



Apex Learning
Virtual School™

Academic Integrity

Policies & Procedures

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Introduction

The principles of academic integrity are a cornerstone upon which the intellectual integrity of the school rests. In order to maintain academic integrity, Apex Learning Virtual School requires that all work be entirely the result of one's own effort. Plagiarism, cheating, or other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and teachers will not accept work that is copied or plagiarized. It is our goal that students never put themselves in a situation where they compromise their integrity. Apex Learning Virtual School will work to provide guidance and instruction towards achievement of that goal.

Communicating Academic Integrity to Students

Teachers share with the administration the responsibility for educating students about the importance and principles of academic integrity.

Best Practice: *Teachers are asked to distribute information and guidance about what constitutes plagiarism and academic integrity in their courses, keeping in mind that our goal is to teach students how to use and document sources appropriately. Learning to do so is part of a long on-going process.*

The following rules apply to all activity conducted by students enrolled in Apex Learning Virtual School (ALVS) courses. Failure to abide by these rules may result in consequences ranging from receiving a 0 (zero) on the assignment to loss of access as determined by ALVS and/or your sponsoring school administration. Violations of this Student Code of Conduct, may be reported to teachers, parents, local school personnel; and documented through Apex Learning at academicintegrity@apexlearning.com or 1-855-550-2547 (ALVS).

Accountability

Publicly posting your personal contact information (address and telephone number or social media references) or anyone else's is strictly forbidden. In addition, you agree to not post any messages that are sent to you privately.

Passwords

Access is password-protected and you are responsible for maintaining the secrecy of your password.

You Agree To:

- Use only your own username and password
- Not aid others in gaining unauthorized access
- Sign off from the Apex Learning courses when done
- Close your Internet browser window when you have finished working

Use of Apex Learning Content

All content is owned by Apex Learning and its licensors and protected by U.S. and international copyright and other intellectual property laws. Unauthorized use, copying or distribution may result in revoked access.

In addition, you agree not to use any automated means to access, monitor, or copy any part of the content, and you agree not to use any network monitoring tools to determine site architecture or extract information about website usage or users.

Netiquette

Netiquette is a word to describe the do's and don'ts of online communicating. Basic courtesy and common sense are generally the rule of the day when communicating whether it is face-to-face or through the Internet.

Best Practice: *Just as in person, know your audience and the people in which you are speaking with —what you post and view can follow you, and if you're not careful, your online interactions can have a negative impact on your professional life. Make sure the digital footprint you leave behind is a step forward rather than a step back. Here are our guidelines for practicing good "netiquette".*

You agree to abide by these guidelines:

- Avoid sarcasm, slang or "textese". (Textese is the use of "u" instead of "you" in a sentence).
- Avoid derogatory comments, including those regarding race, age, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability, political persuasion, body type, physical or mental health, or access issues.
- Avoid insults, threats or attacks of any kind against another person.
- Focus your responses on the topic being discussed, not on the individuals involved.
- Review your messages and remove easily misinterpreted language and proofread for errors.

Course Duration

ALVS course semesters have a 9 (summer) or 18 (fall, spring) week standard duration.

- Students taking a single semester in a:
 - Core pathway course can expect to spend between 70-90 hours in the course;
 - Honors pathway course can expect to spend between 90-120 hours in the course;
 - AP* course can expect to spend between 120-150 hours in the course;

Tip: *While students are allowed to work ahead of schedule, accelerated completions can create decreased quality of work and are subject to review and intervention by ALVS teachers and administrators. One of the biggest benefits of online courses is that students can take them on a flexible schedule. The best way to ensure success is to spread the work out, doing some every day, rather than leaving everything towards the end of the course.*

*AP and Advanced Placement are registered trademarks of the College Board.

Grading

ALVS teachers provide a recommended final grade based on points earned out of points possible for work completed before the designated course end date. Recommended grades are based on the following Apex Learning [Grading Scale](#).

Concurrent Enrollment

A student should not be enrolled in both Semester 1 and Semester 2 of an ALVS course simultaneously.

What are Violations of Academic Integrity?

Academic integrity violations encompass any act that compromises or subverts the integrity of the educational or research process. These offenses include, but are not limited to: cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, and facilitation.

Cheating: The intent to deceive, acts dishonestly, or misrepresents work that he/she has or will produce on an assignment or assists another to misrepresent his/her work.

Examples of cheating include but are not limited to:

- Attempting to or copying from others; Sharing or submitting another's students work as their own work;
- Purchasing a term paper or test questions in advance, paying another to do the work for you;
- Communicating or attempting to communicate answers, posting of videos describing how to cheat, or suggestions and hints about examinations;
- Submitting portions of the same academic work for credit in more than one course without consulting the second teacher.

Fabrication: The use of invented information or the falsification of research or other findings.

Examples of fabrication include but are not limited to:

- Submitting as one's own any academic exercises prepared totally or in part by another;
- Citing information not taken from the source indicated;
- Listing sources in a bibliography not used in the academic exercise;
- Submitting fictitious information in a paper or other academic exercise.

Plagiarism: The use of another person's words, ideas, or data as one's own work. This covers unpublished as well as published sources.

Examples of plagiarism include but are not limited to:

- Quoting another person's words, sentences, paragraphs, or entire work without acknowledgment of the source;
- Utilizing another person's ideas, opinions, or theory without acknowledgment of the source;
- Copying and pasting from an online source and submitting it as one's own work;
- Paraphrasing source material without citations.

Facilitation: Facilitation refers to knowingly or intentionally helping any person in the act of an academic integrity violation. Students who engage in facilitation are also subject to disciplinary action for integrity violations.

Examples of facilitation include but are not limited to:

- Giving another student one's assignment or paper (or portion thereof);
- Giving another student answers to a test or assignment;
- Letting another student copy one's answers during an examination;
- Creating unfair opportunities for students in other sections of a class by communicating or giving any test (or assignment) information, questions, or answers to students in another class, or other sections of the same class; this gives students in later sections an unfair advantage.

Identification and Consequences of Academic Violation:

If a student violates the Academic Integrity Policy of Apex Learning Virtual School, they will be held responsible and accountable for their actions. The following outlines the possible consequences for violations.

Consequences for 1st offense:

- Teacher is to thoroughly document any supporting evidence behind the academic violation.
- Teacher notifies the student, coach or mentor, and the academicintegrity@apexlearning.com email that a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy has occurred.
 - The Student and, Coach or Mentor is asked to acknowledge the notification.
- Teacher has discretion to choose to allow student to resubmit a similar assignment or to assign the student a zero on the assignment or assessment. Final course grade is determined factoring in the newly assigned grade.
- Teacher will re-distribute information about what constitutes plagiarism and provides resource list of how to avoid plagiarism to both the student as well as the coach or student mentor. Keeping in mind that our goal is to teach students how to avoid academic integrity issues as well as use and document sources appropriately.

Consequences for 2nd offense:

- Teacher is to thoroughly document any supporting evidence behind the academic violation.
- Teacher notifies the student, coach or mentor, subject department Lead Teacher, and also the academicintegrity@apexlearning.com email that a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy has occurred. (Teacher uses communication template found in Appendix.)
 - Student, coach or mentor are again provided information about what constitutes plagiarism as well as provides resource list of how to avoid plagiarism.
 - Notice that further academic integrity violations are subject to the receipt of an “E” for the final course.
 - The student and, coach or mentor are asked to acknowledge the notification.
- Student receives a zero on the assignment or assessment. Final course grade is determined factoring in the received zero.
- Depending on the gravity of the infraction, an “Accountability Board” may be convened consisting of the student, coach or mentor, teacher, subject department Lead Teacher, Manager of Instruction and Director of instruction to determine appropriate consequences for the student’s actions.

Consequences for 3rd offense:

- Teacher is to thoroughly document any supporting evidence behind the academic violation.
- Teacher notifies the student, coach or mentor, subject department Lead Teacher, and also the academicintegrity@apexlearning.com email that a 3rd violation of the Academic Integrity Policy has occurred. (Teacher uses communication template found in Appendix.)
 - Student, coach or mentor are again provided information about what constitutes plagiarism as well as provides resource list of how to avoid plagiarism.
 - Notice that further academic integrity violations are subject to the receipt of an “E” for the final course.
 - Student, coach or mentor are asked to acknowledge the notification in writing
- Student receives a zero on the assignment or assessment. Final course grade is determined factoring in the received zero.

- Depending on the gravity of the infraction, the teacher assigns a recommended “E” for the course at the end of the Course.
- Teacher notifies the student, coach or mentor, subject department Lead Teacher, Manager of Instruction and Director of Instruction that an “E” has been assigned as the grade for the course based on the 3rd violation of the Academic Integrity policy.
- Student is allowed to continue through the remainder of the course in order to have access to the course content if that is the desire of the district, coach, mentor or student. Work will be graded but the recommended final grade or “E” will be posted at the conclusion of the course.
 - Consumer decision makers will receive notification from ALVS guidance Counselor on how student enrollment will continue.
 - District stakeholders will receive notification from ALVs Manager of Implementation.

Features to Promote Integrity

The following features within Apex Learning Virtual School courses promote academic integrity:

Randomization & Test Banks

Each computer-scored assessment is designed with randomization so that no two students take the same test and any retakes of a test are original to the student. Computer-scored assessments are randomized in three distinct ways: (1) for a multiple choice item, the order of distractors is randomized; (2) the order in which the items are presented is randomized; and (3) for each item, the specific question is randomly selected from several questions within a large test bank that accomplishes the same assessment objective (at the same level of Bloom’s Taxonomy).

Disabled Concurrent Access & Copy/Paste

To reduce the opportunity for unauthorized test-taking assistance, students may not be logged in from more than one computer at a time and are prevented from copying answers from another web browser or document while an assessment is active.

Proctoring & Closed Book

Proctoring may be set up based on local organization policies if student is working onsite. If the student does not have instructions for proctoring standards, ‘natural proctoring’ is in place. Students will not have access to high stakes activities (unit tests and final exams) until the natural proctoring begins. In order to work ahead of schedule, the student must contact the ALVS teacher to change the due date of an assignment.

Getting Support

To access **online Help** at any time, sign in to Apex Learning and click Help in the main menu.

Apex Learning Virtual School Support

- Monday – Friday, 5:00 AM – 7:00 PM Pacific Time
- 1-855-550-2547
- alvs.support@apexlearning.com

Academic Integrity Appendix A – Student Resources

How do I do well in school and avoid plagiarism?

- Take responsibility for your learning. Being a successful student begins with you.
- Do well through hard work. There are no “short cuts” to doing well in your studies. Consistent and sustained effort over the course of the school year will help you develop self-discipline and improved study habits.
- Know yourself as a learner. Every student has strengths and weaknesses. Know what you do well and work on the areas you need to improve. For example, reading may be a strength and writing may be difficult for you. Seek help in the areas you need to strengthen.
- Ask for help when you are confused about a class or an assignment. Teachers want you to be successful.
- Set your priorities and manage your time. Your schoolwork comes first. Realize that you cannot do everything and you will have to make important choices about how you spend your time outside of the school day.
- Organize your assignments. What do you need to do? When do you need to do it by? Using your student planner will help you map your assignments in each class. By charting when your assignments are due, you can better manage your time.

Academic Integrity Appendix B – Teacher Resources

Identification of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is unacceptable academic behavior. The best approach, of course, is to prevent plagiarism from occurring in the first place. The following resources are provided to support you in detecting plagiarism.

Warning Signs

Unusual phrasings, noticeable unevenness of style (some very sophisticated sentences followed by some amateurish ones), concepts that seem too sophisticated for the level of the class, unclear or incorrect sources listed in the bibliography, a writing style or diction choice in a particular paper that seems inconsistent with that found in other samples of the student's writing — these are some of the signals that you might be reading a plagiarized paper.

One technique to detect plagiarism is to enter an unusual phrase or sentence into a standard search engine (e.g., [Google](#)) and see if a match is found.

Detection Tools

The following sites offer tools and techniques for detecting plagiarism.

[Plagiarism and Anti-Plagiarism \(Source: Rutgers University\)](#)

- [Plagiarism.org \(A service that requires payment but which gives a free trial\)](#)
- [Dupli Checker](#)

Using one or more search engines: One way to confirm that a paper has been plagiarized is to use a Web search engine. In the search engine's search box, you can type in an unusual word or phrase and find documents on the Web containing the search term. If the paper was taken from a paper mill on the Web, the search engine can find the site containing the original paper (Young).

- [Yahoo!](#)
- [Alta Vista](#)
- [Dogpile](#)
- [Lycos](#)
- [Metasearch](#)

Email Template to be sent for each Academic Violation

To: [Student Email]; [Coach or Mentor Email]

CC: academicintegrity@apexlearning.com

Subject Line: [Student Name] – [Course Name] - Academic Violation Notification

Hello [Student Name],

You have received a zero on this assignment. As noted below, it is not acceptable to use info from the web and submit as your own work.

Yours:

From the Web:

Yours:

From the Web:

Apex Learning Student Code of Conduct-

Plagiarism is copying or imitating the language, ideas, and thoughts of another writer and passing them off as your own original work. You agree not to engage in plagiarism when submitting content for any Apex Course.

Without limiting the foregoing, you agree not to:

- * Copy or rephrase another student's work
- * Have someone else rewrite an assignment or rephrase any part of an assignment (not just proofread it)
- * Copy content from student aids (for example, Cliff Notes), critical sources, reference materials, or other materials, in part or in whole, without acknowledgment (including by rephrasing ideas borrowed from such materials)

Apex Learning frowns seriously on students who plagiarize. Your school will let me know what consequence they decide to take based on your actions. Any further misrepresentation will possibly result from being dismissed from your APEX courses.

Sincerely,

[Teacher name]