

PLAGIARISM POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS
AT THE DURBAN UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

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1. Preamble

The University is a community striving to discover, construct and communicate knowledge for the benefit of society. To this end, academic integrity is a commitment to the fundamental values of honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility. Sharing, collaborating and innovating from existing knowledge must be encouraged, but knowledge workers must give credit to others whose work they have used, showing how they have built on it. Without this care by the academic community, the work of knowledge construction is meaningless.

2. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this document is to detail the University's policy and procedures relating to plagiarism insofar as students and staff are concerned, in pursuit of the University's commitment to promoting and protecting the academic integrity of its teaching, learning, research and external engagement endeavours.

3. Scope

The Policy deals with developing an understanding of plagiarism, as well as the elements of protection, detection and non-compliance. All students and faculty staff are responsible for the adherence to this Policy. In addition all faculty staff must ensure that the Policy is consistently implemented.

4. Applicability

This Policy applies to all staff and students of the University.

5. Definition

Plagiarism is the submission, by any person or group of persons, without acknowledgement, of written, visual, or oral material or an idea, originally produced by someone else, purporting to be one's own or a group's own work (Durban University of Technology Rule Book for Students).

This could include:

- Inaccurate or no acknowledgement of another's ideas and/or written, visual or oral material;
- Paragraphs, sentences, a single sentence or significant parts of a sentence from any text including the Internet, which are copied directly and not enclosed in quotation marks or appropriately footnoted or referenced (taken in part from Griffith University School of Environmental Planning: Course Guide 2000);
- Paraphrasing of sentences, paragraphs or themes, i.e. taking a quotation and rewriting or summarising it in your own words without appropriate references;
- Presenting or reproducing someone's artefact, art work, designs or experimental results as your own, without appropriate references;
- Collusion, e.g. another person or group of persons assisting in the production of a work to be submitted for assessment without the requirement, consent or knowledge of the assessor;
- Submitting one's previously assessed or published work for assessment or publication elsewhere, without appropriate acknowledgement (Curtin University of Technology);
- In the case of collaborative projects, falsely representing the individual contributions of collaborating persons where individual contributions are to be identified (Curtin University of Technology).

6. Contact for support

Registrar and Executive Deans or as delegated to Deputy Deans.

7. Policy authority & custodianship

Senate

8. Related policies

Policy on Academic Integrity (to be drafted)

Policy on Institutional Code of Ethics

General and departmental rules

Student code of conduct

Policy on Assessment

Postgraduate Student Handbook (draft)

9. Review date

3 years from Senate approval date or sooner if and when deemed appropriate.

POLICY

Introduction

Plagiarism is a complex issue so it is important to have a standard University wide policy which informs a consistent and comprehensive approach to plagiarism, appropriate to each discipline. The complexity of the issue lies in:

- the differences between academic disciplines, ranging from text to creative input/output,
- the prevalence of intentional and unintentional plagiarism,
- the need to provide developmental guidelines to ensure that staff and students understand the purpose of appropriate referencing and are able to apply their particular discipline's academic conventions in their own work,
- the need to ensure that staff do not plagiarise others' work in handouts, learner guides, etc. that are disseminated to students.

Staff should be role models to students in developing the behaviour expected of them.

Responsibility for developmental process

Responsibility for the development of an understanding of plagiarism lies with the University (for academics) and with academics (for students).

1. Development of staff

- The University is responsible for the development of a consistent and comprehensive institution-wide understanding of plagiarism;
- The University will support teaching, learning and assessment strategies which minimise the opportunities of students plagiarising.

2. Development of students

- Each Faculty (or if so delegated, academic department) is responsible for the induction of first time registering DUT students into the relevant discipline, through a mandatory workshop on plagiarism that is conducted at the start of each academic year or semester. The workshops will include:
 - The issues of plagiarism, and the need to acknowledge the ideas of others, according to the relevant discipline's conventions;
 - Imparting information on what conventions to use, and how to cite and reference when using material from books, journals, the Internet or other people's ideas.
- Academic staff and supervisors/promoters will model and instil correct academic practice. Their responsibilities include:
 - Alerting students (e.g. through Learner Guides) to the Policy, general rules and procedures relating to non-compliance;
 - Providing students with structured feedback within the context of such work;

- Teaching students good academic practice and assessing their ability to use and acknowledge other people's work;
- Instilling in students the understanding that plagiarism is a fraudulent act;
- Ensuring that assessment criteria for any work submitted (including group work/collaborative work) clearly indicate the requirement for correct attribution, referencing and citing.

Student compliance

- Students must sign a declaration of acknowledgement indicating that they are submitting their own work which is appropriately referenced. This must be attached to all work submitted for assessment (see Annexure 1 for an example).
- The consequences of non-compliance are detailed in the Procedures for Students below.

Staff compliance

- Staff will ensure that all their written work (including learner guides, lecture notes and handouts) and all research publications and conference presentations comply with this policy.
- The consequences of non-compliance are detailed in the Procedures for Staff below.

PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

Infringements

1. Student infringements up to and including B Tech

1.1 Inaccurate acknowledgment (from carelessness or neglect, rather than intention to deceive)

Examples:

- incomplete or inconsistent references
- paraphrasing of sentences, paragraphs or themes, i.e. taking a quotation and rewriting or summarising it in your own words without appropriate references omitting quotation marks but indicating source or vice versa

First infringement:

The academic staff member will deal with this directly by:

- providing structured feedback to help the student develop a clearer understanding of his/her plagiarism errors;
- deducting, at his/her discretion, between 1 – 50% from the total marks for the assessment;

- informing the Faculty Officer for recording this infringement on the student's internal record in case of further infringements. This is retained until the student graduates.

Subsequent infringements:

The academic staff member will deal with this directly by:

- providing further structured feedback to help the student develop a clearer understanding of his/her repeated plagiarism errors;
- deducting, at his/her discretion, between 1 – 100% from the total marks of the assessment;
- informing the Faculty Officer for recording this infringement on the student's internal record in case of further infringements. This is retained until the student graduates.

Right to appeal

Any student wishing to appeal against decisions can do so in terms of Rule G1(9).

1.2 No referencing or acknowledgement of source

Examples:

- handing in someone else's work with or without their permission;
- word-for-word copying;
- repetition, with alteration of selected words or phrases of someone else's work;
- paraphrasing of sentences, paragraphs or themes, i.e. taking a quotation and rewriting or summarising it in your own words without appropriate references resubmitting identical work which has already been submitted by same student previously;
- presenting data developed or collected by someone else as one's own work;
- colluding with another person or group of persons in the production of a work to be submitted for assessment without the requirement, consent or knowledge of the assessor.

First infringement:

The academic staff member will deal with this directly by:

- providing structured feedback to help the student develop a clearer understanding of their plagiarism errors;
- deducting, at his/her discretion, between 1 – 100% from the total marks for the assessment;
- handing the student a warning letter (cf Annexure2) that the next offence will be referred to the Student Disciplinary Tribunal;
- informing the Faculty Officer for recording this infringement on the student's internal record in case of further infringements. This is retained until the student graduates.

Right to appeal

Any student wishing to appeal against decisions can do so in terms of Rule G1(9).

Subsequent infringements:

The academic staff member will refer the matter directly to the Registrar for disciplinary action in accordance with the University's Student Code of Conduct.

2. Student infringements at Masters' and Doctoral level

All postgraduate students who commit an alleged plagiarism offence will be referred directly to the Registrar for disciplinary action in accordance with the University's Student Code of Conduct.

3. The responsibilities for procedural implementation

3.1 Academic staff member

- Recognizes possible plagiarism and gathers necessary evidence;
- Accesses student record to determine if the student has a record of any previous plagiarism penalty;
- Informs the Faculty Officer of all infringements in category 1.1 and first infringement in 1.2, as they are dealt with.

2.2 Faculty Officer

- Keeps records of all plagiarism matters administered in the Faculty in terms of this Policy, including removal of any plagiarism related offences from the students' records once they graduate.

PROCEDURES FOR STAFF

If, in the performance of his/her duties, a staff member produces work (e.g. learner guides, notes, research papers etc.) which is allegedly plagiarised, this must be brought to the attention of the relevant line manager. The line manager will convene a panel with a minimum of two other persons as decided by the line manager, to investigate the evidence. Their findings will determine whether disciplinary action should be taken against the staff member as per the conditions of service. In a case where the allegations are against the Executive Dean, the matter must be brought to the attention of the DVC: Academic who will convene the said panel.

Annexure 1 Example of Plagiarism Declaration to be signed by student on submitting work for assessment



DECLARATION

1. I know and understand that plagiarism is using another person's work and pretending it is one's own, which is wrong.
2. This essay/report/project is my own work.
3. I have appropriately referenced the work of other people I have used.
4. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

Signature

Name (in capital letters)

Student Number

