referencing-en.pdf> (last accessed November 2018)

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