Academic Success Policies

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1. Rationale:
It is the belief of UWC Costa Rica that students should take responsibility for their own attendance, knowing the correlation between academic success and being present in their classes to learn. With this in mind, our attendance policy rewards those who earn trust with their teachers and flags students with large numbers of absence for review.
Ultimately, students who do not attend their commitments regularly are seen to be actively not participating in life at our UWC. No matter the type of activity, attendance is necessary for an interaction to take place and for the members of the interaction to strengthen bonds and to grow. Attendance is thus a central aspect for deepening any interaction. That is why we are at UWC rather than somewhere else: to attend classes, tutor meetings, community meetings, co-curricular activities, and residential events. Every area has their own attendance policy and procedures, following is the procedure for Academics. 
Transparency is the key to understanding that all unexcused academic absences will be communicated to prospective colleges and universities, National Committees and Parents. The decision is therefore with the students as to how their commitment (or lack thereof) will reflect on their future endeavours. If there is no progress in spite of notice given, a student who is not participating to the school’s standards will be asked to leave the college. This is a central requirement to be a part of our mission and its implications include: Personal Responsibility and Integrity, Personal Challenge, Action and Personal Example.
2. **Absences:**
   Student absences will only be justified/excused if due to medical or Wellness staff-approved reasons. These will normally be only for Wellness/illness issues that have lasted two or more consecutive days. The school will communicate the unjustified absence information in the reports going to families, NC and universities every semester. The student’s justified absences (resulting in being excused from class) will also be included in the reports. These absences will also be checked by the tutor every time they write reports and will allow the counsellors to follow up on the student.

   * Students who regularly attend their commitments at UWC Costa Rica will be given first preference by teachers and staff for tutorial time, letters of recommendation, or permissions.

3. **Tardies:**
   * If a student is late and misses a significant part of the lesson, teachers can mark the student tardy.
   * Three tardies in the same subject will equal one absence in that subject.

4. **Student’s role:**
   * A student must make every attempt to inform their teachers on the day of an absence that they will miss a class (if known prior to the absence). This can be by email or in person. If by the estimation of the medical or wellness team, the student is not able to communicate with the teacher, the school wellness or medical personnel will inform the relevant staff.

5. **Teacher’s role:**
   * Teachers will inform each of their teaching groups at the beginning of the academic year about the classroom rules/agreements regarding absences and tardies both orally and in writing. The Academic Director should receive a copy of each teacher’s rules/agreements. The document/communication should include what happens if a student misses an exam/test/quiz.
   * When a student misses lessons, the teacher should be the first one to talk to the student and will inform the student’s tutor that he/she has talked to them. That way, it is easy for a tutor to see patterns if more than one teacher informs him/her of absences for the same student.
   * Teachers have liberty to assign students in good standing a “personal block” at their discretion that will not result in unexcused absence. Students should approach the teacher in advance of the start of the class and request this directly. Teachers will record this as personal period (PP).
6. **Tutor’s role:**
   If the tutor recognises a high absence/tardies pattern, they will connect with the teachers to determine if these absences/tardies are excessive. For excessive absences, the tutor will inform the Academic Director and/or Deputy Head and a meeting will be arranged with the student.

7. **Parent communication**
   Each semester the school registrar will send reminders to check on attendance and grades, ensuring transparency of conduct whilst attending UWCCR.
2. Academic Integrity Policy

Contents:
1. Rationale
2. Student responsibilities
3. Teacher responsibilities
4. School responsibilities
5. Parent responsibilities
6. Support provided to students
7. Examples of alignment and non-alignment with Academic Honesty Policy
8. Procedures
9. Frequently asked questions
10. Policy review statement

Policy approved:
Last updated:

1. Rationale:
   The UWCCR philosophy is to act with integrity, honesty and responsibility in all we do and to resolve any differences and misunderstandings in a peaceful and respectful manner. The tenet of academic integrity is ‘honesty’ and with the wealth of information at our disposal, there is a need to educate our students on how to use and manage this information in an honest way. Our students come from a diverse range of educational experiences and may have different cultural perceptions as to what is acceptable or not. The College, therefore, has a responsibility to make our students aware of the expectations of the College and of the IBO and to teach them how to fulfil these expectations. We value the concept of intellectual property and require our students to respect it and learn the appropriate skills to ensure work submitted is authentic and honest.
2. Student Responsibilities:
   Ultimately, students are responsible for their own behaviour and for ensuring that they comply with all requirements laid out by the school and IBO regarding academic honesty and will be provided with help, support and resources to help them do so. Workshops will be given to students throughout their time at UWCCR. Academic staff (Teachers, EE supervisors, Tutors and the EE Coordinator) will ensure students receive the appropriate information regarding academic integrity.

3. Teacher Responsibilities:
   It is the responsibility of all teachers, as part of our educational community, to promote and model behaviour that demonstrates academic integrity and to support students who require help in this area. Additionally, teachers are responsible for following the procedures related to academic honesty as set out in ‘Section 8: Procedures’.

4. School Responsibilities:
   The school has a responsibility to ensure students comply with the requirements of both UWCCR and the IBO as well as providing students with the necessary support to take responsibility for their own academic integrity. Further details of this support are laid out in ‘Section 6: Support provided to students’.

5. Parent Responsibilities:
   It is recognised that parents have a vital role to play by reminding their son/daughter of the importance of academic honesty as well as supporting the school in applying the procedures set out in this policy where necessary.

6. Support provided to students:
   During the first meeting in August with the Academic Director and IBDP Coordinator students will be introduced to the key principles of academic honesty. A further meeting with all IB1 students in late September will explore this policy in more detail and all students will be provided a copy of the latest version of this policy in either hard or digital format. Additionally, prior to starting the IA, subject teachers will revisit the academic integrity policy as it relates to their specific subject that will be reflected in curriculum planning documents, and EE supervisors will provide guidance to students throughout the EE process.

7. Examples of alignment and non-alignment with Academic Honesty Policy:
   An Academic Integrity folder is available for all students via Plus Portals. This folder will include guidance from the school and IB regarding academic integrity as well as examples of alignment and non-alignment with this policy. Additionally, the Academic integrity Board (on the main corridor outside Room 10) will provide further examples.

8. Procedures
It should be noted that work for submission to the IB that involves academic malpractice cannot be submitted. If academic malpractice is determined after submission, the IB procedures regarding academic honesty will be followed. In both cases, the diploma may not be awarded.

First incident:
The guiding principle is that a first instance of academic malpractice should be seen as a learning opportunity and dealt with through additional support and/or restorative action at the discretion of the academic director with input from the subject teacher concerned. The work in question should be resubmitted and restorative action will be decided by the academic director in conjunction with the student concerned.

The following steps set out the procedure to be followed:

The subject teacher, upon suspecting/detecting academic malpractice will talk to the student concerned as well as informing the academic director who will, in turn, inform the parents of the student.

Second incident:
The steps set out above will be followed. In addition, the relevant national committee will be informed. The consequences will be restorative and/or disciplinary action (which may include an academic penalty) at the discretion of the academic director in consultation with the subject teacher (and the student in the case of restorative action).

Third incident:
The steps set out under ‘second incident’ will be followed. In addition, a third offence may also be referred to the code of conduct where consequences may include suspension or expulsion.

11. Frequently Asked Questions
Please see FAQ document available via PlusPortals.

12. Policy Review Statement:
This policy will be reviewed by on an annual basis by the Academic Integrity Committee. This committee will be made up of the Deputy Head, Academic Director, IBDP Coordinator along with two teachers and two students (drawn from Academic Committee of the Student Council). Additionally, the IBDP Coordinator will be responsible for communicating any changes in IB regulations and procedures that impact the school’s Academic Integrity Policy.
3. Academic Success

Contents:

1. Rationale
2. Meeting course requirements
3. Academic Performance

1. **Rationale:**
   United World College Costa Rica delivers a challenging, bilingual two-year academic programme that aims to develop in its students the key knowledge and skills that have been defined by the International Baccalaureate Organization and UWCCR’s Competences Project. It is expected that all students will graduate from UWCCR with the IB Diploma as well as the necessary academic tools to become socially responsible agents of change in their future lives.

2. **Meeting course requirements:**
   Students are expected to adopt a disciplined approach to their studies and should strive to perform to the best of their ability.

3. **Academic Performance:**
   Students failing to meet course requirements should, in the first instance, be reported to the relevant tutor. The teacher and student concerned should try to identify the cause(s) and develop strategies to overcome them. Tutorial hours can be used as necessary. A written summary of what is agreed with the student should be emailed to the tutor.

   For a single subject, the tutor should counsel the student. If there is a pattern of failure over several subjects, the tutor should counsel the student but also discuss the matter
with the Academic Director. Any student with more than one level 3 or lower (at the end of each semester) is cause for concern and will receive an academic warning. Depending on the nature of the academic warning some consequences may include:

- meeting with the academic director, tutor and specific teachers concerned to define a plan to improve
- automatic review at mid-semester or end of semester

Failure to improve thereafter will result in the student being placed on academic probation. A specific plan and a timeframe to improve will be identified and national committees and families will be informed.

If a student does not demonstrate sufficient determination and effort, with resulting improvement, he or she can expect to be withdrawn from the college. Only students in good academic standing i.e. sufficiently prepared, motivated and committed to their academic programme may continue into the second year and enter the final IB examinations.