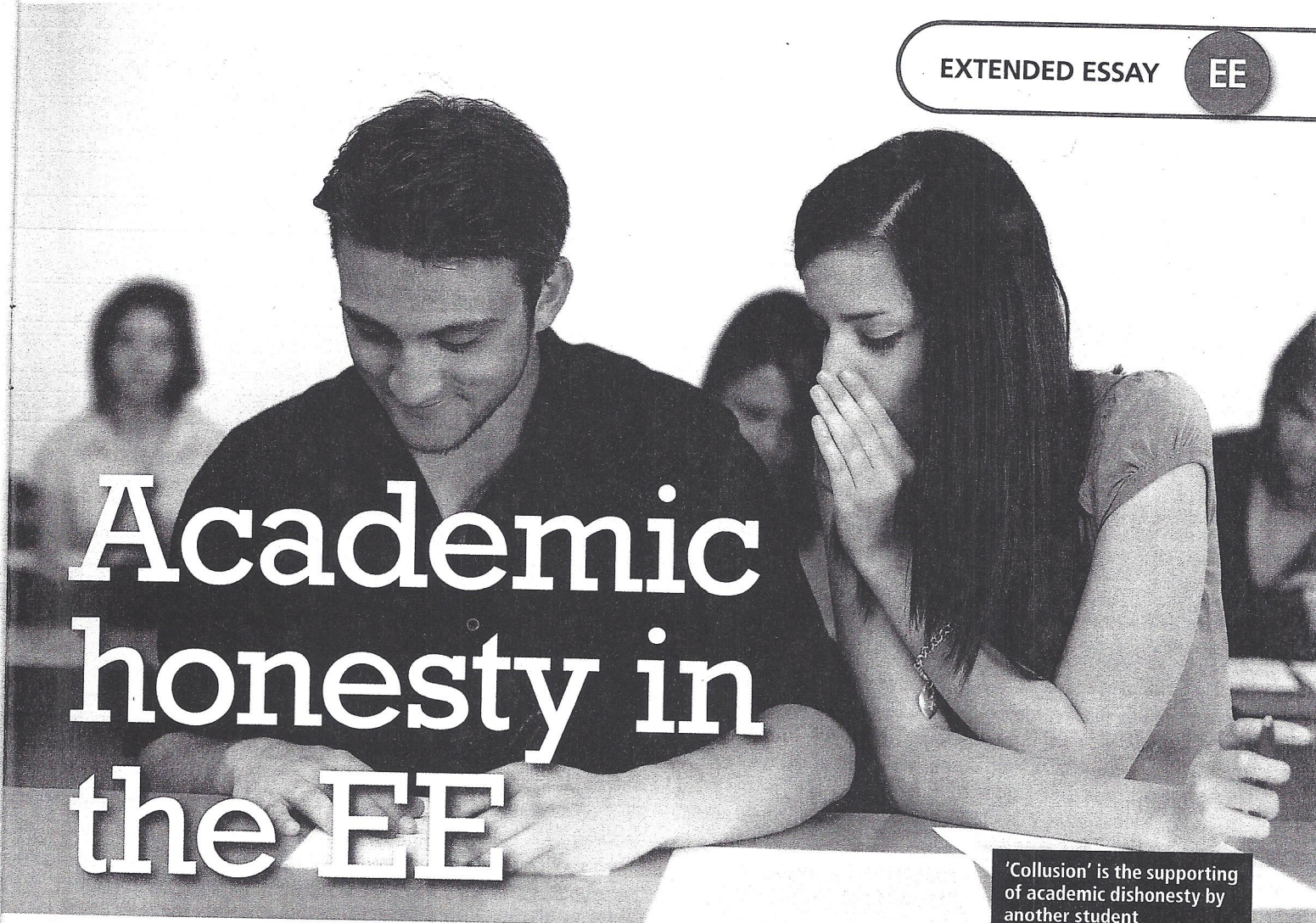




Academic honesty in the EE

'Collusion' is the supporting of academic dishonesty by another student

What counts as academic malpractice in IB assessments? **Paul Hoang** explains

Academic honesty is a code of conduct based on approaching your studies in a manner that is honest, truthful, responsible, fair and respectful. It is a set of guiding principles regarding intellectual property rights, and is a core trait of any academic institution and an expectation of all IB schools.

In contrast, academic dishonesty is any action that results in a student gaining an unfair advantage for a piece of assessed work, such as the extended essay (EE). Examples of academic dishonesty include:

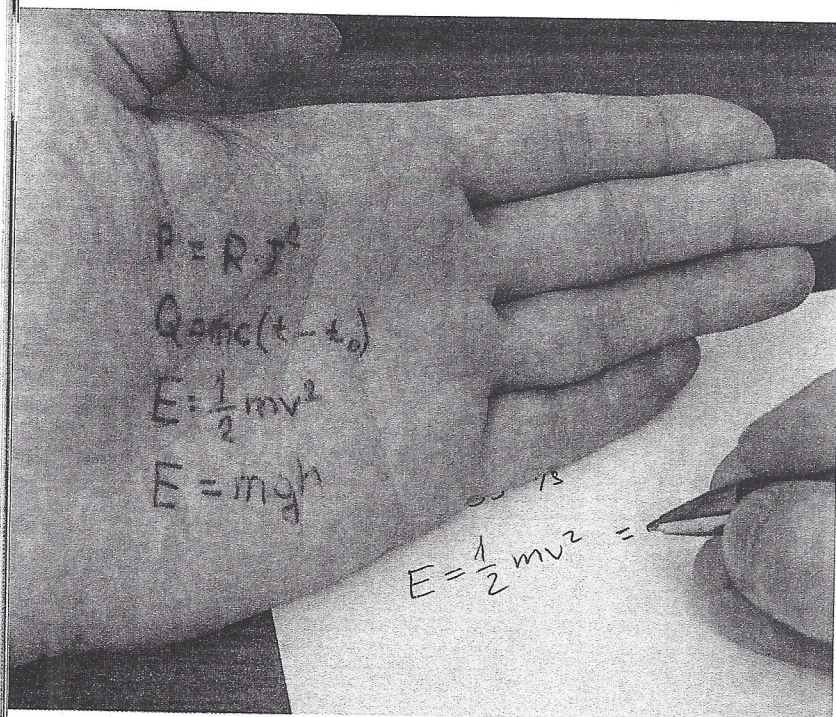
- **Plagiarism:** when students present the words, ideas or opinions of another person as their own. Plagiarism is an infringement of copyrights belonging to others.
- **Collusion:** supporting the academic dishonesty of another student, e.g. a student allows a friend to copy work submitted for formal assessment.
- **Fabrication of research:** falsifying research data, such as interviews or questionnaires. This includes fabricating the use of textbooks or academic journals that have been referred to in the bibliography, and citing sources that don't actually exist. Dishonest construction and presentation of research and data in the EE is academic malpractice. Supervisors will find it difficult to authenticate such essays.

Box | Your responsibilities

In completing your EE (or any assessment work), it is vital that you:

- cite and reference your work appropriately
- conduct and present research findings truthfully
- attend all three reflection sessions with your supervisor
- follow all internal deadlines set by your school
- submit a complete draft of the essay, as written feedback cannot be provided if you miss a deadline without prior authorisation from your IB coordinator
- declare the exact word count

- **Double dipping:** when a student duplicates and submits the same work (in part or in entirety) for different components of IB assessment, e.g. extended essays containing work from an internal assessment.
- **Gaining an unfair advantage:** any act that enables a student to gain an unfair advantage is considered academic dishonesty. Examples include using a commercial service provider or any third party to write



the EE on a student's behalf; submitting the work of another person as your own; using another person's ideas, words, images or examples without citation; missing the internal deadline for submitting the first (and only) draft of the EE; under-declaring the word count of the EE.

All schools are profiled for academic honesty and all cases of suspected malpractice are logged by the IBO.

What are the IB rules?

Since May 2016, all extended essays are checked by the IBO for possible collusion and plagiarism, using sophisticated text-matching software. Online tools such as Turnitin can help students and teachers identify potential problems before the final draft is handed in.

Any potential breach of the rules and regulations will be investigated by the IBO. In the case of suspected academic malpractice, the IBO may request a full written report from the school. The IBO will then take up the case, with the Final Award Committee in Cardiff, UK deciding whether to disqualify the candidate, resulting in them not getting a grade for the subject.

Word limits

Academic honesty applies to the word limits for all assessment work, including the 4000-word limit for extended essays. Examiners are instructed not to read beyond the word limit, so a candidate who submits an essay in excess of 4000 words potentially loses marks for all five assessment criteria. For example, if the conclusion appears after the 4000th word, the candidate would lose marks in criterion C (critical thinking) and criterion D (presentation). Any knowledge and understanding (criterion B) shown after the 4000th word would not be read by the examiner. As all extended essays are electronically uploaded, it is easy for examiners to identify where the 4000-word limit has been reached.

Table 1 shows what is included in the word count for the EE. The inappropriate use of footnotes or endnotes should be avoided. Examiners will not entertain any attempts to use footnotes or endnotes to circumvent the word count. Doing so is considered to be academic malpractice.

Deadlines and academic honesty

Your school or college should have a formal deadlines policy. This should be shared with teachers, students and parents. A candidate cannot gain an unfair advantage by missing official school (internal) deadlines. If the assessment work is submitted after the internal deadline, the EE supervisor might not be able to authenticate the work to be entirely the student's own. In cases of suspected academic dishonesty, the essay can be submitted to the IBO as an atypical piece of assessment.

If you need to request an extension for the internal deadline, this must be administered by your school's IB Diploma coordinator, along with all necessary supporting documents. Be aware that the IB rules state that short-term illness is not a valid reason for submitting an incomplete piece of work for assessment (other than for missing an actual IB examination). This is because the extended essay, for example, should have been written over a certain length of time, with sufficient time for the candidate to complete the work. The IB handbook of procedures clearly states that the following situations are deemed to be reasonably within the control of a candidate and are unacceptable reasons for submitting incomplete or late assessment work:

- misreading and/or misunderstanding the deadline for final submission
- oversleeping
- a family holiday (vacation)
- moving house
- participation in a social engagement, such as a graduation ceremony
- participation in a competition, concert, field trip or sporting event
- attendance at an interview

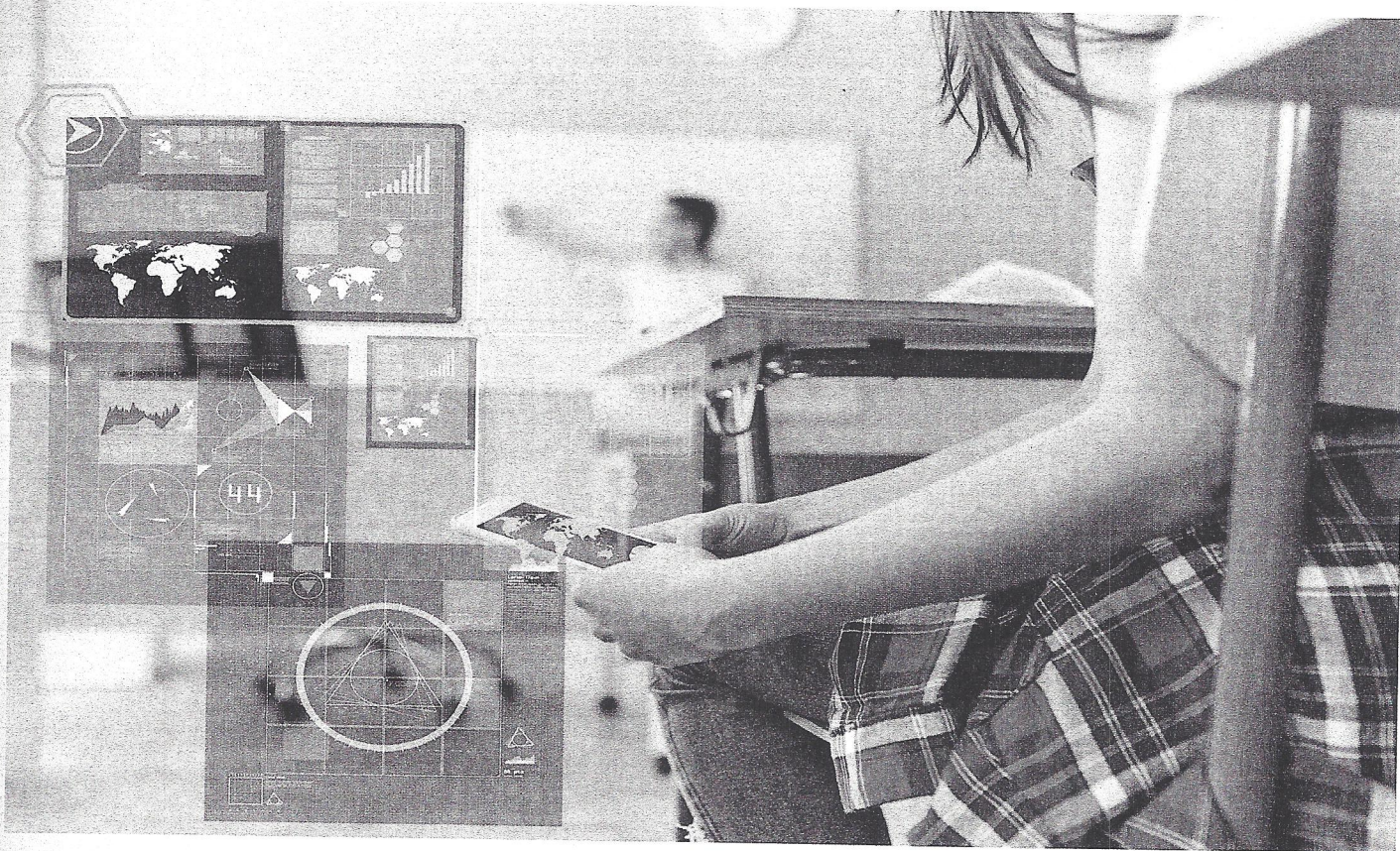
The first submission of the EE should be a complete draft. This is important for academic honesty reasons, as a complete submission enables your supervisor to provide written feedback in a holistic way. It also makes it easier to authenticate the final version of the essay. Drafting and redrafting of the EE is deemed to give candidates an unfair advantage. Supervisors must ensure the fair and transparent treatment of all deadlines so that there is consistency in their approach to academic honesty and internal school deadlines.

Citation and referencing

While collaboration is an important approach to learning for many people, there is a major difference between *collusion* and *collaboration*. During the collaborative process, you share ideas with other learners

Table 1 What's included in the word count?

Included	Not included
Introduction	Contents page
Main body of the essay	Maps, charts, diagrams, annotated illustrations
Conclusion	Data tables
Quotations	Equations, formulae and calculations
Footnotes not used for referencing	Citations and references
Endnotes not used for referencing	Bibliography
	Appendices
	Reflections on planning and progress form



— this is not malpractice. However, collusion is academic malpractice as it is not about preparing or presenting your own work. You should focus on preparing, writing and presenting your individual and personal essay. The ideas of other people should always be referenced.

The EE is an academic piece of work, so you are expected to cite all sources used to write the essay. Although there are no marks explicitly awarded for citation and referencing in the EE, all students are expected to do so for academic honesty reasons. Citation and referencing are vital in providing the examiner with the necessary information to locate your sources, such as a particular publication you used or a person you interviewed as part of your academic research. You must provide a citation when:

- referring to a particular source
 - stating the words, opinions, ideas or research of another person
 - using a photo, diagram or image created by someone else
- However, it is not necessary to provide a citation when you are stating:
- your own opinions or ideas about a particular issue, problem, subject or event
 - common knowledge, such as that Paris is the capital city of France

Be warned, however, that even if you use proper citation and referencing, it may still be considered academic malpractice if the essay lacks originality and over-relies on the work of another person. Incorrect referencing is viewed as academic dishonesty.

Conclusion

Academic honesty is aligned with being principled, which is part of the IB learner profile. So make sure you do the morally correct thing when it comes to all aspects of your extended essay, be it the research, the word count, citations and referencing or meeting deadlines. Not only will this avoid unnecessary sanctions, but it will stand you in good stead as a lifelong learner, way beyond your IB years of schooling.

Remember that academic honesty applies to all assessment work, not just the extended essay. Make sure you comply with the same standards and practices for your internal assessments, individual oral commentaries, written assignments, TOK essays and final IB examinations.

Questions and activities



Academic honesty is intertwined with aspects of the IB learner profile. Discuss how the following traits of the IB learner profile are relevant to academic honesty:

- knowledgeable
- thinkers
- inquirers
- communicators
- reflective
- principled

References and resources



'Citation and referencing' (IB REVIEW, Vol. 2, No. 4, pp. 13–15)

'Academic honesty in the IB educational context'
(www.goo.gl/45wFDI)

'Effective citing and referencing' (www.goo.gl/YqvYc5)

Paul Hoang is vice principal and IB Diploma Programme coordinator at Sha Tin College, Hong Kong. He is an associate editor of IB REVIEW.