

Sophia **HIGH SCHOOL**

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY **2026 - 2027**

Academic Integrity Policy

Version	1.0
Document authors (name)	Melissa McBride CEO Jennifer Callaway Holly McKenna Vanessa Temple Gary Webster (from Aug 2026 version)
Policy Owner	Sophia High School - Vanessa Temple

Audience	
Target	All students and staff, Sophia High School and Sophia Technologies Ltd.
Policy Location	SHS server

Version control	
Implementation date	November 2023
Reviewed and updated	February 2024
Reviewed and updated	August 2024
Reviewed and updated	August 2025
Reviewed and updated	August 2026
Next Review date	August 2027

Academic Integrity Policy

Introduction

As a fully online school, Sophia High School students have unlimited access to the internet and the use of digital technologies including AI, and it is therefore essential to make clear our expectations with regard to academic integrity. This policy is in place for all students at SHS from Foundation Programme to Year 13.

Academic integrity means that students must not gain academic advantage from, nor take credit for, material that is not their own original work. This applies both to classwork and to longer tasks, such as independent home learning tasks, the entirety of which is completed on their own device from their chosen location.

For examinations, oral, practical, and written, there are specific rules and guidance as to what constitutes misconduct and a list of sanctions that may be enforced if a student is found guilty of a breach of any of these rules.

A summary of these appears in this policy, and the key points are covered in the Student and Parent Handbooks, updated and issued at the start of each academic year and shared with any new joiners throughout the academic year. Whether in teaching, learning, or assessment, the view of Sophia High School is that upholding academic integrity fosters personal integrity and cultivates a sense of respect for both individuals and the authenticity of their efforts. Additionally, it plays a vital role in guaranteeing that every student is afforded an equal chance to showcase the knowledge and abilities they have gained throughout their academic journey.

As an online-only school, Sophia High School recognises that maintaining academic integrity requires additional safeguards. Teachers use live observation, questioning, digital exercise books, lesson participation, formative assessment and assessment moderation to support the authentication of students' work.

Academic Misconduct (also referred to as malpractice where appropriate)

At Sophia High School, misconduct in student work refers to any behaviour or action that results in, or has the potential to result in, a student gaining an unfair advantage in one or more assessment components. This includes actions such as plagiarism, collusion, or duplicating work for different assessment purposes. It encompasses any activity that undermines the principles of academic integrity, fairness, and fair and valid assessment of a student's performance and achievements.

Examples of academic misconduct encompass, but are not confined to, the following:

- Collusion: involves aiding and abetting academic misconduct by another student. An illustrative example would be permitting one student's work to be copied by another for assessment purposes.
- Plagiarism: occurs when one represents, whether knowingly or unknowingly, the ideas, words, or work of another individual without giving proper, clear, and explicit acknowledgement.
- Where AI tools are used to support learning or the development of work, students must acknowledge how AI has been used where required by the teacher or assessment instructions. Students remain responsible for the accuracy, originality and academic integrity of all work submitted in their name.
- Duplication of work: instances where a student's work is replicated and submitted for a different assessment component or requirements.

Student Responsibilities

At Sophia High School the students are responsible for ensuring that all work submitted for assessment is their own unless collaboration has been expressly authorised by the teacher.. They are fully responsible for completing their own work with their own authentic ideas and if any ideas of others are used credit and sources must be given. Credit for sources is required in the senior school, including AI tools. The following must be followed when producing work at SHS that includes content from others: See Annex 3 – in the SHS Digital Safety Agreement for students in the senior school classes regarding plagiarism and citing sources in work.

- Ensure that any material directly reproduced from a source is appropriately referenced within the text. This includes phrases, sentences, paragraphs, graphs, charts, images, or any other information. Sources encompass both printed and electronic media, such as books, textbooks, magazines, interviews, websites, and images.
- When incorporating ideas or arguments from someone else's work, provide proper attribution, either in footnotes or by including their name in parentheses within the text.
- Avoid procrastination and maintain meticulous research techniques to prevent plagiarism. When taking notes, enclose information directly copied from a source in quotation marks. It is advisable to read and contemplate the material before rephrasing it in your own words. This practice reduces the likelihood of inadvertently copying.
- Thoughtful research requires time, so plan ahead and refrain from procrastinating.
- Common knowledge pertains to information widely known by everyone or nearly everyone within the relevant community. It does not necessitate citation. When uncertain, it is better to err on the side of caution and cite your sources.
- Exercising caution is crucial. While excessive footnotes may indicate poor scholarship, it is not academically dishonest. Conversely, failing to acknowledge someone else's work constitutes plagiarism.
- Intentions do not factor into the assessment of plagiarism. If credit is not given where it is due, plagiarism has occurred. Exercise diligence and avoid carelessness.
- Acceptable use and Unacceptable use of generative AI tools (for example ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Claude and similar technologies).

Academic Integrity Policy

- AI may support learning but must never replace a student's own thinking, analysis, judgement or original work.
- The following is the guidance which must be followed by all students at Sophia High:

Acceptable Uses	Unacceptable Use
Rewriting a reading passage at a simpler reading level.	Asking things like "What are the main points of the reading passage?"
Asking for clarification on a confusing concept or passage.	Requesting direct answers to specific questions or assignments without any effort to read or understand the material.
Seeking suggestions for additional resources or references related to the topic.	Asking for a summary or paraphrasing of the reading passage instead of reading it.
Requesting help with understanding complex vocabulary or sentence structures.	Asking for a complete essay or paper on the topic without doing the necessary research or writing.
Asking for guidance on how to analyse or approach a literary work.	Asking for the main points or key ideas of the reading passage without making any personal effort to comprehend it.
Seeking examples or explanations to enhance understanding of literary devices or techniques.	Requesting direct quotes or citations from the reading passage to use as evidence without independently identifying them.
Asking for suggestions on how you analysed and interpreted a specific literary passage or poem.	Requesting a complete essay or analysis of a literary work without any personal analysis or effort.
Seeking guidance on how to structure an essay or formulate a thesis statement based on the reading material.	Requesting AI to write the entire essay or provide a ready-made thesis statement.
Asking for help in understanding the historical or cultural context of the literary work.	Requesting direct answers to discussion questions or assignments without reflecting on the material.
Requesting examples of effective writing techniques found in the reading passage.	Asking AI to generate fictional examples or provide content to plagiarise.
Seeking guidance on how to properly cite and reference sources used in an essay or project.	Asking for a pre-written bibliography or list of sources without conducting personal research.
Asking for suggestions on how to analyse character development or themes in a novel.	Requesting a detailed plot summary or book review without reading the book.
Seeking help in understanding the author's writing style and its impact on the overall meaning of the text.	Asking for direct answers to multiple-choice questions or quizzes without attempting to answer them independently.
Asking for recommendations on related books or literary works to further explore the topic.	Requesting direct answers to essay prompts or assignments without constructing an original response.

GL Assessments

For GL Assessments, all students must adhere to the GL Assessment guidelines and use only the onscreen calculator provided. They must not accept any help from adults/carers at home and ensure their microphone and camera remain on throughout the session.

Teacher Responsibilities

At Sophia High School, teachers share the responsibility of best practice on reinforcing and explicitly teaching proper research skills across all subject areas including classwork and home learning. The teaching and monitoring of authentic work can be seen in the digital notebooks both in classwork and independent work.

- Teachers must see personal planning, development of main ideas, personal critiques or analysis, in lesson research assignments with sources aligned.
- Teachers are responsible for the regular marking of student work as per the school's Marking and Feedback Policy and must require students to submit sources, retain drafts, notes and research where requested as part of their assignments if used (including the use of any AI tools and how they have been used). Please refer to the most recent UK Government guidance on the use of AI in education (linked below).
- Teachers will use their professional judgement when considering the authenticity of student work. Where there are concerns about the authenticity of submitted work, teachers may ask students to explain, discuss or reproduce aspects of their work, provide drafts or supporting notes, or demonstrate their understanding through questioning or additional assessment activities.
- Teachers must warn students against carelessness when recording sources or disregarding materials that are not theirs in their work. A student and parent letter outlining the expectations must be shared with all of the families both via email and in Google Classroom as a reference which should be actively used.
- Teachers are responsible for following all moderation and testing guidance given to them by the school. This includes subject moderation (English writing skills), GL Assessments etc.
- External GCSE examination guidelines are enforced and upheld by external centres where students enter as private candidates or by the allocated invigilator in the case of students who take external examinations via Remote Invigilation. It is necessary for SHS to prepare students in advance for high-control examination situations and explain in advance the rules detailed by Pearson Edexcel and the consequences of any breaches.
- Formal mock IGCSE exams taken at SHS must be marked using the published mark scheme to ensure that the marking criteria are applied correctly and the results/grades generated are a true reflection of the working standard/grade. A published grade boundary must be applied to generate the final grade.

- Students are required to ensure all other tabs on their device are closed and remain closed throughout the exams. Textbooks, notes and other sources of relevant information must be removed from the vicinity and not referred to. Mobile phones should be turned off and moved into another room. All smartwatches are to be removed prior to the start of the exam, and placed in another room for the duration of the exam. Mobile phones, smartwatches and any other unauthorised electronic devices must not be used during assessments, examinations or other high-control assessment activities. These devices must be switched off and kept out of reach unless their use has been expressly authorised by the school for an agreed accessibility, medical or examination arrangement. The unauthorised use or possession of such devices during an assessment may be treated as academic misconduct.
- Any misconduct during the mock exams will, depending on its nature, result in sanctions imposed on a case-by-case basis, but could include appropriate sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, restorative service within the school community, or disqualification from all mock exams.
- If misconduct is suspected there may not be enough confidence in the data to support the exam entry process for the student.
- SHS has been given permission to run the entire GL suite of external assessments. These must be completed under high-control conditions. Teachers must ensure that all pupils have their cameras turned on throughout the session (unless they have an exemption approved by SHS) and that the entire session is recorded. Microphones should be muted unless children are asking a question. Some students may be asked to direct their camera view down to show their hands writing on the table surface they are working on.
- Teachers are responsible for sharing the presentation to prepare students for the tests in advance of the testing period.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher to monitor that pupils are not using assistive technology or receiving support of any kind.
- It is the responsibility of the teacher to report to the Senior leadership immediately if any breaches are identified and to provide proof with lesson recordings or screenshots.
- Subject lead teachers who are responsible for moderation must share expectations and guidance of moderation with all SHS staff well in advance of the activity and provide all supportive documentation
- They will also be asked to be made available if academic dishonesty is raised during moderation to support students, parents and staff.

School Administration Responsibilities

Our Senior leadership team at SHS is committed to upholding the higher standards for academic integrity including moderation and testing. The Senior leadership team is responsible for the following:

- The Senior leaders will review any breaches of moderation or testing immediately when disclosed by a teacher and book looks will occur termly to identify any concerns of academic dishonesty or improper use of sources.
- Students will be supported by SHS staff and leaders to complete their IGCSE exam entries at external centres. The student details provided to Pearson/exam centres must be accurate and correct.
- GL Assessments must be administered in line with GL published guidelines to ensure a suitable level of high control is achieved. The lead of Academic Excellence must explicitly share the expectations with all staff before all examinations including posting guidance in the staff room and reviewing at staff meetings before the assessments.
- Senior leadership will review any breaches of moderation or testing immediately when disclosed by a teacher.
- The leader for Academic Excellence is responsible for informing parents about assessment and moderation timings and expectations aligning with school policy and student expectations.

Principles for Dealing with, and Consequences of, Academic Misconduct

At SHS it is important that any cases that arise regarding academic misconduct are dealt with immediately and in a manner that is fair, consistent and with an educational aspect to help achieve future academic success for the student involved.

- All cases are dealt with on a case-by-case basis and in severe cases this could lead to appropriate sanctions in accordance with the Behaviour Policy, or dismissal from live lessons according to our behaviour, presentation of work and online safety policies.
- Where concerns have been raised, parents and students will be requested to meet with with members of the Senior leadership team and/or Director of Education
- Students may receive informal warnings or formal warnings. Formal warnings will be recorded on official school reports /transcripts and student information / reference requests
- Academic misconduct at an external IGCSE centre will be dealt with by the centre. SHS will work with the centre and exam board to support consequences administered by Pearson.
- During GL Assessments, if a member of staff suspects dishonesty or there is a loss of camera, the test session will be terminated.
- Student and Parent Handbook has guidance

Dealing with Accusations of Misconduct regarding examinations taken via Remote Invigilation

- Upon being informed of any accusations of misconduct a full investigation will begin with the concerned student and their parents by the Exams Officer.
- This will include interviews, and the preparation of a signed statement from the student and the school.
- There will be a full and transparent following of the advised investigation stage and process according to Pearson guidance.
- Statements and supporting evidence (if requested) will be shared with Pearson according to their timeline.
- The student and their family will be informed of the outcome of the investigation by the Exams Officer and Director of Education.
- Any further steps taken will be as advised by Pearson in their formal communication..

By following this exam venue and checks policy, we will ensure students have access to supervised, secure environments that meet Pearson standards.

Guidance References

<https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/ai-tools-in-teaching>

<https://infosec.web.ox.ac.uk/use-generative-ai-services-such-as-chatgpt-safely>

<https://www.ibo.org/globalassets/new-structure/programmes/shared-resources/pdfs/academic-integrity-policy-en.pdf>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-education>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/using-ai-in-education-settings-support-materials>

RELATED POLICIES

- Behaviour Policy
- Digital Safety Policy
- Online Learning Policy
- Marking & Feedback Policy
- Assessment Policy
- Examinations Policy
- Safeguarding Policy

Appendix A: Sample Senior Student Letter on Academic Integrity & Guidance

Dear Senior Students & Parents,

As we continue our XXX Term of exciting learning together, we want to take a moment to discuss how we will be integrating some incredible technology into our classrooms.

Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly AI tools like ChatGPT, Claude and Google Gemini, offer wonderful opportunities to support and enrich our learning process. Whether we're brainstorming ideas, dissecting complex texts, or honing our grammar and writing style, these tools can provide assistance and spark creativity. But it's important we use them in a way that upholds the principles of academic integrity, and that we remember the true purpose of our work here.

In our classes and with independent work, our mission is to nurture critical thinking, refine our communication skills, deepen our literacy, and stoke our creativity. Independent work assignments are not merely tasks to complete; they are chances to explore and express our ideas, to learn from each other, and to grow personally and academically.

With this in mind, I want to outline some guidelines for how we can use AI ethically and responsibly:

1. **AI as a Tool, Not a Crutch:** AI may be used to support learning where permitted by the school and the teacher, to inspire and clarify. But remember, the thoughts, analysis, and crafting of your assignments should be primarily your own.
2. **Cite Your Sources:** Just as we acknowledge human sources, any significant insights or phrases you borrow from AI should also be properly cited. As with any source, it should be limited to a quotation of no more than a couple of sentences, as AI can be used to support your work but not be your work.
3. **AI for Understanding, Not for Shortcuts:** Use AI to clarify your doubts, to seek further understanding. Don't use it as a way to avoid reading, thinking deeply, or engaging with the text. Use AI to give you feedback on your writing with suggestions for improvement before the assignment is submitted. Do not ask AI to rewrite it for you beyond your capabilities and submit the rewrite.
4. **AI for Learning, Not Just Task Completion:** Aim to understand and develop skills, not just to finish an assignment.
5. **Tutor not Reader:** While reading a text, just as you might chat with a friend about what you are reading, AI can help you to understand parts of the reading that you need further clarification on. However, bypassing the reading and doing the hard work of comprehension yourself is not acceptable.

Acceptable Uses	Unacceptable Use
Rewriting a reading passage at a simpler reading level.	Asking things like "What are the main points of the reading passage?"
Asking for clarification on a confusing concept or passage.	Requesting direct answers to specific questions or assignments without any effort to read or understand the material.
Seeking suggestions for additional resources or references related to the topic.	Asking for a summary or paraphrasing of the reading passage instead of reading it.
Requesting help with understanding complex vocabulary or sentence structures.	Asking for a complete essay or paper on the topic without doing the necessary research or writing.
Asking for guidance on how to analyse or approach a literary work.	Asking for the main points or key ideas of the reading passage without making any personal effort to comprehend it.
Seeking examples or explanations to enhance understanding of literary devices or techniques.	Requesting direct quotes or citations from the reading passage to use as evidence without independently identifying them.
Asking for suggestions on how you analysed and interpreted a specific literary passage or poem.	Requesting a complete essay or analysis of a literary work without any personal analysis or effort.
Seeking guidance on how to structure an essay or formulate a thesis statement based on the reading material.	Requesting AI to write the entire essay or provide a ready-made thesis statement.
Asking for help in understanding the historical or cultural context of the literary work.	Requesting direct answers to discussion questions or assignments without reflecting on the material.
Requesting examples of effective writing techniques found in the reading passage.	Asking AI to generate fictional examples or provide content to plagiarise.
Seeking guidance on how to properly cite and reference sources used in an essay or project.	Asking for a pre-written bibliography or list of sources without conducting personal research.
Asking for suggestions on how to analyse character development or themes in a novel.	Requesting a detailed plot summary or book review without reading the book.
Seeking help in understanding the author's writing style and its impact on the overall meaning of the text.	Asking for direct answers to multiple-choice questions or quizzes without attempting to answer them independently.
Asking for recommendations on related books or literary works to further explore the topic.	Requesting direct answers to essay prompts or assignments without constructing an original response.

What happens if these guidelines are not followed? Unattributed use of AI-generated content, over-reliance on AI for your work, or using AI to avoid reading or analysis will be considered violations of our Academic Integrity Policy and the stated consequences of this will be applied.

In order to verify that you have genuinely learned from the assignment and have not resorted to using AI or cheating you should be able to discuss the topic verbally and demonstrate your knowledge and understanding of anything submitted. An inability to support/extend your work through conversation or extension questions will demonstrate a need to relearn the material and provide new evidence of the learning.

Remember, the ultimate goal of education is your growth and learning. AI can be a fantastic tool to aid us in this journey, but it can't replace your active engagement and effort. Ensure that anything you submit is an accurate representation of your learning and capability. Let's use AI responsibly, and let's make this a year of meaningful learning and creativity.

Here's to an exciting year ahead!

Kind regards,

Teacher(s) Name