

# Academic Honesty Policy

Excellence, Diversity, Learning, Integrity,  
Community



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# ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY



## Rationale

A VISS learner is a global citizen who has respect for learning and demonstrates a sense of responsibility in the VISS community. The VISS mission and values along with the IB Learner Profile are the corner stones for the VISS Academic Honesty Policy.

In developing this policy we encourage the VISS community of learners to be:

- Inquirers – who acquire the skills necessary to conduct inquiry and research
- Knowledgeable – who explore concepts, ideas, issues and perspectives
- Principled – who act with integrity and honesty; and take responsibility for their own actions
- Open-minded – who are accustomed to seeking and evaluating a range of points of view
- Risk takers – who are articulate in defending their beliefs.

These qualities when applied to learning and student work will establish skills and behaviour which support an approach to learning and quality of work that is expected out of a VISS learner. At VISS we promote academic honesty in a positive and practical way across the school and stress the benefits of properly conducted academic research and a respect for the integrity of all forms of work.

### As a result, this policy aims to:

- Define concepts associated with academic honesty practices in the context of grades 6 to 10, IB and the Global Citizen Diplomas.
- Establish roles and responsibilities across the secondary school to provide support in the implementation of this policy and consistent monitoring of academic honesty in the secondary school.
- Provide an academic honesty continuum across the secondary school
- Provide resources for staff and students
- Outline a clear process and penalties associated with academic dishonesty for the various levels of academic dishonesty.

## Definitions

### Academic Honesty

Is defined as an authentic piece of work based on one's original ideas and work of others fully acknowledged.

### Intellectual Property

Refers to creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images and designs used in commerce. Intellectual Property is divided into two categories: industrial property, which includes patents, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical indications of source; and copyright, which includes literary and artistic works such as novels, poems and plays, films, musical works, artistic works such as drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures, and architectural designs. Rights related to copyright include those of performing artists in their performances, producers of phonograms in their recordings, and those of broadcasters in their radio and television programs.

### Malpractice

Is defined as behaviour which may result in someone gaining an unfair advantage over another such as:

- a) Plagiarism
- b) Collusion (inappropriate collaboration)
- c) Duplication
- d) Misconduct

**Plagiarism:** *this is defined as the representation of ideas or work of another person as the student's own.*

**Collusion:** *this is defined as supporting malpractice by another student, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another.*

**Duplication of Work:** *this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessments.*

**Misconduct:** Any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a student or that affects the results of another student (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination etc.)

## Roles and Responsibilities

### Senior Leadership Team

Actively encourages academic honesty and provides resources to support the implementation and monitoring of academic honesty across the school.

### Academic Honesty Team

Implements, monitors and promotes academic honesty in the entire secondary school. Team members are points of contact for any issues of academic dishonesty and for guidance related to VISS processes for staff across the secondary school.

### The Librarian

At VISS, the School Librarian in collaboration with the Academic Honesty Team will teach and provide support to students in locating, evaluating and referencing sources accurately and appropriately. Digital Citizenship and guidance related to web-based research will also be provided to students.

### Subject or Classroom Teachers

Teachers, in conjunction with the teacher librarian, will provide support in research and study skills, web-based research skills and are available to offer further advice and guidance regarding academic honesty to students.

### Students

All students from grades 6 to 12 in the secondary school are instructed in the correct conventions of academic honesty and encouraged to show ethical behaviour and model digital citizenship in their studies. VISS Students have a responsibility to adhere to both school and IBO ethical guidelines and act with integrity and honesty in all contexts. There is an implicit expectation that VISS Students take responsibility for their own actions and the consequences that accompany them.

### IB Diploma Students

IB Diploma students' work will be subject to the IB Academic Honesty Policy and procedures in addition to the VISS policy.

### VISS Parents

We encourage VISS Parents to encourage their children to demonstrate ethical behaviour and monitor their son/daughter's work at home, for e.g.: computer use, homework, or written assignments.

## The Process

All VISS students will sign a declaration of compliance of the VISS academic honesty policy. IB students will be required to sign a declaration of compliance of the IB academic honesty policy. All parents of VISS students will receive a copy of the VISS Academic Honesty policy and the IB policy wherever applicable.

## Style of referencing at VISS and resources

For consistency across the secondary school, at VISS the Harvard Referencing style is preferred. VISS students are encouraged to use the in-built MS Word or MAC tool for managing sources and doing accurate referencing. See the Academic Honesty Team to learn about this feature.

## Principles & Penalties for dealing with a breach of academic honesty:

At VISS, any case of a breach of academic honesty will be dealt with procedures which ensure:

- a) equity;
- b) consistency;
- c) procedural fairness;
- d) timely resolution of the case; and
- e) achievement of appropriate and effective outcomes.

Incidences of academic dishonesty will be treated on a case-by-case basis, based on these guidelines. Subject or classroom teachers will follow an established school process for dealing with academic dishonesty. Continued intentional academic dishonesty will include moderation involving the Academic Honesty Team, Senior Leadership Team and in severe cases the Principal along with the student and his/her parent.

## Penalties

### Level 1

Violations will be dealt with by the subject teacher. Students who are caught cheating or plagiarising will redo the assessment under supervised conditions as per teacher's convenience.

Recurrence in the resubmitted assessment without evident efforts to avoid plagiarism will result in a zero. A letter informing parents/guardians about the infringement will be sent home. If evident efforts have been made but the student has still plagiarised, the student is permitted to resubmit the assessment after seeking teacher assistance with avoiding plagiarism.

Level one violation includes (but is not limited to):

- ✓ copying homework or classwork from another student or letting another student look on a test or a quiz (collusion)
- ✓ using any other methods of receiving or giving help on any test or assessments
- ✓ taking information from another source that is not properly referenced
- ✓ working with others on an assessment that was meant to be done by individuals

### Level 2

Violations are severe and will be dealt with by the subject teacher and the Academic Honesty Committee.

Level two violations include, but are not limited to:

- ✓ taking papers from the Internet, other publications, or other students and submitting it as one's own
- ✓ blatantly submitting someone else's entire work as their own

These violations can be considered theft; therefore, any student who is guilty of a level two violation will be required to resubmit the assessment but will be penalised with a 20% deduction in the total marks. A letter informing parents/guardians about the infringement will be sent home and a meeting with all stakeholders will be held to discuss the matter.

If a level 2 offense of plagiarism is repeated in the resubmitted assessment or another subsequent assessment, the student will receive a zero and the matter will be recorded on the student's record.

### Level 3

Level three violations are extreme and will be dealt with by the administration of the school.

Level three violations would include (but are not limited to):

- Stealing examinations
- Altering grades on a computer database

Sanctions would include (but not be limited to) permanent exclusion from VISS.

### **Process for implementing the Academic Honesty Policy**

When a subject teacher has reason to believe that plagiarism has occurred, the following steps will be taken:

#### **A**

1. The teacher will investigate the matter with the student(s) involved
2. If required, the teacher will run the assessment through the Turnitin programme
3. If the instance of plagiarism is a Level 2, the subject teacher will communicate the outcome of his/her investigation to the Academic Honesty Committee Phase Representative. Collaboratively, these staff members will communicate their decision in writing to the student and his/her parents/guardians. This letter will be placed in the student's file. If a parent/student wishes to appeal the teacher's consequence, the Academic Honesty Committee may be convened to review the matter. The due process rights of the student will always be ensured.

#### **OR**

## **B**

The subject teacher, exercising their professional judgment, may refer the incident to the Academic Integrity Committee for the following reasons:

1. The student denies the charge of plagiarism
2. Several students are involved in the infraction, and the teacher does not have the capacity to perform a comprehensive investigation
3. Other criteria warrant a broader investigation of the charge.

The teacher will forward copies of all information and written work pertinent to the Academic Honesty Committee prior to a meeting.

***Instances that cannot be resolved by the Academic Honesty Committee will warrant an intervention by the school's Administration in order to ensure fair treatment of students.***

## **An Academically Honest Senior VISS Learner.**

### **DOES**

- ✓ Understand the VISS Academic Honesty Policy and the VISS Assessment Policy and has a commitment to following the rules outlined in these documents
- ✓ Understand the concepts of plagiarism and cheating
- ✓ Understand the consequences of cheating regarding both school-based work and external examinations and assessments
- ✓ Document source material in a formal and appropriate manner, including:
  - Acknowledging the source of direct quotations
  - Acknowledging the source of new ideas
  - Acknowledging explicitly and appropriately help provided by another person (and understands which kinds of external help are permissible)
  - Acknowledging information taken from print and online sources
  - Acknowledging reference materials in a list of Works Cited
- ✓ Show responsibility in keeping and maintaining accurate, personal course notes
- ✓ Uses critical thinking to come up with original ideas and supports these ideas with research

### **DOES NOT**

- ✗ Copy the any assessment work of other students, in any form, with or without that person's consent
- ✗ Give another student his/her work to copy

- ✗ Use notes during a test unless allowed by the teacher or permitted by the examination rules
- ✗ Do classwork, homework or assessments for another student
- ✗ Present material written or created by another person as his/her own, including (but not limited to):
  - Work from another student, parent, friend or private tutor
  - Work written by someone else and purchased, including work purchased
  - online
- ✗ 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
- ✗ Overly rely on the ideas of others

## An Academically Honest VISS Middle School Learner...

### DOES

- ✓ Acknowledge the source of direct quotations
- ✓ Acknowledge the source of new ideas
- ✓ Acknowledge information taken from print and online sources
- ✓ Acknowledge reference materials in a list of Works Cited
- ✓ Acknowledge all assistance from parents, other students and friends
- ✓ Know the VISS Academic Honesty Policy and follows these rules to avoid cheating
- ✓ Follow all exam and assessment rules
- ✓ Use critical thinking to come up with original ideas and supports these ideas with research

### DOES NOT

- ✗ Use notes during a test unless allowed by a teacher
- ✗ Copy from another student during an assessment
- ✗ Copy the classwork or homework of another student
- ✗ Hand in work that has been copied from a source or another student
- ✗ Present someone else's ideas as his or her own without referencing
- ✗ Do work for another student
- ✗ Overly rely on the ideas of others



All VISS Learners are subject to VISS rules related to academic honesty. It is a strong expectation that all VISS Learners act in a responsible and honest manner whilst doing their class work, homework and all types of assessments.

At VISS we take academic honesty very seriously and consider plagiarism or dishonesty in classwork, homework and assessments as a serious wrongdoing.

Academically honest students at VISS ensure they complete work independently and acknowledge all sources of information that have been used in research. These students are honest and responsible.

**To be academically honest, a student needs to:**

- ✓ Acknowledge the source of direct quotations.
- ✓ Acknowledge the source of new ideas.
- ✓ Acknowledge information taken from print and online sources.
- ✓ Acknowledge reference materials in a list of Works Cited.
- ✓ Acknowledge all assistance from parents, other students and friends.
- ✓ Know the VISS Academic Honesty Policy and follow these rules to avoid copying and the consequences that follow.
- ✓ Follow all exam and assessment rules.
- ✓ Use critical thinking to come up with original ideas and support these ideas with research.

By signing this contract, I demonstrate my understanding of academic honesty and my responsibility to follow the guidelines above. If I am unsure, I will seek assistance from a teacher before submitting the work.

Full Name of student: \_\_\_\_\_