



Sidcot

Live Adventurously

Policy Name: Academic Honesty Policy

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1. Aims and Principles

1.1 This policy links to key Quaker values of truth and integrity.

2. Academic Integrity

2.1 Academic Honesty must be seen as a set of values and skills that promote personal integrity and good practice in teaching, learning and assessment. It is influenced and shaped by a variety of factors including peer pressure, culture and parental expectations, role-modelling and taught skills. Although it is probably easier to explain to students what constitutes academic dishonesty, with direct reference to plagiarism, collusion and cheating in examinations, whenever possible the topic must be treated in a positive way, stressing the benefits of properly conducted academic research, giving credit to published authors, and a respect for the integrity of all forms of assessment.

2.2 All students must understand the basic meaning and significance of concepts that relate to academic honesty, especially intellectual property and authenticity. However, a conceptual understanding alone is not sufficient; students must have the knowledge and practical skills to apply such concepts to their work and understand the repercussions of any breach. All staff, including teaching and non-teaching have a role to play in promoting academic integrity to all students.

2.3 Although the principles of academic honesty apply equally to all subjects, there are issues that are particularly relevant to the arts, where imitation, influence and inspiration have a respectable tradition. The observation of form and its resemblance to nature, or to another artist's work, is a skill to be nurtured. There is an expectation that students may be influenced by the work of other artists and writers, whose works may inspire the students' own creativity. Thus there are circumstances where the creative use of the work or ideas of another person is acceptable, but the original source must always be acknowledged. The limitation of another artist's work may be acceptable in contexts that are well defined by the teacher, but students must understand that passing off the work of another person as their own is not acceptable and constitutes malpractice.

2.4 Although plagiarism can be defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student's own, this definition alone does not provide sufficient information or guidance on what constitutes plagiarism and how it can be avoided. Students must receive guidance on when and how to include acknowledgments in their work. Similarly, the practice of paraphrasing is a skill that must be taught so that students do not simply copy a passage, substitute a few words with their own and then regard this as their own authentic work. When using the words of another person it must become habitual practice for a student to use quotation marks, indentation or some other accepted means of indicating that the wording is not their own. Furthermore, the source of the quotation (or paraphrased text) must be clearly identified along with the quotation and not reside in the bibliography alone. Using the words and ideas of another person to support one's arguments is a fundamental part of any academic endeavour, and how to integrate these words and ideas with one's own is an important skill that must be taught.

3. Malpractice

3.1 Malpractice can be defined as behaviour that results in, or may result in, the student or any other student gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment component. Malpractice includes:

- plagiarism: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the student's own or inaccurate citation.
- 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 assessment components and/or diploma requirements.
- 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).

3.2 Some students seem to believe that because the internet is in the public domain and largely uncontrolled, information can be taken from websites without the need for acknowledgment. On the contrary, students must record the addresses of all websites from which they obtain information during their research, including the date when each website was accessed.

3.3 Copying text, or other materials, is not always a deliberate attempt by a student to present the ideas or work of another person as their own. In fact sources show that students are not always aware of when or how to acknowledge sources. It is essential that students are taught this important academic skill. For example, a candidate may copy one or two sentences from a book, journal or website without showing it is a quotation, but indicating its source in a footnote or the bibliography. Inaccurate citation may also be classed a plagiarism.

3.4 For most assessment components students are expected to work independently but with support from their subject teacher or supervisor. However there are occasions when collaboration with other students is permitted or even actively encouraged, for example, in the requirements for internal assessment. Nevertheless, the final work must be produced independently, despite the fact that it may be based on the same or similar data. This means that the abstract, introduction, content and conclusion/summary of a piece of work must be written in each student's own words and cannot therefore be the same as another students. For example, if two or more students have exactly the same introduction to an assignment this could be interpreted as collusion (or plagiarism) and not collaboration. It is essential that the teachers and students are aware of the distinction between collaboration and collusion. Teachers must pay particular attention to this important distinction to prevent allegations of collusion against their students.

3.5 It is the responsibility of each teacher to confirm that, to the best of his or her knowledge, all students' work accepted or submitted for assessment is the authentic work of each student. When a school has implemented all prevention measures, teachers are expected to detect any plagiarism, collusion or duplication of work. Teachers are also expected to support and act on the school's policy on good academic practice and provide students with advice whenever necessary. In this respect teachers must act as good role models for the students.

3.6 Students and teachers must be aware that the requirement to acknowledge sources extends beyond text taken from the internet, , books, magazines and journals. The concepts of intellectual property and academic honesty include the use of footnotes or endnotes to acknowledge the source of an idea, image, diagram or chart that is not the student's own. This also applies to content created or sources taken from artificial intelligence (AI). All work submitted must be the student's own and any use of external sources or AI must be clearly acknowledged. AI may only be used where permitted by the assessment criteria and must be acknowledged clearly; students must ensure the final work reflects their own understanding and complies with JCQ regulations. AI misuse occurs when a student uses AI in a way that means the work is not their own, fails to acknowledge AI use or provides misleading references. This is treated as malpractice under JCQ regulations and can result in penalties

including loss of marks or disqualification. Students are made aware of appropriate AI use and the risks of misuse before assessments and must confirm in authenticity declarations that any AI use has been acknowledged. Teachers and assessors are responsible for understanding JCQ guidance and ensuring that AI use is managed appropriately and that suspected misuse is investigated to maintain the integrity of assessments.

3.7 Paraphrasing is the rendition of another person's words presented in a new style and integrated grammatically into the writing. If done correctly, paraphrasing is a legitimate way to use a source. However, because paraphrasing uses the ideas of another person, it is still necessary to acknowledge the source. Candidates must be taught this skill; they cannot be expected to understand the difference between what is legitimate and what is not legitimate paraphrasing without receiving guidance. If paraphrasing is not done correctly it will be treated as plagiarism. Teachers must help students by structuring assignments to avoid generalised 'reports' involving little more than information gathering. Instead teachers must give specific guidelines that encourage students to develop their own ideas through problem-solving, comparison, precise hypothesis, analysis and the like. In other words, a carefully devised assignment can reduce the chances of a student copying material without proper citation.

3.8 Teachers are advised to provide students with examples of how to acknowledge sources. The examples must include a variety of sources (including , DVD, photographs, illustrations, artwork and data) in addition to journals, books and websites. (http://www.staffs.ac.uk/support_depts/infoservices/learning_support/refzone/harvard/index.jsp)

3.9 Teachers are encouraged to provide a formative assessment structure for investigative reports that includes planning and the evaluation of sources and reflects the need for students' work to be authentic. The formative assessment structure might include:

- a carefully developed thesis
- the evaluation of sources
- planning for an investigation
- personal critique or analysis
- evidence of higher thinking in a proposal of alternative solutions to the issue under discussion
- in-class research assignments

3.10 When marking regular class and homework assignments teachers should take into account each student's use and acknowledgement of sources. A portion of the marks awarded could be available for assessing the degree to which a student has correctly acknowledged all sources. Reinforcing good academic practice in this and other ways must routinely extend to all subjects. At all times the advice to students must be to acknowledge as honestly and accurately as possible the ideas and work of others. When the source cannot be stated with absolute accuracy the student must declare this in an appropriate way, such as in a footnote.

3.11 Teachers must guard against what might be described as "academic negligence". In other words, teachers must warn students about the consequences of being careless when recording sources, or displaying a cavalier disregard for the origin of material within their work. The internet has made a significant contribution to academic negligence, making it all too easy to cut and paste material into a piece of work in electronic format. Negligence is not a valid excuse for plagiarism.

4. The Detection of Plagiarism

4.1 When reading students' work teachers must be vigilant for obvious changes in the style of writing. Equally significant is a style that seems too mature, too error free and perhaps more characteristic of an experienced academic than a student. Over the year teachers will become very familiar with the style and quality of each student's work in their teaching groups. Therefore, it is the subject teachers who are in the best position to identify work that may not be the authentic work of a student. It is also advisable to make use of the various website programs available to check for plagiarism.

4.2 Although in most cases of plagiarism the student has copied passages from a website, there is still plagiarism from books and journals, in addition to the illicit use of photographs, graphs, data and computer programs from a variety of sources. In most cases it is likely that the teacher is familiar with the books being used by students; they may be standard textbooks for the subject, or books that are readily available in the college library. The teacher must be vigilant for familiar passages and, if necessary, check that such passages have not been copied from a textbook.

5. Authenticating Students' Work

5.1 It is the responsibility of teachers to support students in the preparation of their work for assessment and ensure that all of their work complies with the requirements of the relevant subject. Therefore, teachers and supervisors are in the best position to judge whether a student's work is authentic. Ongoing support and guidance will help with the early detection of unintentional plagiarism and will dissuade students from deliberate plagiarism because they know their work is regularly subject to scrutiny. However, what is realistic and what can be achieved within the usual constraints of time and workload must be left to the discretion of teachers. Ultimately, the students are responsible for ensuring that the final version of any work is authentic. Students themselves must bear the consequences if they submit any work for assessment that is not their own, regardless of whether the plagiarism was deliberate or the result of poor research skills. The same principle applies to collusion.

5.2 Every student must sign a coversheet for each externally assessed component (except examination scripts) and all internally assessed components to confirm that his or her work is authentic and that the work being submitted for assessment constitutes the final version of the work. If suspected plagiarism is detected before a candidate signs the coversheet the issue must be resolved within the school.

5.3 Once a student has submitted his or her work to a teacher for external or internal assessment together with the coversheet signed to the effect that it is the final version of the work, neither the work nor the coversheet can be retracted by the candidate. If the candidate is subsequently suspected of plagiarism or collusion, it is no defence to claim that the incorrect version of the work was submitted for assessment.

5.4 After a candidate has signed and dated the coversheet to the effect that his or her work is authentic and constitutes the final version of that work, the student's teacher or supervisor must also sign and date the coversheet to the effect that to the best of his or her knowledge it is authentic work.

5.4.1 It is not acceptable for the teacher to:

- delete the declaration and then sign the coversheet
- submit the work for assessment without his or her signature

- sign the declaration and then write comments on the work or coversheet that raise doubts about the work's authenticity

5.5 If there is a programme of study in place so that students have regular exposure to opportunities for research and referencing protocols, it would be clear that incidences of plagiarism would not be attributable to ignorance.

5.6 In most cases the penalty would be loss of marks/credit for an individual piece of coursework through to disqualification from the course.

It may be appropriate to give an initial warning if plagiarism is suspected; however the danger of leniency may lead to students believing that the rewards of improved grades are worth the risk of cheating. This would be doing a disservice to our students - both those who seek to circumvent the system; as well as the majority of students who work within the bounds of academic integrity.

6. Promotion of Academic Integrity

6.1 In order to minimise the need for the application of penalties, research skills should explicitly be taught regularly throughout the curriculum and across the whole school. The practice of academic integrity should be introduced at the earliest opportunity in the Junior School but needs to be reinforced throughout the senior school, not only for the benefit of students joining school for GCSE and A level/IB courses, but to ensure that research skills are second-nature to students progressing through the school.

6.2 In instances where there has been clear misconduct around content, references, bibliography or appendices or where it is recognised there has been misuse or assistance from Artificial Intelligence with the completion of work, the penalties will see the student incurring the following - asked to withdraw the relevant work and awarded a 0 grade. Other work submitted by the student will also be reviewed. Where the student may not have authored the work themselves and this is proven to be the case, the penalty will again be a grade of 0 and a review of all other work submitted.

7. Resources

'Using sources. A guide for students'. Ofqual publication 2010 (www.ofqual.gov.uk)

'Authenticity – A guide for teachers'. Ofqual publication 2009 (www.ofqual.gov.uk/plagiarism)

PlagiarismAdvice.org; www.plagiarismadvice.org www.grammarly.com/Plagiarism Checker
www.dustball.com/cs/plagiarism.checker/

8. Document Change History

February 2021	No major changes, agreed by Education Working Group
March 2021	Approved by Board
June 2022	No major changes, agreed by Education Working Group
December 2022	Changes made to 2.2 to expand on the responsibility of all to promote academic integrity. 6.2 added to explain actions taken where there is misconduct.

September 2024	No major changes, agreed by Education Working Group
January 2025	Changes made to 3.6 to include the use and misuse of AI in assessments. Removed references to CD-Rom.

Appendix 1

Departures from academic honesty come under the following three headings:

Plagiarism:

This means the representation of the ideas or works of another person as your own. Many students believe incorrectly that because the internet is in the public domain, information can be taken from websites without acknowledgement. All ideas and works of another person, including photographs, maps, diagrams, illustrations and data must be acknowledged in the same way as a quotation from a book. Students must record the addresses of all websites from which they obtain information during their research, including the date when each website was accessed. Passing off someone else's work as your own is intellectual property theft, and is considered malpractice.

Collusion:

This means that one student's work is presented as the work of another. Students are generally expected to work independently and produce work in their own words (although co-operation is encouraged in some subject areas through practical work and projects). If two students produce essays or coursework for external assessment which contain, for example, identical paragraphs of interpretation, collusion has occurred. It is perfectly acceptable for two pieces of work to be written on the same topic, but the students' own writings must always be different. The distinction between co-operation and collusion is a fine one, and guidance should be sought from teachers if a student is in doubt.

Cheating in examinations:

A set of rules for the conduct of examinations is published to exam students well in advance of their examinations in May which students are asked to sign to confirm that they have been read. It prohibits, for example, copying, the taking of study materials into the examination and communication between students in the examination.

A further matter of academic honesty is **regular attendance to classes**. Students who fail to attend classes or community services and activities on a regular basis are not fulfilling their obligations to their parents, teachers and fellow students.

Responsibility for Academic Honesty

- It is the responsibility of the Deputy Head (Academic) to ensure that you are briefed and understand the meaning of academic honesty. These will be discussed with you during tutor periods.
- It is the teachers' responsibility to ensure to the best of their ability that all work submitted for assessment is your authentic work. This means that teachers will be vigilant for plagiarism and collusion.
- You, the candidate, are ultimately responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is authentic, with the work of others fully and correctly acknowledged. You are expected to review your own work before submission for assessment and before the coversheet is signed, to identify any passages, data, graphs, photographs, computer programs etc, that still require acknowledgement.
- It is the responsibility of examiners to be vigilant and report to the exam board any cases of suspected plagiarism, collusion or cheating. You should also know that exam boards randomly check candidates work using a web-based plagiarism detection system.

What happens if academic dishonesty is suspected?

- If a teacher suspects plagiarism, collusion or cheating, the student must be allowed one opportunity to revise and resubmit work. This is one reason why we have internal deadlines ahead of exam board deadlines. If work is actually submitted to the exam board and plagiarism, collusion or cheating are detected, the exam board must be informed by the Deputy Head (Academic) and an investigation will be launched to collect evidence for a report. This will include statements from you and your teacher. If the exam board decides that malpractice has occurred, in the most extreme cases no mark will be given for the subject and certificates will not be awarded.

Please sign below to confirm that you have read the Sidcot School Academic Honesty Policy (No 6.16).

Name of student (please print): Date:

Signature of student: Year of entry: