

**TAIHU INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL**  
**ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY**

(Revised 8.10.2014)

Developing an understanding of the true value of academic honesty and its practical application is vital in helping our students to become independent learners and critical thinkers. Academic honesty is not a concept that students have an intuitive understanding of and as such it needs to be taught to our students from the start of their school experience and reinforced through all curriculums. Access to information from the internet, web-based learning communities, use of tutors, and informal information sharing between peers has made it increasingly tempting and simple for students to rely on the work of others. It is important that we develop within students the confidence to form their own ideas and to encourage students to recognize other people's academic contributions as a building block to their learning.

As such it is important for students and parents to:

1. Develop an understanding of the importance of producing **authentic work and what is meant by plagiarism**. This is work where the student has developed his or her own ideas with the work and ideas of others fully acknowledged. Authentic work is written in the students own language and all sources, be they quotes, passages, diagrams or photo's etc are fully acknowledged.
2. Recognize behavior that can be defined as **malpractice**. This includes:  
**Plagiarism**: representing another's work or ideas as a student's own.  
**Collusion**: one student's work is copied and submitted by another, this may or may not be deliberate on the part of both students and needs to be distinguished as such.  
**Duplication**: submitting a piece of work for more than one assessment.  
**Fabrication**: producing primary data unsupported by research, falsifying a CAS record.  
**Examination abuses**: gaining an unfair advantage during an examination.
3. Understand how best to use the support of tutors/parental support. Tutors/parental support must not be used to help students write assignments that will be used for formal assessment. It is recommended that students prepare and submit these assignments without assistance, and that the tutor/parent review the work once it has been returned to look at how best it could have been improved. This would also apply to students requesting and receiving assistance from previous teachers they have had.
4. Have an understanding of **the internet as a source of information**. Students should be aware that even though all ideas and the work of others should be acknowledged, it is an important academic skill to be able to make selective use of secondary information for their purposes. This formal acknowledgement of secondary sources applies to CD Rom, e-mail, audio-visual, maps, illustrations and graphs etc.
5. Be aware of the concept of **intellectual property rights**, and that all published material falls under a category of protection such as patents, trademarks, copyright and moral right, and as such is protected by law.
6. Use the APA style of referencing. Taihu International School will teach this style to MYP students.

### **What is Plagiarism?**

**Plagiarism means 'to appropriate ideas, passages etc. from another work or author' (The New Collins Dictionary of the English Language, p865). Thus, plagiarism means stealing other people's words or ideas without acknowledging the source of the information.**

### **What is wrong with Plagiarism?**

Plagiarism works against the school's aims, and, if it involves copying, it prevents students from developing their own skills and knowledge. It can lead to a student being asked to re-submit a piece of work and, if undetected, to unfairness in assessment and feedback. If plagiarism infringes copyright laws, the student is acting illegally. Taihu International School regards deliberate plagiarism as a serious offence and all forms of plagiarism as a serious breach of good practice.

However, we also acknowledge that plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional. At Taihu International School we are committed to educating students about the importance of academic honesty and to teaching them how to avoid unintentional plagiarism, whilst also being sensitive to the cultural dimension of this issue. To this end a standardized referencing format has been developed (APA style) and students will be taught correct referencing both in text and bibliographic. We recognize the role of the library/librarian as being vital in working with departments to ensure that a scope and sequence of research skills will be delivered. These skills will also focus on the importance of note-taking and summarizing skills.

### **Examples of Plagiarism**

- Using the Internet to copy and paste someone else's work into a piece of homework/coursework
- Downloading an essay from the internet and handing it in as one's own work, or buying an essay/paper from a research service, another student or online sites
- Copying the classwork, homework or coursework of another student
- Copying answers from another student during a test or examination
- Paraphrasing material from a source without proper acknowledgement
- Having someone else write, compose or design something for you, which you have the intention of handing in as your own (this can be a paid or free service and includes family members doing your work)

### **What can teachers do to minimize the possibility of students plagiarizing work?**

- Plan research tasks/essays by designing assignments that move students beyond regurgitation of facts to involve them in higher-order thinking.
- Provide students with research suggestions that point them to a small number of internet sites and useful print resources. This limits the time students need to spend locating, sifting and choosing resources that are useful. This support should be year level appropriate.
- Include resource evaluation as part of a research task.
- Discuss the meaning of plagiarism and the concept of academic honesty with students.
- Make expectations clear. Put these expectations in writing and make the consequences of deliberate plagiarism clear to your students.
- Teach referencing skills and insist on correct citation for research assignments. Referencing lists and resource evaluations reinforce the importance of acknowledging resources.
- Emphasize, teach and assess note-taking and summarizing skills.
- Teachers, and in particular MYP Projects and Extended Essay supervisors, should closely monitor the development of major assignments and internal assessment throughout the planning and drafting process.
- Teachers should conscientiously check for plagiarism; this may include the use of 'turnitin' or other anti-plagiarism software available.

### **Guidelines on the detection of plagiarism in MYP**

The following guidelines should be used by staff if plagiarism is suspected or proven. Staff should use their professional judgment when dealing with cases of plagiarism.

- During an **internal test** (class test, end of semester exam, internal assessment) – after the examination has ended the student should be seen by the class teacher and/or MYP coordinator. If proven, the test is left ungraded and the student may be asked to re-take the test. The parents, the Director and the relevant IB coordinator are informed. A written record of the incident is placed on the student's file.
- During an **external examination/coursework/set task** – inform the relevant IB coordinator who will take action according to the guidelines set down by the IBO who have a written policy on academic honesty which must be followed at all times. All cases of plagiarism or suspected plagiarism by MYP/DP students must involve the MYP/DP Coordinator as soon in the process as plagiarism is detected.
- Submission of **classwork/homework** – the teacher places a note in the MYP student handbook upon a first offence to be signed by the parent, and the piece of work is not marked. For M4-D2 students, a letter will be sent home to inform the parents of the incident. The teacher who detected plagiarism will write this letter. The homeroom teacher and MYP/DP coordinator is also informed. For a repeat offence the student receives a formal letter home from the MYP/DP coordinator which will also be placed on the student file.

While all incidents of plagiarism are monitored by the class teacher with the MYP/DP coordinator and homeroom teacher being informed as appropriate, repeat offenders will inevitably be subject to Taihu disciplinary investigation which consists of a meeting with the Director, MYP/DP coordinator, and the relevant subject teacher, a formal letter addressed to the school and the parents explaining the action, and a permanent record in the student file. Under no circumstances should grades be deducted for degrees of plagiarism in a piece of work, as this would undermine our assessment procedures. All plagiarized work should be left unmarked and ungraded.

### **Guidelines for academic infringement or malpractice in DP**

The Articles below have been taken from the IB publication "General Regulations: Diploma Programme." In any case of perceived malpractice, the DP Coordinator is to be informed immediately. A review with the Director and subject teacher/s is then to take place to determine a course of action. Should the student be found to have plagiarized, the student's work will receive a grade of zero, a written record of the incident is to be placed on file, and a letter is to be issued home informing the student's parents of the school's decision. Should the student in question be found guilty of a second offence, an in-school suspension will be given and the incident will be reported on their transcript.

#### **Article 27: Definition of an academic infringement**

There can be instances where work submitted by a candidate for assessment contravenes the standard academic practice of clearly acknowledging all ideas and words of other persons without the candidate having made a deliberate attempt to gain an unfair advantage, for example, where a candidate has not used some means of indicating a quotation, but has cited the source of the text in the bibliography or in a footnote. The final award committee, consisting of the Director, the DP Coordinator, and the relevant subject teacher, may designate a case of this type an academic infringement and not malpractice.

### **Article 28: Applicable procedure**

If the final award committee decides that an academic infringement has been established, no marks will be awarded for the component or part(s) of the component. The candidate will still be eligible for a grade in the subject or IB diploma requirement concerned. The Director will be notified that this action has been taken. The case will not be recorded as malpractice.

### **E: Malpractice**

#### **Article 29: Definition of malpractice**

The IB Organization defines malpractice 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.

#### **Malpractice includes the following:**

- a. Plagiarism: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own.
- b. Collusion: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in 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 IB diploma requirements.
- d. Any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, 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).

### **Article 30: Applicable procedure**

30.1 The school's Diploma Programme coordinator must inform the IB Organization if he or she identifies any malpractice (for example, plagiarism) in relation to a candidate's work after the candidate has signed the cover sheet to the effect that it is his or her own work and constitutes the final version of that work. In such cases, or when an examiner or the IB Organization suspects malpractice, the school will be required to conduct an investigation and provide the IB Organization with relevant documentation concerning the case. If questions arise about the authenticity of a candidate's work before the cover sheet has been signed, that is, before the work has reached its final stage, the situation must be resolved within the school.

30.2 Candidates suspected of malpractice will be invited, through the coordinator, to present a written explanation or defense.

30.3 Cases of suspected malpractice will be presented to the final award committee. After reviewing all evidence collected during the investigation, the committee will decide whether to dismiss the allegation, uphold it, or ask for further investigations to be made.

30.4 If the final award committee deems evidence of malpractice insufficient, the allegation will be dismissed and a grade will be awarded in the normal way.

30.5 If the final award committee decides that a case of malpractice has been established, no grade will be awarded in the subject(s) concerned. No IB diploma will be awarded to the candidate, but a certificate will be awarded for other subject(s) in which no malpractice has occurred. The candidate will be permitted to register for future examinations at least one year after the session in which malpractice was established.

30.6 If a case of malpractice is very serious, the final award committee is entitled to decide that the candidate will not be permitted to register for any future examination session.

30.7 If the candidate has already been found guilty of malpractice in a previous session this will normally lead to disqualification from participation in any future examination session.

30.8 An IB diploma, or a certificate, may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established.

*Adapted with permission from Renaissance College, Hong Kong*