ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

Reviewed:	March 2026
Next Review Due:	June 2027
Applies To:	All Teaching Staff, Students and Parents
Owner:	Deputy Head of School
Approved By:	Board of Directors

Mission, Vision and Values

Mission
To inspire our children to reach their full potential by fostering curiosity and an interest in learning, awakening their minds and illuminating their world.

Vision
To create an affordable international secondary school with a high standard of education where children learn through practical and project-based work. To develop our students' moral and intellectual capacity, and to encourage creativity and adaptability.

Aim
An education that is broad, balanced and challenging, with an emphasis on developing strong connections to our host country, Uganda.

Values
Desire for lifelong learning; an ability to adapt; be innovative and reflective thinkers; open minded, and empathetic while achieving high academic success according to individual potential.

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1. Introduction

7Hills International School (7Hills) is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic honesty and ethical scholarship across all areas of teaching, learning, and assessment. As a school offering internationally recognised qualifications, we are required to ensure that all assessment practices are rigorous, transparent, and compliant with the regulations of relevant awarding bodies, including the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ). This policy sets out the expectations, principles, and procedures that underpin academic integrity at 7Hills, providing a clear framework to support students and staff in maintaining authenticity, fairness, and credibility in all academic work.

2. Rationale and Purpose

At 7Hills International School, we are committed to fostering a culture of honesty, trust, fairness, respect, and responsibility in all aspects of learning. Academic integrity is fundamental to meaningful learning, valid assessment, and the development of independent, ethical learners.

This policy ensures that all internal and external assessments are conducted in accordance with the regulations set by the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and relevant awarding bodies (e.g. Cambridge International, Pearson Edexcel).

3. Definition of Academic Integrity

Academic integrity refers to the commitment to producing authentic work, acknowledging sources appropriately, and engaging honestly in all academic activities.

Breaches of academic integrity include, but are not limited to:

- Plagiarism
- Collusion
- Fabrication or falsification of data
- Cheating in assessments
- Malpractice in coursework or examinations

4. Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as presenting the work, ideas, or words of another person as one's own without proper acknowledgement.

Examples include:

- Copying text from books, websites, or AI-generated content without citation

- Paraphrasing without crediting the original source
- Submitting another student's work (past or present)
- Purchasing or downloading essays or assignments
- Using translation tools or AI tools inappropriately where original work is required

5. Alignment with JCQ Regulations

This policy adheres to the requirements outlined by the Joint Council for Qualifications, particularly:

- JCQ General Regulations for Approved Centres
- JCQ Instructions for Conducting Non-Examination Assessments (NEA)
- JCQ Suspected Malpractice Policies and Procedures

In accordance with JCQ:

- All submitted work must be the candidate's own
- Teachers must authenticate student work
- Students must sign declarations confirming authenticity
- Any suspected malpractice must be formally investigated and reported

Failure to comply may result in sanctions imposed by the awarding body, including disqualification.

6. Expectations of Students

Students at 7Hills are expected to:

- Produce original work for all assignments and assessments
- Acknowledge all sources using appropriate referencing conventions when working on research projects
- Seek guidance when unsure about academic integrity
- Follow instructions regarding the use of AI tools and external support
- Sign authenticity declarations where required

7. Expectations of Staff

Teachers and staff are responsible for:

- Explicitly teaching academic integrity and referencing skills
- Designing assessments that minimise opportunities for malpractice

- Monitoring student work for authenticity
- Applying internal standardisation procedures
- Reporting suspected malpractice in line with JCQ procedures

Each case will be considered individually in line with the exam board and JCQ guidance.

8. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

7Hills recognises that AI tools are increasingly accessible. Their use must align with academic integrity principles and JCQ guidance.

Students must:

- Only use AI tools where explicitly permitted
- Acknowledge any AI support where appropriate
- Not submit AI-generated content as their own work

Misuse of AI will be treated as malpractice.

9. Procedures for Suspected Malpractice

If malpractice is suspected:

1. The concern will be documented by the teacher
2. Evidence will be collected (e.g. drafts, sources, similarity reports)
3. The student will be given an opportunity to respond
4. The case will be reviewed by the Academic Integrity Lead / SLT
5. Where required, the case will be reported to the awarding body in line with Joint Council for Qualifications procedures

10. Sanctions

Sanctions will be proportionate and may include:

- Re-submission of work
- Loss of marks for the affected component
- Internal disciplinary action
- Formal reporting to the awarding body

External sanctions (as per JCQ) may include:

- Loss of marks

- Disqualification from a unit or qualification
- Debarment from future examinations

11. Supporting Academic Integrity

7Hills promotes academic integrity through:

- Explicit teaching of research and referencing skills
- Scaffolded assignments and draft submissions
- Use of plagiarism detection tools
- Academic mentoring and feedback
- A school-wide culture of ethical learning

12. Appeals

Students have the right to appeal decisions related to malpractice. Appeals must:

- Be submitted in writing
- Follow the school's internal appeals procedure
- Align with JCQ appeals processes where applicable

13. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed annually or as required to reflect changes in legislation, JCQ and CIS standards, or school practice.

14. Distribution and Access

This policy is available to all staff, students, and parents via the school website and on the school Google drive. Printed copies can be requested from the school reception.

15. Related Policies

EPQ - AI Policy
Ethical Use of Technology
Referencing Guidelines
Student Authenticity Declaration Form

Appendix A: Key JCQ Principles

- Authentication of candidate work is mandatory
- Teacher guidance must not compromise authenticity
- Malpractice must be reported promptly

- Centres are accountable for maintaining assessment integrity