

UNIVERSITY OF VENDA

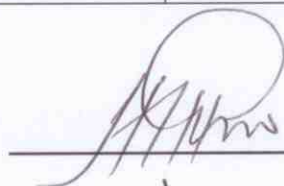
ANTI-PLAGIARISM POLICY

FINAL POLICY

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for

University of Venda Registrar



Prof. P.A Mbatl
Vice Chancellor and Principal



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1. Introduction

Plagiarism is illegal and tarnishes the image of the University of Venda. This policy adopts national best practices to combat plagiarism and has been benchmarked with the relevant policies of South African universities. Schools and Departments are at liberty to adopt policies and associated procedures which consider their particular requirements within the ambit of those stipulated in this document.

2. Purpose

This policy endeavours to provide a framework for combating plagiarism at the University of Venda. It seeks to define plagiarism in order to provide conceptual clarity. It lays out the principal approach of the University of Venda to the prevention of plagiarism. It establishes procedures which facilitate the detection of plagiarism and directs appropriate courses of action when plagiarism is detected in the work of students or staff members. It identifies the responsibilities of the various structures of the university for the implementation of the said procedures. Overall, an attempt is made to safeguard the university from embarrassment and legal action through plagiarism and to establish an environment in which the values of academic honesty and integrity can flourish.

3. Regulatory framework

3.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996);

3.2 The Copyright Act 98 of 1978;

3.3 The Higher Education Act 101 of 1997;

3.4 The Higher Education Quality Committee (2004) *Criteria for Programme Accreditation* Pretoria: Council on Higher Education;

3.5 The Higher Education Quality Committee (2004) *Criteria for Institutional Audits* Pretoria: Council on Higher Education;

3.6 The Higher Education Quality Committee (2004) *Improving Teaching & Learning Resources*; Pretoria: Council on Higher Education.

3.7. Intellectual Property Rights From Publicly Financed Research Development Act 51 of 2008.

4. Links to other policies

The policy is linked to the following policies of the University:

- 4.1 The University Strategic Plan (2009 -2013);
- 4.2 The Teaching and Learning policy
- 4.3 The Assessment Policy;
- 4.4 The Monitoring and Evaluation of Teaching & Learning Policy
- 4.5 Research Policy

5. Scope

This policy applies to all students and staff members at the University of Venda. It applies both to intentional and to negligent plagiarism.

6. Definitions

6.1 Plagiarism is the unjustified presentation of another person's intellectual property as a product of one's own mind. Plagiarism can for example be committed by stealing from literary works, musical works, artistic works, cinematograph films, sound recordings, broadcasts or programme-carrying signals belonging to others. It includes the copying of the words used in other person's writings without crediting the source as well as representing another person's ideas or thoughts as one's own. Furthermore, it encompasses using another person's intellectual property as a basis for the development of one's own intellectual work without acknowledging the source.

6.2 Intentional plagiarism refers to a situation where a person knows that he or she is plagiarising and deliberately uses plagiarism as a means to produce academic work.

6.3 Negligent plagiarism refers to a situation where a person copies another person's writing or uses another person's thoughts because he or she fails to apply the diligence in his or her work which can be reasonably expected of him or her.

6.4 Designated work refers to all academic writings which have been designated by the University for submission to plagiarism detection software.

7. Policy Statement

7.1 General Statement (Plagiarism)

The University of Venda follows an educational approach to combating plagiarism. It endeavours to build consciousness in students and staff members to prevent plagiarism. This is part of the effort of the University of Venda to entrench the values of academic excellence, honesty and integrity in the members and stakeholders of the University.

7.2 Prohibition of plagiarism

All forms of plagiarism are prohibited and infringements will be dealt with in terms of this policy and its associated procedures.

7.3 Education of Staff Members and Students

7.3.1 Staff members must lead the students by example in the avoidance of plagiarism. Staff members have to be empowered to avoid plagiarism, as well as to train students on how to avoid plagiarism. Consequently, the University shall implement continuous staff training concerning the avoidance of plagiarism.

7.3.2 The curriculum of all students at the first and second year level must include training on proper research and assignment writing techniques. In the relevant module specific attention must be given to developing the student's awareness of plagiarism and ways to avoid it.

7.3.3 Appropriate written materials which give guidance to students on proper academic writing techniques and the avoidance of plagiarism will be developed and widely distributed to students and staff members.

7.4 Self-evaluation of work

The University of Venda deploys plagiarism detection software to eradicate all forms of plagiarism. In line with the educational approach to the avoidance of plagiarism students and staff members are expected to submit all designated work to Turnitin (see procedural guidelines). All students and staff members are obliged to submit a report generated by the said software together with any submission of designated work or application for funding for designated work already produced. Furthermore, all students and staff members are obliged to self-evaluate any designated work intended for publication in any way whatsoever and have to submit proof on request by their superiors or instructors.

7.5 Infringements and Penalties

7.5.1 Where infringements of this policy are detected they will be dealt with in terms of the procedure attached as "Annexure I" to this policy.

7.5.2 The penalties for infringements are also determined by the procedures attached hereto as "Annexure I".

8. Approval

This policy must be approved by:

8.1 The University Senate; and

8.2 The University Council.

9. Implementation

This policy will be implemented in accordance with the attached procedure.

10. Policy changes

Changes to this policy should be authorized by Council.

ANNEXURE1

UNIVEN Plagiarism Policy: Procedural guidelines

1. The Univen policy on plagiarism stresses a developmental and educational approach to ensure compliance. Training should therefore be offered to address both awareness and compliance, and should target undergraduate and postgraduate students, as well as all academic staff. The purpose of the training should be to establish an anti-plagiarism culture at the University of Venda.
2. Awareness training about plagiarism (definition, the concept of intellectual property rights, legal implications of plagiarism, moral considerations) should be incorporated into the orientation programme(s) for first-entering students as well as into the induction programmes for new academic staff members. Training for existing academic staff should be undertaken by the newly established Centre for Higher Education, Teaching and Learning (CHETL).
3. Post-graduate students should receive special attention, and it is incumbent on supervisors of postgraduate students to bring the plagiarism policy of Univen to the attention of their students.
4. The policy on plagiarism should be readily accessible to all academics and students.
5. Training in the use of *Turnitin* software should be offered to all academic staff members, and all academics should be encouraged to register as *Turnitin* users. In this regard, a major awareness drive targeting academics should be undertaken jointly by the Research Directorate and Library Services, with the aim of getting all academic staff to register as *Turnitin* users within two years.
6. Information posters about intellectual property rights and plagiarism should be designed, and displayed prominently on campus.
7. Students should be trained in the appropriate use of the internet as a knowledge resource. Lecturers should actively discourage students (from first-year level) to submit "cut and paste" assignments. The use of internet references should be allowed only where the reference is on the internet as the primary resource. This will serve the dual purpose of discouraging plagiarism and encouraging students to consult and properly reference primary sources (published books, articles and conference proceedings).
8. Penalties for the transgression of Univen's plagiarism policy should distinguish between negligent and deliberate plagiarism, with a more severe penalty exacted in the case of the latter. The distinction should be guided by *Turnitin* results; for instance:

<40% similarity – indicative of negligent plagiarism

>40% similarity – indicative of deliberate plagiarism

In the case of negligent plagiarism, resubmission of the work in question should be allowed. Work shown to constitute deliberate plagiarism should not be

considered for assessment. At undergraduate level, academic departments should take responsibility for policy compliance, while Schools should take responsibility for compliance at postgraduate student level. Compliance by academic staff should be the responsibility of the Research and Publications Committee.

9. The introduction of a generic, School-wide post-graduate (Honours) module in research methodology, intellectual property, plagiarism, and dissertation/thesis writing should be considered in all Schools at Univen.
10. Approval of research proposals and research reports submitted to the Research and Publications Committee (RPC) of Senate should only follow upon a positive outcome of a *Turnitin* evaluation. It should be the responsibility of individual researchers and project leaders to subject their research proposals and reports to *Turnitin*, and to submit same to the RPC with their *Turnitin* results attached.
11. The same *modus operandus* as above should be followed in the case of Masters and PhD thesis proposals submitted by Schools to SENEX for approval. It should be the responsibility of the thesis supervisor to subject candidates' proposals to *Turnitin* evaluation.
12. Staff in the Directorate: Research and Innovation should receive priority training in plagiarism awareness and *Turnitin* usage.