Plagiarism and Academic Integrity Policy

Ace London School

1. Policy Statement

Ace London School is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty in all areas of teaching, learning, and assessment.

Plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct undermine the credibility of qualifications, the integrity of the school, and the value of students' achievements. The school therefore treats all cases of plagiarism seriously and applies clear procedures for prevention, detection, and disciplinary action.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote a culture of academic honesty and integrity
- Define what constitutes plagiarism and academic misconduct
- Ensure consistent, fair, and transparent handling of alleged cases
- Educate students on proper research and referencing practices
- Protect the academic reputation of both the school and its students

3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- All students enrolled in programmes at Ace London School
- All academic work, including coursework, examinations, portfolios, presentations, and digital submissions
- All teaching and support staff involved in the assessment process

4. Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined as the presentation of another person's work, ideas, words, or data as one's own without proper acknowledgment or permission.

Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Copying text, phrases, or ideas from books, journals, websites, or other students without referencing the source
- Submitting work written by someone else (e.g., purchased or commissioned assignments)
- Re-using significant portions of one's own previously submitted work (self-plagiarism) without permission
- Failing to use quotation marks for directly quoted material
- Using images, charts, or statistics without citing the source
- Using AI-generated content (e.g., from ChatGPT or similar tools) without proper declaration or acknowledgment, where applicable.

5. Other Forms of Academic Misconduct

In addition to plagiarism, the following actions also constitute academic misconduct:

- **Collusion:** Working with others to produce individual work that is submitted as one's own.
- **Fabrication or falsification:** Inventing data, information, or references.
- **Impersonation:** Arranging for another person to complete an assessment on one's behalf.
- **Contract cheating:** Purchasing or commissioning work from a third party.
- **Unauthorised assistance:** Receiving help that is not permitted during assessments or coursework.

6. Responsibilities

a) The school

Ace London School will:

- Promote awareness of academic integrity through induction and training

- Provide clear referencing and citation guidance
- Implement plagiarism detection systems (e.g., Turnitin or equivalent software)
- Investigate alleged cases fairly and confidentially
- Record and monitor incidents to identify patterns or trends

b) Staff

Tutors and assessors are responsible for:

- Teaching and modelling good academic practice
- Checking assessments for originality and proper referencing
- Reporting suspected cases to the Academic Misconduct Panel

c) Students

Students are expected to:

- Complete all work honestly and independently
- Use correct referencing techniques (e.g., Harvard or other approved systems)
- Seek guidance from tutors if unsure about citation requirements
- Acknowledge all sources of information accurately

7. Prevention and Education

- All new students will receive academic integrity training during induction.
- Guidance on referencing and avoiding plagiarism will be available in the Student Handbook and on the school portal.
- Workshops and tutorials will be provided to help students develop proper research and writing skills.

8. Detection of Plagiarism

The school employs various methods to identify plagiarism, including:

- Electronic plagiarism detection software (e.g., Turnitin or equivalent)
- Manual cross-checking by tutors
- Comparison of writing style or structure across submissions

- Verification of references and citation accuracy

All suspected cases of plagiarism will be referred to the Academic Misconduct Panel for review.

9. Procedure for Handling Alleged Plagiarism

Step 1 – Detection and Initial Review

- The tutor identifies possible plagiarism through detection tools or observation.
- The tutor informs the Programme Leader and submits evidence for preliminary review.

Step 2 – Notification to the Student

- The student will be notified in writing of the suspected plagiarism and provided with the opportunity to respond within five (5) working days

Step 3 – Investigation and Hearing

- The Academic Misconduct Panel (comprising at least two academic staff members and School Manager) will review the evidence and the student's response
- The student may be invited to attend a meeting to explain their case

Step 4 – Decision and Outcome

Based on the evidence, the Panel will determine whether:

- Plagiarism or misconduct has occurred
- The severity of the offence (minor, moderate, or major)
- The appropriate action or penalty

Step 5 – Communication and Record Keeping

- The decision will be communicated in writing to the student within ten (10) working days of the hearing.
- Records of the incident and outcome will be kept confidentially in the student's file.

10. Penalties for Plagiarism

Penalties will vary depending on the seriousness of the offence and whether it is a first or repeated occurrence. Possible sanctions include:

Level	Description	Possible Sanction
Minor (First Offence)	Small portion of work not properly referenced	Re-submission with correction and formal warning
Moderate	Significant copying without acknowledgment	Zero mark for the assignment and formal written warning
Major (Repeat/Severe)	Intentional or large-scale plagiarism, contract cheating, impersonation	Zero for the module, disciplinary action, or expulsion from the school

All sanctions will be recorded, and serious cases may be referred to the Principal or external awarding body as appropriate.

11. Appeals Process

Students have the right to appeal against the outcome or penalty by submitting a written appeal to the Academic Appeals Committee within 10 working days of receiving the decision.

Appeals will only be considered on the grounds of:

- New evidence
- Procedural error or
- Disproportionate penalty

The Appeals Committee's decision is final.

12. Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Tools

Students must declare any use of AI tools (such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, or paraphrasing software) in the completion of assignments, where applicable.

Failure to disclose or misuse of AI-generated content will be treated as academic misconduct.

13. Monitoring and Review

- The Academic Board will monitor and review all plagiarism cases annually to ensure consistency and fairness.
- This policy will be reviewed annually or sooner if required by changes in awarding body or regulatory guidance.

14. Contact Information

Academic Integrity Officer

Thu Nguyen - Ace London School

Suite 302, 315 & 504 Olympic House

28–42 Clements Road, Ilford, IG1 1BA

thu@acelondonschool.co.uk