

UNIVERSITY FOR DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

PLAGIARISM POLICY

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1.0 Preamble

- 1.1 This policy is aimed at establishing a framework for determining, detecting, preventing and dealing with plagiarism to ensure academic excellence, honesty and integrity among students and faculty members of the University for Development Studies. While recognizing, supporting and encouraging the successful exploitation of intellectual property by its staff and students, UDS detests intellectual dishonesty and plagiarism in all forms.
- 1.2 This policy serves as a guide for all faculty members and students of UDS to respect, observe and maintain high probity of academic standards, originality of academic publications, and to avoid academic dishonesty, cheating, stealing of others ideas and plagiarism.
- 1.3 The University is fully aware that effective production and management of intellectual property hinges on the quality and originality of all publications by faculty members and students. This is critical for the university to play its role in higher education. The University is also cognizant of the fact that plagiarism poses a significant challenge for academia worldwide and considers this as a serious form of academic impropriety which can result in rejection or withdrawal of theses/dissertations/long essays, publications or any piece of academic work produced by faculty members and students alike.
- 1.4 It shall also lead to disciplinary actions, such as expulsion from the university, postponement of promotion, rustication or any other form of discipline as stated in the relevant Statutes of the University for Development Studies, and as shall be determined by an impartial and independent committee set up by the authorities of the University.

2.0 Definition of Plagiarism

- 2.1 Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work, ideas, words, images, opinions, discoveries, artwork, music, recordings or computer-generated work such as computer programmes, software, websites, the Internet or other electronic resources, either published or unpublished, as one's personal work, or alternatively claiming all the above mentioned of others, without duly acknowledging the original source, with or without the permission of the source (University of Pretoria, 2010).
- 2.2 Plagiarism can also denote the re-presentation of one's own published or unpublished work, ideas, images, opinions, inventions, music or recordings, artistic works, or computer-generated work without proper citing of source. This is generally known as self-plagiarism (University of Pretoria, 2010).
- 2.3 Or a situation where one's ideas, expressions, words, methods, results, are used to describe these ideas, methodologies and outcomes are similar or expressed in the same way without appropriate acknowledgement.
- 2.4 Examples of plagiarism:
 - i. Direct replication of one's work without duly acknowledging the original source.
 - ii. Reproducing or transcribing work from one language to another without acknowledging the source.

- iii. Rewording of your own work or that of another without appropriately acknowledging the source.
 - iv. Piecing together sections of the works of others or one's own into a new whole.
 - v. Resubmitting work that has hitherto been graded.
 - vi. Presenting a jointly produced work (in whole or in part) as one's own independent work.
 - vii. Presenting the works of students with or without their consent as one's own.
 - viii. Making use of professionals or professional agencies in producing one's work or submitting works which has been written on one's behalf
- 2.5 Plagiarism is a serious academic fraud, intellectual dishonesty, theft, which is unethical and immoral, and a consequential manifestation of academic impropriety can lead to dismissal from an institution such as the University.
- 2.6 Depending on the extent and the enormity of the plagiarism as well as the institutional requirements, the plagiarist may be disciplined according to rules stated in the relevant Statutes of the University for Development Studies, or be forced to apologize publicly and withdraw the plagiarized materials.
- 2.7 In a situation where plagiarism is not detected early, appropriate sanctions shall still be applied when discovered later.

3.0 Types of Plagiarism

- 3.1 According to Turnitin.com and Research Resources¹, two types or categories of plagiarism are identified. These are; Intentional and Unintentional
- 3.2 Intentional plagiarism consists of Sources not cited plagiarism and Sources cited (but still plagiarized).

A. Sources not cited plagiarism:

Examples of this include the:

- i. Turning in another's work, word-for-word, as if they are one's own.
- ii. copying significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration.
- iii. Trying to disguise plagiarism by copying from several different sources, modifying the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing.
- iv. Retaining the essential content of the source whilst altering the paper's appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.
- v. Paraphrasing most of the paper from other sources and making it all fit together.
- vi. 'Borrowing' generously from one's own previous work which violates policies concerning the expectation of originality adopted by most academic institutions (University of Pretoria, 2010).

B. Sources cited but still plagiarized

These include the following:

¹ http://www.plagiarism.org/resources/documentation/plagiarism/learning/types_of_plagiarism.doc

- i. Obscuring source locations of consulted materials. For instance, providing an author's name for a source and neglecting certain important metadata of the referenced material
 - ii. Providing insufficient information on the sources of referenced material, making it impossible to trace.
 - iii. A situation where text is directly copied text is not put in quotation marks although the source has been appropriately cited. In such situations, the writer falsely infers ownership of original information on himself.
 - iv. When an author appropriately rewords, correctly use quotations and cites all sources but the work is entirely not original.
 - v. A situation where the writer properly quotes and cites sources in some places, but goes on to paraphrase other arguments from those sources without citation. This way, the writer tries to pass off the paraphrased material as his/her own analysis of the cited material.” (University of Pretoria, 2010).
- 3.3 Non-intentional plagiarism is the situation where an author does not conform to orthodox standards for referencing. It is also a situation where the writer imitates a source text written in a language that the writer does not understand the technical and conceptual meaning and thus lacks the ability to present the ideas in his/her own words.

4.0 Evaluating Plagiarism

- 4.1 Plagiarism is a very complicated concept, no matter the form it takes. This makes it necessary for a proper assessment to be done when determining the quality of scholarly works produced by persons in academia.
- 4.2 Care must be taken when trying to measure the quality of a scholarly material in the context of intentional and unintentional plagiarism. As enumerated by Ngozi, Eyiuche & Ngozi (2009), certain intimations or hints could be used not only as a form of evidence gathering but also as a means of evaluating plagiarism.
- 4.3 The mixing of citation styles, lack of quotation and references are all strategies for assessing or establishing plagiarism of scholarly materials.
 - i. Mixing of citation styles: There are several ways in which a work can be cited. Works can be cited in Harvard style, Chicago, APA, AAA, MLA etc. Under no circumstance should a writer mix these styles in a text. Doing that indicates the amount of dishonesty exhibited by the writer; hence the work must be treated as a plagiarized material.
 - ii. Lack of quotation and references: Quoting a text without proper acknowledgement is a serious offense and so writers should make it a point to put such text in quotation marks and then cite accordingly in the required citation style. Scholarly works produced without references at the end of the work constitutes plagiarism.

5.0 Institutional Responsibility

The University acknowledges the need to come up with a policy that seeks not only to punish but to help avert the issue of plagiarism among students and staff. In line with this, plagiarism and other similar issues shall form an important part of the academic curricular of the University. With this, the University shall make it one of its utmost priorities to:

- i. Educate the academic community on the dangers involved in plagiarizing

- ii. Acquiring appropriate software to check plagiarism in scholarly works and other researches.
- iii. Supporting the various faculties, schools and departments to enlighten their students on the issue of plagiarism
- iv. Handbooks given to students shall contain the University's stance on plagiarism.
- v. The University Library/Libraries shall be equipped with the necessary logistics and software to handle the plagiarism issues particularly with students' theses and dissertations.

6.0 Student or Author Responsibility

6.1 Students and academic staff in the University shall heed to the following:

- i. Equip themselves with good writing skills
- ii. Know what constitutes plagiarism and what needs to be done to avoid falling into the trap of plagiarism
- iii. Know the accepted citation style of the institution

6.2 It is incumbent on all staff of the University to adhere to these responsibilities to ensure sanity in the academic environment thereby helping to reduce or prevent plagiarism. This shall help instill a sense of discipline among all who find themselves in academia.

7.0 Investigations and Sanctions

7.1 Plagiarism is not acceptable and shall be categorized as highly offensive by the University. Faculties are therefore obliged to observe the requirements and conditions set in this Policy. It is the responsibility of faculties to ensure students, and other staff receive the required training to prevent plagiarism.
All materials suspected to have been plagiarized shall be a requirement for investigations.

10.0 Investigation of plagiarism by students

8.1 When a faculty member responsible for a course suspects possible plagiarism by a student, the faculty member shall:

- i. Investigate
- ii. Organize a meeting with the student in question
- iii. Present suspicions and available proof for discussion with the student
- iv. Solicit the student's opinion/defense on the matter
- v. If the lecturer is satisfied that no offence has been committed, the student may be dismissed and the matter closed

8.2 If the student is able to provide a convincing and reasonable explanations of the accusation, and is discovered to have unconsciously plagiarized, it may be concluded that the student committed an academic misdemeanor by referencing wrongly. A written warning is given.

8.3 However, if any suspicions about the originality of the work are confirmed, the issue can then be;

- i. Settled at the departmental level or

- ii. Referred to the Dean of the particular Faculty, who shall then present a formal complaint to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. An initial investigation will be conducted by the said Dean at the request of the Pro-Vice Chancellor and a report submitted to the Vice-Chancellor through the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.
- iii. For further investigation, the Vice-Chancellor shall then refer the case to the suitable Disciplinary Committee
- iv. Upon conclusion of its hearing, the Disciplinary Committee shall report to the Vice-Chancellor on arrived conclusions and make propositions which he/she may implement per his/her considerations.

10.0 Plagiarism in a Course Assignment

- i. Any student accused of academic misconduct in a given assignment shall be reported to the Head of Department. He shall in turn, adhere to the provisions stated in paragraph 8.1 and 8.3 above to resolve the matter through the appropriate authority.
- ii. The processes of investigation and punishment of any student accused of plagiarism shall be in conformity with paragraph 8.1 to 8.3.

9.1 Plagiarism in a Submitted Thesis

Alleged plagiarism in a thesis shall be reported to the Head of Department who shall immediately report to the Dean and an investigative committee will be set up by the Dean to examine the case. A report shall be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor on the findings detailing their recommendations.

- 9.2 The provisions made in 8.1 to 8.3 shall be adhered to in the process of examining and levying punishment on students.

10.0 Sanctions for Plagiarism by Students

10.1 The Penalty Scale for plagiarism applies to all works submitted for assessment.

10.2 One essential benchmark for assessing the gravity of an offence is “quantity”; however, sanctions should be suitable for the level of severity of the incident.

10.3 The quantity, in this instance refers to the unaided professional judgment of the lecturer/supervisor and not the percentage generated from the TURNITIN originality report.

11.0 Investigating Plagiarism

When investigating a plagiarism incident, it is important to take note of the following:

- i. How significant the plagiarized content is on the grading of the work
- ii. To what extent is the submitted work plagiarized
- iii. The student’s year and level
- iv. The student’s background

- v. Whether the student at any point, took the opportunity to participate in any of the activities provided by the University to enhance students' understanding of plagiarism
- vi. Any previous incidence of plagiarism the student engaged in
- vii. Any apparent intention by the student to mislead (University of Pretoria, 2010).

Plagiarism Penalty Scale

Degree of Seriousness	1 st Year / 1 st Incident	1 st Year 2 nd Incident	Other Undergraduate / 1 st Incident	Other Undergraduate / 2 nd Incident	3 rd or Further Incident	Post Graduate
SERIOUS (More than 20% of text 'copied')	Cancellation of mark Opportunity for resubmission, where the highest mark that may be awarded is 50% Note on student's record Student has to participate in library training	Cancellation of mark No opportunity to resubmit Note on student's record	Cancellation of mark No opportunity for resubmission Note on student's record Student has to participate in library training	Disciplinary investigation	Disciplinary investigation	Disciplinary investigation

Degree of Seriousness	1 st Year / 1 st Incident	1 st Year 2 nd Incident	Other Undergraduate / 1 st Incident	Other Undergraduate / 2 nd Incident	3 rd or Further Incident	Post Graduate
MODERATE (More than 10%, but less than 20% of text 'copied')	Cancellation of mark Opportunity for resubmission, the highest	Cancellation of mark No opportunity to resubmit	Cancellation of mark Opportunity for resubmission, the highest mark	Disciplinary investigation	Disciplinary investigation	Disciplinary investigation

	mark that may be awarded is 50% Student has to participate in library training	Note on student's record	that may be awarded is 50% Note on student's record Student has to participate in library training			
MINOR (Less than 10% of text 'copied')	Warning (marks must be deducted) Note on student's record Student has to attend library training	Cancellation of mark Opportunity for resubmission, the highest mark that may be awarded is 50% Note on student's record	Warning (marks must be subtracted) Note on student's record Student has to attend library training	Disciplinary investigation	Disciplinary investigation	Disciplinary investigation

Plagiarism Penalty Scale Continued

Source: University of Pretoria (2010)

12.0 Investigations and Sanctions for Plagiarism by Faculty Members

12.1 Investigations

- i. The Head of Department shall report to the Dean in instances where a faculty member is alleged to have engaged in plagiarism. The Dean shall then present the matter and a detailed report expressing the suspicion of plagiarism to the Faculty Board.
- ii. The complaint and report shall be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor shall refer the case to the appropriate Disciplinary Committee for action.
- iii. Reports of plagiarism by faculty members from journals which are reported to the University will be forwarded to the appropriate Faculty or School Board Committees. The assigned committee shall investigate the accusation(s) and if

it finds adequate evidence of plagiarism, it shall submit its report to the Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

- iv. The Pro-Vice-Chancellor shall refer the incident to the Vice-Chancellor who shall in turn, refer it to the Disciplinary Committee for Senior Members.
- v. The propositions of the Disciplinary Committee shall be forwarded to the Vice-Chancellor who per his discretion may execute the recommendations or vary them. Where this academic misconduct may have contributed to the person's appointment or promotion, the Vice-Chancellor shall forward the investigative results and recommendations submitted by the Disciplinary Committee to the Appointments and Promotions Board reassess its decision

12.2 **Sanctions**

- i. Sanctions to be applied to any offending Faculty Member shall be in harmony with the authorized sanctions currently in operation.
- ii. Any Member declared guilty of academic impropriety/plagiarism shall be downgraded to the next lower rank for a first offence. In a situation where the faculty member has not yet been promoted, his/her salary shall be dropped to the next lower scale.

13.0 False Accusation of Plagiarism

No student, staff or faculty member shall wrongly or falsely be accused of academic dishonesty. Any incident of this nature shall be reported by the appropriate person in-charge of that particular Department to the Vice-Chancellor and later on referred to the Disciplinary Committee of the University.

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