



PLAGIARISM POLICY



PLAGIARISM POLICY OF NORTHERN UNIVERSITY

In the wake of fundamental improvements being introduced in the system of Higher Education in Pakistan, the credit, respect recognition at research and scholarly publications career development and financial gains are now linked with such original works accomplished without replicating the efforts of other researchers.

Knowledge creation and dissemination are the key aspects of any educational institution. Societies cognizant of this fact are fast moving towards prosperity through the concept of knowledge based economics, which builds health and wealth of society through effective use of original work, research or findings produced by their human resource. The academic standing of the institutions of higher learning, such as Universities is now based directly upon the contribution of original research of that institution to the society. A Plagiarism Policy has therefore, become necessary to create awareness, define itself, present methodology of investigations, cater for punitive action proportional to the extent of the offence and even address the issue of false complaints. In this regard, Higher Education Commission (HEC) has taken major initiatives to safeguard the credit, respect, recognition and sanctity of documented research.

1. DEFINITION

According to concise Oxford Dictionary Plagiarism is defined as **“Taking and Using the thoughts, writings and inventions of another person as one’s own”**.

The Merriam – Webster Dictionary puts it as **“to steal and pass off (the ideas or words of another) as one’s own, use (another’s production) without crediting the source”**.

In order to establish the violation of ethical norms, or academics or intellectual dishonesty resulting from plagiarism and to take punitive actions in this regard, it is necessary that the variety of terms in which “Plagiarism manifests itself are known. These include but are not limited to the following:-



- i. Verbatim copying, near verbatim copying or purposely paraphrasing portions of another author's paper or unpublished report without citing the exact reference.
- ii. Willful copying elements of another author's paper, such as equations or illustrations that are not common knowledge, or copying or purposely paraphrasing sentences without citing the source.
- iii. Verbatim copying portions of another author's paper or term reports by citing but not clearly differentiating what text has been copied (e.g. not applying quotation marks) and/or not citing the source.
- iv. The unacknowledged use of computer program, mathematical / computer models, computer software in all forms, works of art of any sort, fine any pieces or arts facts, digital images, computer aided design drawings or audio-visual art.
- v. Self-Plagiarism: replicating one's own copyrighted work without citing the original source.

2. INTRODUCTION

Northern University shares the vision of Higher Education Commission (HEC) on academic integrity and authenticity. HEC has issued a comprehensive policy on plagiarism vide the above quoted reference. This Policy broadly documents steps to combat plagiarism in academia, thus reinforcing and promoting the culture of academic integrity and originality. Further steps are taken to ensure compliance of international quality standards in research publications. The HEC reinforces the use of "Turnitin" that show permissible limits of Similarity Index.

Northern University aims at providing dynamic higher educational programs focused on quality at education and research, development of professional skills and ethical value. The University is committed to establishing and sustaining a transparent and creative academic environment for meaningful and original output to the academia. In order to address the issue, Northern University Plagiarism Policy has been developed, within the ambit of HEC guidelines regarding Plagiarism, to be implemented by all programs and publications of the University by using "Turnitin" software for ensuring transparency and authenticity in all research and publications.



3. SCOPE OF PLAGIARISM POLICY

The Northern University Plagiarism Policy applies to all documented work produced for publications, at and for Northern University, at graduate and postgraduate levels, in all the academic programs.

4. POLICY FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

4.1. PROCEDURE

- i. For undergraduate students, the concerned Project/Thesis Supervisor is to check the initial draft for Plagiarism.
- ii. Final draft for undergraduate students is to be scrutinized at the department level by Departmental Coordinator appointed by the respective Head of Department. The Departmental Coordinator is to be adequately trained in the use of “Turnitin” software.
- iii. In case the work is within the allowed limits of Similarity Index (19%), Clearance Certificate will be issued by Concerned Head of Department.
- iv. There is a provision of three attempts (First Submission + Two Attempts) for bringing the work within HEC’s prescribed limit of below 19% of Similarity Index. Failing to do so will result in the case being forwarded to the Plagiarism Standing Committee.

5. POLICY FOR POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS

5.1. PROCEDURE

- i. For Post-graduate (MS/M.Phil/PhD) Students, the initial draft at the thesis is to be checked by the concerned Supervisor.
- ii. Final draft will be sent to Quality Enhancement Cell for “Turnitin” Originality Report. The Quality Enhancement Cell shall check the Plagiarism of the document by Turnitin and a report shall be generated. There is a provision at Three attempts (First Submission + Two Attempts) for bringing the work within



HEC's prescribed limit (Similarity Index less than 19%). Failing to do so will result in the case being forwarded to the Plagiarism Standing Committee (PSC).

- iii. The revised hard and soft copy will be sent to the Quality Enhancement Cell through the respective Head of Department.
- iv. In case of re-defense, thesis will be processed through "Turnitin" again at the time of resubmission.
- v. Final/Formal Clearance Certificate will be issued by the Quality Enhancement Cell to the concerned Head of Department.

6. POLICY FOR CONFERENCE PAPERS

In case of Conference / Journal Papers, the host organization will be responsible for scrutiny and acceptance of research publications.

7. CHANNEL OF REPORTING OF PLAGIARISM

If plagiarism is reported or detected and it exceeds the specified limit, following actions are to be taken:-

1. In case of undergraduate students, the plagiarism report is to be sent to the respective Head of Department by the Departmental Coordinator for further disposal,
2. In case of post-graduate students, Quality Enhancement Cell is to report the matter to the concerned Dean and the Rector.

8. PLAGIARISM STANDING COMMITTEE

As per the guidelines of the Higher Education Commission, a Plagiarism Standing Committee at Northern University will be specifically constituted for under-graduate and post graduate cases. It will be approached in case a student / researcher fails to comply with the Higher Education Commission's directives for further decision/disposal.

Following are the composition of the Plagiarism Standing Committee's for Undergraduate and Graduate Programs.



9. PLAGIARISM STANDING COMMITTEE (PSC) FOR UNDERGRADUATE PROGRAMS

In case of Project / Thesis checking at under-graduate levels, the Plagiarism Standing Committee will comprise of :-

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|--------------------------------------|--------------------|
| a) Director Quality Enhancement Cell | (Head) |
| b) Head of Concerned Department | (Member) |
| c) Departmental Coordinator | (Member) |
| d) Project/Thesis Supervisor | (Member) |
| e) Controller of Examinations | (Member/Secretary) |

10. PLAGIARISM STANDING COMMITTEE (PSC) FOR GRADUATE / POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMS

In case of Thesis checking at MS/M.Phil/PhD levels, the Plagiarism Standing Committee will comprise of :-

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|---|--------------------|
| a) Senior Dean of the University | (Head) |
| b) Director Quality Enhancement Cell | (Member) |
| c) Head of Concerned Department | (Member) |
| d) Thesis Supervisor | (Member) |
| e) A nominee of Higher Education Commission | (Member) |
| f) Controller of Examinations | (Member/Secretary) |

Note: *In case of complaint received against any Department of the Faculty working under the supervision of the senior Dean, the immediate junior Dean will chair the meeting.*

11. GENERAL GUIDELINES

11.1. FOR STUDENTS/RESEARCHERS

- a. All Thesis/Papers submitted to Faculty must:-
 - i. Conform to the Standard report/paper writing format of Northern University.
 - ii. Be in a single MS Word (doc) File.



- iii. Follow a citation style, as prescribed by the University (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc) consistently.
- iv. Not here footnotes in the soft copy submitted for Turnitin Originality Report. These can be included in the accompany hard copy.
- b. In order to ensure impartiality of the process, the use of one's personal Turnitin account is not allowed.

11.2. FOR THESIS / PROJECT SUPERVISORS

- a. The following acts can lead to termination of Tunitin account and disciplinary action.
 - i. Manipulating/tampering with Turnitin reports.
 - ii. Sharing account details with others.
- b. Separate chapters/segments of thesis should not be run through Turnitin, as it may render erroneous Similar Index.

12. PENALTIES

The Penalties for plagiarism cases will be applicable after a student/researcher has availed Northern University's prescribed number at attempts, for improving his/her work (Three attempts) and failed to do so.

All such cases are to be placed before the Plagiarism Standing Committee for further disposal / disciplinary action.

The Penalties for plagiarism have been divided into two categories:-

- For teachers, researchers and staff.
- For students.

13. PENALTIES FOR TEACHERS, RESEARCHERS AND STAFF

- i. In cases where most of the paper (or key results) have been exactly copied from any published work of other people without giving the reference to the original work, then major penalty will be awarded which includes dismissal from service. The offender



- may be black listed and may not be eligible for employment in any academic organization.
- ii. In case where some paragraphs including some key results have been copied without citation, then moderate penalty will be imposed which involves demotion to the next lower grade and the notification of black listing of the author.
 - iii. In case a few paragraphs have been copied from an external source without giving reference of that work, then minor penalty will be imposed which may includes warning, freezing of all research grants and the promotion / annual increment of the offender may be stopped.

14. PENALTIES FOR STUDENTS

When an act of plagiarism is found to have occurred, the "Plagiarism Standing Committee" in its recommendations, depending upon the seriousness of the proven offence, will advise the Rector, to take any one or a combination of the following disciplinary action(s) against the student(s) found guilty of the offence:

- i. In the case of thesis the responsibility of plagiarism will be of the student and not of the supervisor or members of the Supervisory Committee.
- ii. The offender may be expelled / rusticated from the University and from joining any institution of Higher Education in Pakistan for a period as deemed appropriate by the "Plagiarism Standing Committee". A notice may be circulated among all academic institutions and research organization to this effect.
- iii. The offender may be relegated to a lower class.
- iv. The offender may be given a failure grade in the subject.
- v. The degree of a student may be withdrawn if at any time it is proven that he/she has presented Plagiarized work in his/her MS, MPhil or PhD dissertation if the extent of plagiarism comes under the category of major penalty.

15. ADDITIONAL ACTIONS REQUIRED

In addition to the above penalties, the following additional common actions must be taken if the



offence of Plagiarism is established.

- i. If the plagiarized paper is accessible on the web page, its access will be removed. The paper itself will be kept in the database for further research or legal purpose.
- ii. The author(s) will be asked to write a formal letter of apology to the authors of the original paper that was plagiarized including an admission of Plagiarism.
- iii. If the paper is submitted but not published yet, the paper will be rejected by the Editor-in-Chief or the Program Chair without further revisions and without any further plagiarism investigation conducted.

However, warning may be issued to the author / co-author.

16. **RIGHT OF APPEAL**

The “**Plagiarism Standing Committee**” will submit its report with clear cut findings to the Rector. The Rector will have the discretion to implement the recommendations after approval through the statutory process and take punitive action against the offender as per penalties prescribed under this policy.

The accused will have the right to appeal to the Rector, Northern University for a review of the findings of the Committee or may submit a **Mercy Petition** within 30 days from the notification of the Plagiarism Standing Committee’s decision.

The appeal shall be disposed off within 60 days of its receipt according to the rules laid down by the Plagiarism Standing Committee.

17. **PENALTY FOR FALSE ALLEGATION:**

If the case of Plagiarism is not proved and it is confirmed that a false allegation was lodged, the Rector will inform the complainant’s Organization and will recommend disciplinary action against the complainant, to be taken by his/her parent organization.