



**The University of Guyana**  
**Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor**  
**Academic Engagement**

**Plagiarism Policy & Procedures**  
**For Students**

---

May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022

## 1. General Policy Statement

The University of Guyana is committed to ensuring that the highest academic standards are fostered and maintained on its campuses and in all its areas of education. The University embraces the free sharing and development of ideas and independent thought. It acknowledges that ideas are engendered and built on the published and unpublished work of many people and that these ideas are utilised, enhanced, and built upon in a spirit of critical inquiry. It promotes scholarly practices that maintain high standards of academic integrity. The University believes that full recognition of academic work is a foundation of scholarly practices and a core element in maintaining a culture of academic integrity. Therefore, the University has formulated this policy on plagiarism as a guide for all its members.

For this policy, plagiarism is defined as:

*Plagiarism is defined as the unauthorised and unacknowledged use of another person's intellectual efforts, ideas, and creations under one's own name.*

*Unacknowledged use involves not only word-for-word copying of sentences or paragraphs of another's intellectual efforts but also large-scale borrowing and repetition of ideas without the proper footnoting or acknowledgement of the source or sources of such borrowing.*

Notwithstanding this, the compilation of referenced ideas without the addition of any significant original thoughts will also be considered plagiarism. The University strongly advises students to adhere to the practice of scrupulous documentation of ideas used in their submission of all academic work.

### **Types of plagiarism that are evident in tertiary institutions:**

#### *Mosaic or patchwork plagiarism*

With this type of plagiarism, the work of someone else is paraphrased without proper citation. It is often difficult to detect because the plagiarised material is interwoven with many different sources, including the writer's own ideas and perspective.

#### *Paraphrasing plagiarism*

Paraphrasing, or incremental plagiarism, is the most common type of plagiarism; it is similar to mosaic plagiarism. However, the difference is that the copied work is not mixed in with new

concepts and research. When the original idea is paraphrased in the writer's own words, the borrowed material stays the same throughout the new piece.

### *Complete plagiarism*

Complete plagiarism is common in academics and occurs when someone tries to submit an entire research paper as their own without proper attribution. This involves copying and pasting the original work in its exact words. The only thing that is changed is the author's name.

### *Self-plagiarism*

This is also known as auto-plagiarism and occurs when someone copies their own writing, whether intentional or not. Often the person who self-plagiarises is summarising or repurposing their own work instead of writing a whole new piece from scratch on the same topic.

### *Accidental plagiarism*

Plagiarism does not always happen on purpose. However, it is still considered plagiarism when someone copies another's writing without citing their source or improperly cites the source and leaves out quotation marks by accident. Where omission or incorrect citation was accidental, this does not mean plagiarism has not been committed.

### *Source-based plagiarism*

This type of plagiarism refers to instances when misleading sources are involved. For example, the writer may have two sources of information but only reference one. Another form of source-based plagiarism would be when an author quotes a non-existent or incorrect source.

### *Direct or verbatim plagiarism*

Direct plagiarism, also known as verbatim or copy-paste plagiarism, is an intentional and unethical form of stealing content. As the name suggests, the writing is stolen word for word and pasted into the new piece. The author then tries to pass off the content as their own.

### *Collusion*

Collusion is when more than one student contributes to a piece of individual assessment that is then submitted as the work of an individual or multiple individuals when this is not permitted for the assessment task. Students are encouraged to engage in discussion and debate of subject content. However, you must not produce work submitted by another student(s) or submit any

work produced by another student(s). Students are encouraged to work together by researching, discussing, and sharing ideas; however, they should not write their assessments with other students. This is different from group assessment work, where students are instructed to work together, and the work is assessed as a group effort. Collusion in producing individual work for assessment is academic misconduct.

### **Glossary of related terms**

- 1) Turnitin – Turnitin is an Internet-based plagiarism detection service that checks your writing for citation mistakes or inappropriate copying (turnitin.com).
- 2) Academic Misconduct – Academic misconduct is any action or attempted action that may create an unfair academic advantage for oneself or an unfair academic advantage or disadvantage for any other member or members of the academic community (University of California).
- 3) Academic Integrity report – Academic integrity is the moral code or ethical policy of academia: it is a commitment to six fundamental values: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage. From these values flow principles of behaviour that enable academic communities to translate ideals into action (ICAI)

## **2. Purpose**

This policy aims to create awareness of plagiarism, put measures in place to assist in the avoidance of plagiarism, and confirm appropriate sanctions which would be applied to persons who plagiarise. In so doing, it will:

- a) Promote a culture of integrity, respect, and high standards in proposing, performing, reviewing and reporting research at the University;
- b) Prevention of acts of plagiarism through increased awareness and educational opportunities;
- c) Investigate thoroughly and take appropriate actions to penalise and further prevent the recurrence of plagiarism; and
- d) Deter plagiarism at the University of Guyana.

### **3. Scope of the Policy**

This policy applies to all students of the University and establishes procedures which should be adhered to in order to avoid and manage issues of plagiarism that may arise. In the event that instances of plagiarism do occur, the student and staff are expected to follow the guidelines set in this policy.

### **4. Review**

This policy will be reviewed as needed in keeping with the changes in writing and style guides such as the APA or any other appropriate style.

### **5. Policy**

This policy provides a framework for ensuring that measures to avoid plagiarism are implemented across the University. It outlines the responsibilities specific to the University community.

#### **5.1 Responsibilities of the University**

In pursuit of this policy, the University of Guyana shall endeavour to provide information, courses, resources, administrative arrangements, and oversight to ensure that a culture of academic integrity is maintained in all its programmes, as set out below.

The University of Guyana will:

- a) Actively publicise its policy on plagiarism, and put in place resources including software, videos, modules, writing and research assistance, to help its students avoid plagiarism;
- b) Advise all students formally about the University's policy on plagiarism as part of their induction into the University;
- c) Make available to all students an opportunity to participate in mandatory workshops on plagiarism at the time of their induction. Information about this workshop will be ongoing and available to all students;
- d) Apply sanctions, as set out in Section 7 of this policy, to students who violate the standards of academic integrity by plagiarising the work of others;
- e) Inform students that they are liable to be penalised after graduation if evidence of plagiarism were to be found in work submitted for their award; and

- f) Mandate to the Board for Disciplinary Committee to hear and deliberate on cases and appeals with respect to plagiarism in a timely manner.

## 5.2 Responsibilities of Academic Staff

Academic staff are responsible for creating an environment in which students recognise, understand, and respect the traditions of scholarship and academic integrity in their courses. They are encouraged to have wide-ranging knowledge of the literature in each respective discipline. Academic staff have a responsibility to act in the following ways:

- a) Encourage students' responsibility in avoiding plagiarism by advising students about plagiarism and directing them to relevant resources in each course that they take;
- b) Ensure that each course outline and each assignment delivered at the University of Guyana includes the following statement:

*Students are reminded that it is their responsibility to avoid plagiarism which the University of Guyana regards as a serious offence. Students who are guilty of plagiarism will be sanctioned as outlined in **section 8.1 of this document.***

- c) Ensure that each assignment submitted by students contains the statement at 6.1(c);
- d) Use appropriate software to detect plagiarism as an integral part of the procedure for assessing papers and other academic work submitted for marks/grades;
- e) Ensure that all cases of plagiarism are dealt with in a timely manner; and
- f) Provide documentary evidence of plagiarism and follow stipulated procedures to deal with persons who plagiarise.

## 6. Referencing styles used

- 1) American Psychological Association Referencing Style (APA) 7<sup>th</sup> ed. [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/apa\\_style/apa\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/apa\\_changes\\_7th\\_edition.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/apa_changes_7th_edition.html)
- 2) Vancouver Referencing Style – <http://guides.lib.monash.edu/citing-referencing/vancouver>
- 3) Chicago Referencing Style – <https://writingcenter.uagc.edu/chicago-manual-style>

- 4) Modern Languages Association of America Referencing Style (MLA) – [https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research\\_and\\_citation/mla\\_style/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide/mla\\_formatting\\_and\\_style\\_guide.html](https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/mla_formatting_and_style_guide/mla_formatting_and_style_guide.html)
- 5) Harvard Referencing Style – <https://essaypro.com/blog/harvard-style-citation>

## 6.1 Responsibilities of Students

Students will be formally advised about plagiarism as part of their induction into the University and that they have the following responsibilities:

- a) Each student, upon first registration at the University of Guyana, will be required to attend a plagiarism workshop conducted by the University's Library. The University will not be responsible in the event that students do not avail themselves of this advice at their time of entry into the University.
- b) All students will be responsible for ensuring that they avoid plagiarism by checking any paper they submit with the aid of relevant software such as the Turnitin similarity report or any other plagiarism checker.
- c) Each paper that a student submits for a mark or grade must be accompanied by the following statement to reflect that the student understands the concept of plagiarism and has checked the paper by using relevant software:

I hereby declare that the work being submitted is my own work. I understand what constitutes plagiarism, and I further declare that I have checked my paper, and this work is not plagiarised. I permit the University of Guyana to analyse my work using any plagiarism detection technology, and if found guilty of committing the offence of plagiarism, I understand that I am liable to be sanctioned.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ USI \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 7. Plagiarism Investigation

Once plagiarism is detected, the matter will be investigated by the lecturer and the level of plagiarism assessed.

- 7.1. If the offence proves to be minimal (25% of the sources not acknowledged or are inappropriately acknowledged), the lecturer will bring this to the attention of the student

and, at his or her discretion, may deduct marks in keeping with the grading rubric for the assignment.

7.2. For extensive plagiarism (above 25% of the sources not acknowledged or are inappropriately acknowledged), the following steps will be taken:

- a) The matter must be reported to the Head of the Department to which the course belongs.
- b) The matter will be investigated by the Head of the Department, and a meeting will be convened with the student, where the circumstances of the particular case will be considered.
- c) If the majority of the work or a central aspect of the assignment reveals extensive plagiarism, the Head of Department will report the matter to the Dean of the Faculty/School or College and the Head of Department of the student's programme (in instances where the student belongs to a different department).
- d) The Dean will issue a letter of warning to the student, copied to the student's Head of Department and the Assistant Dean(s), the University Disciplinary Committee (if necessary), and the Registrar.
- e) If the student is a first-time offender, a mark of zero (0) will be awarded, and the student will be given the option to redo the assignment with the provision that the student will not be awarded more than a 'C' grade.
- f) If the student is not a first-time offender, the matter will be referred to the Faculty Disciplinary Committee, where the appropriate penalty will be applied.
- g) The Registry will enter this data into a repository developed to store records of plagiarism.

## **8. The Faculty Disciplinary Committee**

The Faculty Disciplinary Committee will comprise the Dean, who will be Chair, the Assistant Dean, the HOD from which the student belongs, and a student representative. At the time of the hearing, the student is entitled to have an advocate present.

With regard to ALL cases of plagiarism, The Faculty Disciplinary Committee will:

- a) have the right to **institute** disciplinary actions except those involving suspension and expulsion.
- b) Make recommendations to the Academic Board, where a student faces suspension or expulsion as outlined in section 7.
- c) Conclude within a month any matter brought formally to the attention of the Dean.
- d) Communicate its decisions to the Registrar in writing.

Appeals against the decisions of the Faculty Disciplinary Committee, outlining the reasons, shall be made in writing to the Registrar. Such an appeal will then be heard by the University's Disciplinary Committee, in keeping with Statute 27 of the University Act & Statutes.

## 8.1. Regime of Sanctions

*Reminder: Plagiarism is a form of cheating. The University's Academic Board takes a serious view of any form of cheating; hence, plagiarism and cheating at examinations may result in expulsion from the University.*

If found guilty of plagiarism, penalties for students are as follows:

Minimal Plagiarism	Extensive Plagiarism	
	1 <sup>st</sup> Offender	2 <sup>nd</sup> Offender
- Deduct marks at the lecturer's discretion in keeping with the grading rubric for the assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- A mandatory session with the Library</li> <li>- Issue of a warning letter by the Dean.</li> <li>- Award of a zero mark.</li> <li>- Option to redo assignment with the provision that no grade higher than a 'C' will be awarded.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Issue of a letter of reprimand by the Dean on behalf of the FCC.</li> <li>- The outcome is to be documented in the student's record.</li> <li>- Suspension of the student for a period deemed appropriate by the Academic Board.</li> <li>- Expulsion of the student from the University.</li> </ul>

- NB: If, after a final grade has been awarded for a course, it is determined that a student is guilty of plagiarism, as outlined in section 7, the University reserves the right to revoke the awarded grade.
- If, after a qualification has been awarded to a student, it is determined that the student is guilty of plagiarism, as outlined in section 7, the University reserves the right to revoke the qualification.

## **9. Rights of Students**

- a) Any student who has been allegedly accused of committing plagiarism has the right to be provided with evidence of the charge of plagiarism.
- b) Any student having been found guilty of plagiarism may appeal in writing through the Registrar to the University Disciplinary Committee within two weeks of receiving the decision.
- c) Students who have been allegedly accused of plagiarism have the right to a representative or a support person of choice at the hearing.
- d) Any student who has been allegedly being accused of plagiarism, has a right to remain silent. However, if he/she decides to invoke their right to remain silent, the University will exercise the right to proceed with the procedure.
- e) Students who are being investigated for plagiarism may be suspended from participating in any academic activity until the matter has been concluded.
- f) All information relating to alleged plagiarism that is received and investigated will be treated confidentially. The progression of investigations will be handled in a confidential manner and will not be disclosed or discussed with any person(s) other than those who have a legitimate right to such information.

## References:

International Centre for Academic Integrity, available @ <https://academicintegrity.org/>

The Turnitin website available @ <https://www.turnitin.com/>

The University of Guyana, Handbook for the Guidance of Academic

Administrative Staff: <https://docplayer.net/12615762-Guide-for-academic-staff-at-the-university-of-guyana-2012-2013.html>

University of Guyana Student Handbook:

<https://uog.edu.gy/sites/default/files/documents/Student%20Guide%20%202017-2018%20final.pdf>

## Prepared by:

- Members of the FEH sub-committee on Plagiarism
- Members from other Faculties
- Members of the Registry
- Members of the Office-DVC-AE

**Responsible Executive:** Vice-Chancellor, DVC-AE

**Responsible Office:** Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor

**Date Endorsed by AP & PC:** November 26<sup>th</sup>, 2021

**Date Approved by Academic Board:** May 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022