

Academic Honesty Policy

BMIS aims to comply with copyright law, in accordance with the existing and future laws of Malawi, and the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works, to which Malawi is a signatory nation (12th October 1991). Staff and students will limit reproduction and communication of copyright materials in accordance with generally accepted principles of fair use.

BMIS recognizes that students should understand and comply with accepted principles of academic honesty, and that instruction in academic honesty is a fundamental part of each student's education.

These principles are:

1. That authors and creators possess a moral and legal right to their own work;
2. That these rights must be acknowledged by following accepted procedures for citation and attribution;
3. That work must be authentically produced through a students' own efforts;
4. That plagiarism, collusion and cheating of all kinds are unacceptable.

All students will be taught to act in a responsible, ethical and honest manner towards intellectual property and authentic authorship. Instruction will be age appropriate and reflect the regulations and expectations of the educational programmes offered in the school, and the agencies that govern them (for example: International Baccalaureate Organization).

Academic malpractice will be treated as a serious breach of discipline and will be dealt with through the student code of conduct.

Guidance for the avoidance of plagiarism and how to cite the intellectual property of others is provided in the Student Planner. The standard system for referencing at BMIS is the Harvard ("author-date" or APA) system.

Guidance for the implementation of this policy is provided below.

Academic Honesty Procedures and Guidelines

Responsibilities

1. The Head teacher of each section of the school is responsible for creating academic honesty procedures and practices which will provide more detailed guidance to teachers, parents and students.
2. The library, in conjunction with the ICT department, and other teachers and departments where appropriate, will teach students how they can use information from various sources and put it in their own words.

Whole school

All students will be encouraged to act in the following ways:

1. To tell the truth.
2. To value their own work and the work of others.
3. Not to copy, take or borrow answers or the work of others.
4. To do their own work, including homework and not ask their parents or tutor to do it for them.
5. To recognize the difference between group work and individual work and to play a full role in group work.
6. To record the type of sources they used when creating their own work.
7. To be responsible for their own actions.

8. To show respect for intellectual property rights and acknowledge these where necessary.

Secondary School

In addition, Secondary School students will be encouraged to act as follows:

1. To familiarize themselves fully with relevant regulations and develop a clear understanding of what academic honesty means and what exactly constitutes academic dishonesty.
2. To act ethically with information and cite references for any work taken from another source.
3. To follow examination board rules for mock examinations, public examinations and coursework.
4. Academic honesty is an important part of teaching and learning. Teachers in particular are able to detect plagiarism and cheating in various ways:
 1. Teachers know their student's writing styles and language ability. They can easily recognize if a text was really written by someone else.
 2. It is very easy to copy and paste from the Internet but its also easy for a teacher to trace where the text has been taken from. A simple search on 'Google' will find most copied text.
 3. If a student is caught being dishonest, teachers of the student will be informed of this and they will pay special attention to that student's work in future.
5. Teachers will model good practice. All articles or quotes from newspapers, journals, books and websites should be referenced before being presented to students or put on display.
6. Teachers in both the Primary and Secondary schools will educate students about the importance of academic honesty. Teachers will take into account that students are still learning to understand what academic honesty means.
7. Teachers will educate students about the right way to use someone else's ideas. Secondary School students should be taught to use the Harvard ("author-date" or APA) system for referencing and citations.
8. If a teacher recognizes cheating or plagiarism, or even suspects such a case, he/she will take immediate steps to deal with it, according to school policy using the code of conduct.
9. Students are not expected to know and create everything themselves. They should always try to do their work on their own, but if any help is given it should be acknowledged in writing in the final work.
10. Students should not give their work to another student for any reason even if they are friends.
11. Students should not wait until the last minute to work on an assignment.
12. Students should ensure that they know how to cite (reference) sources and how to create a bibliography.
13. When in doubt about any aspect of academic honesty, students should ask their teacher or librarian.
14. Parents should encourage their children to try to do their homework on their own and write in their own words.
15. Any help given by parents should be clearly stated in writing on the work itself.
16. If a parent knows or suspects that their child has been academically dishonest he/she should inform the school.

Expectations

Expectations of Teachers

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Expectations of students

1. Students are not expected to know and create everything themselves. They should always try to do their work on their own, but if any help is given it should be acknowledged in writing in the final work.
2. Students should not give their work to another student for any reason even if they are friends.
3. Students should not wait until the last minute to work on an assignment.
4. Students should ensure that they know how to cite (reference) sources and how to create a bibliography.
5. When in doubt about any aspect of academic honesty, students should ask their teacher or librarian.

Expectations of parents

1. Parents should encourage their children to try to do their homework on their own and write in their own words.
2. Any help given by parents should be clearly stated in writing on the work itself.
3. If a parent knows or suspects that their child has been academically dishonest he/she should inform the school.

Consequences of Academic Dishonesty for Students

All students are expected to follow both the letter and the spirit of this policy. The level of proof required for the school to take action on the grounds of academic honesty is reasonable suspicion and it is the responsibility of the student to demonstrate that they have not acted dishonestly.

The consequences for any student found attempting malpractice, collusion, plagiarism or duplication might range from a simple verbal warning to having an examination certificate taken away and losing a place at university. This will depend on:

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- The age of the student.
- The seriousness of the offence.
- Whether the occurrence was accidental, the result of carelessness or a deliberate action.
- Whether the occurrence contravenes the rules of an examination board.
- For details of the consequences and sanctions that will be applied in cases of academic dishonesty, please refer to the code of conduct.

Some useful definitions used at BMIS

Academic dishonesty	The deliberate act of trying to gain academic credit for work that is not your own. Such acts are classified either as malpractice, collusion, plagiarism or duplication.
Academic honesty	Actively making sure that the work you are presenting as your own, whether to teachers or examiners, is yours and it has not been copied from friends, books, the Internet or other sources.
Authentic authorship	Work that is actually written by the named author.
Collusion	Work that is produced by more than one person, which can include: When someone allows you to copy her/his work or writes part of it for you and you present it as your own work. Letting someone else copy your assignment, homework or answers in a test or exam. Giving others the answers during a test, quiz or exam.
Duplication	Presenting the same work for marking more than once, which can include: 'Recycling' an old assignment by presenting it as new original work for additional credit without acknowledging that this has been done. Handing in the same text or research material for two different subject assignments without acknowledging that this has been done. The presentation of the same work for different assessment components and/or diploma requirements (for example if the same material from an internal assessment has been used in an extended essay) in contravention of examination board rules.
Intellectual property	Creations of the mind: inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names, images & pictures, and designs used in commerce.
Malpractice	Commonly referred to as cheating, which can include: Imitating someone else signature. Using hidden notes on paper, electronic devices or written on yourself during a test or examination. Asking for or looking up answers during a test or examination. Making up or altering scientific or other research data. If you work in a team, letting others do the work and then adding your name as if you had done an equal part of the work. Pretending to be someone else in an examination.
Plagiarism	Presenting someone else's ideas without crediting them, which can include: Copying or paraphrasing material and presenting it as your own work without properly citing the book, newspaper or website where you took it from. Take someone else idea and present it as your without citing the source. Translating a text or an idea and then presenting it as yours without citing the original source.

Harvard Referencing System

BMIS students will be taught to adhere to the Harvard system for referencing texts.

Bibliography format:

FAMILY/SURNAME, Initials. (Publication year in brackets) Book title - italicised. Series title and volume if applicable. Edition – if not the first. Place of publication: publisher

For example:

BENBRIDGE, J. (1979) *Essential Writing Techniques*. London: Wyte Publishing.

Citations in the main body of the work appear as quotations, paraphrasing or illustrations. Quotations are used when quoting the exact words of the original author's work. Quotes that are less than a line may be included in the body of the text in quotation marks. Longer quotes are indented on left and right and italicized, but not put in quotation marks.

For example:

Benbridge (1979. P167) argues that "a writing frame is essential for second language learners."