

# Dravidian University Plagiarism Policy

## 1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to ensure and establish a framework based on some universal ethical and policy guidelines to deter, detect, and deal with plagiarism in all forms, to be adopted for faculty and researchers across all disciplines of Dravidian University.

Plagiarism takes place due to various reasons, which includes ignorance in certain cases, while in many instances it is deliberate, anticipating the poor or non-availability of a strict vigilance and policy in that matter. The ready availability of electronic resources makes plagiarism tempting to many to expand and enhance their list of accomplishments. This may be partly due to lack of proper training and ethical norms. Plagiarism is a worldwide menace which encroaches upon the proprietary matters of original thinkers.

Plagiarism is seen as a serious form of academic misconduct in academic institutions across the world. Thus any form of plagiarism should be discouraged. There are many instances where persons guilty of plagiarism are severely punished, which includes expulsion from the institution, civil claims, and criminal proceedings.

## 2. Scope

This policy document and guidelines which intend to prevent plagiarism are applicable to all members of the university community. The policy intends to deter teacher, research scholars, students and staff from malpractices and intends, to pursue various activities - like awareness campaign, formulating strict norms, educating students on the subject, to implement preventive mechanism, and to deal with policy transgressors.

## 3. Policy Statement

- 3.1 The policy will play a two-pronged role to ensure preventive measures and to create awareness via sensitisation widespread publicity /informative activities among the university community. It intends to serve two major roles: (a) devise a fair mechanism to deal with instances of plagiarism; and (b) ensure awareness among community to avoid plagiarism in all forms.

  
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Accordingly, this policy document is organised as follows:

- 3.1.i. defining various forms of plagiarism,
- 3.1. ii. Informative, educative, and preventive measures to be made available centrally at the University level and implementation of the guidelines
- 3.1.iii. formulate general guidelines on preventive measures.
- 3.1.iv. To devise a consistent and fair system to address all instances of plagiarism.
- 3.1. v. To devise a system to keep all records of plagiarism and place them in the public domain.
- 3.1.vi. To create a dedicated staff unit with proper training to detect plagiarism.

The current policy would address all instances of plagiarism emanating knowingly or unknowingly from staff members and students. All instances will be treated as deliberate until and unless proven otherwise and will be subject to punitive actions. Accordingly, the policy mandates all staff members to provide guidance to students on how to avoid plagiarism by instructing on proper referencing. Similarly, students also need to act with academic integrity and responsibility for the presentation and production of their academic work. Policy states that plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct for which a faculty/student will be subject to the university's disciplinary code of conduct and punitive actions.

#### **4. Definition of Plagiarism**

Very simply, plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct. Plagiarism involves taking credit for someone else's work by claiming it as one's own. The misconduct may involve copying and borrowing someone else's original ideas, but the seriousness of the offence is not fully represented when one uses the terms 'copy' and 'borrow'. Plagiarism is an act of fraud committed knowingly or unknowingly by stealing someone else's work, idea (both scientific and literary work) and/or published materials. The act of plagiarism can be manifested in the form of publishing someone else's work, audio and video broadcasting, or circulation of copied words and images, ideas and opinions, discoveries, artwork and music, recordings or computer generated work (like circuitry, software or computer programs, websites-internet content).

#### **4.2. Types of Plagiarism:**

Plagiarism can be categorised under two major types: (a) The act of copying or borrowing where sources are not cited or with partial citation and (b) The act of copying or borrowing where sources are cited, but the facts deliberately misrepresenting. Accordingly, plagiarism is not only limited to copying someone else's work completely, or in part, but also tweaking of a portion or portions from



several sources so as to make it read as original work. In some instances, copying from one's own work can be an act of plagiarism, if the published material is copyright protected and was previously transferred to a publication house.

Under this policy, if any act of plagiarism is found in the form of certain elements the University authority will ensure that the author/s or person/s intended this as a disguise for obvious reason of infringing upon someone else's work. University will consider all such acts for disciplinary hearing and take appropriate actions irrespective of whether act was a lack of intent or deliberate on the part of the guilty person/s.

#### **4.3. Disciplinary code and definition of misconduct:**

A person shall be guilty of misconduct, if:

- (a) He/she infringes upon a person's copyright or any other intellectual property right such as a patented product, including but not limited to the act of plagiarism,
- (b) He/she plagiarises by claiming or implying as author/inventor/discoverer of someone else's work as his/her own. Such an act may be manifested in any of the following forms:

Copying from someone else's written or creative work (in the form of images, ideas, opinions, discoveries, invention, artwork, music, recordings, photographs, software, computer programs). Incorporation of such contents in whole or in part without proper acknowledgement and citation will be considered as acts of plagiarism. Such act is prejudicial or potentially prejudicial to the university's reputation and liable for disciplinary action for breach of university's policy on ethical conduct.

#### **4.4. Guidelines on Do's:**

- \* Only one's original work to be submitted,
- \* Precise and accurate citation of others' work,
- \* Any downloaded information from internet to be appropriately created/referenced,
- \* Submitted material should not contain any artwork, pictures, and graphics from someone else's work and such materials should be authentic with no use of others' electronic storage media.

#### **4.5. Guidelines on Don'ts:**

The following must be avoided unless source of material/information is credited appropriately:

- \* Direct or indirect copying,
- \* Any act of translation without proper accreditation ,
- \* Paraphrasing others' work,

  
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- \* Tweaking and piecing together work of others,
- \* Resubmission of one's own or someone else's work,
- \* Claim of a collaborative work without consent from the concerned collaborator(s) (includes unauthorized collaboration and claiming a collaborative work as an independent one or vice-versa),
- \* Ghost writing – i.e. writing a document(s) on someone's behalf.

#### 5. Preventive steps: Informative and Educative activities

University will strive to avoid instances of academic misconduct by ensuring/having / prescribing, informative and educative programs at various stages in the form of course module and extensive awareness and sensitization activities.

Few of the preventive mechanisms are given below:

- 5.1 Declaration of originality to be submitted along with each and every assignment, i.e. All relevant submissions must be accompanied by a document signed by the candidate mentioning that the submitted document is original (and authentic).
- 5.2 Special course module on plagiarism in academic writing.
- 5.3 Study guides with explicit mention of anti-plagiarism initiatives
- 5.4 Awareness campaigns.
- 5.5 Check list with anti-plagiarism briefings
- 5.6 Mandatory submission of electronic file for plagiarism check
- 5.7 Mandatory deposition of submitted material in the electronic library for future check and universal availability of such library
- 5.8 Plagiarism detection software
- 5.9 Fact sheet – Registration of each and every act of plagiarism and make available such information to all.

6. Penalties based on level of offence – University to constitute a Research Ethics Committee separately for each School / Faculty as and when need arises under the Chairmanship of Rector comprising of Dean and 2 senior faculty members of the concerned School / Faculty. In case the complaint is against a student / research scholar, one student representative should also be associated.

The committee based on their findings can recommend any of the following or make a report on their own.

- a) Written warning – level -1 minor / inadvertent
- b) Withholding increment/ fellowship/grant - level -2
- c) Rustication/expulsion decision - level -3

  
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7. In order to create awareness a sustained campaign for anti-plagiarism should be conducted by all concerned, such as
  - a. Introducing compulsory course module to be formulated for students.
  - b. University website will create pop-up warnings to create awareness and avoid plagiarism
  - c. Dean, Academic Affairs in collaboration with library services or any other interested division, should conduct any informative course /talk on monthly basis as awareness campaign
  - d. Publicizing the availability of anti-plagiarism software with Library and Departments.
  - e. Making it mandatory for submission of plagiarism check certificate for dissertations/theses etc
  - f. There shall be a Research and Development Cell to check the Plagiarism – Count.

#### **Guidelines for the R & D Cell**

1. The content available in the thesis, from cover to cover, must tally with the content of the soft copy submitted by the research scholar concerned in the form of CD.
2. There must not be any discrepancy between the hard copy of the thesis and the soft copy thereof.
3. The maximum matching percentage of the content / information in the thesis should not exceed 30%.
4. In this matter, no informal and / or un-official enquiries shall be made either by the research scholar or by the supervisor.
5. Under normal circumstances, a research scholar is expected to submit the soft copy of the thesis, duly endorsed by the research supervisor concerned to the Research & Development Cell of the University to get the thesis examined for plagiarism check, and to obtain a report from the cell to the effect that the thesis concerned is found within the acceptable matching percentage.
6. To apply for anti-plagiarism check, a research scholar has to apply using the prescribed application form without any fee for the first time.

#### **Guidelines for M.Phil./Ph.D. Scholars regarding submission of thesis**

1. The research scholar should submit the soft copy of the thesis for the plagiarism check to the examination section through a CD.
2. The document shall be submitted either in MS Word file or in PDF file format.
3. The plagiarism check shall be applied from title page to the last page, excluding references and bibliography.
4. During the initial plagiarism check the thesis shall not be added to the data repository.
5. Permitted Similarity index  $\leq 30\%$  (Not more than 30%).

6. The candidate shall mandatorily produce the anti-plagiarism report as a part of the thesis.
7. If the similarity index is  $> 30\%$  the modified thesis has to be resubmitted following the step no.1 of the process with the fee of Rs. 3,000/-.
8. The student can submit the thesis for the third time with the fee of Rs.5,000/-.
9. The third chance shall be considered as the final submission failing which the thesis shall not be accepted.
10. The published papers, if any, by the candidate himself or herself either independently or along with supervisor or co-supervisor, shall be exempted from anti-plagiarism check/matching count.

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\* The Panjab University plagiarism policy document has been consulted for guidance.

  
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