

# Academic Honesty Policy

## St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Secondary School – Halton Catholic District School Board (applicable to IB programme)

### Statement of purpose

The Halton Catholic District School Board (HCDSB) is committed to assessment and evaluation practices that are grounded in the belief that all students should be able to demonstrate their learning in an environment that reflects the Catholic values of fairness, equity, and respect for all.

Academic honesty is an essential aspect of teaching and learning in IB programmes where learning is based on inquiry and reflection. Academic honesty is part of being “principled,” a learner profile attribute where learners strive to “act with integrity and honesty” as we question, inquire, and act.

It is the responsibility of students to be academically honest in all aspects of their schoolwork so that the marks they receive are a true reflection of their own achievement. Academic dishonesty, therefore, is a serious offence, and, as a result, it is imperative that students understand what academic dishonesty entails and are clear as to its consequences. It is the responsibility of school staff to communicate to students that academic honesty is required in all aspects of their school work.

### Student Responsibilities

To ensure academic honesty and avoid instances of plagiarism students are expected to:

- seek clarification from teachers about what constitutes plagiarism;
- seek remediation when their research skills are deficient;
- ensure that all their work is original;
- ensure that they cite sources accurately and consistently.

### Teacher responsibilities

Teachers will:

- define and explain plagiarism and academic dishonesty to ensure students are aware of what academic dishonesty entails using subject- and grade-specific examples;
- discuss the ethical dilemmas presented by plagiarism with students;
- instruct students on appropriate research and citation practices;
- monitor students’ work and provide ongoing feedback throughout the assignment process;
- ensure all assignments are clearly defined, at the student’s developmental level, and accompanied by success criteria;
- structure assignments, when possible, in a way that discourages plagiarism;
- ensure that student work completed within a group project is evaluated individually;

- ensure that assignments for evaluation, tests, and exams are completed, whenever possible, under the supervision of a teacher.

### School responsibilities

Schools will:

- explain the Board Policy on Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism to all students;
- communicate board and school practices to all stakeholders and all appropriate board staff, e.g. student agendas, school webpage, info evenings;
- teach and reinforce appropriate referencing protocols for students;
- access and consistently use “Turnitin” software to assist with detecting plagiarism.

### Parent responsibilities

Parents may:

- encourage students to plan each assignment;
- provide support with the scheduling of their work, as they may have many assignments to complete;
- encourage students to ask their teacher for advice if they are having difficulty with their work;
- familiarize themselves with the school policy on academic honesty;
- understand what constitutes academic misconduct;
- know the consequences of their son/daughter being in breach of regulations;
- model responsible and ethical behaviour in their support of their son/daughter throughout participation in the Diploma Programme;
- promote and value learning over grades.

### Expected student behaviours

Habits of good practice:

- make sure that information you have used is acknowledged in the body of the text and is fully listed in the bibliography using the referencing style agreed to with your teacher;
- cite your sources so that readers can find them; if you cannot state the origin of the source it is probably better not to use it;
- make clear which words, ideas, images and works are not your own (including maps, charts, musical compositions, movies, computer source codes, and any other material);
- give credit for copied, adapted and paraphrased material;
- when using text, make clear where the borrowed material starts and finishes;
- all sources cited in the text must also be listed in the bibliography (or reference list/list of works cited);
- homework completion.

### Categories of “academic misconduct” in the IB:

- *plagiarism* is defined as the representation, intentionally or unwittingly, of the ideas, words or work of another person without proper, clear, and explicit acknowledgment. The use of translated materials, unless indicated and acknowledged, is also considered plagiarism;

- *collusion* is defined as supporting academic misconduct by another student; for example, allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another;
- *misconduct during an IB examination* includes taking unauthorized material into an examination room, disruptive behaviour, and communicating with others during the examination;
- *communication about the content of an examination* 24 hours before or after the examination with others outside their school community is also considered a breach of IB regulations;
- *duplication of work* is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or Diploma Programme requirements.

### Unacceptable practice

Academic Dishonesty is broadly understood to mean offences against the academic integrity of the learning environment. This would include, but is not limited, to the following:

- copying from another student or making information available to another student for the purpose of copying during a test/examination/quiz or for individual/group assignments;
- failing to follow instructions of the presiding teacher during an examination;
- submitting any written work (electronic or hard copy) in whole or in part which has been written by someone else;
- using direct quotations or paraphrased material in any assignment without giving the proper acknowledgement.

One form of academic dishonesty is plagiarism. Plagiarism is usually defined as presenting someone's words and ideas as one's own. It can take many forms, including the following:

- submitting an essay/assignment written by someone else, e.g. buying an essay online, downloading an essay from a free website, having someone else complete your assignment or copying or using work done by another student (including homework);
- piecing together material from one or several sources and adding only linking sentences;
- quoting or paraphrasing material without citing the source of the material, including books, magazines, or print from all electronic sources (videos, podcasts, etc.);
- not providing quotation marks for direct quotations, even if sources have been cited.

### Response to Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism

When plagiarism or academic dishonesty is suspected teachers will gather evidence of the plagiarism or academic dishonesty.

When a student has not met the Board's expectation of academic honesty, a consequence will be applied which will ensure the student's understanding of the vital importance of academic honesty and the gravity of dishonest behaviour. The consequence will reflect a continuum of behavioural and academic responses that take into account the grade level of the student, the maturity of the student, the number and frequency of incidents, and the individual circumstances and human dignity of the student.

Schools will:

- record incidents of academic dishonesty.

Teachers will:

- discuss the matter with the student(s) involved;
- define and explain the evidence of academic dishonesty and plagiarism in the student's work to ensure the student understands why his/her academic honesty is being questioned;
- inform Administration of repeated minor incidents of academic dishonesty by a student;
- in the event of a serious incident that may have an impact on a student's success, inform Administration;
- in the event of a serious incident that may have an impact on a student's success, inform a student's parents/guardian.

Teachers may:

- require the student to do supplementary or alternative work;
- in consultation with Administration, assign a grade penalty up to the full value of the assignment.

Administration may:

- meet with the student, parent/guardian, and teacher;
- assign consequences for the behaviour;
- limit a student's eligibility for school awards;
- suspend the student based on repeated misconduct.

### Policy Review

This policy will be reviewed every year by a committee consisting of the Diploma Coordinator, teaching staff members, and an administrator.

Documents consulted during the preparation of this policy:

- Halton Catholic District School Board Policy VI-55: Assessment & Evaluation: Academic Dishonesty and Plagiarism (2015);
- Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation and Reporting in Ontario Schools. (2010);
- Academic honesty in the IB educational context (2016), Academic honesty in the Diploma Programme, published by the International Baccalaureate Organization.