



TASOK Academic Integrity Policy

At TASOK we BELIEVE in... *Excellence, Integrity, and Inclusivity*

Our Mission for Excellence: The American School of Kinshasa provides dynamic and individualized educational challenges and opportunities that promote diversity and empower each of its students to develop into independent global community leaders.

Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this policy is to inform our community about how TASOK approaches academic integrity and academic misconduct and why we feel it essential to the learning of our students. Our Vision of Excellence guides this policy: *The American School of Kinshasa strives to empower students to become reflective, culturally aware, and independent thinkers who will go on to enrich the global community.*

Academic Integrity is defined as:

- A guiding principle for ethical decision-making and behavior in the production of legitimate, authentic, and honest scholarly work.

Academic Misconduct is defined as:

- Deliberate or inadvertent actions or behavior that gives an individual an unfair advantage on an assessment, or that may disadvantage another individual.

Expectations and Responsibilities

Academic integrity is encouraged and taught through the TASOK curriculum. Students are guided to think creatively, question and inquire, which should result in their own solutions to further incorporate knowledge and understanding. IB students across the Programme should learn Approaches to Learning (ATL) skills to suit their level of understanding. These skills include self-management, social, communication, thinking and research. Students are given opportunities to make mistakes and learn from them so that they are well prepared for further studies.

It is the responsibility of all stakeholders to be aware and informed about the importance of academic honesty at TASOK.

The TASOK community is expected to 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." (IB Learner Profile)

The school is expected to:

- Support the community in their understanding of academic honesty and misconduct.
- Work to educate parents, students and other community members about academic honesty and misconduct.
- Uphold academic honesty following the policy.
- Ensure students have access to the policy placed on the TASOK website.
- Ensure students are taught in their classes about academic honesty and how to avoid academic misconduct.



- Facilitate workshops for teachers, students and parents on academic integrity.

Teachers are expected to:

- Teach students how to maintain academic integrity and avoid misconduct in their subjects
- Work with students so that they understand how to avoid issues with misconduct
- Uphold academic integrity by following the policy
- Go over this policy with their students
- Model academic integrity

Students are expected to:

- Know and understand what academic integrity and misconduct mean at TASOK
- Complete all assessments in an honest manner and to the best of their own abilities
- Give credit to the work of others in all assessments
- Refrain from receiving non-permitted assistance in the completion or editing of their work
- Refrain from giving undue assistance to peers in the completion of their work

Parents are expected to:

- Know and understand what academic honesty and misconduct mean at TASOK
- Support their children in their endeavors to maintain academic integrity and avoid misconduct

TASOK will follow the guidelines set out by MLA (Modern Language Association). Teachers are expected to know and understand MLA guidelines and are expected to teach these guidelines to students throughout the year. All students are encouraged to adopt the conventions of MLA, but how and when they are doing is developmentally appropriate.

TASOK uses *Turnitin* to support students in their academic honesty. This is a service that runs essays through a database of published material and produces an originality report, indicating the amount of the essay that is not considered original. It is most effective at locating problems related to academic honesty and has proven useful in supporting students in submitting original work. How it is used depends on when it is developmentally appropriate across our academic programs.

Academic Misconduct

The IB 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. misconduct includes the following:

Cheating is defined as using dishonest methods to gain an advantage. *Cheating* occurs when a student misrepresents that he/she has mastered the information on an assessment when in fact it has not been mastered. This can include the possession of unauthorized materials, the unauthorized exchanging of information during an assessment, or gaining unauthorized access to assessments before the scheduled time

Plagiarism can come in many forms. The first copying external sources without giving proper acknowledgement. Second is copying and submitting another student's work as their own. The third is when a student lends or facilitates the copying of their work.



Collusion occurs when students are working collaboratively but the work submitted has extensive similarities and significant sections with identical content or answers, and is then submitted as a student's own original work.

Duplication of work is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or IB diploma requirements.

Submitting work commissioned, edited by, or obtained from a third party is when a student submits work that was heavily edited or entirely produced by a third party in order to circumnavigate rules regarding plagiarism or teacher support

Academic Integrity in the Primary Years Programme

At TASOK we use the attributes of the IB learner profile when providing students with examples and models of academic honesty that support approaches to learning, classroom practices, group work and other activities.

Our academic honesty practices are modeled at a level appropriate for the age of the student.

In the PYP at TASOK teachers ensure that students:

- Take responsibility for their own work
- Recognize that they are personally responsible for academic honesty and are able to recognize what behaviors constitute academic misconduct
- Are given guidelines for individual and group work
- Understand references, citations, quotations and paraphrasing (at an age-appropriate level)
- Understand intellectual property, plagiarism and authentic authorship (at an age-appropriate level)

All PYP teachers emphasize the ethical uses of information as students engage in the inquiry process to construct new learning based on what they know and learn from other sources.

To assist students in developing personal responsibility for learning, teachers refer to, teach and use the **approaches to learning** (self-management skills, social skills, communication skills, thinking skills and research skills) across the curriculum to further support students develop the tools necessary to maintain academic honesty.

Examples of how academic honesty may be explicitly taught in the PYP

(i) Culminating project

As students prepare to present a culminating project to parents, the teacher takes a moment to discuss the importance of academic honesty. The teacher provides an example of a student who copies another's work or allows someone else to complete a project for them as a way of not maintaining academic honesty. The teacher provides examples of academic



honesty and encourages a conversation that allows parents to share ideas that can be used at home.

(ii) Group work

Very young students are working together in small groups. The teacher notices that one student is not participating. The teacher has a one-to-one conversation with the student and encourages participation by asking questions and reminding the student of the importance of presenting his/her own ideas. Later, the teacher reminds the class of the essential agreements for group work and that every student should have a chance to offer new or different ideas that reflect the creativity and collaboration of the team. The students are also reminded of the importance of practicing social, communication and thinking skills.

(iii) Presentation

A Grade 5 student is working on the PYP exhibition. During the research process, a variety of sources, including books, blogs, internet videos and print articles were accessed. The student has used items from web searches as part of his visual presentation. Since the information is easily available, he is confused about whether or not all sources need to be documented. The student reviews the school guidelines for academic honesty and his own exhibition journal where several pages are dedicated to citations across a variety of media. The homeroom teacher also models and provides regular reminders to all students about the importance and meaning of academic honesty.

(iv) Creative work

While working on a project related to the transdisciplinary theme: *How We Express Ourselves*, a student creates a video that features different forms of art. She decides to use pictures, music and images that were found on the internet. While reviewing the rubric for the project, the student realizes that she has forgotten to cite the different musical and video sources that have been used. She talks with the classroom teacher who provides examples of an agreed way to reference the items.

(v) Independent work

To further develop skills related to academic honesty, the whole school librarian has chosen the key concept of responsibility as a central theme. The librarian leads discussions across the grade levels about how authors create work and the importance of respecting intellectual property. Students learn that they have the responsibility to cite sources beginning in Grade 1. The librarian explains that the sources are a “road map” for the students and that it is important to acknowledge the author out of respect. Therefore, students are taught how to create a bibliography or a page of works cited.

Academic Integrity in the Middle Years Programme

Teaching of Academic Integrity in the Middle Years Programme falls into different phases as students progress through the program.

Grades 6 & 7

- Learns about what constitutes academic integrity and misconduct



- Uses notes during a test only when allowed by the teacher
- Learns to write in own words/voice instead of paraphrasing
- Ensures that they are clear about teacher expectations for the assignment
- Talks to teachers and the Librarian about referencing and research

Instruction is provided in a cross-disciplinary approach regarding:

- Simple paraphrasing and adaptation of source material
- Introduction to the use of MLA referencing
- Simple ways to acknowledge information derived from electronic sources
- Learns what constitutes cheating

Grades 8 & 9

- Keeps and maintains accurate personal course notes
- Understands and abides by the school's rules concerning cheating
- Acknowledges in a specific manner help from another person
- Asks beforehand what kinds of external help are permissible
- Develops citing sources accurately according to the MLA format
- Does not purchase and submit work written by someone else
- Must not submit work done by a parent, another student, friend, or tutor
- Uses notes during a test/examination only when allowed by the teacher

Instruction is provided in cross-disciplinary approach regarding:

- Paraphrasing and adaptation of source material
- Techniques for using translated material
- Research writing techniques
- Data gathering techniques

Grade 10

- Documents source material in a formal and appropriate manner
- Uses direct quotation properly
- Understands the concepts of plagiarism
- Understands the consequences of cheating regarding both school-based work
- external examinations
- Acknowledges explicitly and appropriately, help provided by another person
- Keeps track of the research process to prove sources used in research
- Uses the website www.turnitin.com to help check for plagiarism
- Does not purchase and submit pieces of writing written by someone else
- Does not write essays for other students
- Does not present artistic or creative work in any medium that has literally been reproduced except in a manner allowed by the teacher or permitted by the examination rules

Instruction is provided in a cross-disciplinary approach regarding:

- Understanding and applying MLA referencing
- Research writing techniques
- Data gathering techniques
- The planning, preparation, and execution of research writing assignments

The possible consequences of academic misconduct within the MYP



The following is a guideline for students across all of their subjects. Offences will be logged on continuous Academic Tracking for Grades 6-12.

	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence
Misconduct	<p>The teacher informs the Principal and Coordinator.</p> <p>Student is added to Academic Misconduct Tracking.</p> <p>The teacher will explain through verbal and/or written feedback on why the student's work is inappropriate. Rewrite within 1 day.</p> <p>From this meeting, a plan is created to help the student develop skills to avoid misconduct and promote academic honesty. Parents notified</p>	<p>The teacher informs the Principal and Coordinator.</p> <p>Incident is reported on Academic Misconduct Tracking. The work will need to be resubmitted but will incur a 0 grade following feedback and support from the teacher.</p> <p>Parents and student meet with the MYP Coordinator..</p> <p>The MYP Coordinator documents the meeting, places the letter on the student's file and reports back to teachers.</p>	<p>The teacher informs the Principal and MYP Coordinator.</p> <p>Incident is reported on Academic Misconduct Tracking. Internal suspension until work is submitted, but will incur a 0.</p> <p>A parent/student meeting is arranged with the MYP Coordinator and Principal (DP Coordinator will be present for Grade 10 students.)</p> <p>The MYP Coordinator documents the meeting, places the letter on the student's permanent file and reports back to the teachers.</p>

Note: After a third offence, students will be dealt with on a case by case basis with the principal and coordinator.

Academic Integrity in the Diploma Programme

In addition to understanding the principles and expectations of academic integrity developed in the Middle Years Programme, Diploma students are also expected to understand and abide by the academic integrity requirements of the DP. There is more specific guidance on what is considered academic misconduct when taking the Diploma Programme examinations. Each of these threaten the integrity of the examinations:

- Possessing unauthorized material in the examination room
- Exhibiting misconduct or disruptive behaviour during an examination
- Exchanging, passing, obtaining or receiving verbal or written information from other students during the examination completion time— or attempting to



- Removal of secure materials such as examination papers, questions and answer booklets, from the examination room
- Impersonating an IB candidate— both impersonator and person allowing impersonation
- Failing to report an incident of academic misconduct
- Gaining access to IB examination papers before examination's scheduled time
- Sharing of IB examination paper content before or during the examination's scheduled time, or within 24 hours after the examination
- Assisting another student(s) in committing an act of academic misconduct

The possible consequences of academic dishonesty within the DP

Students entering Grade 11 and the DP/Course Programme are expected to be fully aware of what constitutes academic dishonesty and to avoid any form of malpractice.

The following is a guideline:

	First Offence	Second Offence	Third Offence
Misconduct	<p>The teacher informs the Principal and DP Coordinator.</p> <p>A note is placed on the student's files.</p> <p>The teacher will explain through verbal and/or written feedback on why the student's work is inappropriate.</p> <p>From this meeting, a plan is created to help the student develop skills to avoid misconduct and promote academic integrity.</p> <p>Parents notified.</p> <p>Work is submitted based on a date agreed by the teacher for full credit.</p>	<p>The teacher informs the Principal and DP Coordinator.</p> <p>Parents/students meet with the DP Coordinator and a plan is made to address the misconduct and set a date for resubmission.</p> <p>The DP Coordinator documents the meeting, places the letter on the student's file and reports back to teachers.</p> <p>Work is submitted based on a date agreed by the teacher but receives a grade of 0.</p> <p>For DP coursework, work is still submitted to the IB following correcting concerns of misconduct for full credit towards the IB diploma.</p>	<p>The teacher informs the Principal and DP Coordinator.</p> <p>Parents/students meet with the DP Coordinator and a plan is made to address the misconduct through internal suspension.</p> <p>The DP Coordinator documents the meeting, places the letter on the student's file and reports back to teachers.</p> <p>Internal suspension until work is submitted, but will receive a grade of 0.</p> <p>For DP coursework, work is still submitted to the IB following correcting concerns of misconduct for full credit towards the IB diploma.</p>

Note: After a third offence, students will be dealt with on a case by case basis with the principal and coordinator.



Further information on how the IB handles misconduct, the process in which they are investigated, and the possible consequences can be found in “Academic Integrity”, published October 2019 on behalf of the International Baccalaureate Organization.

Investigating Academic Misconduct and the Rights of the Student

When teachers suspect academic misconduct, the following process is followed:

1. Teacher submits an Academic Misconduct Form
2. The appropriate program coordinator receives notification
3. The coordinator checks the Academic Misconduct Log and determines the number of the offense
4. The coordinator verifies with the teacher that there is valid evidence of misconduct
5. The coordinator informs the teacher and principal the steps required for the offence
6. A meeting is held with the student and appropriate parties, depending on the number of offences, to inform them of the misconduct and the steps required to correct the issue.
7. The coordinator logs the offense and steps taken with the student

In instances where a student feels that they have been unfairly accused or would like to appeal the decision made by the school regarding the consequences of academic misconduct, they should follow the guidelines laid out in the “TASOK Appeals and Complaints Procedures” document.

Academic Honesty and University/College Applications

For most university/college applications to be accepted, the Counselor has to sign the application or acknowledge that it is being submitted. With these applications, the Counselor has to give full disclosure about any academic misconduct that has led to a suspension or any involving IB DP assessments. Thus, before applications are sent, the Counselor will check student files.

If misconduct involving suspension occurs after a college application has been sent, then the school notifies the university/college.

In addition, many universities/colleges require a letter from both the Counselor and at least one teacher who knows the student well. It may be difficult for a teacher to write this letter if there are multiple incidents of misconduct in their academic career. As well, the Counselor will disclose misconduct involving suspension or on IB DP assessments in their letter.

Frequently asked Questions

1. What is the difference between collaboration and collusion?

Collaboration is where a group works together equally. Collusion is where one person or two people do the work and one person or more say that they completed the work as well.

2. I didn't mean to do it, so it's okay?

It is not okay. Whether it is intentional or not, it is still misconduct.

3. So this means no more group work?

Group work is important and it will still be part of learning at TASOK. Group work is



acceptable as long as everyone works together and equally completes the work.

4. Why does academic integrity matter?

It is not only a matter of integrity, but it is about respecting the work of others and yourself.

5. How do I cite properly?

You are expected to master this skill with the guidance of your teachers. There are specific rules and regulations for citations that can be found online.

6. Why can't I just rely on online citation sites like *Easybib*?

Easybib is a great tool but you must remember that it is only a "machine" or "computer program". It only puts in the information that you input. What if you don't know what information to input?

7. Where can I go for help?

You can go and see your teachers, the librarian, the MLA Handbook, and the website: OWL Purdue.

Policy Stewardship

Roles and responsibilities for implementing, evaluating and reviewing the assessment policy and for training new teachers

- Implementing responsibility: Principals and Programme Coordinators.
- The Academic Integrity Policy will be evaluated and reviewed by the programme coordinator and section principals
- The Academic Integrity Policy will be introduced to new teachers during the Orientation Programme by the Principal and Programme Coordinators.
- Revisions and updates will be communicated to the SS Staff.
- The Academic Integrity Policy will be introduced to parents and students at the beginning of the academic year.
- The Academic Integrity Policy is published on the TASOK Website.

Review process:

Date revised: February 20th, 2022 as part of the DP evaluation process

To be evaluated and reviewed: February 2024

Appendix I: IB Regulations

Extracts from *General Regulations: Diploma Programme*

Article 21: Investigating cases of suspected academic misconduct

21.1 If questions arise about the authenticity of a candidate's work before submission for assessment, the situation must be resolved within the school. If possible academic misconduct (for example, plagiarism, collusion) is identified after a candidate's work has been submitted to the IB Organization for assessment, the school's DP Coordinator must inform the IB Organization as soon as possible. For work that is internally assessed, "submission" refers to the deadline by which teachers' marks must be submitted to the IB



Organization. For work that is externally assessed, other than the scripts from the written examinations, “submission” refers to the candidate signing the declaration of authenticity for their work.

21.2 When a school, an examiner or the IB Organization establishes evidence to suspect academic misconduct by a candidate, the school will be required to conduct an investigation and provide the IB Organization with statements and other relevant documentation concerning the case. If a school fails to support the investigation into possible academic misconduct, no grade will be awarded to the candidate in the subject(s) concerned.

21.3 If the IB Organization notifies a school that a candidate is suspected of academic misconduct and that the IB Organization has the intention of initiating an investigation, at the discretion of the head of school it is permissible for the candidate to be withdrawn from the session or from the subject(s) in which academic misconduct may have occurred. However, at the discretion of the IB Organization the investigation into the suspected academic misconduct by the candidate may still proceed and a decision be reached on whether to uphold or dismiss academic misconduct. If a candidate is withdrawn from a subject no mark for that subject may contribute to the award of a grade in a future examination session.

21.4 Candidates suspected of academic misconduct must be invited, through the school's DP Coordinator, to present a written statement that addresses the suspicion of academic misconduct. If a candidate declines to present a statement, the investigation and decision on whether the candidate is in breach of regulations will still proceed.

21.5 The majority of cases of suspected academic misconduct will be presented to a sub-committee of the Final Award Committee. The sub-committee will normally comprise IB Organization staff, school representatives, and chief/deputy chief examiners, but any group or combination of these persons may make decisions on cases subject to the approval of the Final Award Committee. The sub-committee will be chaired by the chair or vice-chair of the Final Award Committee, or a chief examiner nominated by the vice-chair.

21.6 Decisions of the sub-committee are made on behalf of and under the supervision of the Final Award Committee. After reviewing all statements and evidence collected during the investigation, the sub-committee will decide whether to dismiss the suspicion of academic misconduct, uphold it, or ask for further investigations to be made. If the sub-committee is unable to reach a decision then the case will be referred to the Final Award Committee.

21.7 If the sub-committee decides that a case of academic misconduct has been established, a penalty will be applied in the subject(s) concerned. The penalty will, in the judgment of the sub-committee, be commensurate with the severity of the misconduct. If a case of academic misconduct is considered by the Final Award Committee to be very serious, the Final Award Committee may decide not to issue a grade for a candidate in the subject(s) concerned and additionally prohibit the candidate from being registered in any future examination sessions.

21.8 If no grade is issued for a subject that contributes to a candidate's IB Diploma, no IB Diploma will be awarded to the candidate. DP Course Results will be awarded for other subjects in which no academic misconduct has occurred. Except in cases of serious or repeated misconduct, the candidate will be permitted to register for future examination sessions, which may include the session that follows six months later, if the relevant registration deadlines are met. In the case of an IB Diploma Candidate, if the session in which the academic misconduct has been established is the candidate's third examination



session towards achieving the award of the IB Diploma, no further IB examination sessions will be permitted.

21.9 If the candidate has already been found in breach of regulations in any previous session, this will normally lead to disqualification from participation in any future examination session.

21.10 If there is substantive evidence, the IB Organization is entitled to conduct an investigation into academic misconduct after a candidate's results have been issued. If academic misconduct is subsequently established by the Final Award Committee, or its sub-committee, the candidate's grade for the subject(s) concerned may be withdrawn from the candidate which will also result in the withdrawal of their IB Diploma where applicable. (13-14)

Appendix II: MLA Citation Practices

Creating a Works Cited list using the eighth edition

MLA is a style of documentation that may be applied to many different types of writing. Since texts have become increasingly digital, and the same document may often be found in several different sources, following a set of rigid rules no longer suffices.

Here is an overview of the process:

When deciding how to cite your source, start by consulting the list of core elements. These are the general pieces of information that MLA suggests including in each Works Cited entry. In your citation, the elements should be listed in the following order:

1. Author.
2. Title of source.
3. Title of container,
4. Other contributors,
5. Version,
6. Number,
7. Publisher,
8. Publication date,
9. Location.

Each element should be followed by the corresponding punctuation mark shown above.

Example:

Said, Edward W. *Culture and Imperialism*. Knopf, 1994.

Creating in-text citations using the eighth edition

The in-text citation is a brief reference within your text that indicates the source you consulted. It should properly attribute any ideas, paraphrases, or direct quotations to your source, and should direct readers to the entry in the Works Cited list. For the most part, an in-text citation is the **author's name and the page number (or just the page number, if the author is named in the sentence) in parentheses**:



Imperialism is “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (**Said 9**).

or

According to **Edward W. Said**, imperialism is defined by “the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan center ruling a distant territory” (**9**).

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