Academic Honesty Policy

Updated December 2014
**Academic Honesty**

The principle of academic honesty is the cornerstone of a school community. In all our actions at UNIS we encourage students toward a life governed by the values of honesty and personal integrity. The policies and procedures in this document are informed both by the UNIS mission and vision and the attributes of the International Baccalaureate (IB) learner profile.

In teaching, learning and assessment, academic honesty serves to promote personal integrity and engender respect for others and the integrity of their work. Upholding academic honesty also helps to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to demonstrate the knowledge and skills they acquire during their studies.

As stated in the IB learner profile, all members of the IB community strive to be “principled”, acting with “integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness, justice and respect for the dignity of the individual, groups and communities.” In all their studies at UNIS, students must demonstrate academic honesty and avoid any form of academic misconduct.

**Academic Misconduct**

The *IB General Regulations: Diploma Programme* defines misconduct as “behavior that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment components.”

Examples of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism is defined as the representation, intentionally or unwittingly, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgment. The use of translated materials, unless indicated and acknowledged, is also considered plagiarism.

- Collusion is defined as supporting academic misconduct by another student, for example allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.
• Examples of misconduct during an IB examination include: taking unauthorized material into an examination (whether the student uses it or not), behavior that disrupts the examination or may distract other students and communicating with another student during the examination.

• Duplication of work is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or Diploma Programme requirements.

For the most complete definition and explanation of academic honesty consult the position paper, Academic Honesty in the IB. This document will be referenced in the document with section guide numbers in parentheses.

**Student Responsibilities**
The student is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged (3.4). The most frequent failure to give credit to other sources of information occurs when writing research papers. It is, therefore, extremely important that every student at UNIS be familiar with the accepted procedures in acknowledging the work of another writer.

• Reference in the text all material reproduced directly (i.e., copied) from any source. This includes all phrases, sentences, paragraphs, graphs, charts, images or any other information.

• Sources include printed and electronic media, such as books, textbooks, magazines, interviews, websites and images.

• If any idea or argument of someone else's work is used, give that individual credit, either in footnotes or in the text in parentheses.

• Procrastination and sloppy research techniques can lead to plagiarism. When taking notes, be sure to put information copied directly from a source in quotations. It is always better to read the material, think about it and then
write the information in your own words. This will make inadvertent copying less likely to occur. Thoughtful research takes time, so plan ahead and don’t procrastinate.

- Common knowledge is knowledge known by everyone or nearly everyone, generally in reference to the community to which you are writing or presenting. Common knowledge does not need to be cited. When in doubt, it is always better to cite your sources.
- Be on the safe side. Having too many footnotes, while poor scholarship, is not academically dishonest; on the other hand, if someone else’s work is not acknowledged that is plagiarism.
- Intentions are not relevant in judging whether or not something has been plagiarized. If credit is not given where credit is due, plagiarism has occurred. Don’t be careless.

**Teacher Responsibilities**

ALL teachers at UNIS share the responsibility of reinforcing best practices and teaching proper research skills. UNIS teachers are expected to:

- Support and act on the School’s policy on good academic practice and provide candidates with advice whenever necessary (3.3),
- Provide instruction and support in research and study skills, and be available to offer advice and guidance to students.
- Give specific requirements as well as written examples of proper citation of a variety of sources in their discipline area(s) (4.13)
- Structure assignments to encourage the development of students’ own ideas through problem solving, comparison, precise hypothesis, analysis etc. (4.18)
- Provide a formative assessment structure for investigative reports that includes planning and the evaluation of sources, and reflects the need for candidates’ work to be authentic. The formative assessment structure might include:
  - a carefully developed thesis
  - the evaluation of sources
- planning for an investigation
- personal critique or analysis
- evidence of higher thinking in a proposal of alternative solutions to the issue under discussion
- in-class research assignments (4.19).

- Mark regular class and homework assignments that are not being submitted to the IB for assessment, taking into account each candidate’s use of and acknowledgement of sources. A portion of the marks awarded could be available for assessing the degree to which a candidate has correctly acknowledged all sources.

- Guard against what might be described as “academic negligence”. In other words, teachers must warn candidates about the consequences of being careless when recording sources, or displaying a cavalier disregard for the origin of material within their work (4.22).

- Observe the same procedures as students and actively use the MLA bibliographic convention (or other discipline appropriate style) when providing students with reference material. All teachers should epitomize good academic practice and act as role models for students (4.12).

For more detailed guidelines consult Diploma Programme, Academic honesty (updated July 2011).

**IB Coordinator and/or School Administration Responsibilities**

The school’s leadership has the responsibility for establishing processes and procedures that supports and a school culture that actively encourages academic honesty. UNIS coordinators and administrators are expected to:

- Know the regulations and instructions as provided by the IBO that govern the conduct of each examination session.
- Inform staff and students through various media what constitutes malpractice and how it can be prevented.
• Support the IBO fully in the prevention, detection and investigation of malpractice.
• Undertake any additional responsibilities required by the IBO should a candidate or staff member be investigated for malpractice.

**Principles for dealing with and consequences for academic misconduct**

Any case of academic misconduct will be dealt with in a manner that ensures equity, consistency, procedural fairness, timely resolution and further learning.

Incidents of academic misconduct at UNIS are treated on a case-by-case basis and students may be penalized with a failing grade for the assignment or assessment, the semester, or the year. In addition, a student may receive internal suspension. In severe cases, the student may be suspended or dismissed from the School.ii

Practical steps taken in each case of misconduct include the following:

• Investigation of misconduct
• Student(s) conference with the teacher regarding the incident
• Referral of the infraction to the Assistant Principal or Principal
• Parent(s) contacted by the teacher and/or Assistant Principal or Principal
• Conference with the student, parent(s), teacher and Assistant Principal or Principal
• Incident documented and included in the students file and appropriate parties notified (i.e. IB, and prospective colleges)
• Further education
  o In cases of plagiarism, additional instruction on the rationale behind conventions of scholarship and the necessity for absolute honesty in the presentation of written work.
  o In cases of collusion, misconduct during exams or duplication of work, additional support to address learning (i.e. study habits, time management) or affective issues that may have disrupted preparation.
As a general guideline, students are subject to the following sanctions for academic misconduct on major assessments:

FIRST INFRACTION: Failing grade for the assessments, internal suspension and disciplinary letter

SECOND INFRACTION: Failing grade for the semester, internal suspension, academic probation and disciplinary letter

THIRD INFRACTION: Failing grade for the school year; internal suspension, academic probation and disciplinary letter

FOURTH INFRACTION: Recommended dismissal from school

**Plan for sharing the concepts and practices of academic honesty with students, faculty and parents**

In order to provide students with helpful instruction for avoiding charges of plagiarism and to ensure consistency of attribution across all discipline areas, UNIS has chosen the Modern Language Association of America (MLA), 7th edition format as its chosen referencing system. This is not the only standard used by students. However, this is the format used if there is no specification from the teacher.

Instruction on the concepts and practices of academic honesty begin with our introductory Research course in Grade 9. Resources containing our guidelines on academic integrity (and citation methods) are introduced as part of the course and available to students via UNIS Connect and through the UNIS IB page. Students also have access via a school subscription to Noodletools for formatting a bibliography. Free online bibliography formatting tools are also available and could be helpful. Teachers and library staff regularly refer students to these resources. In an assembly at the beginning of the academic year, Grade 11 students are provided further instruction on academic honesty within the IB Programme.

Teachers must submit all Internal Assessments and Extended Essays through Turnitin. This text-matching software is the first level of safeguard to ensure that students are
submitting original work. Online plagiarism detection services have their limitations, and should be used with caution. These services are best used to help students improve their writing, avoiding plagiarism and also over-reliance on other people's work (4.16).

All teachers new to UNIS complete an introductory workshop on the concepts and practices of academic honesty in the IB and on the School’s policies and procedures for dealing with cases of misconduct. As many of our teachers are highly experienced IB instructors (and examiners), annual academic honesty workshops for all teachers are not seen as necessary. As part of our annual cycle of faculty meetings, the IB Coordinators presents any new requirements and the emerging concerns identified by the IBO in regards to academic honesty.

Parents provide support by affirming and sharing the school’s academic honesty policy with their children, encouraging ethical behavior and monitoring students' work in the home such as computer use, homework and written assignments. Parents are provided an electronic copy of the Student and Parent Handbook (which includes the Academic Honesty Policy) and parents attend a version of the Grade 11 presentation during the Tutorial House Parent Coffee Meeting.
Appendix A: Student and Parent Handbook, Academic Honesty

The principle of academic integrity is the cornerstone of a school community. In all our actions at UNIS we encourage students toward a life governed by the values of academic honesty and respect for the work of others. Cheating, plagiarizing, or giving or receiving unacknowledged assistance in academic work are unacceptable behavior in this community. As an affirmation of this principle, students are required to write out the following honor pledge on all major academic work:

“I declare that I have neither given nor received any help or unfair advantage on this test/or on this work which I now submit.”

It is expected that writing out the honor pledge will serve as a reminder of the community’s commitment to the principles of academic honesty and personal integrity.

The following are examples of academic dishonesty:

- Plagiarism— submitting someone else’s words, ideas, or research as if they were one’s own without acknowledging the source
- Using unauthorized notes or other aids in a test, or copying from or being influenced by another student’s work during a test.
- Giving unauthorized aid to another student; allowing another student to copy or use one’s test, paper, or homework.
- Use of help on homework or take-home tests that is beyond the limits specified by the teacher—in effect, constituting plagiarism.
- Theft, deceptive use, or deliberate destruction of library or other educational materials.
- Use of translating software, including those found on the Internet, or translations of texts studied in class, without the permission of the teacher.
• Submitting the same work for credit to more than one teacher unless both teachers give their permission. If in doubt, ask your teacher before turning in any work.

The most frequent failure to give credit to other sources of information occurs when writing research papers. It is, therefore, extremely important that every student at UNIS be familiar with the accepted procedures in acknowledging the work of another writer.

• Footnote all material reproduced directly (i.e., copied) from any source. This includes all phrases, sentences, paragraphs, graphs, charts, images or any other information.
• Sources include printed and electronic media, such as books, textbooks, magazines, CD-ROMs, and the Internet.
• If any idea or argument of someone else’s work is used, give that individual credit, either in footnotes or in the text in parentheses.
• Procrastination and sloppy research techniques can lead to plagiarism. When taking notes, be sure to put information copied directly from a source in quotations. It is always better to read the material, think about it and then write the information in your own words. This will make inadvertent copying less likely to occur. Thoughtful research takes time, so plan ahead and don’t procrastinate.
• Be on the safe side. Too many footnotes, while poor scholarship, are not academically dishonest; on the other hand, if someone else’s work is not acknowledged that is plagiarism.
• Intentions are not relevant in judging whether or not something has been plagiarized. If credit is not given where credit is due, plagiarism has occurred. Don’t be careless.

In cases of academic dishonesty a student may be penalized with a failing a grade for the assignment, the semester, or the year. In addition, a student may receive
internal suspension. In severe cases, the student may be suspended or dismissed from the School.

In order to provide students with helpful instruction for avoiding charges of plagiarism, a booklet containing our guidelines on academic integrity (and citation methods) is presented and distributed to every student during the first week of classes. It is important for students to understand that this educational material is offered to clarify the rationale behind certain conventions of scholarship and to educate on the necessity for absolute honesty in the presentation of written work.

\[i\] Academic Honesty in the Diploma Programme.
\[ii\] UNIS Student and Parent Handbook