

Academic Honesty Policy

MISSION, VISION AND RATIONALE

Founded in the charism of the Religious of the Sacred Heart of Mary, London is an independent, Catholic, all-girls, IB world school that empowers young women to be “firm in faith, vibrant in hope, rooted in love and one in service”. Marymount students question, challenge and contribute meaningfully as intellectual and compassionate global citizens.

Enshrined in the Mission and Objectives of Marymount International School London is the commitment:

- To develop in each student a sense of personal integrity, inner reflection and responsibility for her own actions.
- To stimulate students to think independently, critically and without prejudice
- To instil a lifelong love of learning and inculcate in students the qualities of scholarship, character, service and leadership

As an IB World School, Marymount London is equally committed to developing the skills and attributes of the IB Learner Profile, particularly that of helping students to become principled, by acting ‘...with integrity and honesty, with a strong sense of fairness and justice, and with respect for the dignity and rights of people everywhere.’ (IBO 2013).

We believe that these principles of responsibility, integrity, honesty, scholarship and respecting others should be reflected and visible in the work produced by students and throughout all areas of the School, and as such they form the foundation of the School’s policy on Academic Honesty.

WHAT IS ACADEMIC HONESTY?

The IB understands Academic Honesty as ‘... a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment’. (Garza 2014).

Academic Integrity is defined as “a choice to act in a responsible way whereby others can have trust in us as individuals” (IBO 2019, p3)

Marymount London aims to instil an “ethical culture” of Academic Integrity, to “be embraced and fostered by the entire community” (IBO 2019, p3), as the foundation for all members of the community to produce “legitimate, authentic and honest scholarly work” (IBO 2019, p3) and therefore expects all students, staff and parents to:

- Act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work at all times
- Avoid plagiarism by respecting conventions relating to intellectual property and always acknowledging the sources of ideas and/or work that are not their own.
- Understand the difference between collusion and collaboration
- Use appropriate and recognised research and referencing techniques
- Strive to produce authentic work at all times

With this in mind, teachers, students and parents at Marymount International School London are expected to act in a way that acknowledges and shows respect for the work and ideas of others in order to:

- give the reader/viewer/listener the opportunity to follow up references;
- help a reader/viewer/listener to distinguish between the work of the creator and the work of others;
- give the reader/viewer/listener the opportunity to check the validity of creator's interpretation;
- receive proper credit for the research process;
- establish credibility and authority of own knowledge and ideas. (Garza 2014)

In order to ensure that all members of our learning community observe academically honest practices, it is important to understand what academic misconduct is and how best to avoid it.

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'. (Garza 2014)

There are many ways a teacher, student or parent might gain an unfair advantage including (but not limited to) the following:

- **Plagiarism** – ...the representation, intentionally or unwittingly, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear and explicit acknowledgement.
- **Collusion** – secret agreement or cooperation for an illegal or deceitful purpose. In an academic context, this would include supporting misconduct by another candidate, as in allowing your work to be copied or submitted for assessment by someone else.
- **Cheating** – to knowingly violate rules to gain an unfair advantage. This might include cheating in a test or examination by copying from another student, giving information to someone else, obtaining information from unauthorised materials (hidden notes, loose papers, books etc.) and/or technology (smart phone, tablet, smart watch etc.).
- **Fabrication** – fabrication and/or misrepresentation of data, information, references and/or results etc.
- **Duplication of work** – reusing or recycling already assessed material and/or the presentation of the same work for different assessment components.
- **Disclosing information** to another student, or **receiving information** from another candidate, about the content of an examination paper within 24 hours after the examination. (IBO 2012)

RESPONSIBILITIES

Student responsibilities – students are expected to:

- produce work that is appropriately referenced in accordance with the School's Academic Honesty Policy;
- familiarise themselves with the guidance outlined in the Academic Honesty Policy and to read all supporting documentation, including the Marymount 'Super Quick Citing and Referencing' Guide;
- ask their teachers for guidance and clarification if they are at all unclear about their responsibilities regarding academic honesty, or about any of the conventions they are required to use (citing, referencing, bibliographies);
- adhere to all examination guidelines.

Teacher responsibilities – teachers are expected to:

- ensure they are familiar with the Marymount ‘Super Quick Citing and Referencing’ Guide and have read the supporting documentation:
Academic integrity (October 2019)
Academic honesty in the IB educational context (August 2014, updated November 2016)
Effective citing and referencing (August 2014);
- seek help from the Director of Research, Department Chair, or member of Senior Leadership Team for clarification if they are at all unclear about their responsibilities regarding academic honesty, or about any of the conventions they are required to use (citing, referencing, bibliographies);
- ensure students are aware of what academic honesty and academic misconduct look like in their subject;
- provide opportunities within and across subject areas for students to learn and practise how to use the work and ideas of others in support of their own;
- provide appropriate feedback, guidance and/or examples (in accordance with the School’s ‘Assessment Policy’ and ‘Code of Conduct’) to ensure that students’ work is their own;
- undertake regular quality assurance checks on student work to confirm it does not contain plagiarized content or evidence of student collusion (IBO 2019, p6);
- recognise where genuine mistakes and misunderstanding arise and provide appropriate support;
- provide a suitable test/examination environment where appropriate;
- identify, record and report any instances of academic misconduct in accordance with the Academic Honesty Policy.

Department Chair responsibilities – the Department Chair is responsible for:

- ensuring that all members of the department are apprised of the Academic Honesty Policy, have read all the supporting documentation and are following policy and procedures.

School responsibilities – the School is responsible for:

- ensuring that the Academic Honesty Policy and supporting documentation are accessible to staff, students and parents;
- ensuring all documentation is up to date and reviewed on a regular basis;
- ensuring teachers are familiar with, and implement, practices relating to academic honesty;
- ensuring that examinations are carried out strictly to the standards required by examination boards;
- providing appropriate professional development for teachers to implement these practices effectively;
- ensuring that the policy is implemented fairly and consistently School-wide;
- ensuring that appropriate records are kept.

Parent responsibilities – parents are responsible for:

- familiarising themselves with the policy and supporting documentation;
- working in partnership with the School to support their daughters in the production of work which is academically honest.

PROCEDURE FOR INVESTIGATING ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

If a teacher suspects that student may have contravened the School’s Academic Honesty Policy, he/she will follow the procedure outlined below. The student has the right to request that a parent, peer or teacher be present in any discussion of a problem or incident, particularly if the consequences are especially heavy.

1. Gather evidence to support initial suspicions – this may involve checking websites, periodicals, books and other print media as well as the work of other students. Hard copies of the student’s work and supporting evidence of academic misconduct must be kept on file.

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2. Inform the student concerned and give them a right to respond to the accusation of academic misconduct. If the student is found to be innocent of academic misconduct then no further action will be taken and no record will be kept of the matter.
 3. Inform and consult with the Advisor and Deputy Head (Academic) to establish the severity of the infringement (based on the evidence provided and the response of the student under investigation) and determine appropriate action. The focus of the investigation and resulting judgement will be to ascertain the level of intent i.e. whether the academic misconduct was deliberate or accidental.
 4. The student concerned, along with their Parents/Guardians and Advisor will be informed of the judgement and the resulting consequences.

CONSEQUENCES OF ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

The consequences of an incident of academic misconduct will vary, according to:

- the student's past history in terms of academic honesty
- the student's age and the expectations associated with her year level
- the student's level of awareness (for example, previous teaching, for example if new to the school and not taught academic honesty in previous school)
- the student's level of understanding (for example additional learning requirements or English as a second language which could limit the student's understanding of academic honesty requirements)
- the severity of the incident
- intentionality

All cases of academic misconduct will be treated on a case-by-case basis. However, if a student is judged to have contravened the School's policy on academic honesty, the following consequences will apply:

1. The student will immediately receive a failing grade (this would be either a criterion score of '0' or an overall score of '0') for that piece of work. In most cases the student will be required to redo and resubmit the work to the required standard as long as deadlines/time permit.
2. The student will receive an Academic Sanction (recorded on iSAMS) and may be placed into detention.
3. A letter will be sent home to parents/guardians informing them of the incident and a record will be noted in the student's file.

Please note that if a student is judged to have contravened the School's Academic Honesty Policy for a second time, the matter will be instantly referred to a disciplinary committee, which will consider the matter and take appropriate action. Appropriate action may include:

- requesting a meeting between the student's parents/guardians and the Deputy Head and/or Headmistress
- refusing to sign-off on a piece of coursework
- being temporarily suspended from School
- not being awarded course credit for the subject concerned
- being removed from the MYP/DP programmes
- reporting details of academic misconduct to the IB

It is also important to note that, if a student is discovered to have helped another student to cheat, she will automatically receive a failing grade for her own work and appropriate disciplinary action will be taken, including a meeting with the Deputy Head and the student's Advisor.

To ensure consistency and fairness when mistakes are made, the School will keep central records of each incident of academic misconduct and the resulting consequences. While each incident will be treated on a case-by-case basis, central records will help ensure consistency, and may also highlight general trends or problems with particular students.

GUIDANCE ON ACADEMIC HONESTY

Marymount London expects all students, staff and parents to act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their work at all times, respecting appropriate academic conventions (i.e. the correct way to do it).

The principles of academic honesty (note-taking, paraphrasing, citing, referencing etc.) are taught holistically within the curriculum as part of ATL skills.

Students, parents and teachers should refer to supporting documentation on citing and referencing, including the Marymount 'Super Quick Citing & Referencing' Guide, and the IB Guides *Effective Citing and Referencing* (August 2014), *Academic Integrity* (October 2019) and *Academic Honesty in the IB Educational Context* (August 2014, updated November 2016) for additional help and/or clarification.

SPECIFIC GUIDANCE FOR STUDENTS

What does Academic Honesty look like?

The key convention to remember is:

'in any piece of work which you produce, you should cite or credit the work of other people if you have used it in any way'.

- '...any piece of work which you produce' means any piece of work – not just essays, but also presentations, key notes, talks, videos, pamphlets, posters etc.
- '...the work of other people' means any ideas, thoughts, images, opinions or words which you may have found in a book, an article, a video, a picture, a photograph, a piece of music, an interview, a conversation, an email....
- '...cite or credit' means to make it clear that this idea or thought or picture was not originally created by you, but by someone else. We usually do this by writing somewhere in your piece of work, the name (or more) of the original author/website etc. The instructions on how you are expected to do this will be given by your teachers (and are in the Marymount 'Super Quick Citing and Referencing' Guide).
- '...used it in any way' means if you have summarised it, paraphrased it, quoted it, used an example from it...you must cite it.

Therefore, if, in your work, essay, presentation, video or other work, you have used the words, ideas, pictures, videos, or any thoughts at all of another person, in any way, these must be appropriately cited and referenced (in accordance with instructions from your teachers and the Marymount 'Super Quick Citing & Referencing' Guide).

If you saw it, read it, heard about it anywhere else, assume it needs to be referenced!

For consistency, the School uses the Chicago system. Each department has determined which of the two Chicago formats (Author-Date or Notes/Bibliography) is most appropriate for that particular subject.

Some vocabulary you may need to understand:

- **Source:** where you got the information from. (eg book, picture, email, video, lecture, interview....)
- **Cite** (verb): to write a brief indication of where the source of this information is from, within the body of your text/essay/presentation etc. For example, at the end of a sentence somewhere in your essay, or after a bullet point in a PowerPoint slide. In Chicago style, it may be either the author's name/title of item and date (and sometimes page number/s) of the source in brackets, or a footnote.
- **Citation** (noun): the actual bracket information or footnote containing brief information about the source.
- **Reference:** the full details about your source. These will vary depending on the type of source (book, video, interview...) and your teacher's instructions. Giving the full details (eg author's name, internet URL, date document was written etc) allows your reader to find the source easily if they wish to.
- **Reference List / Bibliography***: a list of all the references for all your sources which you cited in your piece of work, listed in alphabetical order. It goes at the end of your piece of work (eg the final slide if it is a presentation, the last shot of a video....).

*NB: the IB requires you to only include in your Reference List or Bibliography those items which you have cited in your essay/presentation etc. Although other definitions exist, in order to adhere to the IB requirements, this is the definition to be used and understood by all staff and students at Marymount International School London for all IB MYP and DP externally-assessed assignments.

FAQS:

If I cite lots of different people & sources, surely it doesn't look good?

Many citations in a piece of work does not mean that your work is not good! On the contrary, it shows the reader that your work is more serious, more academic, and that any opinions or conclusions you come to have been founded in good research, rather than just randomly made up. Look at some of the advanced scientific research in the library – they are full of citations!

I have summarised an article or put it into my own words, so surely, I don't need to cite it?

You must cite it, whether you have summarised, quoted or paraphrased, because the ideas and thoughts are from the article, not from you originally.

What if I make a mistake and cite or reference incorrectly?

The important thing is that you have tried to cite or reference in the best way you know how – in this way you have fulfilled the expectations of academic honesty. As you go up through the School you will get more practice at doing it and will be expected to become more familiar with the conventions, and therefore your accuracy will improve. The odd incorrect full stop or comma or missing initials or misspelt title will not be considered academic misconduct. It is far better to cite with a few errors than not to cite at all.

What if I forget to reference one of my authors – will this be considered academic misconduct?

Again, your intention is what matters. If it was a genuine mistake, just keep your eyes out for the next time. Teachers will often recognise what is a genuine mistake (for example, if all the authors are cited in the body of the text, but the full reference for one of these is missing from your Reference List). However, you need to demonstrate that you have learned from your mistakes and to work hard to produce comprehensive and accurate referencing.

If I don't get my friend/family to help me, I'll get a bad grade.

All work, whether it is a piece of homework, a project or a test, is a chance for you to practice your skills, learn new ones, and show what you have learnt. Assessment is a chance for a teacher to praise you for skills and

knowledge which you have improved, and to help you and guide you in any areas where you are struggling or do not understand. It is also a chance for the teacher to give further guidance on the parts which students have not understood.

Therefore, if you show us what you do not understand, we can help you – so what you might consider a ‘poor’ grade now, will turn into a better one. However, if you show us only what someone else (your friend/family) knows, your teachers will think you understand it all and will not give any further help – so the next time you will still not know!

What specific skills will help me to ensure my work is academically honest?

There are a whole range of ATL skills that you will be taught and encouraged to use as you move through the School. These skills will be specific to the subjects you are studying, but may include:

- Taking notes
- Highlighting and annotating
- Paraphrasing
- Writing a journal/Reflecting
- Creating an annotated bibliography
- Citing and referencing

POLICY FACTS

Approved: February 2021
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