



ST JOHN'S COLLEGE
Cardiff

Anti-Plagiarism Policy

St John's College, Cardiff

ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICY

This policy applies to the following sections/s of the School:
Sixth Form and Senior School.

Version: September 2025

Rationale

Throughout their time at St John's College, students are encouraged and expected to use all the resources at their disposal to ensure the work they produce is of the highest quality. Inevitably, this involves independent research using a variety of media, both print and digital, to access new ideas and information. Given the amount of information which can now be accessed via the Internet, the opportunities for plagiarism have never been greater. Plagiarism has become a very serious issue in schools, and there are now very severe punishments for students who are found guilty of plagiarising in Public Examinations and at Higher Education levels. It is vital, therefore, to ensure that our students can distinguish between cheating, and effectively using the work of other people to develop their own ideas, which they acknowledge by correct referencing to the source material.

Definition and Examples of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is defined by the Joint Council for Qualifications as:

"The failure to acknowledge sources properly and/or the submission of another person's work as if it were the student's own".

Some common examples of plagiarism in schools are as follows:

- Copying the work of another student;
- Obtaining help from another source, e.g. a parent, essay bank service etc., and passing off this work as your own;
- Copying sections from a text, whether print or digital, without acknowledging the source;
- Downloading figures, charts, diagrams, pictures or photographs without acknowledging the source.

If these activities are done knowingly by the student, the clear intention is to gain an advantage which has not been justified by personal effort, and therefore it must be viewed as cheating. However, plagiarism can occur inadvertently owing to inexperience, pressure of work or simply a lack of understanding that this behaviour is cheating. It is our aim to ensure students develop the right skills and do not inadvertently expose themselves to the risk of plagiarism.

Good Practice and Staff Responsibilities

To prevent plagiarism occurring, it is vital that students understand the different types of plagiarism, the implications of plagiarism and the good practices they need to learn to avoid this happening. All staff have a vital role to play in communicating these good practices which need to be reinforced from an early stage of education at St John's. This process starts in the Junior School and continues in the Senior School where the following practices will be adopted:

- a) Prior to starting in R12, all parents can view the school's anti-plagiarism policy on the school website, together with a link to the [OFQUAL download](#) "*Avoiding Plagiarism: A Guide for Parents and Carers*".

- b) During the Advent term, all R12 students will participate in an assembly led by their Head of Year, highlighting the issues surrounding plagiarism and how to avoid it.
- c) Students are reminded in the Online Safety Policy to avoid any form of plagiarism.
- d) Specific research skills such as finding resources, note taking and the correct use of referencing and citing sources will be taught through an on-going process of teaching research skills in specific projects and providing exemplar materials. In the Sixth Form, where necessary, the skills of referencing (including the Harvard system) are discussed.
- e) All teaching staff will make sure students understand the importance of producing original work and will be alert to any signs of plagiarism in homework and classwork.

Student Responsibility

We expect our students to:

- Understand that they must not copy from another student's work, or allow other students to copy their work.
- Take responsibility for ensuring they fully understand and can utilise the good practices which help to avoid inadvertent plagiarism, and to ask for help from their teachers if they need further clarification.
- Report to a member of staff any suspected cases of plagiarism.

Parental Responsibility

We expect our parents to support their child and the school by:

- Ensuring they are aware of the exact nature of the help they can give their child with their school work so that students always understand that any work submitted should be their own.
- Encouraging students to remember good practices when they are undertaking research and always acknowledge their sources.
- Reminding students that copying from their friends is always wrong.
- Accepting and supporting any sanctions imposed by the school in line with those listed on this policy if an incident of plagiarism has been confirmed.

Use of AI

In order to maintain academic integrity and promote originality in students' work, it is imperative to address the potential misuse of AI in the context of plagiarism. The use of AI tools or algorithms to generate or alter academic content is strictly prohibited. This includes employing AI to write essays, reports, or any other form of academic work on behalf of the pupil. As a school, we aim to uphold the principles of honesty, critical thinking, and personal growth, while fostering an environment that values authentic learning and independent thought. Students are encouraged to develop their own ideas and express them in their own words, thus ensuring the integrity of their academic pursuits.

Sanctions for Dealing with Suspected Cases of Plagiarism

St John's College will adopt a zero tolerance approach to all instances of proven plagiarism, and sanctions will be applied equally to students across Key Stages 3, 4 and 5 to reinforce the message that it is never acceptable to copy another person's work. Good study skills developed here at St John's will prove invaluable as students move on to higher levels of study and work, and therefore bad practice will be dealt with strenuously.

In order to achieve a consistent approach to dealing with plagiarism across all departments, the following procedures will be followed:

- a)** The subject teacher will be responsible for carefully checking all work submitted, and should be vigilant to spot any suspected plagiarism. Where sceptical that the work submitted is not the student's own, the teacher should investigate further and gather any evidence to support the suspicion. This evidence will then be passed on to the Head of Department.
- b)** The Head of Department will arrange a formal interview with the student to discuss the evidence and to determine whether or not the student has deliberately tried to pass off the work of another person as their own. If it is decided that plagiarism has taken place, then the piece of work submitted will be automatically ungraded and the student will receive an after-school detention where it is expected that the work will be redone.
- c)** When an after-school detention is issued, the Head of Department will automatically inform the Director of Academic Studies, and a letter will be sent home to the parents informing them of the reason for the detention.
- d)** Any instances of plagiarism will be recorded on iSAMS so that it is possible to track any history of the offence by an individual student.
- e)** Where there is a second instance of plagiarism by the same student, the parents of the student will be asked to come in to school and they and the student will be seen by the Director of Academic Studies, the Assistant Head (Pastoral), and the Head of Department concerned to emphasise the seriousness of the offence. Again, an after-school detention will be served and the work will be redone.
- f)** Should there be a third instance, the student and parents would be seen by the Deputy Head or Headteacher and an internal suspension could be issued.