

ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICY



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1. Purpose of the Policy

The purpose of this document 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 Shadan College of Engineering and Technology.

To ensure the university's academic integrity, students, researchers and staff must be discouraged from practicing plagiarism. As such, this policy and the plagiarism scale documents would be applicable to all stakeholders within the university community. These documents endeavour to provide a framework which will:

- ensure awareness of the need to avoid plagiarism, and
- provide for fair and consistent administrative processes across faculties.

2. Policy Statement

Intellectual Property Rights

The protection of intellectual property (IP) rights comprehensively protects the rights of authors, creators, inventors and innovators. Article 206, on free reproduction for teaching, does provide provision for universities and other educational institutions to access and use, without asking for permission, small amounts of intellectual property (IP) for non-economic purposes such as teaching or for examinations. The ease of access to electronic data and information on the internet, however, has led to an increase in the abuse of this law. This is partly the result of poor training in referencing techniques.

In addition to the importance of protecting economic intellectual property rights (IP) rights, best academic practice must be upheld at college. Academic tradition dictates that students and researchers need to acknowledge where others have shaped their own thinking and where their ideas are different. By having little regard for the correct referencing of resources, students do not appreciate how easy it is to appropriate someone else's work, and how serious plagiarism is as an offence.

Plagiarism is a problem for academic institutions not only in Rwanda but worldwide as many students, researchers, and even occasionally academic staff, do not appreciate that plagiarism is viewed as a form of academic misconduct that can lead to expulsion from the university, civil court claims and even criminal charges.

Definition of Plagiarism

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, with or without the source's permission.

Plagiarism is not dependent on proving intent. It is assumed that where plagiarised elements are found, the author intended them to be there, and that where content has been paraphrased, the author intended this to disguise the process of appropriation. However, the absence of intent can be taken into consideration when determining individual penalties for plagiarism.

Examples of plagiarism include:

1. copying, translating or paraphrasing without crediting sources.
2. compiling sections of the work written by others into a new whole.
3. consenting to another's request to copy one's work.
4. submitting one's own, or another's, previously marked work.
5. submitting work as one's own when it has been produced by a group.
6. copying the work of others, without their knowledge and presenting it as your own.
7. using professional writers to produce work for submission on your behalf.

In the context of a university environment, plagiarism is a form of academic misconduct. A student shall be guilty of plagiarism if he or she:

- infringes a person's copyright or any other intellectual property right, including but not limited to plagiarism;
- plagiarises by stating, or implying, original authorship of someone else's written or creative 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.

Educative and preventative mechanisms

In order to uphold a high standard of academic practise, has determined that a strategy to deter plagiarism is as important as developing structures to detect and penalise plagiarism. To this end the following advocacy initiatives need to be developed:

Report and Assignment Writing Short Course

A compulsory information literacy second-semester module needs to be developed jointly, by the Library, Research & Innovation, and Teaching & Learning Enhancement Directorates that covers ethics, plagiarism, copyright, referencing as well as techniques in writing assignments and research reports. This short course will compulsory for all first-year students.

Faculty Research methodology courses

All Faculties will incorporate into their own research methodology courses faculty writing requirements (including referencing and citations) where students are introduced to the specific reporting requirements for assignments and research reporting.

Warnings against plagiarism

Plagiarism and copyright guidelines must be included in all generated study guides. The guideline must contain a reference or links to the Library Directorates webpage on plagiarism.

Assignment briefing sheets

Each assignment briefing sheet should contain a definition of plagiarism. It should be clearly stated that committing plagiarism as a form of academic misconduct which could lead to serious consequences such as academic exclusion.

Declaration of Originality to accompany each assignment

Each assignment or research component which a student submits must be accompanied by a declaration of original content. (See Appendix A)

2.2.8 Library Directorate's webpage

The Library Services' webpage contains an online tutorial and self-test on avoiding plagiarism.

2.4 Detection and penalisation mechanisms

The University's believes the detection and penalisation of plagiarism needs to be applied consistently across the institution. Penalties should be determined by an approved set of criteria to ensure fairness across all cases. Also, as it is important to allow offenders to correct their behaviours and practices it is important that there is a regularly maintained database of confirmed cases of plagiarism that helps identify repeat offenders. The following mechanism must be put in place.

Plagiarism detection software (Small SEQ Tools)

The University of academic staff must be trained to use Small SEQ Tools – an electronic plagiarism detection software/tool and use it as part of their marking/grading procedure.

For undergraduates one assignment per module must be checked using the anti-plagiarism software. All post graduate reports, dissertations and thesis papers must be evaluated using the anti-plagiarism software. Further instructions are available in Appendix B.

Lecturer Training – Detection tools

A version of the Report and Assignment Writing Short Course developed for student by the Library, Research & Innovation, and Teaching & Learning Enhancement Directorates will be developed to support I lecturers on how to prevent plagiarism and how to deal with it fairly. The Centre of Open, Distance and eLearning (ODEL) will provide regular training on the use of Small SEQ Tools for academic staff.

Penalisation Processes

Faculties have the right to judge and penalise all but the most serious cases as per the penalty guidelines below. However, should the case be serious then the Committee on Plagiarism will judge the case. Cases of plagiarism need to be dealt with in a fair, transparent and consistent manner (see Penalty Scale table).

A student suspected of plagiarism must be informed in writing by the marker and given a chance to deny the allegation. If the student admits the plagiarism, the marker must suggest a penalty in line with the Plagiarism Penalty Scale, and a note of the incident must be made on registrar's student's record. If the student does not admit the plagiarism or disputes the degree of seriousness he/she must go the disciplinary investigation route.

Note: When investigating an incident, the following is important:

1. the significance of the plagiarised content
2. the extent or amount of the plagiarism
3. the year and level of the student
4. the background of the student
5. whether the student has taken up any of the opportunities provided by the University to enhance students' understanding of plagiarism
6. whether the student has previous incidents of plagiarism (see Plagiarism Register).
7. any apparent intention by the student to deceive.

2.2.12 Plagiarism Records

The University Registrar stores and updates students all records of confirmed cases of student plagiarism. To ensure the integrity of these records it is important that penalties are applied consistently. Lecturers should complete the “Confirmed Instances of Plagiarism” report (See Appendix B) in order to register all cases of proven plagiarism. When a case of plagiarism is opened the lecturer looks for previous plagiarism incidents provided on the students record to determine the appropriate penalty and/or process in accordance with the Penalty Scale.

Small SEQ Tools Instructions

With the advance in technology and Internet, databases of research and other forms of information are easily accessed online. This has significantly contributed to an increase in the number of plagiarism cases in the digital learning environment, which hamper the academic integrity and quality of education. In order to tackle this problem, the University of Rwanda has introduced a computer-based plagiarism control tool to support the academic community.

uses Small SEQ Tools® plagiarism control software used by many international higher learning institutions across the world to detect plagiarism. This document is the first set of instructions as part of a holistic and detailed Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Control Policy being developed.

The instructions elaborated in this document are in line with the following existing academic regulations, procedures and policies:

- Framework and regulations for higher degrees by research and regulations on cheating and plagiarism in research degrees. (B1.3. i, B3.2. i)
- General Academic Regulations for undergraduate programmes (Section V, 121, 122 & 123)
- Policy and Procedures on Academic Staff Appointments and Promotions (Point 2,3,5 and Appendix 2, 3& 4)
- Guidelines on Teaching Portfolio and Assessment Criteria (Point 3.8 & 3.9)

List of preliminary instructions for Academic Integrity and Plagiarism Control

Instruction 1: Small SEQ Tools® Software Licenses for all Academic Staff

1. Every Academic Staff Member shall receive a license for Small SEQ Tools® Software for online text matching that must be used as a support for controlling plagiarism and to ensure high academic integrity at college.
2. As licenses are renewed on a yearly basis, the renewal of Small SEQ Tools® shall be done in accordance with what will have been used in the preceding year and any new requests made by College Principals.
3. It is a responsibility of the Centre for Instructional Technology at to acquire and distribute Small SEQ Tools® licenses to the academic community.

Instruction 2: Plagiarism check and declaration of originality

1. All students' submissions including Essays, Dissertations, Course assignments and Internship reports must be checked for plagiarism using Small SEQ Tools®.
2. The system produces and stores Originality Reports on each submitted document and it is a responsibility of academics to analyse and reflect on whether the similarity profile indicates that a document is plagiarised.
3. Academic staff trained on the use of Small SEQ Tools® must start using it for checking students' submissions as outlined in 2.1.

4. An originality declaration form will be designed by the Centre for Instructional Technology in consultation with the University Director of Teaching and Learning Enhancement and the University Director of Research and Postgraduate Studies and then approved by the Senior Management Council. This will be completed by September 2017.
5. Once developed and approved the declaration of originality form shall be filled and signed by each student and sent together with the work submitted for marking.

Instruction 3: Technical support for faculty and students

1. As Small SEQ Tools® is newly introduced at, the Centre for Instructional Technology will be responsible for providing timely and adequate support to faculty and students with access to and use of Small SEQ Tools® software.
2. The Centre for Instructional Technology shall provide a special training on Small SEQ Tools® for at least one focal staff member in each department who will assist in providing technical support to staff and students in the Department.

Instruction 4: Plagiarism penalty scale based on similarity indexes

1. In close consultation with the Office of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research, the School of ODL and Centre for Instructional Technology shall develop the plagiarism penalty scales (frequency) from minor, moderate and high levels, and the associated actions or sanctions to related plagiarism cases.
2. Academics must deal with suspected cases of plagiarism in a fair and transparent manner by referring to the penalty scales. They must not turn a blind eye on any case of academic misconduct. Failure to handle cases appropriately may have disciplinary implications for staff.

Instruction 5: Academic integrity course for students

1. Incoming students at starting a new programme shall be required to complete the online Academic Integrity course (a compulsory non-credit rated module) developed and availed online by the School of ODL in partnership with the Centre for Instructional Technology and other College level units in charge of curriculum development. This will be implemented before the end of academic year 2017/18.
2. The aim of this course shall be to increase student knowledge on academic integrity, University regulations and rules of academic conduct, and the consequences of academic misconduct on individuals and the institution, with reputational risk for the sector.
3. This online course should be passed in the first year to prepare students for academic work.
4. Completion of the Academic Integrity course shall be recorded on a student's transcript.
5. Completion of the online course on academic integrity shall be a requirement in order to be awarded any academic degree, diploma or certificate.

Instruction 6: Priority course on plagiarism detection tool for academics

1. After the initial preliminary training on Small SEQ Tools®, Colleges and Schools should immediately take responsibility to complete the training of all faculty and E-learning Officers before the tool can be formally and compulsorily used to check students' work (Research Projects, Internship Reports and Assignments). This must be completed by the end of academic year 2017/18.

2. The Centre for Instructional Technology and School of ODL must collaborate with the Directorates of Teaching and Learning Enhancement in coordinating all the Academic Integrity course delivery to Colleges and Schools.
3. The completion of the Academic Integrity course shall be sanctioned with a certificate that will be considered as additional requirement for academic promotion.

Instruction 7: Enhancement of Lecturers' and students' skills in Academic Writing

1. Directorate of Library shall plan courses on Computer-Based Reference Management Systems in collaboration with Colleges, Schools and Departments and the Centre of Instructional technology. Delivery deadline?
2. The Centre for Instructional Technology and the Library Directorate shall select tools for reference management systems that shall be recommended for integration as teaching tools in the research methods courses in both undergraduate and postgraduate programmes to equip students with adequate information literacy skills. Delivery deadline?
3. To increase skills in academic writing and citation styles, an online self-regulated learning tutorial shall be developed collaboratively by the Library Directorate and the Centre for Instructional Technology and be availed on the library website and E-learning platform. Deadline?

Instruction 8: Awareness on academic integrity guidelines and policy

1. Strategies for creating an awareness of these instructions, the policy and the plagiarism control system available at shall be established for all incoming and on-going students from October 2017.
2. Colleges, Schools and Departments shall ensure that the Academic Integrity Policy and Instructions are disseminated at Student Orientation and Staff induction times, Online Registration System, E-learning platform, Library Web Systems and at each course introduction.
3. The Centre for Instruction Technology and School of ODL shall assist in creating this awareness through institutional seminars and workshops under the coordination of the office of Deputy Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research.

Instruction 9: Plagiarism Registration system

1. shall maintain a systematic plagiarism database to facilitate a consistent application of penalties and disciplinary measures for identified cases of plagiarism.
2. This academic integrity database will serve as a reference to review and monitor the extent of plagiarism within the University.
3. To facilitate the registration process, a form for reporting plagiarism cases shall be designed by the Centre for Instructional Technology in collaboration with the University Centre for Teaching and Learning Enhancement, and be made available at the department level in all the Colleges.

Instruction 10: Development and enforcement of Academic Integrity Policy

1. Upon approval of these Instructions by the Senate, a detailed inclusive and informative 'Academic Integrity Policy' shall be developed under the supervision of the office of Deputy Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Research in consultation with Colleges, Centre of Instructional Technology, University Centre for Teaching and Learning Enhancement and the University Directorate for Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies. Delivery deadline?
2. This Academic Integrity Policy shall be developed at institutional level and cascaded to College, School and Department levels.
3. To ensure this policy is enforced Academic Integrity Boards (Academic Disciplinary Boards) shall be stipulated in this policy and established at each College level. This governing body for academic integrity shall implement, support and monitor the adherence to the overall Academic Integrity Policy.
4. They shall also ensure that appropriate Schools and Department Level policies for plagiarism control are developed to reflect their specific study programmes and research areas.
5. All the above-mentioned organs to be involved in the Academic Integrity Policy at each level, shall recommend regular policy revision to accommodate changes in higher education as a result of emerging technologies.