



Mountain Creek State High School



ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

2019



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Rationale

As an IB World School, Mountain Creek State High School embraces the mission and philosophy of the IB Organization, which holds as a basic tenet, 'academic honesty'. We ensure that all of our policies reflect the development of the IB learner profile attributes. As it pertains to academic honesty, the IB learner profile states that each student must be principled, "We act with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere. We take responsibility for our actions and their consequences." The aim of this policy is to promote good academic practice and a school culture that actively encourages academic honesty.

2. Definitions of Academic Misconduct

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:

- 1.1 Plagiarism – the representation, intentionally or unintentionally, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgement.
- 1.2 Collusion – whilst candidates often work together in group collaborations it is considered an act of collusion by the IB if candidates do not present assessment in their own words and acknowledge the words or ideas of others where collaborations has occurred. For example it is considered to be an act of collusion when a single or very similar version of a report is presented by a number of candidates as their own work.
- 1.3 Other forms of misconduct –
 - duplicating work to meet the requirements of more than one assessment component
 - falsification or inventing fictitious data for an assignment
 - taking unauthorized material into an examination room
 - disruption of an examination by an act of misconduct, such as distracting another candidate or creating a disturbance
 - exchanging, supporting, or attempting to support, the passing on of information that is or could be related to the examination
 - failing to comply with the instructions of the invigilator or other member of the school's staff responsible for the conduct of the examination
 - impersonating another candidate
 - theft of examination papers
 - obtaining or seeking to obtain, disclosing, sharing or discussing the content of an examination paper with a person outside the immediate school community either at any time before the start of an examination or within 24 hours after the examination has ended
 - use of essay-writing services (ghost-written or purchased essays) offering assistance in writing essays or other assessment materials.

2. Citing Sources

The method of citing sources adopted by Mountain Creek State High School is the Harvard Methodology – please see school diary/website for an in-depth explanation and example of this method

3. Actions Mountain Creek State High School IB will take to ensure academic honesty is upheld

Upon enrolment into the IB Program, each IB candidate and his/her parent/legal guardian will be given access to a copy of the Academic Honesty Policy. The generic MSCHS academic policy and the IB academic policy is also published in the school diary and on the website

Information sessions are run for parents/guardians and for students, which will cover definitions, descriptions and implications of academic misconduct.

Concepts of academic honesty are address in each class either within assessment documentation or by classroom teachers. Information covered:

- Importance of leading their lives honestly and with integrity as members of an IB school, and as members of a global community.
- Correct way to cite work taken from other sources, using the IB publication 'Effective Citing and Referencing'.
- Different types of academic misconduct and of their consequences.

Coordinator to ensure all new teachers are trained in the principles and practices of IB Diploma Programme so that all teachers understand the relationship between the Learner Profile, transdisciplinary skills, and Approaches to Teaching and Learning as they relate to academic honesty.

Crossmarking/checking is a consistent practice in all subject areas

Students to submit all rough drafts and final submissions for writing assignments, essays and/or research papers to plagiarism checking software. e.g. Turnitin.

4. Action students will take to ensure academic honesty is upheld

- Ensure that work submitted for assessment is authentically theirs.
- Ensure that all words, thoughts, ideas, arguments, or quotes from others are correctly referenced using the APA convention.
- Utilise positive time management skills in order to adhere to assessment deadlines and produce the best work possible for submission.
- Submit all works, draft and final copy to the required plagiarism checking software (Turnitin) regularly as an aid to understanding and avoiding plagiarism.

5. Actions parents / legal guardians can take to ensure academic honesty is upheld

- Become familiar with the Academic Honesty Policy and actively discuss with their children the content and related implications.
- Understand the implications of academic misconduct.
- Approach the school if their children need additional support.
- Recognise the role of external tutors and ensure that these tutors are aware of the Academy's Academic Honesty Policy.
- They should be aware that tutors must abide by the requirements of academic honesty when providing tuition related to IB curriculum and assessment tasks.

6. Actions to be taken in the event that academic misconduct is suspected

If a breach of the Academic Honesty Policy is suspected the following will occur.

- The teacher, invigilator, or fellow student will report suspected academic dishonesty to the IB Coordinator.
- The IB Coordinator will investigate the incident and make a determination as to whether academic misconduct has occurred and the extent of the academic misconduct. This involves interviewing the student(s) and teacher and reviewing the material in question.
- If the IB Coordinator reaches the conclusion that academic misconduct has occurred, parents will be notified and the matter will be recorded on One School.
- The assessment will be awarded a non-submission.
- If the breach is part of an ongoing pattern of behaviour a report will be submitted to the Head of Subschool/Head of Department OR Deputy Principal and discussion about continuation in program will occur with all parties
- The MCSHS Assessment and Academic Policy provides further details of consequences for students.
- The student will face disciplinary consequences in accordance with MCSHS policy published in the school diary and on the website

7. Action IB may take if an academic honesty infringement is suspected

Please refer to the current *Diploma Program Assessment Procedure* document but as of 2019 this states:

7.1 Circumstances that may trigger an investigation:

- A coordinator informs the Assessment Division, IB Global Centre, Cardiff, that academic misconduct may have taken place during an examination.
- An examiner reports possible plagiarism or collusion.
- A sample of assessment material randomly submitted to plagiarism detection software(s) (by the Assessment Division, IB Global Centre, Cardiff) reveals that the work of a candidate may not be entirely authentic. Before the IB will investigate a case of suspected academic misconduct, there must be clear evidence to justify a suspicion of wrong doing.

- In the case of plagiarism, the evidence must be in the form of a source that appears to have been copied by a candidate.
- In cases of collusion, an investigation will only be pursued if the candidates' work shows clear similarities.

7.2 The investigation process

When the IB starts an investigation into academic misconduct, the coordinator is informed by email.

The IB requires the coordinator to immediately inform the head of school of the investigation.

The IB will include full instructions for the investigation, including the steps to be taken by the coordinator, statement templates, and so on, with the email.

The evidence is then considered by the academic honesty sub-committee of the final award committee and the outcome is decided.

If an allegation of a breach of IB regulations is established, a penalty will be applied.

If it is decided that no breach has occurred, the subject result will be released in the normal way.

In all cases where the final award committee has established a breach of regulations, the head of school will be informed by email of the decision reached by the committee.

The correspondence will be copied to the school's DP coordinator, appropriate IB staff and the chair of the examining board.

The final award committee, or its sub-committee, has full discretion to make these decisions.

7.3 Appeals against decisions of the final award committee

Decisions of the final award committee may be appealed if there are acceptable grounds for the appeal. For further information about the process, acceptable grounds and any subsequent appeal, please refer to Diploma Programme: Assessment appeals procedure and article 22 of General regulations: Diploma Programme.

8. Communications about academic honesty with the MCSHS community

The following communication processes are used to ensure our community are informed about all aspects of student assessment at MCSHS.

- This policy (and accompanying documents) is available to staff on the MCSHS on G: Drive and students, and parents on the school website and Moodle
- Staff are in-serviced annually on processes and the importance of academic honesty and the use of plagiarism checking software.
- Students are taught about academic honesty in the curriculum.
- Parent nights provide details about the importance of academic honesty and how our school processes support students.

9. Support documents to refer to if academic dishonesty is suspected

Please refer to the following documents when consider each case (not exclusive to)

- Mountain Creek Student Framework (published in diary and on website)
- Mountain Creek Assessment Policy for possible examples of infringement
- Current IB documents – for example *Diploma Program Assessment Procedure AND The responsibilities of IB World Schools in ensuring the integrity of IB assessments*