



MACHAKOS UNIVERSITY

ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICY AND PROCEDURES

SEPTEMBER 2023

APPROVAL

Policy Title: Anti-plagiarism Policy
Policy Contact: Deputy Vice Chancellor (Research, Innovation and Linkages)
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Effective Date: 2023
Approved by the University Council

Sign..... Date.....

PROF. JOYCE J. AGALO, PhD

VICE CHANCELLOR

Sign..... Date 15/09/2023

DR. CHRISTOPHER GATAMA GAKAHU, PhD

CHAIRMAN OF COUNCIL

FOREWORD

Machakos University has a strong background on character development and equipping its graduates with skills and competencies that are necessary for national development. The Plagiarism policy is in line with the need to equip MksU community with virtues that facilitate integrity in their academic and scholarly work as the University strives to remain true to its vision and mission.

This Plagiarism policy provides a framework for the MksU community to uphold ethical practices as they pursue their academic goal. It outlines the various principles and procedures that guide the eradication of plagiarism in scholarly research and academic work.

The development of this policy underscores the University's commitment to promote ethical practices in research, academic and scholarly standards. The adherence of these policy regulations by the MksU community will guarantee quality and promote high standards in research, academic and scholarly work as stipulated in the University's Statutes and the Commission for University Education and other regulatory bodies. In addition, the policy will also accelerate the academic growth of the University academic staff.

PROF. JOYCE J. AGALO, PhD

VICE CHANCELLOR

UNIVERSITY FUNDAMENTAL STATEMENTS

Vision

A preferred University of Excellence in Scholarship and Service Delivery

Mission

Provide scholarly education through Training, Research and Innovation for Industrial and Socio-Economic Transformation of our Communities.

Machakos University Identity Statement

Machakos University is an Academic Institution Committed to Generating and Transmitting Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes through Science, Technology, Research and Innovation for the Benefit of Humanity.

Mandate

The core mandate of Machakos University is to Teach, Train, conduct Research, Innovate, Collaborate, generate new knowledge and Community Service.

Machakos University Philosophy Statement

The Philosophy of Machakos University is to provide transformative leadership in Teaching, Training, Research, Innovation, Industrial and Technology transfer for wealth creation.

Core Values

Integrity:	To honestly deliver on our promises to our stakeholders
Accountability:	To always be accountable in the assigned duties
Professionalism:	To be committed to high standards of training and service delivery
Inclusivity:	Respect for diversity
Creativity:	Determination to continually improve
Teamwork:	To actively work together to achieve common goals
Equity:	To strive to be an equal university where meritocracy is practiced in all areas

ABBREVIATIONS & ACRONYMS

DBPS:	Departmental Board of Postgraduate Studies
MksU:	Machakos University
MLA:	Modern Language Association
ODEL	Open and Distance Learning
SBPS:	School Board of Postgraduate Studies
UPC:	University Plagiarism Committee

DEFINITION OF TERMS

Department	Department which for academic and administrative purposes has been designated by the council as being constituted within a school
Electronic Material:	Information documents that are in digital format.
Intellectual Property	refers to researchers' work as a result of creativity
Library	University Library that contains books and periodicals.
Plagiarism:	The action or practice of taking someone else's work, idea, etc. and passing it off as one's own.
Researcher	A Bona fide student of Machakos University who carries out academic or scientific research
Scholarly Work:	Proposal, thesis, project, term paper, written assignment, research work, fiction work, report, or any other literary work that has been written and submitted for either assessment, academic qualification or publication.
School	a School of the University established in accordance with the University statutes
Student:	Any person registered in a university or an institution offering university education (The Universities Act 2012).
Supervisor	a member of staff who directs and oversees the work of a research student
University Community:	The community of Scholars, including staff, students, collaborators, researchers, visiting lecturers/staff and any other persons engaged by the University on permanent, contract or temporary terms.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

Globally, there has been tremendous growth in university education. This expansion has been confounded by a variety of challenges; issues of examination malpractice, impersonation in presentation of assignments, fraud in project and thesis writing and general problems of academic plagiarism. The introduction of blended teaching and learning has caused more challenges of the quality of students' and lecturers' academic work. The several cases and complaints received from Lecturers, Supervisors and Examiners on the many documents they have received and continue to receive which are premised on scholarly work suspected to have been borrowed from other sources without acknowledgement of the source have been a growing concern. With increasing enrolment for Postgraduate studies and generation of knowledge, there is need to spell out clearly how existing information must be dealt with or acknowledged appropriately and what should happen when this policy is violated.

The Plagiarism policy addresses postgraduate research work, MksU University Staff research work as well as undergraduate work where projects or term papers are submitted as a requirement for certification in order to address the challenges highlighted above. Further, the policy also addresses similar issues affecting collaborators and visiting professors who are involved in research. The aim of this Policy therefore, is to enhance and promote originality and protect ideas generated in the University.

1.2 Rationale

Over time, the population of researchers and other scholars at MksU has increased necessitating the generation of large volumes of information which must be protected and used appropriately.

Unfortunately, there are proven and documented cases where existing information is used without acknowledgement of the original source. Some students and other scholars have wanted to know how much information can be borrowed from other sources for their use without plagiarizing and how the source can be recognized. This policy is therefore informed by the existing need to

provide information on how plagiarism can be addressed and different scholars and researchers guaranteed of protection against such malpractices.

1.3 Objectives

The objectives of this policy are:

- i. To ensure that the University students and staff maintain high levels of integrity and originality in their academic and research activities.
- ii. To provide a framework for dealing with plagiarism at MksU University
- iii. To reinforce the value system of the University as an ethically responsible institution.

1.4 Scope

This policy shall apply to:

- a) Both the University staff and bonafide students;
- b) Community of scholars, who include academic staff, visiting scholars, collaborators and students. Proposals (academic and grant), projects, thesis, and dissertations;
- c) Publications of MksU, research books, journal, publications and reports.

1.5 Legal Framework

The policy will be operationalized and administered in compliance with:

- a) The Constitution of Kenya 2010
- b) The Universities Act, No. 42 2012
- c) The Public Officers Ethics Act, 2003
- d) Industrial Property Act, 2012
- e) The Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act, 2003
- f) Copyright Act, No. 12 of 2001
- g) Information and Communications Act, 2015
- h) Books and Newspapers Act, 2012
- i) Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013
- j) Universities Act, 2012
- k) Trade Marks Act, 2012
- l) Commission for University Education Guidelines and Standards, 2014

- m) Machakos University Intellectual Property Rights Policy, 2018
- n) Machakos University Research Policy, 2022
- o) Machakos University ODEL Policy, 2020
- p) Machakos University Statutes, 2019
- q) Machakos University Students Handbook, 2022
- r) All laws passed and applicable in the Republic of Kenya

2.0 CATEGORIES OF PLAGIARISM

There are three (3) broad categories of plagiarism as follows:

a) Plagiarizing the work of another student/staff

Plagiarism in this category includes, but not limited to the following offences:

- i. Copying and submitting the work of a fellow student/staff with or without his/her permission;
- ii. Handing in the work of a student/staff who completed the course in previous years with or without permission;
- iii. Word-for-word repetition of sentences and/or paragraphs from another student/staff's work with or without permission;
- iv. Repetition with deliberate alteration of selected words, phrases, sentences and/or paragraphs from another student/ staff's work, with or without permission;
- v. Replication of the structure or argument of another student/ staff's assignment with or without permission.

Grant proposal

b) Plagiarizing work from secondary sources without due acknowledgement

Plagiarism in this category includes, but not limited to, the following offences:

- i. Handing in work gleaned from other sources, published or unpublished, without duly acknowledging these sources. This includes information taken from websites, published books, journal articles, conference papers or reviews, unpublished manuscripts or conference papers, class notes and departmental handouts or any other source.
- ii. Handing in one's own original work or parts of work that has already been submitted for another module or programme without indicating where the material was original used.
- iii. Buying assignments or downloading them from the internet and submitting as one's original work.
- iv. Creating a piece of work by cutting and pasting various sections of text or images found on the internet into a document without referencing the source.

- v. Unacknowledged paraphrasing i.e. paraphrasing the words, ideas, opinions, or theories of others, whether oral or written as well the use of images.
- vi. Borrowing facts, statistics, or illustrative material without acknowledging.
- vii. Presenting materials assembled or collected by others in the form of projects or collections without acknowledgement.
- viii. Quoting directly from a source without using quotation marks and clearly acknowledging the source.
- ix. Paraphrasing a source without acknowledging it.
- x. Paraphrasing too closely to the original (substituting synonyms for some of the original works)
- xi. Fabrication of a source or quotation to give the appearance of having done required research.
- xii. Submitting someone else's work as your own.
- xiii. Paying another person to do the work or contribute to your work.
- xiv. Using software or online translators to translate material from or to other languages without citation.
- xv. Paying someone else to do your work, purchasing material, or translating from someone else's material (web-based or hard copy).
- xvi. Copying the text verbatim without enclosing it in quotation marks and acknowledging the source.
- xvii. Using your own past material or another person's material as a new idea without citation.

c) Incomplete, incorrect or inconsistent referencing

Plagiarism in this category includes careless or ignorant failure to reference correctly and includes, but not limited to, the following offences:

- i. Incomplete or inconsistent references to sources.
- ii. Failure to provide a bibliography with every submitted assignment.
- iii. Omitting the acknowledgement of sources in some parts of the assignment.
- iv. Using direct quotations without the use of quotation marks.

3.0 DETECTION OF PLAGIARISM

This entails the process of identifying similarities within an article or document by use of similarity index percentages which help in locating potential sources of plagiarism. Careful examination of both the submitted work and the suspect sources should be thoroughly examined before deeming any work plagiarized. Where plagiarism is established, the matter will be referred to staff disciplinary committee for further action and settlement.

The process of detecting plagiarism shall begin at the departmental level where students submit their concept of scholarly work. In the case of members of staff,

the process shall begin at any time work is suspected to be plagiarized. Detection can be either manually or Software-Assisted. Manual detection requires substantial effort and is impractical in cases where too many documents are compared, or original documents are not available for comparison. On the other hand, Software-Assisted detection allows vast collections of documents to be compared to each other, thus making successful detection easier.

The signs of plagiarism may not always be obvious, however, there are some things that instructors should pay special attention to when they suspect plagiarism.

These include:

a) Observe citations throughout the paper:

This will help to determine whether or not the required citation style was used. For example, if the citations in the paper conform to APA style when the MLA style was required for the paper, you may be looking at a plagiarized paper. In addition to this, you may find more than one citation style used throughout the paper.

b) Observe the writing style(s) or language used in the paper:

Sometimes, you may notice that the style or language used in presenting some arguments in a paper does not “sound like” something the student/staff would write. The unusual words or wording may include “advanced vocabulary”. Other papers may include a writing style that is below average.

c) Look for signs that the paper is outdated:

Sometimes, Instructors can find signs that the paper being read may be outdated. For example, the paper may contain statements which are no longer true. Also, the sources used for the paper may need to be checked for accuracy. If all of the sources listed in references or works cited are several years old, then the paper may be an example of plagiarism.

d) Observe the font used in the paper:

A paper may contain more than one “font style or size.” Different fonts throughout a paper would indicate that a student/staff may have copied and pasted various portions of Web pages together into a word processor.

e) Observe the reference and bibliography list:

A paper with missing references or bibliography entries that have not been cited is always suspected.

f) Look for signs that the paper veers away from the topic:

The paper may not cover certain points that need to be covered or it may be completely or partially irrelevant to the original topic.

g) Interrogation of scholarly work submitted for examination by a panel of faculty members.

All scholarly work suspected to be plagiarised such as work done by a third party but has a similarity index below 20% shall be taken through an oral defense.

4.0 PREVENTION OF PLAGIARISM

Anti-plagiarism measures shall include but not limited to;

- i. Sensitization of students and staff on what plagiarism is, its negative effects on scholarly endeavour and why it should be avoided
- ii. Integration of information literacy and competencies course in all academic undertakings in the University
- iii. Establish Plagiarism register
- iv. Requirement that all relevant student scholarly work subjected to plagiarism test before submitted in both print and electronic format.
- v. Requirement that no work will be submitted to Institutional Repository without clearance from the Anti-Plagiarism office of the University Library.

5.0 CONFIRMATION OF PLAGIARISM

The following are two ways for confirming plagiarism:

a) Using one or more Search Engines:

Various Web Search engines such as Google and Yahoo are available for use to confirm plagiarism. When using a Search Engine to check for plagiarism, enter an unusual phrase or sentence in the Search Engine's search box, and see if a match is found. To confirm, repeat the search using another Search Engine and compare the results. When performing a phrase search in a Search Engine, always enclose it in quotation marks.

b) Using a Text-matching Software or an Online Service:

MksU has adapted the use of **Turnitin** text-matching service. Instructors get an instructor ID, and they submit electronic copies of papers. The service then generates a report after searching the Web, including Cheat Sites. The service also stores papers in a database and searches its own database. However, it does not distribute database entries. It provides a detailed report with two windows, one with the student/staff text, complete with hyperlinks to the bottom window, which provides the submitted text and the text from the online source. Turnitin text-matching Software is a web-based service available online at Turnitin.com.

NB: The current software in use (turnitin) was modified to detect Artificial Intelligence generated documents.

6.0 LEVELS OF PLAGIARISM

Scholarly work such as research proposals, projects and theses should have an overall similarity index of less or equal to (20%) and less or equal to two percent (2%) from individual articles or documents. The levels shall be checked by use of the approved plagiarism software.

7.0 PROCEDURES FOR CHECKING FOR PLAGIARISM

Machakos University shall use the procedure below to detect plagiarism in all academic and scholarly work:

- i. Members of MksU Community wishing to present their proposals, projects, thesis research publications and other scholarly work at the departmental/divisional level shall fill a Declaration of Originality Form; (See Appendix I) confirming that the work is free from plagiarism. The students' scholarly work must be signed by the supervisors. The dully filled declaration form shall be forwarded to the respective Chairman of the DBPS, SBPS, who then shall check the work for plagiarism. The Dean, Graduate School shall also re-test the work for plagiarism. For staff, the work shall be forwarded to the University Plagiarism Committee as in the MksU Statutes, 2019(proposed to be included during the revision of the statutes)
- ii. The Chairman of the DBPS and one other member of the Board after confirming that the work is free from plagiarism, shall issue the MksU community member with a Plagiarism Clearance Certificate (See Appendix II).
- iii. In event the text is plagiarized, this will be reported in a Plagiarism Incident Reporting Form (See Appendix III). The incident form shall be filled by the

- person who has detected plagiarism and forwarded to the Chairman of the Department/Division.
- iv. Upon issuance of the clearance certificate, the candidate then submits the proposal for defense.
 - v. Upon successful defense of proposals or any other scholarly work at the departmental/divisional level, the work shall be submitted to the Chairman of the Department/Division for forwarding to the SBPS for defense at the school level and forwarding to Graduate School for registration /Division and then to the UPC.
 - vi. Upon completion of writing the project/ thesis the work shall be tested for plagiarism and a clearance certificate issued before submission for examination
 - vii. Before the final binding of a project, thesis, research work and grant proposals the library division shall confirm that the work is free from plagiarism.

Plagiarism check will be done at two levels; before the proposal presentation and also before the project or thesis submission for examination/ evaluation of grant proposals respectively. No scholarly work shall be tabled in the Graduate School Board without the Plagiarism Clearance Certificate.

8.0 PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM

Confirmed cases of plagiarism will be adjudged and penalties meted as hereunder;

STUDENTS		MEMBERS OF STAFF	
Major Plagiarism	Minor Plagiarism	Major Plagiarism	Minor Plagiarism
Fail the student	Academic counselling	Retraction of work in question	Warning
Revoke Award/recognition or both	Do a supplementary, Re-submission	Revoke recognition /award	Retraction of the work(s)
Expulsion	Warning	Dismissal	Staff counselling
		Legal action by the interested parties	

9.0 APPEAL

In case of a situation where an author (MksU community member) is not satisfied with the results of plagiarism check, the member can make an appeal to the Vice-Chancellor.

10.0 ADMINISTRATION OF THE POLICY

- a) The Plagiarism Committee as appointed by the Vice-Chancellor shall determine and handle all cases of plagiarism. The Committee shall be chaired by DVC (Research Innovation and Linkages). The committee shall consist of;
 - i. DVC(RIL)-Chair
 - ii. Dean, Graduate School
 - iii. Director, Research Innovation and Linkages
 - iv. University Librarian
 - v. Dean of the relevant school.
 - vi. Chair of the relevant department
 - vii. Senate representative

The Committee shall ensure the effective implementation of this Policy. It shall be answerable to the University Senate.

- b) Every student shall be required to:
 - i. Fill the declaration of originality form, (Appendix I).
 - ii. Ensure submissions of academic research proposals, projects, theses or papers are accompanied by an auto-generated plagiarism report based on the plagiarism detecting software at the university library or other designated points.
- c) Every staff shall be required to fill the declaration of originality form at the submission of reports or related works for appraisal for specific areas where originality is inherently required, (Appendix IV).
- d) The Dean, Graduate School shall be responsible for the implementation of the policy in respect to postgraduate research proposal and project reports and in this regard, will be;
 - i. Ensuring plagiarism declaration of originality forms and plagiarism reports are attached at the submission of proposal and thesis
 - ii. Initiating action upon detection of plagiarism after the acceptance of the research proposal
- e) The Deans of Schools shall be responsible for;
 - i. Dissemination of the anti-plagiarism policy to all students in the respective schools

- ii. Enforcing the requirement for declaration of originality prior to submission of the proposals, project reports and theses
- iii. Initiating action upon detection of plagiarism in all undergraduate studies and postgraduate studies (prior to submission of proposals to Graduate School)
- f) The University Librarian shall be responsible for the provision of services such as training and capacity building and confirming generated anti-plagiarism reports, among others. The services may be devolved to Dean of schools/Chair of Departments

11.0 POLICY MONITORING AND EVALUATION

The University Plagiarism Committee shall ensure quality control in the implementation process of the policy in line with other policies and shall give periodical/annual reports to the University Senate.

12.0 REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be reviewed after every five (5) years or when need arises



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APPENDIX I: DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY FORM (FOR STUDENTS) (The form should be filled in triplicate)

This form must be dully completed by the student and signed for all scholarly works submitted to the University for Examination.

Name of student -----Reg. No. -----
Name of the Programme -----
Level eg. Undergraduate ☐ Masters ☐ PhD ☐
School -----
Type of work eg. Assignment, Project etc -----
Title of the work-----

Declaration

1. I understand what Plagiarism is and I am aware of the University's policy in this regard.
2. I declare that this ----- (thesis, project, essay, assignment, term paper, report, etc.) is my original work and has not been submitted elsewhere for certification or publication. Where other people's work or my own previous work has been used, this has properly been acknowledged and referenced in accordance with MksU's requirements.
3. I have not sought or used the services of any professional agencies to produce this work.
4. I have not allowed, and shall not allow anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his/her own work.
5. I understand that any false claim in respect of this work shall result in disciplinary action, in accordance with MKsU Plagiarism Policy.

Student's Name-----
Signature-----Date-----
Name of supervisor (i) -----
Signature-----Date-----
Name of supervisor (ii) -----
Signature-----Date-----
Name of supervisor (iii) -----
Signature-----Date-----



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APPENDIX II: PROPOSAL PLAGIARISM CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE (FOR STUDENTS)

(The form should be filled in triplicate)

Name of student-----

Registration No.-----

Department-----

School-----

Level eg. Undergraduate ☐ Masters ☐ PhD ☐

Title of the work-----

I declare that I have run a similarity check of the aforementioned scholarly work by the above-named student. The similarity index was found to be-----%, and therefore, it is cleared for assessment.

Checked by

Supervisor's Name-----Signature-----Date-----

Verified by

Name-----Signature-----Date-----

Chairman of Department-----

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Name-----Signature-----Date-----

Dean of School-----

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Approved for Registration

Name-----Signature-----Date-----

Dean, Graduate School-----

Key:

The acceptable threshold is 20% or below



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APPENDIX III: THESIS/PROJECT PLAGIARISM CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE (FOR STUDENTS)

(The form should be filled in triplicate)

Name of student-----
Registration No.-----
Department-----
School-----
Level eg. Undergraduate ☐ Masters ☐ PhD ☐

Type of scholarly work Level eg. Project ☐ Thesis ☐

Title of the work-----

I declare that I have run a similarity check of the aforementioned scholarly work by the above-named student. The similarity index was found to be-----%, and therefore, it is cleared for assessment.

Checked by
Supervisor's Name-----Signature-----Date-----

Verified by
1. Name-----Signature-----Date-----
Chairman of Department-----

2. Name-----Signature-----Date-----
Dean of School-----

Approved for examination
Name-----Signature-----Date-----
Dean, Graduate School-----

Similarity check confirmed by
Name-----Signature-----Date-----
University Librarian

Key:
The acceptable threshold is 20% or below



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APPENDIX IV: PLAGIARISM INCIDENT REPORTING FORM (FOR STUDENTS)

(To be completed by Supervisor/Chairman of Department)

(The form should be filled in triplicate)

This form is to be completed and submitted to Machakos University Plagiarism Committee.
Please attach all relevant information on all cases of plagiarism.

Name of Student----- Reg. No-----
Department-----
School-----
Student's Contact: -----Tel No -----Email address-----

Name of the Programme-----Level-----
Code and Name of the Course-----

Type of scholarly work-----
Title of the work-----

Description of the plagiarism incident:

Student's Comments: -----
Student's Name-----Signature: -----Date-----
Name of the Staff who has detected plagiarism-----
Department-----Date -----Sign-----

Confirmed by
Name -----Signature-----Date-----
Chairman of Department



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APPENDIX V: DECLARATION OF SCHOLARLY ORIGINALITY FORM

(DECLARATION FORM FOR STAFF & STUDENTS)

To be completed for all scholarly work submitted to MksU for presentation

Name of Staff _____

PF No./Registration No. _____

School _____

Department _____

Description of work and the bibliographic

Declaration:

I am well briefed and sensitized of what constitutes plagiarism

I am further aware of the University's policy on plagiarism and consequences for any violation of the policy

That the work submitted is my original work that has not been presented anywhere for examination or otherwise. Where other people's work has been used, I have made appropriate citations as per the MksU Policy on Plagiarism

I will not allow any body to use my work for purposes of examination or presentation as his or her own work.

Signature: _____

Date: _____