
PLAGIARISM PREVENTION POLICY

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1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework (consisting of a policy and guideline documents) for deterring, detecting and dealing with plagiarism consistently across all faculties of the University of Pretoria.
- 1.2 In line with the general availability of research resources, particularly electronic resources, a considerable increase in the number of plagiarism cases is being experienced in the higher education system. This is partly the result of a lack of proper training in referencing techniques at secondary school level. While the outcomes-based curriculum requires learners to deal with vast amounts of information, scant regard is given to the correct referencing of such resources, with the result that learners do not appreciate the seriousness of appropriating someone else's work.
- 1.3 Plagiarism poses a considerable problem for academic institutions worldwide as many students and/or researchers do not realise that it is a serious form of academic misconduct that can lead to expulsion from an institution such as a university, civil claims and even criminal charges.

2. ORGANISATIONAL SCOPE

The plagiarism prevention policy applies to the academic activities of the University and by implication all those involved in these activities. The emphasis is primarily on undergraduate and postgraduate students and the assessment of students' learning. Two mechanisms are proposed: firstly, deterrence and assessment through informative, educative and preventative mechanisms (i.e. Library training on plagiarism prevention and referencing as well as guidance in class or in study guides or online), and secondly, policing (i.e. detecting plagiarism and dealing with transgressors).

Plagiarism by staff in the research environment is dealt with in the Policy and Procedures for Responsible Research and the Code of Ethics for Scholarly Activities. Misconduct by a researcher will result in action against the staff member concerned as set out in the University of Pretoria's Conditions of Service and the Disciplinary Code and Procedures for Employees.

3. POLICY STATEMENT

- 3.1 To ensure the University's academic integrity, students are discouraged from unethical behaviour. In this regard, this policy provides a framework that will (a) ensure student awareness of the need to avoid plagiarism, and (b) provide for fair and consistent administrative processes across faculties in cases where plagiarism is detected.
- 3.2 This policy includes the following:
 - 3.2.1 a broad definition of plagiarism.
 - 3.2.2 an exposition of informative, educative and preventative mechanisms available at the University that are aimed at preventing plagiarism, such as –
 - a) the Academic Information Management modules (AIM), in certain programmes prescribed for first-year students at the University;
 - b) research methodology courses for senior students;

- c) warnings to avoid plagiarism in study guides;
 - d) assignment briefing sheets containing warnings against plagiarism;
 - e) the Declaration of Originality which must accompany each assignment;
 - f) awareness campaigns;
 - g) Library Services' courses on the topic;
 - h) an online tutorial and a self-test on avoiding plagiarism available on the Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page;
 - i) training by the Department of Education Innovation to lecturers and senior students in detection software (Turnitin);
- 3.2.3 a fair, transparent and consistent system to deal with all incidents of plagiarism (the Plagiarism Penalty Scale).
- 3.2.4 a system for recording all incidences, the actions taken and the penalty imposed (the Plagiarism Register).

3.3 Role of staff

- 3.3.1 This policy requires academic staff to provide students with guidance on how to:
- a) avoid plagiarism; and
 - b) how to reference correctly.
- 3.3.2 The policy also requires academic staff to act immediately when plagiarism is detected and to ensure appropriate action is taken and fair penalties are imposed where appropriate. When a suspicion of plagiarism arises from a Turnitin originality report, plagiarism must not be assumed. The document must be investigated and then discussed with the student.

3.4 Students

This policy requires students to act with integrity and to take responsibility for the production and presentation of academic work. Guidance on recognised referencing techniques can be obtained from lecturers, the staff of the Library Services and the Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page.

4. DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM

- 4.1 Plagiarism is the presentation of someone else's work, words, images, ideas, opinions, discoveries, artwork, music, recordings or computer-generated work (including circuitry, computer programs or software, websites, the Internet or other electronic resources) whether published or not, as one's own work, or alternatively appropriating the work, words, images, ideas, opinions, discoveries, artwork, music, recordings or computer-generated work (including circuitry, computer programs or software, websites, the Internet or other electronic resource) of others, without properly acknowledging the source.
- 4.2 Plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct for which a student may be disciplined in terms of the University's disciplinary code.
- 4.3 The relevant sections of the **Disciplinary Code: Students** read as follows:

"1. DISCIPLINARY CODE: STUDENTS

1.1 DEFINITION OF MISCONDUCT

A student shall be guilty of misconduct and may be dealt with in terms of this code if he or she...

1.1.4.3 *in University context infringes a person's copyright or any other intellectual property right, including but not limited to **plagiarism**;*

1.1.4.4 *in University context...*

f. *plagiarises by stating, or implying, original authorship of someone else's written or creative work (words, images, ideas, opinions, discoveries, artwork, music, recordings, computer-generated work), and/or by incorporating such work or material, in whole or in part, into his or her own work without properly acknowledging or citing the source;*

4.4 It is not a requirement for plagiarism that a person must have intended to deceive. Irrespective of intent, it remains plagiarism. At the University it is presumed that where certain plagiarised elements are found in a text, the author intended them to be there and that where paraphrasing is the issue, the author intended this as a disguise for more obvious plagiarism such as unattributed verbatim copying. The absence of intent may be considered as mitigation when a suitable penalty for plagiarism is determined.

5. INFORMATIVE, EDUCATIVE AND PREVENTATIVE MECHANISMS

5.1 Being an educational institution, the University's emphasis is on teaching and evaluating students' learning rather than on detecting plagiarism and dealing with offenders. The preferred method of dealing with plagiarism is prevention through information, education and assessment. In this regard, the following mechanisms exist:

5.1.1 AIM module

Academic information management (AIM) modules are prescribed for most programmes for first-year students. They deal extensively with information literacy, referencing and referencing techniques as well as writing assignments and research reports. Library courses and their online resources also deal explicitly with plagiarism issues and the prevention of plagiarism.

5.1.2 Research methodology courses

Faculties have their own courses adapted to their own requirements where students are introduced to the research process, the planning accompanying research as well as the methods and techniques used to collect data and how to integrate such information and ideas logically and systematically in the development of an argument when writing a scholarly paper or report. Turnitin training for students should be included in these courses.

5.1.3 Warnings against plagiarism

A warning in respect of plagiarism/copyright must be included in all study guides. The warning must contain a reference or link to the Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page, i.e. the page is available on the Library Services homepage under "Services" or at <http://www.library.up.ac.za/plagiarism/index.htm>.

5.1.4 **Assignment briefing sheets**

A warning in respect of plagiarism should be included in every assignment briefing sheet.

5.1.5 **Declaration of originality to accompany each assignment**

Each assignment or research component that a student submits must be accompanied by a declaration of originality in which he/she declares that the relevant assignment or research is his/her own work.

5.1.6 **Awareness campaigns**

Awareness campaigns that, among others, coincide with the welcoming of first-year students must be presented annually.

5.1.7 **Library Services' courses**

During library courses students are actively taught the necessary skills for academic writing, citation and attribution.

5.1.8 **Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page**

The Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page that is available on the Library Services homepage under "Services" or at: <http://www.library.up.ac.za/plagiarism/index.htm>, contains a number of resources including an online tutorial and self-test on avoiding plagiarism.

5.1.9 **Similarity detection software (Turnitin)**

- a) The University of Pretoria makes use of Turnitin – an electronic similarity detection software tool that is used by hundreds of international and national higher education institutions to support staff in detecting potential plagiarism. The system creates "originality reports" on submitted documents. It is recommended that the manuals available on the Turnitin website (<http://turnitin.com/>) be read in conjunction with the University Plagiarism Prevention Policy and Guidelines.
- b) The Department for Education Innovation (EI) provides staff with support and training regarding access to and use of, the software. Staff are required to attend a four-hour training session on creating valid Turnitin reports, how to prevent plagiarism and how to deal with it in a fair and consistent manner.
- c) Plagiarism is not dependent on the verbatim presentation of a specific number of words as, under certain circumstances, the use of a single phrase or idea can constitute plagiarism. A subject matter expert should evaluate the originality report before any allegations of plagiarism are made. The similarity score cannot be the only indicator, as some types of plagiarism are more serious than others. The numerical value of the similarity score has little meaning on its own, as it is greatly influenced by the Turnitin settings. Turnitin reports are susceptible to manipulation and thus the reports lack independent value.

5.1.10 Penalties

- a) Faculties must evaluate and penalise plagiarism cases in accordance with the policy.
- b) The objective is to deal with detected plagiarism in a fair, transparent and consistent manner (**see Penalty Scale table**). A staff member may not turn a blind eye to plagiarism.
- c) An allegation based on a high similarity score is not the same as proof of plagiarism. A student suspected of plagiarism must be informed in writing by the relevant staff member and given a chance to refute the allegation in person. If the student admits the plagiarism, the staff member must suggest a penalty in line with the Plagiarism Penalty Scale and the incident must be recorded in the Plagiarism Register. If the student does not admit the plagiarism, or disputes the degree of seriousness, a disciplinary investigation must be initiated.
- d) When imposing a penalty, the following are important considerations:
 - (i) the significance of the plagiarised content on the work submitted for assessment;
 - (ii) the extent and seriousness of the plagiarism in the submitted work based on the independent, professional judgement of the staff member;
 - (iii) the year and level of the student;
 - (iv) the student's circumstances and background;
 - (v) whether the student has used Turnitin on previous occasions or in previous modules;
 - (vi) whether the student has made use of the opportunities provided by the University to enhance students' understanding of plagiarism;
 - (vii) whether the student has any record of previous incidents of plagiarism (see Plagiarism Register); and
 - (viii) any apparent intention by the student to deceive.

5.2 Plagiarism Register

- 5.2.1 The University maintains a Plagiarism Register to enable the monitoring of transgressors and to ensure the consistent application of penalties. The Plagiarism Register also enables a review of the extent of plagiarism within the University.
- 5.2.2 Students must be informed that penalties may affect their academic progress adversely. In proven, serious cases, penalties could result in expulsion from the University.
- 5.2.3 Staff members must complete the Form for the Reporting of Plagiarism Incidents and forward it to the Legal Services Division in order to register all cases of plagiarism. The staff member uses the information regarding previous plagiarism incidents provided by the student on the form to determine the appropriate penalty and/or process in accordance with the Penalty Scale. The information provided by the student will be verified by the Legal Services Division after the form has been received. If the Legal Services Division is satisfied that the information provided by the student regarding previous incidents is truthful, it will confirm the incident as well as the penalty in a letter to the student. However, if the Legal Services Division is not satisfied with the information provided by the student, it

will proceed with disciplinary steps against the student.

- 5.2.4 All cases of plagiarism, whether a student admitted the misconduct, or whether misconduct was established by the Disciplinary Committee (Students) on a balance of probabilities, will be logged on the Register that is held and maintained by the Legal Services Division. Only the Legal Services Division will have access to the Register.

6. OTHER FORMS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AND MISCONDUCT

- 6.1 Students may not act dishonestly in any way whatsoever.
- 6.2 Apart from plagiarism, as explained earlier in the document, there are various other forms of academic misconduct or academic dishonesty within the context of tests, examinations and other academic assessments such as academic tasks or assignments.
- 6.3 These forms of dishonesty include work submitted by a student for assessment when the work in question:
- 6.3.1 has been copied from another student or a former student.
 - 6.3.2 is, whether fully or in part, that of another.
 - 6.3.3 is the result of collusion between two or more group members, except in the case of group work as determined by the relevant lecturer.
 - 6.3.4 is that of another student or a former student and has been falsely presented in a way that aims to deceive and to create the impression that it is the student's own.
 - 6.3.5 is the previously submitted and graded work of the student.
- 6.4 The Penalty Scale applies to all plagiarism detected in assignments, dissertations, theses and reports submitted for assessment. However, all fraudulent or deceptive or cheating activities as set out in paragraph 6.3 above, are covered by the General Rules (see Examinations, Tests and other Academic Assignments) and will be dealt with in terms of the Disciplinary Code: Students.

7. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

- Plagiarism prevention guidelines
- Disciplinary Code: Students
- Policy and Procedures for Responsible Research and the Code of Ethics for Scholarly Activities
- University of Pretoria's Conditions of Service and the Disciplinary Code and Procedures for Employees

8. RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION

The Office of the Registrar is responsible for the implementation of this policy.

9. POLICY LIFE CYCLE

This policy should be reviewed every four (4) years or in the interim should it be required.

10. DOCUMENT METADATA

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ANNEXURE A – Penalty scale

PLAGIARISM PENALTY SCALE						
DEGREE OF SERIOUSNESS	1st YEAR*, 1st INCIDENT	1st YEAR*, 2nd INCIDENT	OTHER UNDERGRADUATE, 1st INCIDENT	OTHER UNDERGRADUATE, 2nd INCIDENT	3rd OR FURTHER INCIDENT (1st years* & other undergraduates)	POSTGRADUATE
SERIOUS <i>(More than 20% of text 'lifted')</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation
	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to resubmit, the highest mark that may be awarded is 50%	<input type="checkbox"/> No opportunity to resubmit	<input type="checkbox"/> No opportunity to resubmit			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student has to attend library training		<input type="checkbox"/> Student has to attend library training			
MODERATE <i>(More than 10%, but less than 20% of text 'lifted')</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation
	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to resubmit, the highest mark that may be awarded is 50%	<input type="checkbox"/> No opportunity to resubmit	<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to resubmit, the highest mark that may be awarded is 50%			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student has to attend library training		<input type="checkbox"/> Student has to attend library training			
MINOR <i>(Less than 10% of text 'lifted')</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> Warning (marks must be subtracted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Cancellation of mark	<input type="checkbox"/> Warning (marks must be subtracted)	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation	<input type="checkbox"/> Disciplinary investigation
		<input type="checkbox"/> Opportunity to resubmit, the highest mark that may be awarded is 50%				
	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record	<input type="checkbox"/> Note on student's record			
	<input type="checkbox"/> Student has to attend library training		<input type="checkbox"/> Student has to attend library training			

Please refer to the Plagiarism prevention guidelines - The role of lecturers

*1st year student means a student who has entered tertiary education for the first time.

ANNEXURE B – Declaration of originality

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

The Department of places great emphasis upon integrity and ethical conduct in the preparation of all written work submitted for academic evaluation.

Academics teach you about referencing techniques and how to avoid plagiarism; it is your responsibility to act on this knowledge. If you are at any stage uncertain as to what is required, you should speak to your lecturer before any written work is submitted.

You are guilty of plagiarism if you copy something from another author's work (e.g. a book, an article or a website) without acknowledging the source and pass it off as your own. In effect you are stealing something that belongs to someone else. This is not only the case when you copy work word-for-word (verbatim) but also when you submit someone else's work in a slightly altered form (paraphrase) or use a line of argument without acknowledging it.

Students who commit plagiarism will not be given any credit for plagiarised work. The matter may also be referred to the Disciplinary Committee (Students) for a ruling. Plagiarism is regarded as a serious contravention of the University's rules and can lead to expulsion from the University.

The declaration which follows must accompany all written work submitted while you are a student of the Department of No written work will be accepted unless the declaration has been completed and submitted.

Full names and surname of student:

Student number:.....

Topic of work:

Declaration

1. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this (e.g. essay, report, project, assignment, dissertation, thesis, etc) is my own original work. Where other people's work has been used (either from a printed source, Internet or any other source), this has been properly acknowledged and referenced in accordance with departmental requirements.

SIGNATURE

DATE

ANNEXURE C – Form for reporting incidents

UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

Form for reporting of plagiarism incidents

This form is part of the procedures that have been established to support the consistent implementation of the University's plagiarism prevention policy promptly and fairly across all faculties. Once completed, it must be submitted to the Division of Legal Services (report.plagiarism@up.ac.za, 012 420 3025) where the incident and the penalty decided upon by the lecturer will be recorded in the Plagiarism Register. If the Division of Legal Services is satisfied that the information provided by the student regarding previous incidents is truthful, the Division of Legal Services will confirm the incident and the penalty in a letter to the student. However, if the student has committed plagiarism previously, which incidents were not indicated on this form, the Division of Legal Services will proceed with a disciplinary investigation against the student and such student could be expelled from the University.

Full name and surname of student: _____

Student number: _____

Student contact details

(email and telephone number): _____

Module code and title: _____

Lecturer: _____

Lecturer contact details

(email and telephone number): _____

Department: _____

Date assignment submitted: _____

Date plagiarism detected: _____

Date of interview with student: _____

Has the student admitted the transgression and agreed that the matter be dealt with in this manner?

Lecturer's report on the incident (lecturers should, for a period of one year, keep copies of the instructions given to the students regarding the assignment, the original work with the plagiarised passages marked and a copy of the source material with the passages which have been plagiarised, marked).

In order to determine a penalty in terms of the Penalty Scale (see back of this document), it is required to know if the student has committed plagiarism previously. In this regard, the relevant block below **must be marked by the student**.

WARNING TO STUDENT: Providing false information here will lead to disciplinary action. If you are found guilty, you may even be expelled from the University.

1 st year*, 1 st incident	1 st year*, 2 nd incident	Other undergraduate, 1 st incident	Other undergraduate, 2 nd incident	**Any 3 rd or further incident
--	--	--	--	--

* 1st year student means a student who has entered tertiary education for the first time.

** "Any" includes 3rd or further transgressions of undergraduate students.

Penalty imposed (refer to the Plagiarism Penalty Scale):

Student's signature to confirm that he or she has accepted the process and outcome

Lecturer's signature to confirm that the processes prescribed by the policy have been adhered to

Date submitted to the Division of Legal Services: _____

PLAGIARISM PREVENTION GUIDELINES

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1. USE OF TURNITIN AT THE UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA

It is recommended that the manuals available on the Turnitin website (<http://turnitin.com>) be read in conjunction with the University Plagiarism Prevention Policy and Guidelines.

- 1.1 The Turnitin software used to detect potential plagiarism is completely web-based and has been implemented as an integrated tool within the learning management system, *clickUP*. The Turnitin Assignment Tool can only be used when activated via a *clickUP* module.
- 1.2 Lecturers and supervisors are responsible for creating Turnitin assignments in *clickUP* modules for their students. Guidelines are provided in the priority training course on the Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page and in *clickUP* Help. Lecturers should use the appropriate settings for the type of assignment, particularly the informed use of the paper repositories. It is particularly important to note that the originality report produced indicates *possible* plagiarism but that the lecturer then has to review the piece personally and even discuss it with the student before arriving at a definite conclusion of plagiarism. Postgraduate students should also be able to submit work-in-progress for the learning opportunity. Otherwise, Masters' and doctoral students can gain access to Turnitin to help them evaluate and improve their work before they submit it, using the instructions on the Library Services' Plagiarism Prevention Page.
- 1.3 Submitted papers are used, among others, as source material to detect potential plagiarism. The submitted papers of the University of Pretoria's students contribute to the expansion of the Turnitin database from which other UP courses and other participating institutions may benefit.
- 1.4 The system creates "originality reports" on submitted documents. According to the Turnitin license agreement, it is the responsibility of lecturers to exercise their independent,

professional judgement in, and to assume sole and exclusive responsibility for determining the actual existence of plagiarism in a submitted paper with the acknowledgement and understanding that the Originality Reports are only tools for detecting textual similarities between compared works and do not conclusively determine the existence of plagiarism.

- 1.5 Lecturers should deal with detected plagiarism in a fair and consistent manner within the UP Policy. Tips to detect plagiarism in a fair manner:
 - 1.5.1 Lecturers should familiarise themselves with the expected similarity % in their subject that is due to common knowledge. They could adjust the similarity level for plagiarism detection accordingly. By default, quotations and references should be excluded from the settings, as well as an informed level of small matches.
 - 1.5.2 Lecturers should determine the placement of headings for the References section in the document, as that can confound the similarity score.
 - 1.5.3 Scanned PDFs of submissions should not be allowed, only the original formats of the documents.
 - 1.5.4 Assignments should assess the higher order learning of Bloom's taxonomy, then inadvertent plagiarism is less likely to occur.
- 1.6 When interpreting the seriousness of plagiarism the following is important:
 - 1.6.1 Some similarities constitute less serious types of plagiarism, for instance poor paraphrasing, if sources are cited; technically incorrect quotation techniques; incorrect headings for references; description of common research methodologies and statistical methods, legal documents and others. Plagiarism becomes more serious when it is clear that the student was dishonest about the authorship of the document or parts thereof, or intended to portray his/her work as original and his/her own when it was not. A high similarity score may indicate patchwork writing from many sources, with little original argument. That should be evaluated by the lecturer according to the assignment brief.
 - 1.6.2 The similarity index can only suggest what the student's writing method was and cannot be an absolute measure of what was original or copied, as Turnitin does not have every conceivable electronic document in its database. This is a problem when penalty scales relate to absolute similarity values. On the one hand, some copied material might not be flagged. On the other hand, the Turnitin assignment settings can influence the similarity scores by, for example, excluding or including quotations, references, small matches and searching for similarities in student repositories. High similarity scores often result when the document had been unofficially "tested" in another Turnitin assignment or in a different module using the repository. Postgraduate and research papers often go through several iterations and can be submitted to Turnitin multiple times which will generate high similarity scores if the student or institutional repositories are used. Re-using the same assignment topics year after year invites plagiarism. Using writing templates to aid organisation of academic writing also results in higher similarity scores while not implying plagiarism.
 - 1.6.3 When an assignment requires original thought and reasoning skills rather than gathering relevant material, high similarity scores are more likely to indicate plagiarism. The interpretation of the similarity score therefore depends strongly on the thorough investigation of the originality report by the lecturer or subject matter expert.
- 1.7 All postgraduate theses, dissertations or mini-dissertations must be evaluated against the Turnitin database. These can be submitted by either the supervisor or the student in a Turnitin

assignment created by the lecturer using standard Postgraduate settings. The originality reports obtained are often submitted with the theses, dissertations or mini-dissertations to the examiners. A screen capture of the first page of the report could be submitted with the full dissertation. It is not possible to download or print a complete originality report for submission.

- 1.8 For formal undergraduate assessments, it is strongly recommended that lecturers allow students to submit their work themselves and to receive the originality reports as this would provide students with important learning opportunities.
- 1.9 When take-home assessments are used, the use of Turnitin is compulsory as a means of ensuring the credibility of results.

2. ROLE OF THE LECTURER

2.1 The role of lecturers in preventing plagiarism

- 2.1.1 During the investigation of alleged plagiarism, students often argue that they neither knew what was permissible, nor the seriousness of the offence.
- 2.1.2 By acting in accordance with the guidelines the lecturer fulfils an important role in the process of creating awareness in this regard; the disciplinary process is simplified, while the lecturer is protected.
- 2.1.3 A warning in respect of copyright/plagiarism must be included in study guides. This warning must mention that this transgression could result in expulsion from the University and refer students to the Policy and other information available on the subject.
- 2.1.4 Lecturers should discuss the issue in class at the start of each new term. This discussion should:
 - (a) Emphasise the value system and academic integrity of the University and encourage students to bring misconduct to the attention of lecturers;
 - (b) Clearly state that students are expected to do their own work and submit it in the prescribed manner;
 - (c) Discuss plagiarism, its meaning and what is acceptable, as well as the rules with regard to quotations and references. Special emphasis should be placed on websites and other electronic sources;
 - (d) Provide students with standards of referencing and bibliography at the beginning of each course; and
 - (e) Explain the seriousness of the transgression and mention the fact that students at the University have been expelled in the past as a consequence.
- 2.1.5 All assignments or research submitted by a student must be accompanied by a signed *Declaration of Originality*. This document contains a declaration by the student that he/she has read the content of the document, understands it, and that the relevant assignment or research is his/her own work. It should be borne in mind that, where this document is attached to the assignment itself, it will increase the similarity scores that must then be interpreted accordingly. Lecturers should provide clear instructions on how to submit the signed form.
- 2.1.6 If it becomes evident that a student may have committed plagiarism, the lecturer must take the steps described in 2.2 below.

2.2 Role of the lecturer when possible plagiarism is detected

2.2.1 When a lecturer becomes suspicious that a student has plagiarised, he/she must initiate an investigation immediately. The lecturer must:

- (a) Convene a meeting with the student.
- (b) Discuss his/her suspicions as well as the evidence with the student.
- (c) Ask the student for his/her version of the matter.
- (d) If satisfied that there has been no transgression, the student may be excused and the matter regarded as resolved. If, however, the lecturer's suspicions are confirmed, the matter can either be resolved within the department or referred to the Legal Services Division in terms of the Penalty Scale.

2.2.2 Dealing with a charge in the department

With regard to undergraduate students, the matter can be resolved in the department when **all** of the following apply:

- (a) It is a first-year student's first or second transgression of this nature, or the first transgression of any other undergraduate student;
- (b) The student admits the transgression; and
- (c) The student accepts that the case has been settled in the manner provided for by the Penalty Scale.

The form for reporting plagiarism incidents (Annexure C to the Plagiarism Policy) must be completed and submitted to the Legal Services Division.

2.3 Referral to the Legal Services Division

2.3.1 The matter is referred to the Legal Services Division for a disciplinary investigation if **any** of the following applies:

- (a) It is a first-year student's third, or any other undergraduate student's second or further transgression of this nature;
- (b) It is a postgraduate student;
- (c) The student denies the transgression; or
- (d) The student does not accept that the case be settled in the manner provided for by the Penalty Scale.

2.3.2 The matter is referred to the Legal Services Division by means of a written statement and report on the incident, and written statements from anyone who can testify in this regard. The student must be given an opportunity to state his/her version of the matter. If a student prefers not to provide a written statement he/she must confirm this in writing. The written statement/confirmation must contain the student's signature and his/her student number and contact details.

2.3.3 All documentary evidence and statements must be submitted to the Legal Services Division.

2.3.4 The marks for the assignment or research in question must be held back by the Department until further notice from the Legal Services Division.

2.4 The disciplinary hearing

2.4.1 If the Registrar is of the opinion that reasonable grounds exist for bringing a charge

of misconduct against a student, he/she formulates a charge in writing that is sent to the student and in which he/she is summoned to attend a hearing.

2.4.2 Lecturers and other witnesses, whose presence may be required at the hearing, will be notified accordingly.

2.4.3 Copies of the documents containing the charge and the disciplinary measure imposed will be communicated to the relevant staff members.

2.5 **Disciplinary measures**

2.5.1 If a student is acquitted by the Committee, he/she retains the mark, which will be made available by the lecturer.

2.5.2 If the student is found guilty, the Committee will decide on a suitable penalty. If the student is to be deprived of the credits for the subject or assignment in respect of which the transgression was committed, the mark is forfeited.

3. **PLAGIARISM AND HOW TO AVOID IT**

3.1 **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is committed when a person presents someone else's ideas – published or unpublished – as if they were his/her own.

3.1.1 **People's ideas** may be contained in the following:

(a) **Written text**

Journal articles, books, theses, dissertations, newspapers, magazines, notes, course material, students' projects, e-mail messages, data, computer code, everything on the Internet, etc.

(b) **Visual text**

Books on fine art, graphics, photographs, etc.

(c) **Multimedia products**

Websites, video productions, films, CDs and DVDs, design projects, etc.

(d) **Music**

Compositions, lyrics, CDs and DVDs, music or sound bites on the Internet, etc.

(e) **Spoken text**

Speeches, audio recordings, lectures, interviews, etc.

3.1.2 **Changing the words of an original source is not sufficient to prevent plagiarism.**

If the essential idea of an original source is retained and the source is not cited, then no matter how drastically it has been altered, plagiarism has taken place.

3.1.3 **“Citing”** provides the information necessary to find that source again and should include:

(a) information about the author (surname, initials);

(b) the title of the source;

(c) the name and geographical location (usually a city) of the company that published the source;

- (d) the date the source was published and
- (e) the page number(s) of the material used.

3.1.4 Types of Plagiarism

- (a) Learning to recognise the various forms of plagiarism, especially the more ambiguous ones, is an important step in the fight to prevent it.
(Refer to <http://turnitin.com> on the different types of plagiarism)
- (b) Examples of what should be avoided include but are not limited to:
 - (i) Using someone else's ideas, work or research information without acknowledgement;
 - (ii) Direct copying without crediting the source and indicating direct wording in quotation marks;
 - (iii) Translating without crediting the source;
 - (iv) Paraphrasing sentences or paragraphs without acknowledgement; and
 - (v) Cutting and pasting portions of text from the web or the work of others without proper reference to the source.
- (c) Examples of what should be done include but are not limited to:
 - (i) hand in one's own original work;
 - (ii) indicate precisely and accurately where information provided/ created by someone else has been used. Referencing must be done in accordance with a recognised system; and
 - (iii) never use someone else's ideas, written work, artwork, pictures or graphics, music or spoken text as if they were your own.

3.2 Avoiding plagiarism

- 3.2.1 In academic writing such as assignments, dissertations, theses, research articles and reports it is standard practice to give an overview of the current knowledge about a topic and to provide evidence to support the points that are made. These ideas will form the foundation for your own arguments and will be integrated into your work by means of:
 - (a) quoting (using the exact words of another);
 - (b) paraphrasing (using the ideas of another in your own words);
 - (c) summarising (using the main points of another); and
 - (d) translating the original text and summarising or paraphrasing it.
- 3.2.2 If you do not acknowledge these ideas correctly you may be accused of plagiarism as it indicates either that:
 - (a) you have not yet mastered the skill of referencing (citation) – which can be learnt with the help of your lecturers, library staff and other resources such as the guidelines that we provide; or
 - (b) you have succumbed to academic dishonesty, which is a violation of academic norms.
- 3.2.3 Ensure that you fully understand the definition of plagiarism and familiarise yourself with the Policy and Regulations regarding plagiarism. Being found guilty of plagiarism can have serious consequences for your academic and professional career.
- 3.2.4 Each assignment should be accompanied by a Declaration of Originality (**Annexure B to the Plagiarism Policy**) in either MS Word format or PDF. This can

be submitted in a clickUP Assignment.

3.2.5 In the case of **group work** submitted for assessment, the module's study guide and the assignment's briefing sheet will make it clear whether the submission is a joint or individual assignment.

- (a) In the case of a joint submission, sources must be correctly acknowledged and each member of the group assumes responsibility for an assignment that is submitted under his/her name as well as the consequences of any plagiarism that might occur in such an assignment.
- (b) In the case of individual submissions resulting from group or collaborative work, it is the responsibility of each individual student to ensure that the submission is his/her own work.