

Academic integrity for internal assessments

The foundation principles
of academic integrity

Supporting your
students

Meeting academic
integrity requirements

Identifying possible
plagiarism

Authenticating
student work

The foundation principles of academic integrity

Building and embracing an academic integrity culture requires a strategy at school level that combines policies and good academic practice. The school administration must have a clear and defined vision of what it wants its school community members to achieve in the long term.

The principles

- All work considered for assessment must be the true and genuine work of the candidate and without plagiarized content.
- All work considered for assessment must have been produced and supervised in strict adherence to the subject guides.
- All teachers must only authenticate work they are certain was produced by the candidate, following the principles above.
- All school administrators responsible for the upload of work, must only approve/authenticate work that was produced/completed in adherence to the principles above.

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What reasonable support can I provide to my student?

- Teachers/supervisors must follow the instructions of the subject guides and abstain from “over-editing” a piece of work.
- Comments on drafts submitted by candidates can only be done on the margins and be of a general nature.
- If the student faces difficulties with a specific piece of work, consider having a meeting (virtual if needed) to further discuss the requirements of the task.

Is it acceptable if I provide my students with a framework/template, so they can better complete their tasks?

- Teachers should be careful not to intervene excessively in the support provided to their students. It is acceptable to guide them on how to structure an essay (the usual: introduction, body and conclusion). However, providing a rigid step by step outline of what to write where and when, becomes a template, particularly if the work submitted by the cohort is almost identical in the structure and flow of ideas.
- Excessive guidance by the teacher can limit the candidates’ creativity and if the entire cohort submits work tailored in the same way, the pieces of work lose authenticity and become the work of the teacher, not the candidates.

Can I provide my student with several rounds of written comments on drafts of their work?

- No, teachers/supervisors are expected to follow the subject guides and only provide written comments once.
- Teachers should ask themselves if excessive comments will have an impact on the quality of the final piece of work of the candidate, to the point that it becomes unrecognizable from the original.

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- Before submission for assessment to the IB, any matters arising in relation to the authenticity of work should be dealt by following the school's academic honesty/integrity policy.
- If the school's policy allows for resubmission of work, then it is acceptable to allow a candidate in difficulties to re-work their piece so it meets the criteria/requirements.
- However, there are many tasks/components that cannot be redone as they are considered exams. For example, if an irregularity is identified during the completion of the oral components in Language subjects (a candidate in possession of unauthorized materials), the recording must not be repeated as it would give the candidate in question an advantage (schools can find further details on PRC in supporting guidance for the session).

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Plagiarised text is often easy to identify because the grammar tends to be sophisticated. One or more passages embedded in an essay may have a quite different style to the rest of the work (a standard internet search engine will normally identify the source of the plagiarized text).

- The standard of spelling suddenly improves.
- The gender of pronouns is inconsistent.
- Reference is made to material (for example, charts, graphs, tables) that is not included in the candidate's work.
- The candidate is unable to summarize the outcome of the research.
- Inappropriate or inconsistent "voice" (for example, changing from singular to plural).
- A strange layout of the paper (page numbers, headings, and spacing do not correctly transfer in a rushed cut-and-paste job).
- Outdated bibliographic citations.
- There are signs of an electronic origin, including:
 - changes in font or formatting
 - different spellings
 - "grey" letters in the text (an indication that the page was downloaded from a web site)
- References to untrustworthy websites or dubious publications.
- Text with superscript reference (e.g., ²) that bears no relation to citation list in the submitted work.

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What to do when your student submits a piece of work suddenly improved or not to the usual standard of their previous work?

- Cross-reference the new submitted work against earlier drafts.
- Ask your student for a written explanation and query the quality of work.
- Consider an interview with the student to allow further enquiries about the work (preferably with a witness). Can the student fully explain the quality of the piece of work?
- If the candidate is not able to fully defend their piece of work, consult with the programme coordinator about the next steps, which should be in line with the school's policy.

Should work with plagiarized content be submitted to the IB?

- If a final piece of work has plagiarized content, was not completed according to the subject guide requirements, or the candidate failed to attend meetings (or reflection sessions), that component should be awarded an "F" on the IB internal assessment mark entry system or marked as non-submission in the case of externally assessed components, such as the extended essay, or theory of knowledge essay.