IVINAR PARK ACADEMY

SCHOOL POLICIES & COMPLIANCE FRAMEWORK

PREAMBLE: LEGAL AND REGULATORY ANCHORING

The policies set forth in this document for Ivinar Park Academy derive their legal mandate and operational authority from the Constitution of Zimbabwe (Act No. 20 of 2013) and are anchored upon the following primary legislation, statutory instruments, and policy guidelines of the Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education (MoPSE) and relevant statutory bodies:

- **Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013:** Specifically Section 75 (Right to Education) and Section 81 (Rights of Children to safety, security, and equal protection).
- **Education Act [Chapter 25:04] (as amended by Education Amendment Act, 2020):** Governing non-discrimination, mandatory education standards, child protection against corporal punishment or inhumane treatment, and operational guidelines for independent and government schools.
- **Cyber and Data Protection Act [Chapter 12:07] (Act No. 5 of 2021):** Regulating data privacy, lawful collection, processing, and protection of personal data of learners, parents, and staff, and enforcement under POTRAZ.
- **Criminal Law (Codification and Reform) Act [Chapter 9:23] (as amended):** Enforcing provisions against cyberbullying, unauthorized system access, identity theft, child safeguarding, and academic fraud.
- **Statutory Instrument 1 du 2020 (Education Regulations):** Standards for school registration, administration, safety, and governance.
- **MoPSE Secretary's Circulars & Policy Directives:** Including Circular No. 3 of 2019 (Guideline on School Safety and Health) and MoPSE Written Work and Assessment Circular Policy Guidelines.
- **Public Health Act [Chapter 15:17]:** Guiding communicable disease management, school hygiene, and medical safety procedures in residential/day institutions.
- **Manpower Planning and Development Act [Chapter 28:02]:** Governing tertiary, technical, and vocational assessment standards (HEXCO alignment).

1. Admissions Policy

1.1 Criteria for Student Admission

The academy admits eligible learners who meet the school's class/age requirements. Admission is based on:

- Learner's age and eligibility for the relevant form level
- Prior academic record (where applicable)
- Any required documentation submitted on time

Learners with special educational needs are admitted where the academy can provide reasonable support as defined by school capability and local regulations.

The academy does not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, gender, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

1.2 Application Process and Timeline

Applications open and close on dates communicated by the school administration. Applicants must submit:

- Completed admission form
- Grade 7 result slip
- Birth certificate
- Transfer letter (if transferring from another school)
- Academic reports/certificates (for higher classes)
- Any other documents specified by the admissions office
- Three names of parents or guardians

Shortlisted applicants may undergo:

- Entrance assessment (literacy/numeracy screening)
- Interview (especially for higher forms or special programmes)

1.3 Non-Discrimination Policy

- All applicants are treated fairly.
- No learner is denied admission for reasons other than meeting stated eligibility criteria.
- Any complaint regarding discrimination must be reported to the Admissions Officer/Head Teacher using the school's complaints procedure.
- Complaints will be handled confidentially and without victimization.

2. Academic Policy

2.1 Curriculum Standards and Expectations

The academy follows an approved curriculum and ensures lesson delivery matches curriculum objectives. Teachers use schemes of work and lesson plans aligned to term outcomes.

Learners are expected to:

- Bring required learning materials (books, notebooks, stationery)
- Attend classes punctually
- Complete classwork and homework assignments
- Participate respectfully in classroom learning activities

Teachers maintain learning records and document learner progress.

2.2 Scheming and Planning

Teachers must prepare:

- Schemes of work for each term

- Scheme-cum plans
- Submission date for Scheme-cum plans is the second week of opening

Planning must include:

- Learning objectives
- Teaching methods and learning activities
- Assessment points
- Differentiation for learners who need support

Supervisors/academic heads review lesson plans to ensure compliance.

2.3 Assessment Methods

Assessment includes:

- Continuous assessment (class tests, end of month tests)
- Term examinations including mid–year examinations
- Practical assessments/projects especially under Tertiary

Learners must observe assessment integrity rules:

- No cheating, no impersonation, no bringing prohibited materials into tests

Teachers provide feedback:

- Marked work returned within a reasonable time
- Remedial support for learners who underperform
- Written work should meet the minimum requirements contained in the MoPSE circular on written policy

2.4 Academic Integrity, Cheating, and Misconduct

Ivinar Park Academy enforces a zero-tolerance policy towards academic dishonesty in all formal, informal, continuous, and practical assessments. Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and personal character.

Forms of Academic Misconduct include, but are not limited to:

- **Unauthorized Materials:** Bringing unauthorized written materials, digital devices, unauthorized notes, or illegal aids into an examination or test room.
- **Collusion & Copying:** Copying work from another student, communicating/signaling during examinations, or sharing test content.
- **Plagiarism & Unauthorized AI Use:** Submitting work, essays, projects, or lab reports written by another person, commercial service, or generated using Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools without explicit teacher authorization and proper attribution.
- **Impersonation:** Arranging for another individual to sit for an examination or test on behalf of a registered learner.
- **Falsification & Tampering:** Altering, tampering with, or falsifying marks, grade records, teacher comments, or assessment scripts.

Investigation and Disciplinary Process:

- Invigilators or teachers who suspect academic dishonesty must confiscate evidence immediately and file a written incident report to the Academic Head within 24 hours.
- The learner shall be given a hearing before the Academic Disciplinary Committee to present their defense.

Penalties for Academic Misconduct:

- **First Offence (Minor/Internal Test):** Automatic cancellation and awarding of a zero (0%) score for the affected assessment paper/project.
- **Second Offence or Mid-Year/End-of-Term Examinations:** Awarding of zero (0%) for the entire term subject grade, formal written warning placed in student file, and mandatory parent/guardian conference.
- **Gross Misconduct / National Assessments:** Suspension from school, forfeiture of eligibility for academic awards/honors, and potential referral to national examination bodies (HEXCO/ZIMSEC) for formal disqualification where applicable.

2.5 Awards for Good Performance

The academy recognizes:

- Academic excellence (top performers per class/form)
- Improvement awards (not only high scores, but progress)
- Attendance awards (where permitted by school rules)
- Good conduct awards
- Annual Speech and Prize Giving sessions in September each year

Criteria are communicated at the start/end of each term. Awards should be fair, transparent, and consistently applied.

Facilitators should be awarded according to grades as follows: A* = USD150, A or Distinction (for HEXCO courses) = USD100, B or Credit = USD80, C or Pass = USD50

3. Code of Conduct

3.1 Student Behavior Expectations

Learners are expected to:

- Respect teachers and all staff
- Respect fellow learners and avoid fighting or insults
- Maintain discipline in classrooms, corridors, dining areas, and sports grounds
- Keep the school environment clean (no littering, proper waste disposal)
- Take responsibility for school property (books, desks, chairs, uniforms)
- Obey school rules during events, excursions, and co-curricular activities
- Sexual misconduct or any other related mischief

3.2 Disciplinary Procedures and Consequences

The academy uses a progressive and fair disciplinary approach:

- Verbal guidance/warning for minor misconduct
- Written warning/behavior report for repeat or serious minor offences
- Parent/guardian notification and meeting for continued misconduct
- Detention and/or suspension for serious offences (as per severity and school rules)
- Higher-level action for gross misconduct (e.g., proven violence, repeated serious offenses)

Key safeguards:

- Learners must be allowed to explain their conduct before final decisions.
- Disciplinary measures must be consistent and documented.
- Staff must not use cruel, degrading, or inhumane treatment.
- The academy protects learners' rights and ensures due process.

3.3 Bullying and Harassment Prevention

Bullying (physical, verbal, emotional, or cyber) is strictly prohibited.

The school commits to:

- Reporting and investigating incidents promptly
- Providing support to victims
- Taking disciplinary action against perpetrators

Learners are encouraged to report bullying without fear of retaliation.

Cyberbullying and harassment via phones/social media are also covered by this policy.

The academy provides periodic awareness sessions on respect and empathy.

4. Attendance Policy

4.1 Attendance Requirements and Procedures

Learners must attend all school days and arrive on time. Parents/guardians are responsible for:

- Notifying the school of a learner's absence (and reason)
- Ensuring return to school after approval/clearance where required

The class teacher/attendance officer maintains attendance records daily.

4.2 Absences and Tardiness

Excused absence: when a parent/guardian reports illness or valid reasons and provides required documentation (if requested).

Unexcused absence: absence without proper communication or acceptable reason.

Tardiness may lead to:

- Record of lateness

- Parent notification after repeated lateness
- Progressive consequences for frequent late arrival

Speech and prize giving should be held in the second week of opening every third term

4.3 Excessive Absenteeism

Learners with repeated absences are referred for support intervention. The school may:

- Conduct a meeting with parents/guardians
- Create a learner attendance improvement plan
- Recommend counseling/support measures

After 3 days' absence, the form teacher must contact the parent.

Persistent absenteeism may lead to formal consequences in line with school and education guidelines.

5. Health and Safety Policy

5.1 Contagious Diseases

Learners showing symptoms (fever, persistent cough, rashes, vomiting/diarrhea) should report to staff immediately.

The academy requires:

- Hygiene practices (handwashing, covering mouth when coughing)
- Regular cleaning of classrooms and common areas

Where necessary, learners may be:

- Sent to the clinic/assigned medical point
- Referred for medical evaluation

Return-to-school may require clearance or a parent confirmation as guided by school health procedures.

To be collected by a parent or guardian listed in Section 1.2

5.2 Emergency Procedures and Evacuation Plans

The academy maintains:

- Emergency exits and clear evacuation routes
- Emergency contact lists for parents/guardians

Teachers conduct emergency drills (e.g., fire/evacuation) and train learners on:

- What to do when alarms sound
- How to move calmly to assembly points
- Headcount procedures during/after evacuation

During emergencies:

- Staff prioritize learner safety
- Parents are contacted as soon as practicable

5.3 First Aid and Medical Care Provisions

The academy provides basic first aid through trained staff (where available). Injuries requiring medical attention are referred to approved health facilities.

The school maintains:

- Medical records (allergies, chronic conditions)
- Emergency contact numbers

Any medication administration must follow school procedures and parental consent where required.

5.4 Reporting Injury to Parents

Any injury must be recorded in an incident log. Parents/guardians are informed promptly and details shared, including:

- Time and location of the incident
- What happened (as reported by involved staff)
- First aid provided
- Advice on next actions

Serious injuries are escalated immediately.

6. Residential Life Policy (Boarding)

6.1 Rules for Boarding Students

Boarders must:

- Observe wake/sleep schedules
- Keep rooms clean and orderly (daily cleaning routines)
- Follow study schedules and attend supervised study time
- Use proper conduct in dining and common areas
- Avoid bringing prohibited items into boarding (as defined by boarding rules)
- Respect boarding staff instructions and house rules
- Observe out-of-bounds areas

6.2 Safeguarding Boarders

The academy safeguards all boarders by:

- Ensuring adequate supervision in dormitories and common spaces
- Maintaining safe staff-learner boundaries
- Providing clear reporting channels for abuse allegations, threats, or unsafe behavior
- Handling sensitive cases confidentially and promptly
- Training staff on safeguarding, child protection, and reporting requirements

Only the listed parents or guardians referred to in Section 1.2 should collect the learners.

Conduct impromptu roll calls and parades for boarders at the hostel.

Visiting days should be according to the calendar of events.

6.3 Room Assignments and Responsibilities

Room assignments are managed by the administration/boarding manager based on:

- Age/grade level
- Gender considerations (where applicable)
- Safety and suitability
- Any medical needs (where declared)

Boarders' responsibilities include:

- Ensuring personal hygiene and cleanliness
- Proper storage of belongings
- Immediate reporting of damaged property
- Participating in room inspections

Repeated failure to follow room rules results in disciplinary action and/or reassignment.

7. Dress Code Policy

7.1 Uniform Guidelines and Expectations

Learners must wear the full academy uniform as issued/approved by the school:

- Correct school shirt/blouse
- Approved trousers/skirts
- School shoes
- Approved socks and belt (if applicable)

Uniform must be clean, neat, properly fitted, and worn correctly (no rolling of sleeves beyond permitted rules, no improper wear of belts/ties). Learners must have grooming standards aligned with school expectations (hair neatness, cleanliness).

7.2 Prohibited Attire

The following are not permitted:

- Clothing not matching uniform requirements (except when a special permit is issued)
- Excessive jewelry or accessories that violate school rules
- Offensive wording/imagery on clothing
- Any footwear that is unsafe for school activities
- Any attire that creates distraction or undermines learning discipline

7.3 Dress Code for Special Occasions

For events (sports day, ceremonies, assemblies), the administration will specify the required uniform/special attire in advance. Learners who miss uniform requirements due to illness or other valid reasons must submit justification to class teacher/administration.

7.4 Stewards' Special Attire

Stewards/learner leaders assigned duties must wear approved steward attire and/or badges/sashes/IDs at all times during duties. Stewards must model discipline and proper grooming. Stewards who misuse their position may be removed from duties.

7.5 Number 1 Uniform for Off-Campus Visits

Whenever boarders are going out of campus, they should wear their Number 1 uniforms.

8. Technology Use Policy

8.1 Use of School/Personal Devices and the Internet

Acceptable use: Technology may be used for educational purposes only (learning activities, research, assignments, and approved school tasks).

School devices: Learners may access school devices only when authorized by a teacher or school ICT staff.

Personal devices: Personal phones/tablets may only be used where the school permits (e.g., class-approved learning, emergency contact, or before/after school time).

Internet access: Internet browsing must be limited to approved sites and supervised/filtered where available.

No unauthorized access: Learners must not hack, bypass filters, download illegal software, or access accounts that are not theirs.

8.2 Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Technologies

Ivinar Park Academy recognizes Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (such as large language models, AI writing assistants, automated coding tools, and image generators) as powerful educational aids when used ethically and responsibly.

Acceptable Use of AI:

- **Educational Enhancement:** Learners may use AI tools for brainstorming, concept clarification, language grammar refinement, or learning support ONLY when explicitly permitted by the subject teacher.
- **Mandatory Citation & Transparency:** All content, ideas, code, or text derived from AI tools MUST be acknowledged and properly cited in assignments, projects, or research reports.
- **Teacher & Staff Integration:** Teachers and administrative staff are encouraged to leverage AI for lesson preparation, differentiated material creation, and administrative efficiency, ensuring human oversight is maintained at all times.

Prohibited AI Practices:

- **AI-Generated Plagiarism:** Direct copying or generating full essays, reports, code, or answers using AI tools and submitting them as a student's own original work (classified as Academic Fraud).

- **Assessment Integrity Violation:** Using AI during examinations, closed-book tests, or controlled assessments unless explicitly specified in test instructions.
- **Data Privacy Violation:** Inputting confidential learner records, personal data, staff records, or internal academy communications into public, third-party AI models, in strict compliance with the Cyber and Data Protection Act.
- **Malicious Content Generation:** Using AI to generate deepfakes, offensive content, harmful media, or targeted harassment of staff or students.

8.3 Social Media Guidelines

Learners must not post content that:

- Identifies the school community in a harmful, insulting, or unsafe way
- Includes bullying/harassment, hate speech, or threats
- Shares private information (full names, addresses, phone numbers, exam results without permission)

Learners must not livestream or record staff/learners without permission. Any cyberbullying or harassment on social media must be reported immediately to a teacher or class teacher.

8.4 Consequences for Misuse of Technology

Minor misuse (e.g., using a phone where prohibited) may lead to:

- Device confiscation for the term
- Written warning/behavior report
- Parent/guardian notification

Serious or repeated offences (e.g., hacking, pornography, threats, stealing accounts, cheating, sharing harmful content, unauthorized AI plagiarism) may lead to:

- Strong disciplinary sanctions (detention, suspension, or removal of technology privileges)
- Referral for investigation and, where required, reporting to appropriate authorities

Staff will investigate incidents fairly and preserve evidence (screenshots, device logs) where possible.

9. Financial Policy

9.1 Tuition and Levies Payment Schedules and Methods

The academy sets a tuition payment schedule for each term/semester/year. Payment methods may include:

- Bank transfer
- Bank deposit
- Receipt-based direct payment at the bursar's/finance office

Learners' enrollment/attendance may depend on fulfilling financial obligations as per school rules and local regulations. Receipts must be issued for all payments received. Any communication regarding tuition and levy payments should be done with the bursar.

9.2 Scholarships and Financial Aid Options

Scholarships/aid may be offered based on:

- Financial need (means assessment where applicable)
- Academic merit, leadership, or special talent
- Or other approved criteria by the school

Applicants submit required documents by the deadline (proof of need, academic records, recommendation letters, etc.). Decisions are reviewed by an approved committee and communicated to parents/guardians.

9.3 Refund and Withdrawal Policies

Withdrawal procedures: Parents must notify the school in writing of withdrawal and complete required checkout processes.

Refund approach: Refunds (if applicable) should depend on:

- Date of withdrawal (before term starts vs. after classes begin)
- Non-refundable administrative or registration fees (if applicable)
- Any outstanding obligations (uniforms, learning materials, services already rendered)

The finance office provides a clear refund computation and timeline for any approved refund. The school must handle disputes through the grievance policy process.

10. Co-curricular Activities Policy

10.1 Participation Requirements and Expectations

Learners must participate in clubs, arts, music, debates, and sports of their choice. Participation may require:

- Regular attendance to practice sessions
- Completion of academic responsibilities
- Proper use of uniforms/kit and equipment

Learners must follow schedules and reporting procedures during activities. The academy shall provide the basic facilities. All sports disciplines should receive a commensurate funding vote.

10.2 Code of Conduct for Clubs and Sports

- Respect coaches/instructors, teammates, and officials.
- No fighting, bullying, or harassment during activities.
- Proper sportsmanship: no cheating (illegal player, falsified eligibility, match manipulation).
- Equipment and uniforms must be cared for and returned if required.

10.3 Eligibility Criteria for Sports Teams

Eligibility may include:

- Meeting academic minimum standards set by the school

- Good conduct record (no serious disciplinary issues)
- Medical fitness/clearance where required
- Training/practice attendance requirements

Team selection is based on the school's selection process (tryouts, coach assessment, and availability). Injured learners may participate in modified roles if medically advised. All learners should be given an equal opportunity to represent Ivinar Park Academy in all disciplines.

11. Parental Involvement Policy

11.1 Guidelines for Communication with Parents

Communication occurs through approved channels:

- School notices, official emails/letters
- Phone calls from class teachers/administration
- Parent-teacher meetings
- School Development Committee (where applicable)

Parents must:

- Use respectful language and follow meeting procedures
- Avoid confronting staff directly in public spaces
- Provide relevant information promptly when a learner has issues (health, attendance, discipline)
- Co-operate in creating an enabling learning environment

11.2 Opportunities for Parent Involvement

- Parent-teacher conferences each term.
- Volunteering in school events (sports day, cultural day, assemblies).
- Supporting learning at home through homework routines and attendance encouragement.
- Participation in committees and school governance structures as permitted by policy.

11.3 Procedures for Addressing Parent Concerns

Step 1: Parent reports the concern to the Form teacher (for learning/behaviour matters).

Step 2: If unresolved within a reasonable time, escalate to the Head Teacher/Deputy.

Step 3: If still unresolved, escalate to the school management.

The school maintains records of concerns, outcomes, and follow-up actions.

11.4 School Development Committee (SDC)

The SDC supports improvement activities such as:

- Resource mobilization
- School projects and development planning
- Review of school progress reports

SDC meetings should have agendas, minutes, and attendance records. Members must follow confidentiality and act in the best interest of learners.

12. Environmental Policy

12.1 Sustainability and Conservation Commitment

The academy promotes sustainable habits such as:

- Efficient water use
- Responsible energy use (turn off lights when not needed)
- Tree planting and greening activities

Learners are encouraged to practice environmental responsibility at school and at home.

12.2 Waste Management Guidelines

- Separate waste collection where facilities exist (e.g., recyclables vs. general waste).
- Prohibit littering in classrooms, dormitories, and school grounds.
- Use designated bins and cleaning rosters.
- Hazardous waste handling (if any, e.g., broken lab items) is managed by trained staff only.

12.3 Educational Initiatives on Environmental Issues

- Environmental topics integrated into relevant subjects.
- Learner projects: clean-up drives, recycling competitions, composting demonstrations.
- Partnerships with local organizations for awareness and practical conservation activities.

13. Grievance Policy

13.1 Procedures for Addressing Complaints from Students and Parents

Complaints must be made in good faith, using respectful language, and within appropriate channels.

For students:

- Report to class teacher/guidance focal person
- Or use a designated grievance box/secret reporting method (if the school has one)

For parents:

- Submit the complaint to the class teacher or admin office (in writing where possible)

The school acknowledges receipt and assigns responsibility for handling the issue.

13.2 Confidentiality Assurances

The school treats complaints and related information confidentially as required. Personal details are protected, and information is shared only with parties who need to act.

13.3 Escalation Steps if Grievances Are Not Resolved

Step 1: Class teacher/assigned officer

Step 2: Head Teacher/Deputy

Step 3: School Management/Committee review

Step 4: Where required, report to the relevant education authority or legal/regulatory bodies

Deadlines for responses should be defined (e.g., acknowledge within X days; resolve within Y days where feasible).

14. Cultural Awareness and Inclusion Policy

14.1 Promotion of Diversity and Inclusion

The academy values all learners and promotes respect across cultures, languages, traditions, and religion. Learners must not practice discrimination or exclusion.

14.2 Respecting Various Cultural Backgrounds

Learners are encouraged to:

- Respect cultural practices that do not conflict with school rules and safety
- Work positively with classmates from different backgrounds

School events may include cultural days or programs celebrating diversity.

14.3 Education on Cultural Sensitivity

Teachers integrate lessons on respect, empathy, and inclusion into classroom activities. Learners participate in discussions, assemblies, and activities that build understanding. Staff model inclusive behavior and handle cultural misunderstandings fairly.

15. Staff Policies

15.1 Code of Conduct for Teachers and Staff

Staff must maintain professional behavior, punctuality, and accountability. Staff should:

- Treat learners with respect and fairness
- Provide equitable attention
- Maintain confidentiality of learner matters
- Use safe, ethical teaching methods (no humiliation, no corporal punishment)

Staff must follow school procedures for recordkeeping, supervision, and reporting.

15.2 Professional Development Requirements

Staff participate in:

- In-house training workshops

- Subject/teaching methodology trainings
- Mandatory trainings (where required by education authority)

Performance reviews consider instructional effectiveness, lesson planning and documentation, and evidence of professional growth.

15.3 Recruitment and Retention Practices

Recruitment follows fair selection processes:

- Required qualifications and verification
- Background checks where applicable
- Reference checks and interview assessments

Retention focuses on supportive supervision, training opportunities, clear career/role expectations, safe workplace practices, and staff welfare.

16. Crisis Management Policy

16.1 Procedures for Handling Emergencies

The academy maintains an emergency response plan covering natural disasters, severe weather disruptions, medical emergencies/outbreaks, and security threats/violence incidents.

Roles are assigned: Incident commander, Evacuation leader, First aid team, and Headcount officer. Learners must follow staff instructions during crises.

16.2 Communication Plans During Crises

The school uses an approved communications approach:

- Internal: staff briefing/chain of command
- External: parents/guardians via phone/Whatsapp/SMS/email where possible
- Where necessary: police/fire/medical services

Communication should include location and nature of incident, actions taken, and safety instructions. Only authorized staff share updates.

16.3 Psychological Support Services

After a crisis, the school provides emotional support and counseling referrals, safe spaces for learners to talk, and follow-up check-ins for vulnerable learners.

17. Data Protection Policy

17.1 Guidelines for Handling Student and Staff Data

Learner records (names, grades, medical info, discipline records) must be treated as confidential. Staff must:

- Access only data necessary for their role

- Keep records secure (locked cabinets/password-protected systems)
- Avoid sharing student information publicly or via unapproved platforms

Student data should be used only for school purposes.

17.2 Privacy Policies and Compliance with Relevant Laws

The academy complies with applicable data protection and child protection regulations in its jurisdiction (including the Cyber and Data Protection Act [Chapter 12:07]).

Parents/guardians are informed about what data is collected, why it is collected, and who it is shared with. Consent and permissions are obtained where required.

17.3 Procedures for Data Breach

The school defines a data breach response plan: identify and contain breach, notify data protection officer/management, document details, assess risk, notify relevant authorities/POTRAZ and affected parties, and implement corrective actions.