

The Ronald Edmonds Learning Center

An International Baccalaureate MYP Candidate School



REL C

Academic Integrity Policy
2023-24

Introduction to Philosophy

As an International Baccalaureate (IB) Candidate School, we strive to instill 10 key attributes of the IB learner profile within each of our students. These ten attributes are the very core of everything we work to instill through our programs. Therefore, the foundation of this policy is based on the attributes of the learner profile, including:

- **Communicators** need to explain their ideas clearly and reference ideas and/ or research rigorously using an accepted format, in our case MLA formatting.
- **Knowledgeable** students know that they need to cite where information comes from that underpins their work.
- **Inquirers** have the requisite skills to carry out research and inquiry.
- **Open-minded** students pursue and consider information from a variety of sources and points of view.
- **Principled** students act with honesty and integrity by taking responsibility for their actions.
- **Thinkers** explore concepts, issues, and ideas critically and creatively.

For more information on the IB Learner Profile visit this [link](#)

Academic Integrity & Academic Misconduct

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. We consider this principle to be the foundation for ethical decision-making and behavior in the production of legitimate, authentic, and honest scholarly work.

The IB defines student **academic misconduct** as deliberate or inadvertent behavior that has the potential to result in the student, or anyone else, gaining an unfair advantage in one or more components of assessment. Behavior that may disadvantage another student is also regarded as academic misconduct. In the next section, there is a breakdown of some common types of academic misconduct or *malpractice*.

Types of Malpractice: *Collusion, Duplication & Plagiarism*

Legitimate collaboration, like assigned group work or academic discussion, is an important part of the learning process and collaboration skills are promoted and cultivated. Advisors and subject teachers work together to promote legitimate collaboration throughout a program. Although it is important to learn to work collaboratively it is also important to not be involved in academic misconduct or *malpractice*.

Malpractice can be defined as a behavior that results in, may result in, a student gaining an unfair advantage on an assessment task. This could take the form of several different ways, including *collusion*, *duplication*, or *plagiarism*.

Collusion:

- *Collusion* is when you allow your work or part of your work to be copied.
- Collusion could happen on a variety of tasks (e.g., homework, a formative task, a summative assessment, or even a creativity project or community project).
- You may work collaboratively (e.g., collect data in a science lab together). However, any final work turned in by a member of the faculty must be in the author's own words.

Duplication:

- *Duplication* is when a student submits the same or a very similar piece of work for another assessment.
 - o Example: A student submitting a research assignment on *Individuals and societies*, then reusing this work on a biography task in *Language and Literature* class.
- This is a form of academic dishonesty or cheating.
- It is possible to choose a future topic related to a past task that is suitably different. Students are encouraged to explore this with their teacher.

Plagiarism:

- *Plagiarism* is when you use someone else's work without giving credit.
- Passing off someone else's idea as your own is an example of plagiarism which could happen in any subject or project.
- We teach an acceptable way to use other's ideas, words, etc. to support your thinking or argument is the goal!

Malpractice can occur anywhere. Below is a short list of examples:

- Homework, projects, quizzes, tests, etc.
- Community service reflection or SMART goal setting -- if copied this would be considered collusion and/ or plagiarism.
- On examinations (e.g., copying from another's paper, non-verbal communication between students, taking unapproved material to the exam (e.g., mobile phone/ notes), or using an unauthorized calculator)

Stakeholder Responsibility

Responsibility of Students

Ultimately students are responsible for what they submit to teachers. Whether it is homework, formative or summative tasks in class, creativity & and community projects, or anything else they are presenting to faculty as something they have produced. Students are expected to know and understand that there are consequences for malpractice at RELC. Moreover, they should be aware that quite severe consequences in high school, university, and society result from academic dishonesty.

To avoid malpractice students should:

- Read work before you submit to check for malpractice.
- Students may use applications to assist with a bibliography (e.g., Easy Bib) or sources that provide preformatted citations of their articles (e.g., MLA format citations in a specific Encyclopedia Britannica article).
- Refer to the lessons they are taught about the values behind academic honesty as well as the skills required to cite appropriately and avoid malpractice.

A student is expected to report to faculty any malpractice they are aware of from a classmate. We encourage students to do this privately with a member of the faculty when other students are not around. This is for several reasons to avoid voicing allegations publicly, including the chance that may turn out to be false or it may lead to complications amongst classmates.

All students are expected to read and know our academic honesty policy and their responsibilities. There is an academic honesty agreement that each student will sign. Moreover, there is an additional agreement for Grade 8 students as they embark upon their Community Project.

Responsibilities of Parents and Legal Guardians

There needs to be a partnership between the school and parents to ensure academic honesty. Parents are responsible for alerting the school to any issues of malpractice by their child and reinforcing academic honesty's importance and practices. The school encourages parents to help students develop homework routines and even help, but it is important to note boundaries. Moving beyond the role of facilitator can have adverse effects on a child's development by stunting the growth of their self-management skills, preventing them from becoming a more independent learner. Parents should strive to strike the right balance in their interventions and think of themselves as facilitators of the student's growth as independent learners. All MYP parents are expected to read our academic honesty policy.

Faculty Members

Teachers play an important role in teaching and ensuring academic integrity. Teachers' responsibilities include making efforts to determine the work of students as their authentic work. Malpractice or academic dishonesty are taken seriously at a school and teachers are expected to understand the types of malpractice and the consequences for these offenses as laid out in the next section of this policy document. Subject teachers, advisors, and supervisors (of service, creativity, or community projects) are positioned best to discover evidence of malpractice and should be alert to issues of malpractice within their classes or scope of supervision.

The School Leadership Team

School leadership is responsible for embedding academic honesty policy into school structure, issuing guidance for teachers, designating a team or person responsible for academic integrity, communicating principles of academic integrity to parents and guardians, and ensuring the school's academic integrity. Leadership is responsible for ensuring that the school does the following:

- Has an academic integrity policy and has scheduled plans for reviews and updates?
- Stakeholders have a common understanding of the IB's expectations about *academic integrity*, *academic misconduct*, and *school maladministration* and possible consequences for misconduct.
- Students are held accountable to our academic honesty policy when involved in an *academic misconduct* incident.
- Support the IB in any investigation into possible student academic misconduct, following guidance provided by the IB.

- Teachers and school administrators are held accountable, according to the school's policies, when involved in a *maladministration* incident.

MYP Program Coordinator

The program coordinator maintains overall supervision of all activities in the teaching and learning process. The coordinator manages the necessary resources with the school leadership team to ensure training and sufficient resources. Focus on processes for managing academic integrity incidents and providing stakeholder support is an important role of the program coordinator. Support provided includes:

- Guidance and support to ensure school policies are applied fairly and consistently.
- Ensure stakeholders have a copy, read, and understand RELC's academic integrity policy.
- Report suspected instances of student academic misconduct and school maladministration to school administration.
- Supervised all activities related to the investigation of student misconduct and school maladministration cases according to school policy.
- Development of strategies to cross-reference work across student groupings when preparing to submit final pieces of work to prevent collusion.

Non-teaching staff

Other members of staff are expected to support academic integrity, be aware of types of misconduct (e.g., collusion, maladministration, etc.), and that they are responsible for reporting any types of misconduct to the program coordinator.

Processes

Processes are important to promote and ensure academic honesty. RELC primarily focuses on the educational process around academic integrity but also has an established investigation process.

Educational process

Our education process focuses on developing an understanding of legitimate collaboration vs. collusion of any sort. We promote the development of collaborative approaches to learning (ATLs) by which students are taught acceptable academic collaboration through our advisory program in conjunction with subject teachers and global citizenship where we reinforce core elements of our program. This is guided in part by our collaboration ATL skills exemplified. This education is both preventative and reflective in nature to avoid academic misconduct whilst allowing for growth from (unintended) misconduct.

Investigation process

When there is a need for an investigation into academic misconduct, we follow a process. This includes not divulging the origin of the notification of misconduct. Individuals (and their parents or guardians) under investigation will be informed in writing of the possible consequences. Individuals will have the opportunity to respond in writing to the allegation. Interviews will be conducted with a witness present. A report will be filed detailing who was responsible for conducting the investigation, details of who was involved in the incident, details of circumstances surrounding the incident, evidence collected that supports or refutes the allegation, how it was collected, information about if the evidence is corroborated, details of witnesses to the incident, and any information about people who have provided expert evidence.

Consequences of Malpractice

Every case of malpractice is dealt with on a case-by-case basis. However, we do have guidelines for consequences for student malpractice. In each program, teachers will explain the importance of being academically honest through restorative practices in addition to the consequences outlined by the program below.

- I. Collusion I: For the student who copied another's work:

a. **MYP** - Students must do the task again and write a reflection on academic honesty. Student loses lunch break privileges at least one lunch to enable the student to complete the task satisfactorily, at the teacher's discretion.

b. For the student who allowed another to copy their work:

i. **MYP** - Students must write a reflection on academic honesty. Students lose lunch break privileges for at least one lunch, at the teacher's discretion.

*****If this offense is repeated twice, the student is bumped up to Plagiarism (level) II outlined below. *****

II. Collusion II: A student colluded with another student on a community project.

a. **MYP** - A meeting is set up with the student, the teacher, MYP Coordinator. Guidelines from the IBO Academic Honesty documentation to ensure it is properly followed.

III. Plagiarism I: A student plagiarizes someone else's work.

a. **MYP** - Students must do the task again and write a reflection on academic honesty.

*****If this offense is repeated twice, the student is bumped up to Plagiarism (level) II outlined below. *****

Repeat offenses:

If a student commits two or three offenses, then there are follow-up steps that will be instituted:

MYP - To ensure consequences, restore a student's standing, and keep them on an academically honest track for their learning and development, MYP students must do the following:

→ For a **second offense**, the student will have a meeting with the teacher and coordinator (as mentioned previously) where an appropriate consequence will be determined. Parents will be informed at this point after the teacher has brought this to the attention of the coordinator. The student will sign a formal letter of commitment about future conduct.

→ For a **third offense**, the student will have a meeting with the teacher, MYP Coordinator, and Head of School where an appropriate consequence will be determined, including suspension. Parents will be called in for a meeting with the teacher and MYP Coordinator.

Referencing guidance

There are several acceptable referencing standards in existence, but RELC has elected to adopt **MLA (Modern Language Arts)** formatting across its programs.

MYP - By the end of the MYP, students should be able to provide a rigorous and academic reference list at the end of an assessment task.

Challenge: Using the ideas of others

Many students believe that including someone else's ideas is cheating, however, this is not true if you use them appropriately. You just need to make it clear that you have used an idea, quote, chart, data, image, etc. from someone else to develop your stance on an issue for one of your projects. Moreover, paraphrasing is a skill students are taught in the program and can help students acceptably use others' ideas.

MLA Referencing Help

Students are expected to produce a **bibliography** for research assignments. A bibliography is a list of sources that you got information from to complete a project, research assignment, or essay. **Citations** are what you write into your bibliography. These citations are your chance to cite, or acknowledge and give credit to, a source of information used in your research.

*****Utilize this [MLA citation link](#) for specific guidance as well as material shared by teachers. *****

Policy Review Process:

A steering committee will review the academic integrity policy annually. It will be revised as needed to reflect current best practices. Once the policy has been reviewed and revised by the steering committee, it will be shared with the program pedagogical leadership teams for final notes and feedback. Upon completion, the policies will be shared with all stakeholders.

All policies will be published on the school website where they can be accessed by students and community members.

Academic Integrity Steering Committee:

Ghany Alexander: MYP Coordinator
Carmen Coward: MYP Language & Literature Teacher
Tiffani Davis: MYP Individuals & Societies Teacher
Nathan Matsui: CP Coordinator
Tamika Thomas-Murray: MYP Science Teacher/ Peer Collaborative Teacher
Tayzah Peebles: MYP SPED/Language & Literature Teacher
Carlos Vargas: MYP Individuals & Societies Teacher/UFT Chapter Leader
Tiffany Pierre: MYP Guidance Counselor
Jasmyn Washington: MYP Visual Arts Teacher

The final policy was shared with all teachers during a professional development session devoted to developing an understanding of all school policies. In the future, teachers will continue to receive annual professional development in all school policies.

This policy has also been posted on the RELC website along with the RELC Assessment Policy, RELC Inclusion Policy, and RELC Language Policy.

Each year in June immediately following the end of the school year, this policy will be revisited using data from the closing school year, new research, and input from all representatives and revised accordingly. The updated policy will again be posted on the RELC website.

As with other RELC information, students and parents who are new to RELC will be made aware of all four school policies.

IB Mission Statement

The International Baccalaureate aims to develop inquiring, knowledgeable, 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 programs of international education and rigorous assessment.

These programs 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 Ronald Edmonds Learning Center is a candidate school* for the MYP. This school is pursuing authorization as an IB World School. IB World Schools share a common philosophy—a commitment to high-quality, challenging, international education that we believe is important for our students.

*Only schools authorized by the IB Organization can offer any of its four academic programs: the Primary Years Programme (PYP), the Middle Years Programme (MYP), the Diploma Programme (DP), or the Career-related Programme (CP).

Candidate status gives no guarantee that authorization will be granted.

For further information about the IB and its programs, visit <http://www.ibo.org>.