

Academic honesty:
guidance for schools

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Introduction

This publication is for schools that offer the International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. It is the expectation of the International Baccalaureate Organization (IBO) that each head of school will make this publication available to the school's Diploma Programme coordinator (henceforth "coordinator"). It is also for use by IBO staff involved with investigations into suspected malpractice and members of the IBO's final award committee who review each case and uphold or dismiss an allegation of malpractice.

In cases where a diploma or certificate candidate does not show academic honesty, the actions of that candidate may constitute malpractice, which is a breach of the *Diploma Programme General Regulations* (the "Regulations"). Although malpractice takes many forms, plagiarism is certainly the most prevalent form. Accordingly, the main focus of this publication is on how to prevent and detect plagiarism.

This publication aims to:

- help define academic honesty and malpractice in the context of the Diploma Programme
- establish the roles and responsibilities of the IBO, heads of school, teachers, candidates and examiners in preventing and detecting malpractice
- offer advice to schools on the prevention and detection of malpractice
- describe the procedure followed by the IBO when investigating instances of suspected malpractice and the role of the school in supporting an investigation
- describe the role of the final award committee and the penalties it applies to candidates found guilty of malpractice.

Throughout the publication reference is made to "the head of school", the assumption being that the head of school normally has overall responsibility for school policy and for resolving significant issues that arise within the school. In practice, the head of school may delegate tasks, such as establishing a school policy on academic honesty or investigating a case of alleged malpractice, to the coordinator or other senior colleague.

The policy and guidance within this publication apply to all candidates for the Diploma Programme, regardless of their registration category.

Understanding academic honesty and malpractice

1 Academic honesty

- 1.1** All Diploma Programme candidates must understand the basic meaning and significance of concepts that relate to academic honesty, especially authenticity and intellectual property. Ensuring that candidates understand and respect academic honesty should not be confined to original authorship and ownership of creative material: academic honesty includes, for example, proper conduct in relation to the written examinations. In reality, it is probably easier to explain what is academic dishonesty, with direct reference to plagiarism, collusion and cheating in examinations. However, whenever possible the topic should be treated in a positive way, stressing the benefits of properly conducted academic research and a respect for the integrity of all forms of assessment for the Diploma Programme. This is preferable to simply warning candidates that plagiarism, collusion, cheating etc are unacceptable and will be penalised by the IBO.
- 1.2** An authentic piece of work is one that is based on the candidate's individual and original ideas with the ideas and work of others fully acknowledged. Therefore, all assignments, written or oral, completed by a candidate for assessment must wholly and authentically use that candidate's own language and expression. Where sources are used or referred to, whether in the form of direct quotation or paraphrase, such sources must be fully and appropriately acknowledged.
- 1.3** The concept of intellectual property is potentially a difficult one for candidates to understand because there are many different forms of intellectual property, such as patents, registered designs, trademarks, moral rights and copyright. Candidates must at least be aware that forms of intellectual and creative expression (for example, works of literature, art or music) must be respected and are normally protected by law.

2 Malpractice

- 2.1** The Regulations define malpractice as behaviour that results in, or may result in, the candidate or any other candidate gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment component. Malpractice includes:
- (a) plagiarism: this is defined as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own
 - (b) collusion: this is defined as supporting malpractice by another candidate, as in allowing one's work to be copied or submitted for assessment by another
 - (c) duplication of work: this is defined as the presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements
 - (d) any other behaviour that gains an unfair advantage for a candidate or that affects the results of another candidate (for example, taking unauthorized material into an examination room, misconduct during an examination, falsifying a CAS record).

- 2.2** Although the Regulations define plagiarism as the representation of the ideas or work of another person as the candidate's own, this definition alone does not provide candidates with sufficient information or guidance on what constitutes plagiarism and how it can be avoided. For example, many students incorrectly believe that because the Internet is in the public domain and largely uncontrolled, information can be taken from web sites without the need for acknowledgment. Even when the need for acknowledgment is recognized, many candidates believe that simply listing sources in a bibliography or in footnotes is sufficient. It must be made very clear to candidates that:
- using the words and ideas of another person to support one's arguments while following accepted practices is an integral part of any intellectual endeavour, and integrating these words and ideas with one's own in accepted ways is an important academic skill
 - all ideas and work of other persons, regardless of their source, must be acknowledged
 - CD-Rom, e-mail messages, web sites on the Internet and any other electronic media must be treated in the same way as books and journals
 - the sources of all photographs, maps, illustrations, computer programs, data, graphs, audio-visual and similar material must be acknowledged if they are not the candidate's own work
 - passages that are quoted verbatim must be enclosed within quotation marks and references provided.
- 2.3** The issue of plagiarism is not confined to groups 1 to 5 of the Diploma Programme. In general, copying works of art, whether music, film, dance, theatre arts or visual arts, also constitutes plagiarism. There are circumstances where the creative use of part of the work of another artist is acceptable, but the original source must always be acknowledged. Candidates must understand that passing off the work of another person as their own is not acceptable and constitutes malpractice.
- 2.4** Plagiarism by candidates is not always a deliberate attempt to present the ideas or work of another person as their own. In the experience of the final award committee it is apparent that many candidates are not aware of how or when to acknowledge sources. In frequent cases passages from a book, journal or web site appear in the candidate's work and are not enclosed within quotation marks, but the source is listed in a footnote or bibliography. Although each case requires separate judgment, in general such cases involve only negligence on the part of the candidate and do not warrant an allegation of malpractice. They will not attract the penalty of no grade being issued for the subject concerned.
- 2.5** For most assessment components candidates are expected to work independently with support from their subject teacher, or supervisor in the case of extended essays. However, there are occasions when collaboration with other candidates 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 similar data. This means that the abstract, introduction, content and conclusion or summary of a piece of work must be written in each candidate's own words and cannot therefore be

the same as another candidate's. If, for example, two or more candidates have exactly the same introduction to an assignment, the final award committee will construe this as collusion, and not collaboration. It is essential that both teachers and candidates 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 candidates.

2.6 The presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements is a duplication of work and therefore constitutes malpractice. If, for example, a candidate submits the same or very similar piece of work for the in-depth study in history internal assessment and for an extended essay in history, this would be viewed as malpractice. However, it is perfectly acceptable for a candidate to study one aspect of a topic for internal assessment and another aspect of the same topic for an extended essay.

2.7 Malpractice most commonly involves collusion or plagiarism. However, there are other ways in which a candidate may commit malpractice and thereby breach the Regulations. The following examples of malpractice do not constitute an exhaustive list and refer mainly to the written examinations:

- paraphrasing another person's work without acknowledging the source
- fabricating data for an assignment
- taking unauthorized material into an examination room (for example, an electronic device other than a permitted calculator, own rough paper, notes, a mobile phone)
- misbehaving during an examination, including any attempt to disrupt the examination or distract another candidate
- exchanging or in any way supporting, or attempting to support, the passing on of information that is related to the examination
- copying the work of another candidate
- referring to, or attempting to refer to, unauthorized material that is related to the examination
- failing to comply with the instructions of the invigilator or other member of the school's staff responsible for the conduct of the examination
- impersonating another candidate
- including offensive material in a script for reasons other than analysis or intellectual inquiry
- stealing examination papers
- disclosing or discussing the content of an examination paper with a person outside the immediate school community within 24 hours after the examination
- using an unauthorized calculator during an examination.

For all cases of malpractice in relation to the examinations, the coordinator must send a report to the coordinator help desk at IBCA.

2.8 Breaches of regulations are not confined to candidates: improper conduct by a coordinator or teacher may be brought to the attention of the final award committee. The following are examples of unacceptable actions that will be investigated by the IBO:

- the unauthorized rescheduling of an examination
- failing to keep the examination papers secure prior to an examination
- opening examination paper packets prior to an examination
- providing a candidate with undue assistance in the production of any work (whether written or oral) that contributes to the assessment requirements of the Diploma Programme
- leaving candidates unsupervised during an examination
- allowing additional time in examinations without authorization from the IBO
- releasing an examination paper, or otherwise disclosing information about the content of a paper, within 24 hours after the examination.

Maintaining academic honesty

3 Roles and responsibilities

3.1 The role of the IBO is to:

- provide the regulations and instructions that govern the conduct of each examination session
- offer guidance to schools on what constitutes malpractice and how it can be prevented
- investigate cases of alleged malpractice, in liaison with the school concerned
- review all available evidence collected during an investigation into malpractice and decide whether to dismiss the allegation or uphold it.

3.2 The IBO does not employ staff to search candidates' work for signs of plagiarism or to search the Internet or libraries for the source of text that is allegedly plagiarized. Nevertheless, as a deterrent, at each examination session the IBO takes a random sample of candidates' work and submits it to a web-based plagiarism detection system. The fact that the IBO is doing this does not allow schools to abrogate their responsibility for submitting work that is authentic.

3.3 The **head of school**, or his or her nominee, must ensure that all candidates:

- understand what constitutes academic honesty and an authentic piece of work
- understand what constitutes malpractice, particularly plagiarism and collusion
- receive guidance on the skills of academic writing and acknowledging sources
- know the consequences of being found guilty of malpractice.

It is also the responsibility of the head of school to establish a school policy that promotes good academic practice and a school culture that actively encourages academic honesty. It is assumed that much of this responsibility will be delegated to the coordinator.

The school is the IBO's first line of defence against malpractice and is therefore expected to support the IBO fully in the prevention, detection and investigation of malpractice. In the event of a candidate being investigated for malpractice, the school has additional responsibilities: see section 7.

3.4 It is the responsibility of each **teacher** to confirm that, to the best of his or her knowledge, all candidates' work accepted or submitted for assessment is the authentic work of each candidate. This includes all work for internal assessment where teachers' marks are submitted to the International Baccalaureate Curriculum and Assessment centre (IBCA) in Cardiff, United Kingdom. When a school has implemented all prevention measures, teachers are expected to detect any plagiarism. Teachers are also expected to support the school's policy on good academic practice and provide candidates with advice whenever necessary.

- 3.5** The **candidate** is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged. Candidates are expected to comply with all internal school deadlines: this is for their own benefit and may allow time for revising work that is of doubtful authorship.
- 3.6** The principal responsibility of an **examiner** is to mark (or moderate) the work of candidates against prescribed assessment criteria. It is not the role of examiners to search for plagiarism, collusion or any other form of malpractice. However, examiners are experienced educational practitioners who are familiar with the texts and web sites that deal with their subject area. Because examiners are well placed to identify plagiarism they are expected to be vigilant and report to the IBO any cases where there is evidence to support an allegation of malpractice. Senior examiners may be asked to write reports on work submitted for assessment that shows evidence of malpractice.

4 Advice to schools

School policy

- 4.1** It is essential that a school-wide policy exists to promote academic honesty and that candidates clearly understand it. This policy should be shared with candidates before they begin the Diploma Programme and be followed by reminders throughout the two years of the programme. The way in which this policy is shared with candidates is left to the discretion of the head of school. However, it is recommended that candidates receive formal tuition, a written copy of the policy and know that the coordinator and teachers are available to offer further advice and guidance. It is expected that the coordinator will play a central role in this process.
- 4.2** All subject areas should contribute to the development of a policy on academic honesty so that candidates gain a clear idea of what constitutes plagiarism in a variety of disciplines. The need to acknowledge the source of data, computer programs, photographs, diagrams, illustrations, maps etc must also be made clear to candidates by their subject teachers.
- 4.3** A school policy on academic honesty should at least include:
- advice on what constitutes academic dishonesty, intellectual property, plagiarism and authentic authorship
 - examples of conventions for citing and acknowledging original authorship
 - guidance on the distinction between legitimate collaboration and unacceptable collusion or plagiarism
 - information on what action will be taken by the school and the IBO if a candidate is found guilty of malpractice
 - an extract of the provisions of the Regulations relating to malpractice.
- 4.4** The policy may refer to the existence of Internet sites that can be used to detect plagiarized text. In fact, candidates should be warned that the IBO randomly checks candidates' work for plagiarism using a web-based plagiarism detection system. An additional deterrent is the vigilance of examiners who are adept at identifying text and material that is not the authentic work of a candidate.

- 4.5** Plagiarism should be viewed as going well beyond a mere breaking of rules and into an area of far greater seriousness. Plagiarism should not be seen as simply an item in a long list of school rules in a handbook. It must be viewed as a serious academic offence with a community attitude that shows no tolerance and imposes severe penalties when it is discovered.
- 4.6** As conventions differ according to the discipline and geographic region, it is not possible to give closely defined rules for attribution, except to say that whatever accepted convention is chosen by a school or individual candidate it should be applied consistently. One suggestion is to use the format provided by the Modern Language Association (MLA), which produces a handbook for writers of research papers, now in its fifth edition (1999). The MLA maintains a web site at <http://www.mla.org>.

Teaching support

- 4.7** The coordinator or teachers must provide candidates with specific conventions for acknowledging sources, both in the bibliography and when providing references for citations from all sources, such as books, journals or Internet sites. It is equally important to ensure that the teachers themselves are fully aware of such conventions, and are actively using them when providing candidates with reference material.
- 4.8** Candidates and teachers should be aware that the requirement to acknowledge sources extends beyond text taken from the Internet, CD-Rom, 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 if that idea emerged as a result of discussion with, or listening to, a fellow student, a teacher or any other person.
- 4.9** 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.
- 4.10** Teachers should help candidates by structuring assignments to avoid generalized "reports" involving little more than information gathering. Instead, teachers should give specific guidelines that encourage candidates to develop their own ideas through problem solving, comparison, precise hypothesis, analysis and the like.
- 4.11** Teachers should provide a formative assessment structure for investigative reports that includes planning and the evaluation of sources, and reflects the need for candidates' 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.
- 4.12** It is important that teachers routinely reinforce good practice and do not emphasize this solely when language A1 world literature assignments, theory of knowledge essays, ITGS projects, extended essays and the like are due for submission.
- 4.13** Teachers are advised to provide candidates with examples of conventions for acknowledging sources. The examples should include a variety of sources (CD-Rom, photographs, illustrations, data) in addition to journals, books and web sites, and should include how to acknowledge the source of an idea that is not the candidate's own. For example, a candidate could provide a footnote or endnote in the following manner: "The basis of this idea was originally expressed by a fellow student during a theory of knowledge seminar."
- 4.14** At all times the advice to candidates should be to attempt as honestly and as accurately as possible to acknowledge the ideas and work of others, even when the exact source cannot be stated with absolute accuracy.

5 The detection of plagiarism

- 5.1** As mentioned in paragraph 3.5, the candidate is ultimately responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is authentic, with the work or ideas of others fully and correctly acknowledged. Candidates are expected to review their own work before submission for assessment to identify any passages, data, graphs, photographs, computer programs etc that still require acknowledgment.
- 5.2** When reading candidates' work teachers must be vigilant for obvious changes in a candidate's 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 secondary school student. Over the two-year period of the Diploma Programme teachers will become very familiar with the style and quality of each candidate's work in their teaching groups. It is therefore the subject teachers who are in the best position to identify work that may not be the authentic work of a candidate. The analysis of texts or documents at a sophisticated level to answer questions about, among other things, text alteration and authorship, is known as forensic linguistics. Information about the techniques used in forensic linguistics is readily available on the Internet.
- 5.3** Although in most cases of plagiarism that come to the attention of the IBO the candidate has copied passages from a web site, plagiarism still takes place 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 candidates; they may be standard textbooks for the subject, or books that are readily available in the school library. The teacher must be vigilant for familiar passages and, if necessary, check that such passages have not been copied from a textbook. In the case of supervising a candidate during the writing of his or her extended essay, the supervisor, if suspicious, may quiz the candidate on the content of the essay to determine whether the work is in fact that of the candidate.

- 5.4** It is a requirement for the completion of the extended essay that a teacher from the school is appointed to each diploma candidate to act as his or her supervisor. The role of the supervisor is to:
- encourage and support the candidate throughout the research and writing of the extended essay
 - provide the candidate with advice and guidance on the skills of undertaking research
 - ensure that the extended essay is the candidate's own work.

It would be unrealistic to expect teachers to offer the same amount of guidance to all their candidates for every piece of work they undertake. However, close supervision, in the form of guidance and advice, will help with the early detection of plagiarism (and collusion) and will dissuade candidates from plagiarism because they know their work is regularly subject to scrutiny. What is realistic and what can be achieved within the usual constraints of time and workload must be left to the discretion of teachers and the coordinator. Nevertheless, candidates' work must be read and checked for authenticity before submission: this includes internal assessment, but excludes examination scripts.

- 5.5** With the recent growth of the Internet and corresponding increase in its use, the abuse of electronic media is now prevalent within the academic community. Aside from the immense number of legitimate web sites, there are an increasing number of sites that actively encourage students to plagiarize and even purchase essays. Little can be done to prevent the emergence of these sites, but the Internet can also be used for detecting academic dishonesty. Several of the more efficient search engines can be used to detect the source of passages that have been plagiarized. Also, there are several web sites that offer a useful service in detecting plagiarism from the Internet, for example Turnitin.com.

Although web-based plagiarism detection systems and search engines are highly effective as a deterrent, they have their limitations. Even a combination of search engines will cover only a limited percentage of web sites and may not tap into secure sites that are password protected. There are many essay banks from which students can purchase essays, but accessing such sites to verify that a student's essay is plagiarized may first require a payment.

6 Authenticating candidates' work

- 6.1** It is the responsibility of Diploma Programme teachers to ensure that all candidates' work for assessment is prepared according to the requirements of the relevant subject guide. Therefore, teachers (or supervisors in the case of extended essays) are in the best position to judge whether candidates' work is authentic.
- 6.2** Before the submission of work for assessment, issues of authenticity arising from plagiarism and collusion must be decided within the school. All work submitted to the IBO for moderation or assessment must be authenticated by a teacher, and must not include any known instances of suspected or confirmed malpractice.
- 6.3** In the case of externally assessed components (for example, extended essays, language A1 world literature, theory of knowledge essays), the submission of work for assessment refers to the assessment of work by an examiner appointed by the IBO. In the case of internally assessed components, the submission of work for assessment refers to the assessment of work by a teacher.

6.4 If the coordinator (or a teacher) has reason to suspect that part or the whole of a candidate's work may not be authentic, that work must not be accepted or submitted for assessment. The situation must be resolved within the school. At the discretion of the coordinator one of two possible courses of action must be adopted.

- The candidate should be allowed one opportunity to revise and resubmit the work. This must be completed in time for the coordinator to send the work to the examiner to arrive by the appropriate IBO deadline (or to send marks to IBCA in the case of internal assessment).
- If there is insufficient time to allow a revision of the work, an F must be entered against the candidate's name on the appropriate mark/attendance sheet (or on IBNET in the case of internal assessment). This will result in no grade being awarded for the subject concerned. To avoid giving an F, coordinators are advised to set an internal school deadline that is sufficiently early for teachers (and supervisors) to read each candidate's final submission.

Whichever course of action is adopted, the incident must be dealt with by the school and **not** reported to IBCA.

6.5 Occasionally, the coordinator or a teacher may identify possible plagiarism after a candidate's work has been accepted or submitted for assessment. If evidence of plagiarism is available IBCA must be informed so that an investigation can be undertaken. If plagiarism is suspected, but there is no evidence in the form of a source that has been copied, the situation must not be brought to the attention of IBCA unless advice is required.

Investigating malpractice

7 The procedure for an investigation

- 7.1** The following circumstances are those that most commonly give rise to an investigation.
- A coordinator informs IBCA that malpractice may have taken place during an examination.
 - An examiner suspects malpractice and provides evidence to justify his or her suspicion.
 - An IBO member of staff identifies examination material that may not be the authentic work of a candidate and provides evidence to justify his or her suspicion.
- 7.2** The IBO will only investigate a case of suspected malpractice when there is clear evidence to justify an allegation of malpractice. In the case of plagiarism the evidence must be in the form of a source that appears to have been copied by a candidate. In cases of collusion an investigation will only be pursued if the other candidate's work is available and shows clear similarities.
- 7.3** If the IBO initiates an investigation into malpractice it will do so immediately after the evidence of malpractice is brought to the attention of the coordinator help desk at IBCA. The head of examinations administration will inform the coordinator, normally by e-mail, that a candidate (or candidates) is being investigated for possible malpractice. It is a requirement of the IBO that the coordinator will immediately inform the head of school that a candidate (or candidates) is suspected of malpractice.
- 7.4** For all cases of malpractice by a candidate the coordinator will be asked to provide IBCA with a report after he or she has conducted a discreet investigation. In the case of suspected plagiarism the coordinator's report will normally include:
- a statement from the candidate that directly addresses the allegation that his or her work is not authentic
 - a statement from the teacher for the subject concerned (or supervisor in the case of an extended essay)
 - the coordinator's own statement
 - a summary of an interview with the candidate about the allegation of plagiarism.
- The statement from the candidate's teacher (or supervisor) should include information on:
- the guidance given to all candidates on how to acknowledge sources, avoid collusion etc (as appropriate to the nature of the case) in the subject and component concerned
 - the nature and extent of supervision given to the candidate on the work under investigation

- the procedure for verifying that, to the best of his or her knowledge, candidates' work accepted or submitted for assessment in the subject and component concerned is authentic.

The statement from the coordinator should include information on:

- the guidance given to all Diploma Programme candidates on how to acknowledge sources, avoid collusion etc
- the circumstances of the case, including details of any mitigating circumstances
- the coordinator's opinion on whether the allegation of plagiarism made against the candidate should be upheld or dismissed (if the allegation came from the IBO).

- 7.5** It is essential that the investigation and subsequent reporting to IBCA are undertaken without delay; otherwise a decision on the case by the final award committee will not be given until after the issue of results. However, to avoid distracting a candidate from examination preparation, it is acceptable to delay raising the issue with the candidate until after the candidate's last written examination.
- 7.6** Coordinators are advised to inform the candidate's parents (or guardians) that their son or daughter is suspected of malpractice, but whether they are involved in the investigation is a decision made by the coordinator or head of school. Some discretion may be necessary here depending on the age of the candidate.
- 7.7** The planning and conduct of an investigation are left to the discretion of the coordinator. However, to protect the candidate's personal rights the investigation must be discreet and all information relating to the investigation must remain confidential.
- 7.8** It is normal practice to interview the candidate, with a relative or friend in attendance as an advisor, witness or observer. The candidate must be shown the evidence and be invited to present an explanation or defence. Accusatory statements about the candidate, whether written or verbal, must be avoided. With the candidate's permission, a transcript of the interview may be taken and submitted to IBCA as part of the coordinator's report on the investigation. The candidate must also be given the opportunity to provide a written statement.
- 7.9** The content of a coordinator's report will depend on the nature of the alleged malpractice. In addition to the requirements listed in paragraph 7.4 the coordinator's report may also include a seating plan (for malpractice in examinations), rough notes produced by the candidate for the work concerned or early drafts of the candidate's work. If appropriate, a coordinator may be asked to submit examples of the candidate's coursework for comparison with the work under investigation.
- 7.10** If a statement from a candidate is not included with the coordinator's report and no evidence of an interview is provided, the coordinator will be asked to confirm in writing that the candidate has been given the opportunity to be heard and to provide a statement. IBCA will not resolve a case of suspected malpractice until either this confirmation or the statement itself has been received.

- 7.11** IBCA will normally make available to a school all evidence relating to a case of possible malpractice. Evidence may be withheld to protect the identity of an informant or if the disclosure of that evidence compromises the privacy of another person.
- 7.12** The IBO reserves the right to withhold the results of a candidate or group of candidates until an investigation is completed.
- 7.13** On rare occasions possible malpractice by a candidate is brought to the attention of the IBO after the issue of results. In compliance with the Regulations, which state that an IB diploma or a certificate may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established, the IBO will still initiate an investigation. Although the candidate may no longer attend the school, the IBO will seek advice and support from the school in resolving a late malpractice case.

8 The rights of the candidate

- 8.1** If a candidate is under investigation for possible malpractice, the coordinator must inform the candidate. Whether the candidate's parents (or guardians) are informed of the allegation and involved in the investigation is left to the discretion of the school, bearing in mind any relevant circumstances such as whether the candidate has reached the age of legal majority.
- 8.2** The candidate and his or her parents (or guardians) have a right to see evidence, statements, reports and correspondence about the case. Any decision to withhold such information rests entirely with the head of school or coordinator. Evidence may be withheld to protect the identity of an informant.
- 8.3** The candidate must be given a copy of the Regulations and his or her attention drawn to those articles that concern malpractice.
- 8.4** It is the policy of the IBO that any candidate being investigated for malpractice is given the opportunity to be heard and to submit a written defence to IBCA. The school has no right to prevent this process, to edit or unduly influence the candidate's statement. The candidate is expected to make the content of the statement available to the coordinator, but may request that the statement remain confidential to the IBO.
- 8.5** The candidate must be given sufficient time to prepare a response to the allegation. IBCA must be contacted for advice if the candidate may not be able to meet the deadline imposed.

9 Investigating improper conduct by a coordinator or teacher

- 9.1** In consultation with the head of school, the IBO will conduct an investigation into an alleged breach of regulations by a coordinator or teacher with the utmost discretion. The purpose of an investigation will be to establish whether:
- the coordinator or teacher has breached regulations or otherwise compromised the security or integrity of assessment for the Diploma Programme
 - the results of any candidate (or candidates) have been affected.

- 9.2** The head of school will be expected to produce a report on the situation following an internal investigation, during which the coordinator or teacher will be given the opportunity to be heard.
- 9.3** The final award committee will consider all cases of alleged improper conduct by a coordinator or teacher and take whatever action is necessary if examination results have been affected.
- 9.4** Where the final award committee establishes a case of improper conduct, the academic director will write to the head of school to express the committee's concern for the integrity of the Diploma Programme. There is no obligation on the committee to recommend any particular course of action with regard to the coordinator or teacher. However, the letter will indicate that unless appropriate action is taken by the head of school to prevent a recurrence, the director general may review the school's authorization with the IBO. The letter will be copied to the director general and the appropriate regional director.

10 The role of a grade award meeting and of the chief examiner

- 10.1** In preparation for the meeting of the final award committee, a case of suspected malpractice may be referred to the appropriate grade award meeting for a recommendation from the chief examiner (or his or her nominee). A case is normally referred to a grade award meeting when a group of candidates has allegedly been involved in malpractice during an examination. The chief examiner will be asked to review the scripts and recommend whether the allegation should be upheld or dismissed.
- 10.2** In cases of suspected collusion or plagiarism during an examination, the chief examiner will be asked to review candidates' scripts and consider whether the candidates' similar or identical answers are:
- a coincidence
 - a result of misinterpreting the information or questions in the examination paper
 - the result of a particular technique taught by their teacher
 - so unusual that they can only be accounted for by collusion, plagiarism or some other form of malpractice.

In the case of a candidate who has produced a correct answer without showing any working or method of achieving the answer, the chief examiner will consider how likely this is without malpractice in view of the candidate's performance on other parts of the paper and in other papers for the subject and level.

- 10.3** In a case of suspected malpractice where the chief examiner finds no grounds for establishing malpractice, the recommendation of the chief examiner will be accepted, resulting in no further action. The case will not be presented to the final award committee. Where grounds for establishing malpractice are identified, the case will be presented to the final award committee.
- 10.4** In cases where the allegation of malpractice is supported by the chief examiner, he or she submits to the final award committee:
- the work under suspicion
 - evidence to support the allegation of malpractice
 - a written report on the case with a recommendation on the action that should be taken by the final award committee.

11 The role of the final award committee

- 11.1** The IBO recognizes that work submitted by candidates for assessment does not always conform to the standard academic practice of clearly acknowledging all ideas and words that are not the candidates' own. In cases where the final award committee does not deem this a deliberate attempt by a candidate to gain an unfair advantage, this nonconformity will be designated an academic infringement and not malpractice.
- 11.2** Cases of suspected malpractice will be presented to the final award committee. After reviewing all evidence collected during the investigation, the committee will decide with full discretion whether to dismiss the allegation, uphold it, or ask for further investigations to be made. If the final award committee deems evidence of malpractice insufficient, the allegation will be dismissed and a grade will be awarded in the normal way.
- 11.3** In reaching a decision on each case of suspected malpractice, the chair of the final award committee will ensure that:
- each voting member of the committee is given the opportunity to present his or her views on the case
 - all evidence is reviewed in an objective manner before a decision is reached on the guilt or innocence of the candidate (or candidates)
 - discussion is coordinated, impartial and relevant to the case
 - a clear majority decision is reached regarding the action to be taken.
- 11.4** Any member of the final award committee who has a personal interest in a case, and is therefore not independent from the case, must declare that interest and not take part in any discussion or voting. The chair will ask the colleague to leave the meeting while the committee discusses the case.
- 11.5** Where appropriate, in reaching a decision on whether a candidate is guilty of malpractice the committee will take into consideration any similar cases that may have set a precedent for a case of its kind. Nevertheless, each case of suspected malpractice will be judged on its own merit, taking into account all the evidence and information that is available about the case.
- 11.6** If the investigation of a case is incomplete, or the committee requires additional information, the committee will make a provisional internal decision on the outcome of the case pending further investigation.
- 11.7** If a case cannot be resolved during the meeting of the final award committee, no result will be issued for the candidate (or candidates) in the subject under investigation until all inquiries are complete and a final decision has been reached. This includes any candidate involved in the case.
- 11.8** No final decision regarding the guilt of a candidate accused of malpractice will normally be reached unless a statement from that candidate has been received and considered by the committee. In cases where a candidate has not been heard and produced a statement, the coordinator must state in writing that the candidate declined the opportunity of being heard and of producing a statement.

- 11.9** If a candidate is found guilty of malpractice in the production of one or more of several assignments for a component, the candidate is not eligible for a mark based on his or her performance in the remaining assignments for the component: no grade will be awarded for the subject. For example, the internal assessment requirement for a subject may require a portfolio of four separate assignments. If a candidate is found to have plagiarized all or part of one assignment, a mark for his or her internal assessment will not be based on the remaining three assignments: no grade will be awarded for the subject.

12 Offences and their penalty

- 12.1** Penalties are imposed on a candidate found guilty of malpractice in order to:
- ensure that the candidate does not gain an unfair advantage
 - maintain the integrity of the examination session by excluding those candidates who have abused the system
 - deter other candidates from taking the same action.
- 12.2** The committee will not take into account the consequences of imposing a penalty; the penalty will be imposed according to the nature of the offence. However, the committee will take into consideration all the information presented by teachers and the coordinator in their statements on the case. This information may include mitigating circumstances.
- 12.3** If the final award committee decides that a case of malpractice has been established, no grade will be awarded in the subject concerned. No diploma will be awarded to the candidate, but a certificate will be awarded for other subjects in which no malpractice has occurred. The candidate will be permitted to register for future examinations at least one year after the session in which malpractice was established.
- 12.4** If a case of malpractice is very serious, either because of its nature or because the candidate has already been found guilty of malpractice in a previous session, the final award committee is entitled to decide that the candidate will not be permitted to register for examinations in any future session.
- 12.5** If the final award committee decides that an academic infringement has been established, no marks will be awarded for the component or part (or parts) of the component. The candidate will still be eligible for a grade in the subject or diploma requirement concerned. No further penalty will be imposed and the case will not be recorded as malpractice. In such a case, the decision regarding academic infringement will be notified in accordance with 13.1 below.
- 12.6** An IB diploma, or a certificate, may be withdrawn from a candidate at any time if malpractice is subsequently established.
- 12.7** Although a case may not warrant a penalty against one or more candidates, it may be appropriate for a letter to be sent to the head of school on behalf of the final award committee insisting that greater care be taken to avoid a similar incident occurring again.

13 Notification of decisions made

13.1 In all cases where the final award committee has considered a breach of regulations, the head of school will be informed by a letter, signed by the academic director, of the decision reached by the committee. The head of school will be required to acknowledge receipt of the letter to assure the IBO that the decision of the committee has been received. It is the responsibility of the head of school to inform the candidate of the IBO's decision. If a breach of regulations was established, the letter will be copied to appropriate IBO personnel and to the chief examiner.

14 Reconsideration and appeal

14.1 An application for reconsideration of a decision by the final award committee may be presented to the committee in the light of new factual evidence. Any such application must be sent to the IBO within three months of the date of the original decision by the final award committee.

14.2 Decisions of the final award committee are not subject to appeal to another body.