

## Academic misconduct – the IB’s use of a tailor-made text matching software

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**Type:** Full paper

**Section:** Use of technology in addressing issues of academic integrity

**Abstract:**

The International Baccalaureate (IB) is a non-profit educational foundation offering four programmes of education. The consistent year-on-year growth has resulted in a significant increase in the number of academic misconduct cases identified and pursued each examination session. One form of misconduct is plagiarism. Since 2003, the IB has used a commercially available plagiarism/collusion detection service to check student work for possible misconduct; however, due to cost constraints, it has not been possible to submit all pieces of student work (currently over 750,000 annually). Unfortunately, this may have resulted in a number of students being awarded grades based on non-authentic work.

To effectively deal with this issue, the IB has entered an agreement to trial Cactus64 (<https://www.cactus64.com>), a new bespoke software program (which runs on a local device, without internet upload or inclusion in any external database) that enables cross-comparison of work (by language) for each assessment component.

Cactus64 functions allows the IB to pinpoint and investigate misconduct based on real data. Misconduct types identified through Cactus64 in previous examination sessions include:

- Detection of collusion within schools.
- Detection of collusion across schools.
- Detection of “essay mill” work (using Flesch–Kincaid analysis).
- Detection of “cross examination session” sharing of work.

Based on data from previous examination sessions, the IB has seen a large increase in the identification of cases across the above categories. The IB wishes to use Cactus64 not only as an investigation/detection tool but as an educational/preventative tool across the educational community worldwide.

**Keywords:** Tailor-made text matching software.