



UPchieve Academic Integrity Policy

Introduction

Students, along with their parents and educators, expect UPchieve to uphold academic integrity in addition to providing high-quality tutoring and college counseling. We define academic integrity as “the commitment to and demonstration of honest and moral behavior in an academic setting”. Coaches play a critical role in upholding academic integrity by ensuring that students are actively learning during sessions. We’ve written these guidelines to help you understand UPchieve’s standards for coaching and how you can ensure that students leave their sessions better equipped to progress in school.

Your Responsibilities As a Volunteer

1. Encourage active participation

While students may not know what the answer to their question is right away, they often have an idea of how to get there! To help students get to the answer themselves, tutors must ask a sequence of questions to guide student thinking and provide feedback so that students know if they’re on the right track. Ultimately, we want students to build confidence by helping them discover the solution for themselves rather than handing it to them.

Additionally, if a student sends you a question, you should not respond with your immediate thoughts on how to approach it. Instead, ask what they think the first step should be. If a student is clearly struggling or confused on a particular problem, you must make a judgment call and decide if they truly need your help or if they want you to do their work. If you can tell that the student is attempting to solve the problem, engaging in the conversation, and asking questions, you should continue to support them in answering the question.

2. Refrain from giving students the answers

UPchieve Academic Coaches provide support rather than answers, so that students will work to understand the concepts and successfully apply them on future assignments and assessments. Students need to be active participants in every session; they cannot send a question and expect you to do all the work. Giving answers is not only a direct violation of our Academic Integrity policy, but it could also result in negative consequences for the student (e.g., not actually learning the material, disciplinary action, loss of credit for an assignment, etc.).

3. Verify student answers

UPchieve coaches **are** allowed to verify students' answers on the platform. Students can ask if they answered a certain number of questions correctly, and you are permitted to let them know which are correct and incorrect. It may be tempting to flag this as cheating, or feel cautious about helping them in this manner, but it **is allowed!** In fact, we explicitly mention to our student partners that that is one of the proper use cases of UPchieve.

Even in this scenario, asking prompting questions while verifying their answers is a great way to facilitate the tutoring session. For example, even if a student had all the right answers, you could say "These all look right to me, great job! Is there anything about the questions you were confused or unsure about?". This allows the student to reflect on their work and gives you an opportunity to continue working with the student and improve their understanding.

4. Assume the best of your students!

You should not assume a student wants answers or preface a tutoring session by letting them know you can't give them answers. It may seem tempting to lay out expectations right from the beginning, but sending some form of "I can't give you the answer" as one of your first messages to a student can make them feel defensive and judged. Many students on the platform may seem like they just want the answer, but in reality they genuinely just don't know where to begin.

Reserve that line for situations in which the student is explicitly asking for answers, or if you've been trying to work with the student for a while and they seem to not be involved at all. Otherwise, continue to assume the student has the best intentions and try to get them more involved. With your guidance, not only will they be able to find the answer, but they'll be able to build the skills they need to solve similar problems going forward.

5. Refrain from writing students' essays for them

As a coach, your role is to focus on improving the writer, not just the essay they're working on. It is crucial that you help students by modeling the critical thinking skills necessary to craft a well written essay. Copy editing, writing or rewriting sentences or paragraphs, or providing a completed outline for students takes away their power to learn and develop as a writer. Instead, ask students questions like: Who is the audience for this essay? What is the main point you want them to know after reading your essay? How can we make this transition clearer?

Additionally, personal statements for college admissions are an opportunity for the student to tell *their* story. While you may provide the student with feedback on how they can make their essay

even clearer, you can't take control from the student and tell them to write things they wouldn't have originally. In addition, college counselors read thousands of essays. They know what a high school student sounds like and is capable of writing. By writing a student's essay, or sections of it, you risk the school becoming suspicious of the student and rejecting them.

6. Never help a student cheat on a graded assessment or exam

Helping a student on a graded assessment is forbidden, as they're typically meant to be completed without outside support. If the student lets you know they need help with a quiz, or if you suspect they're asking test questions, let them know that you can't explicitly help them with any of the questions. Instead, encourage them to do their best and suggest that they come back to get help studying for their next assessment.

Consequences

Remember, this guide is to ensure you know what can and can't be done on our platform. We trust our volunteers to do their best when working with students. If you're ever really unsure about a particular scenario, please complete the feedback form, and we'll reach out if we have any feedback.

We believe that most of our volunteers will not break this rule intentionally, and when we see it occur, we will reach out with an explanation of why the policy was broken. If we deem the violation especially severe, or if a volunteer repeatedly makes the same mistake, that can result in us pausing your account until you complete a live training with us. If it continues after that, your account may be permanently banned from the platform.