

ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY

Statement of Purpose

Robinson School's main mission is the pursuit of education and scholarship while encouraging educational development and personal growth. This institution advocates academic excellence through inquiry, critical thinking, and perseverance. The students of this community understand that academic work and investigation are essential in becoming reflective and open-minded individuals. Robinson's students adopt the school's mission of intellectual exploration and analytical thought allowing it to imbue their process of reflection and introspection.

In order for students to produce high quality work they need to understand the concepts associated with the intellectual property, original authorship, and the difference between legitimate collaboration and unacceptable collusion in order for our students to produce authentic work and avoid malpractice. This policy aims at providing students, teachers and parents a guideline to follow in order to avoid malpractice and promote the creation of authentic work.

Defining Concepts

1. *Academic Honesty*

It is the action of submitting an original work that expresses the student's ideas while using information responsibly and ethically.

Example:

1st Scenario: Handing in a research paper that reflects the student's ideas, writing style and cites sources correctly.

2nd Scenario: Student does all his/her assignments expressing his/her own ideas and synthesizing information, reflecting their own interpretations of the material discussed in class.

2. *Intellectual Property*

The World Intellectual Property Organization defines it as "creations of the mind, such as inventions; literary and artistic works, designs; and symbols, names and images used in commerce" (par. 1).

Examples: paintings, poems, song, documentary, etc.

3. *Authentic work*

It is defined as a work that reflects the student's original ideas, through his/her particular writing style and acknowledges in a proper way other's thoughts by citing.

Examples:

1st Scenario: A research paper with a clear thesis statement, correctly cited and that expresses the student's ideas and thoughts.

2nd Scenario: Oral presentation that shows the student's creativity and ideas, the student doesn't limit him/herself to read the data found in the research but that analyzes and explains the material, quotes sources correctly and includes a bibliography.

4. *Plagiarism*

The student uses someone else's ideas and thoughts and present them as his/her own.

Examples:

1st Scenario: Student inserts thoughts from different people but doesn't follow the in-text citation rules and doesn't include a bibliography.

2nd Scenario: Student pays someone to write a paper and submits it as his/her own.

5. *Duplication of work*

It's defined as the instances where a student submits a work he/she had done for a previous class as a new work for another class.

Examples:

1st Scenario: Student writes a paper on female education in the 17th century and how is reflected in literature and society. The student uses Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* as the literary piece. A year later the English class is reading *Pride and Prejudice* and the class is assigned to write a paper on the novel and the student submits the same paper for this new class.

2nd Scenario: Students use the same science fair project in different grades.

6. *Copying on an assessment*

It's defined as the act of looking at someone else's exam to copy the answers.

Examples:

1st Scenario: Student didn't study well for the test and looks at the paper of the student sitting next to him/her to copy the answers.

2nd Scenario: A student texts another student the answers to a test.

7. *Collusion*

When a student hands in an assignment that was not done by him/her in its totality because another student helped complete the assignment. In a collusion, both students (the one copying and the one that gives the answers) are considered to be engaged in an academic malpractice.

Examples:

1st Scenario: A student is answering assigned questions the morning the assignment is due and another student lets him/her copy some of the answers.

2nd Scenario: A group of students decide to do an assignment together even though it wasn't a collaborative assignment and they hand in separate papers with the exact same answers.

8. Collaboration

The International Baccalaureate Organization (IB) defines it “as working together on a common aim with shared information, which is an open and cooperative behavior that does not result in ‘allowing one’s work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another’” (“Academic Honesty” 2).

Example:

1st Scenario: Teacher assigns a collaborative work and the group assigns each member a part of the work, they share information and work on their different tasks to complete the assignment.

9. Misconduct during an International Baccalaureate examination

The IB defines it as unacceptable practices that “include taking unauthorized material into an examination room, disruptive behavior and communicating with others during the examination” (“Academic Honesty in the Diploma Programme” 2).

10. Disclosing or receiving information about an International Baccalaureate examination

It is considered a breach of IB regulations to communicate with IB students or others outside the school community about the content of an IB examination 24 hours before or after said examination.

Roles & Responsibilities

A. School

1. Express how the school will maintain fairness and transparency in the process.
2. Provide professional development for teachers:
 - The librarian offers a conference on Copyright Law in Education for upper level teachers.
 - Teachers, students and parents have access to the RS Academic Honesty section in the school website with information and guidelines provided by the librarian (<http://www.robinsonschool.org/school-life/learning-commons/copyright-right-plagiarism-center>).
 - Review with the faculty the different types of malpractices and discuss best approaches to those kinds of situations.
3. Promote awareness among parents:
 - Middle and Upper Schools’ Division Heads inform about academic honesty in the newsletter.
 - Have parent meetings about the topic and talk to them about how can they help students avoid malpractice.

- Make parents aware of the RS Academic Honesty section on the school website so they can access the information.
- Have meeting with parents to discuss the school Academic Honesty Policy.
- Include the Academic Honesty policy in the student handbook and the school website.

B. Teacher

1. Teachers will model academic honesty practices.
2. Teachers will explain to students what are the expectations in terms of academic work.
3. Teachers will provide students with opportunities to practice their research and analytical skills, and transfer of knowledge by providing higher thinking and investigation assignments, such as:
 - the design of their own experiments
 - the application of knowledge and skills obtained to real-life situations
 - providing proof and/or justification of existing theories/theorems
 - the justification of their reasoning process
 - the evaluation and reflection of their learning process and growth
 - curating and/or creating resources
4. Teachers will coordinate workshops with the librarian to teach research strategies and how to use information responsibly. In teacher-librarian collaborations, the teacher brings in the content and the librarian will work on the skills needed to execute or complete the tasks. The workshops can be offered in all levels and the librarian will work on the skills following the literacy curriculum. Teacher-librarian collaboration scenarios:
 - At the beginning of the academic year teachers and the librarian will instruct Middle School freshmen and Robinson new students about intellectual property and how to use the material responsibly.
 - For a research project, the teacher and the librarian can work together on the following skills:
 - Selecting a topic
 - Research strategies & selecting sources
 - Creating a thesis statement and selecting the arguments
 - In-text citations and reference (using the writing manual that is used for the class)
 - Some courses require the use of specific reports or assessments such as the completion of a study, therefore, are required to use surveys as tools. The librarian can teach students how questionnaires are done using a specific digital tools such as Google Forms, Office Forms, Survey Monkey, etc.

5. Remind students to use the resources provided by the librarian at the How (<http://www.robinsonschool.org/school-life/learning-commons/how-to-research-guides>) where they have guides on how to cite using MLA, APA and Chicago Style.
6. Teachers will use Turnitin for assignments that require the use of sources (essays, presentations, informative brochures, etc.) and will provide a minimum of 4 days for students to upload drafts in order to use the platform as a proof reading tool before submitting the work on the due date.

C. Student

1. Students are expected to:
 - Request assistance ahead of time when they have questions on how to use Turnitin.
 - Request assistance ahead of time when they have questions on how to do citations and bibliographies. They can go to the **How To: Research Guides** section of the website, they can ask teachers or the librarian to clarify doubts.
 - Hand in authentic work for all assignments in all subject.
 - Use information responsibly and ethically following the Fair Use guidelines for Copyright protected work, and if they work is in Creative Commons, following the specifications of the license that protects the work. If they work is under Public Domain, the student is expected to give proper credit to the creator of the original work.
 - Visit the RS Academic Honesty section of the school website to learn more about good practices (<http://www.robinsonschool.org/school-life/learning-commons/copyright-right-plagiarism-center>).
 - Sign and comply with Robinson School’s Honor Code (see end of document).
2. Expected Behavior versus Malpractice Scenarios:
 These are examples of the kind of behavior is expected and the example of what is not desirable.

Expected Behavior	Malpractice
Hand in assignment completely done by the student.	Hand in an assignment where part or all the answers were copied from another student’s work.
Group of students discuss the assigned questions and write their answers each on their own words.	Group of students discuss the assigned questions, one of them write down the answers and they all print the same document with different names.
Student has to create an infograph on a topic and cites all the sources used, including images.	Student has to create an infograph and hands it in with the information correctly cited but without giving credit to the source where he/she got the images for the project.
Student hands in a research paper done completely by him/her demonstrating understanding on the topic and citing sources correctly.	Student hands in a research paper that was not written by him/her. The student paid another person do the work and then submitted it as his/her own.

Expected Behavior	Malpractice
Student had to create a personal expenses journal for the VHS Personal Finance class and submitted the work. He/She is asked for the same type of assignment for Parenting Class and creates a new journal with different entries for this class.	Student had to create a personal expenses journal for the VHS Personal Finance class and submitted the work. The following semester the Parenting teacher assigns the same assignment and the student submits the work he/she did for the online class.
Student was absent and asks a classmate for the notebook to copy the material discussed the day before. On part is a set of questions and his/her classmate answered the questions, but he/she only copies the discussion and the questions leaving space to answer the questions later.	Student was absent and asks a classmate to the notebook. Part of the material is a set of questions, the student copies the discussion, the questions and the answers his/her classmate wrote down for each question.

D. Parents

1. Parents are expected to:
 - reinforce the school’s Academic Honesty policy and support the student by promoting good academic practices.
 - promote and assist the student’s academic growth and critical thinking by encouraging independent work and the development of original and creative ideas.
 - encourage the student to plan each assignment and schedule and manage their time, so he/she can complete his/her work as expected.
 - encourage the student to seek advice from the school faculty and staff if he/she is having difficulty with the assignment.
2. Parents are advised to:
 - keep a good level of communication with the school so they have an understanding of the academic requirements and assessment expectations.
 - visit the RS Academic Honesty section of the school website to learn more about good practices (<http://www.robinsonschool.org/school-life/learning-commons/copyright-right-plagiarism-center>) and how to support the student.

Procedures to Follow in Cases of Suspected Malpractice

In an effort of guiding our students to comply with good practices of academic honesty, it was determined that in the case of suspected malpractice such as copying an assessment, duplicating work, collusion, and/or plagiarism; the school will proceed with the following steps:

1. the teacher will collect the evidence and report the incident to the Division Head and the Dean of Students.
2. the Division Head and the Dean of Students will analyze the situation and the evidence provided by the teachers.

3. after identifying malpractice, the Division Head and the Dean of Students will approach the student, present the evidence, and discuss the student's actions. Depending the severity of the situation, the student may have the parent present in the meeting.
4. the Division Head, Dean of Students, and other members of the Academic Team will determine the consequences based on the severity of the case, amount of previous offenses, and the guidelines provided by the school handbook.
5. the determination and consequences will be notified to both student and parents by the Division Head or the Dean of Students.

In the case of misconduct during an IB examination, the IB coordinator will communicate it directly to the IB. A committee determined by the IB will review the reports and evidence provided for the case. The IB final award committee will issue a determination and consequences for the student.

Policy Revision

This policy will be revised every two years in order to improve and update the procedures. The committee made up of Division Heads, IB coordinators, curriculum coordinators and librarian will meet on the second year to review the policy and decide if it needs changes.

Any changes made will appear in the student handbook and the school website on the third academic year.

References

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