



# Oman Private School

## Academic Integrity Policy

Academic Year: 2019-2020

Last Revised: December 24, 2019

The Academic Integrity Policy is based upon the International Baccalaureate (IB) learner profile attributes of being principled and reflective. Oman Private School (OPS) requires all students to act with integrity and honesty when submitting, presenting, or representing work for review or assessment, while respecting the intellectual rights (or otherwise) of others. Upholding these values promotes and instills in students a culture of ownership, responsibility, and an understanding of consequences - not only in academics, but in places of work and the global community at large.

### Purpose of the Policy

In compliance with the following IB *Programme standards and practices* (2014):

Standard B1:

5d. The school has developed and implements an academic honesty policy that is consistent with IB expectations;<sup>1</sup>

Standard C3:

4. Teaching and learning promotes the understanding and practice of academic honesty;<sup>2</sup>

and in accordance with OPS values of best teaching and learning practices, the school has implemented a school-wide Academic Integrity policy with the aim to:

- Clarify the parameters of academic integrity and dishonesty with transparency to the entire school community including Primary and Middle Years, and any future secondary program teachers, students, and stakeholders.
- Ensure students understand the importance of academic integrity and the seriousness of academic dishonesty.
- Encourage cooperation between students and their teachers to ensure no forms of malpractice occur.
- Clarify the consequences to be implemented in the event a student is found to have taken part in any form of academic dishonesty.

### Academic Integrity

OPS requires that all work submitted be that of the student. Likewise, it is prohibited that any student be given an unfair advantage over another. Therefore, any practice resulting in work being presented that is not wholly the student's, or which is not properly attributed to whom it belongs, or which prevents others from completing their work, is considered academic dishonesty and malpractice.

<sup>1</sup> International Baccalaureate, *Programme standards and practices*, January 2014, pg. 3

<sup>2</sup> International Baccalaureate, *Programme standards and practices*, January 2014, pg. 5

Academic integrity is fostered by assisting students in developing the following Approaches to Learning (ATL):

1. Thinking skills
2. Communications skills
3. Social skills
4. Self-management skills
5. Research skills

### **Types of Academic Dishonesty (Malpractice):**

There are various forms by which work submitted, presented, or represented could be considered academically dishonest, including, but not limited to:

- Plagiarising someone else's work. This is when a student uses another person's work and/or ideas and presents them as their own. This is generally done within a larger piece of work, such as a student incorporating statements or ideas from someone else, and including it in their submission without proper citation, as though it is their own.
- Falsifying something, such as handing in someone else's assignment, signing something with someone else's signature (such as a student signing their parent's signature on a report card or assessment).
- Colluding with someone, whereby a student allows another to copy their work (whether during an assessment or assignment), or giving a student who was absent during an examination the information from the said exam.
- Duplicating one's work, which is handing in the same work for more than one assignment.
- Manipulating or fabricating data for a given assignment.
- Concealing and using materials that infringe against the regulations specified or sanctioned for a given assessment.
- Sabotaging someone's work by disposing of it, erasing parts of it, or modifying it so that it is either impossible to submit, or to the extent that what is submitted is not what the student prepared.

### **Detecting Plagiarism**

Academic staff and students will be responsible for detecting plagiarism and this will be done in two ways:

**Student Submission Reports:** For any written assignment, students must include a plagiarism report with the assignment showing their submission contains original content and is free from unreferenced work. Students will use the following resource for generating the report to be submitted with the assignment: <http://plagiarismdetector.net>

**Specified Plagiarism Checks:** If a teacher suspects a student of submitting plagiarized work, in part or in whole, they will check that student's work for plagiarism. This suspicion may be based upon, but is not limited to: The quality and/or language of the work submitted in comparison to previously submitted work, or the speed at which it was submitted.

For these checks, teachers will use one of the following plagiarism checkers:

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| <b>1</b> Plagiarism Detector:<br><a href="http://plagiarismdetector.net">http://plagiarismdetector.net</a> | <b>2</b> Dupli Checker:<br><a href="http://duplichecker.com">http://duplichecker.com</a> |
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A search engine check may also be used for suspected phrases, and evidence from original sources of the matching results will be made evident to the student to show an infraction has taken place.

## Referencing Format

In order to assist students with proper citations in their work, the school requires that all students follow the Modern Language Association (MLA) citation style. This will be taught to students in school, and guides will be provided to students to refer to as well.

## Penalties for Infractions of the Academic Integrity Policy

### Level 1

Class teachers are responsible for this stage.

Examples of Level 1 incidents:

- Copying or allowing minor assignments to be copied, such as daily/weekly exercises from textbooks.
- Not properly referring to sources when citing information.
- Working with others on an assignment that was designated as independent work.
- Looking at or allowing someone to look at an examination during the time of assessment.

If a malpractice infraction is confirmed, the infracting student will not receive credit for the work in which the incident took place. This applies to anything for which a student receives credit, and includes, but is not limited to, anything called a test, quiz, assessment, project or assignment. The student may be given an opportunity to redo the work, based upon the available timeline and the teacher's discretion. If this is done, this work will then count in place of the original. If a teacher confirms any of these infractions, they will report it to the respective IB program coordinator for record keeping purposes. Subject to the discretion of the Head of School, the record may then be included with the student's end of term report card.

### Level 2

Any time a student commits a second Level 1 infraction it is considered a Level 2. This will carry the same consequences as Level 1, along with an in-school suspension. This may consist of being suspended from co-curricular activities (CCA), given limited access to the gymnasium, or given other duties around the school to perform for a period no less than three days. Depending on the seriousness of the offence, an out-of-school suspension may also be given.

### **Level 3**

Repeated Level 1 or 2 offences are considered Level 3. This will result in an in-school or out of school suspension of 1-3 days, loss of privileges and/or loss of extracurricular participation (co-curricular activities, sports, clubs, etc.).

### **Level 4**

Altering records, stealing examinations or unauthorized materials, or a Level 1 infraction committed more than three times are considered a Level 4 malpractice. This will result in a hearing, and if a Level 4 malpractice is confirmed, it may lead to the student being expelled from OPS and the IB program. Additionally, any deposits and payments made to the school up until that point will be forfeited.

### **External Penalties for Malpractice**

If any malpractices are suspected after a student has had their marks submitted to the IBO, the IB program coordinator will inform the IBO and begin an investigation into the matter. Once the investigation is complete, the IB program coordinator will submit the results of the investigation to the IBO. The student suspected of the malpractice will be given the opportunity to provide a defence in writing. Once both parties have submitted their documentation, the Final Award Committee decides whether to dismiss or uphold the allegation, or to request further investigation. If the allegation is dismissed, a grade will be awarded as normal. If malpractice is established, no grade will be awarded for the subject in which the malpractice occurred and no IB certificate/diploma qualification will be awarded. However, certificates for subjects in which no malpractice took place will be awarded. After a period of at least one year from the end of the session in which the malpractice took place, the candidate involved will be permitted to register for future examinations.

However, if a case of malpractice is deemed severe, due to the nature or number of offences, the Final Award Committee may use its discretion to prohibit the candidate from registering for any future examinations. Furthermore, any IB qualification awarded may be withdrawn if it is confirmed that malpractice warranting its withdrawal is established after the fact.

## **Assessment Code of Conduct**

Students may have the following items with them at their desks (or in the examination room):

Pencils/Pens, erasers, geometry set and ruler. A calculator may also be permitted by the subject teacher of a given assessment; however, functions and calculator types may be restricted.

Pencil cases/backpacks are not permitted. If needed, students may bring a clear plastic bag to carry their supplies.

Electronic devices are not permitted in the room, other than those of the teacher/invigilator. These include, but are not limited to, mobile/smart phones, smart watches, tablets, laptops, and cameras.

Other materials may be permitted only if specifically stated in the instructions for a specific assessment.

Instructions given by an invigilator must be followed. The invigilator has the right to immediately expel from the room any student whose behavior is interfering with the proper conduct of the assessment.

During the scheduled assessment time, students are not permitted to communicate with one another in any way. Failure to observe this constitutes academic malpractice.

In emergency cases, a student may be allowed to leave the room. Such leave is granted at the discretion of the invigilator and a student may be asked to empty pockets and be accompanied outside of the class. This is left to the discretion of the invigilator.

If a student arrives within the first 20 minutes of an assessment start time, they will be allowed to enter the room and complete the assessment. However, no extra time will be awarded to complete the assessment.

If a student arrives more than 20 minutes after the start of an assessment he/she will not be allowed to enter the classroom. They will be required to sit in the front office until the completion of the scheduled assessment time and will then take the assessment privately and on their own immediately after the scheduled assessment time is completed. This will be done in a designated area within the school under the supervision of a teacher.

At the end of a scheduled assessment time, students must submit all papers related to the assessment including, but not limited to, answer sheets, data booklets, and scrap papers.

It is the responsibility of the student to conduct himself/herself in a manner that does not arouse suspicion. Invigilators are required to consider any suspicious behavior as evidence of academic malpractice. Students will not be given the benefit of the doubt in such situations.

## **Stakeholder Roles in Academic Honesty**

### **Students' Role**

Students are responsible for:

- Reading and understanding the OPS Academic Integrity Policy as well as all IBO documents related to rules and regulations.
- Ensuring the work they submit is their own.
- Submitting an accompanying plagiarism report with all written assignments.
- Consenting to their work being submitted against a plagiarism checker, as designated by the school, as required by academic staff.
- Properly citing their work following MLA guidelines.
- For work that may not be verifiable through plagiarism checkers, students will document their steps in researching and completing their projects, as well as what steps were completed to search for topics online.
- Signing a declaration of authenticity form before submitting work to the IBO.

### **IB Coordinators' Role**

IB program coordinators are responsible for:

- Ensuring students, teachers, legal guardians and all stakeholders understand IBO expectations regarding academic integrity.
- Ensuring the academic integrity policy aligns with IB expectations of standards and practices.
- Regularly reviewing the Academic Integrity Policy and updating when needed.
- Setting up an internal calendar for due dates for the submission of students' assessment materials.
- Ensuring students and invigilators are given necessary information regarding assessment regulations.
- Holding regular meetings with teachers to ensure all have a clear understanding of the Academic Integrity Policy and IB expectations of standards and practices.
- Ensuring policies and procedures are easily available to all stakeholders.

### **Head of School's Role**

The Head of School is responsible for:

- Establishing and making available the Academic Integrity Policy.
- Ensuring teachers obtain any required training needed to uphold and guarantee best practices of academic integrity are taking place in the school.
- Ensuring students and teachers abide by the school's Academic Integrity Policy.
- Sharing the aim of the Academic Integrity Policy with legal guardians.
- Ensuring stakeholders have a clear understanding of academic integrity and consequences of academic misconduct.

### **Librarian's Role**

The librarian is responsible for:

- Familiarizing students with the research process.
- Directing and ensuring students have an understanding of reliable sources for citing.
- Reinforcing fundamentals of academic integrity.

### **Teachers' Role**

All teachers are responsible for:

- Discussing what constitutes academic dishonesty (malpractice) and ensuring students understand the consequences of confirmed offences.
- Teaching students how to properly complete research papers and presentations.
- Setting clear expectations for assignments.
- Teaching required components of MLA referencing style to students.

## **Monitoring and Evaluating this Policy**

This policy will be formally reviewed yearly by the governing body and pedagogy leadership team and will be revised as needed to adapt to changing best practices and the needs of our learning community.