

Policy on Promotion of Academic Integrity, Prevention of Plagiarism and guidelines for similarity verification, NIIT University (2023)

Preamble

Plagiarism is presenting another person's idea, thoughts or work as one's own without acknowledging the same.

The forms of plagiarism that a student, faculty, staff and researcher might commit include:

1. Submitting other person's work (wholly or partially) as their own.
2. Taking passages/diagrams/tables/data from their own previously published / presented work, without submitting the copyright permission for reproduction from the copy-right holder of published work and without giving proper citations.
3. Data acquisition/experiments conducted at any external organization and subsequently added in thesis work or research publication without submitting the permission given by concerned organization (duration with date, staying in that organization for performing the experiments should also be specified).
4. Re-writing someone's work without properly citing sources.
5. Using quotations for definitions/laws/quotations, but not citing the source.
6. Interweaving various sources together in the work without citing.
7. Citing some, but not all passages that should be cited.
8. Melding together cited and uncited sections of the piece.
9. Providing proper citations but fails to change the structure and wording of the borrowed ideas enough.
10. Inaccurately citing the source.
11. Relying too heavily on other people's work. Fails to bring original thought into the text.

(A) Student Doctoral Committee (SDC) will check the idea of the thesis topic, problem statement, objectives and methods/methodology to prevent plagiarism.

(B) Supervisor, Co-Supervisor and student will also provide the certificates that the work is plagiarism free.

(C) SDC will also certify that the thesis work is original.

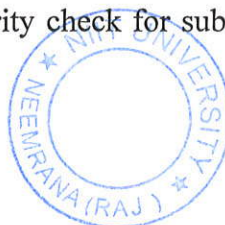
1. Guidelines for Similarity verification:

In accordance with the aforementioned, appended here are step wise similarity check guidelines to be followed while checking similarity within any documents i.e., thesis, dissertation, research papers, etc.

- a) NU has subscribed 'TURNITIN' - plagiarism detection software to facilitate the faculty, staff, researchers, scholars, and students to produce original and plagiarism free academic and research publications.



- b) NU has provided the access of this plagiarism detection tool to the student, faculty, staff, and researcher so that documents such as thesis, dissertation, research papers, conference papers, publications or any other such documents are free of plagiarism at the time of their submission.
- c) Every student submitting any such document shall submit an undertaking indicating that the document has been prepared by him/her and that the document is his/her original work and free of any plagiarism. The undertaking shall include the fact that the document has been duly checked through a plagiarism detection tool approved by NU. (Refer Annexure 1)
- d) Each supervisor/co-supervisor(s) shall submit a certificate indicating that the work done by the Ph.D. student or UG, PG, or project staff under him/her is plagiarism free. (Refer Annexure 2)
- e) The university submits soft copies of all M. Phil., Ph. D. dissertations to INFLIBNET for hosting in the digital repository under the “*Shodh Ganga e-repository*” programme.
- f) TURNITIN is in operation at NU since 12th October, 2021. While performing a similarity check scan generally following sections are excluded:
- i) *References/Bibliography*
 - ii) Quoted material (definitions/laws/formula)
 - iii) small matches up to eight words
 - iv) *Preface*
 - v) *Acknowledgements*
 - vi) *Certificates*
 - vii) *Annexures*
 - viii) *Content page*
 - ix) *Declaration*
 - x) *Cover page*
- g) TURNITIN at NU is operated, by default, in a mode such that eight words is the minimum for excluding small matches. The reason is that if any adverse comment (from any external source), like more % as similarity report, will be received for thesis/research articles regarding similarity check, NU can give the reason for that.
- h) Cited materials are not excluded as they contain the work by other researchers as well as the author’s earlier publications. In case, any exclusion of previous publication(s) by the Ph.D. student is requested, that will be routed through NU self-publication exclusion policy. In addition to this copyright permission certificates must be obtained from the publisher and must be provided with duly filled request form “(Request to grant permission to exclude earlier published work during plagiarism/similarity check for submission of Ph.D./M.Tech.



Thesis)". Attached as Annexure 3 and form is attached as Annexure 4.

- i) The same process will be continued for checking similarity of Ph.D. thesis, research articles submitted to journals/conferences or Project reports of R&D projects, Advanced R&D projects, Capstone projects etc.
- j) Guidelines prescribed under this policy are applicable to the B.Tech. M. Tech. students and Ph.D. scholars, researchers, project staff, faculty members and staff of NU.

Instructions and deliberate points of merit

- While carrying out the similarity check scan of project report/dissertation/thesis/research paper, etc., copy of the document must not be stored within the data repository of TURNITIN software.
- If any of the content undergoing TURNITIN scan is taken from previously published sources, then the text must be written within "quotes", and the sources must be properly cited within the text and in the bibliography.
- During the similarity check scan, it must be ensured that software must have access to all the available standard databases including publications from all the reputed publishers such as NATURE, SCIENCE, IEEE, SPRINGER, TAYLOR AND FRANCIS, WILEY, and ELSEVIER etc. apart from open access content.
- In exceptional case, even after all permissible exclusions as per NU policy, if still the similarity within a document/thesis remains higher than permitted limit, concerned faculty or supervisor may request Dean Research for the review of the same document by a nominated committee. This Area wise committee will be formed by the Dean Research "sicut per postulationem" and will report all its proceedings, MoM's, and recommendations to the same authority. Its structure is appended in the following:

- (a) Area Director (Convener)
- (b) Expert from library (Member)
- (c) Nominee of Dean Research (Member)
- (d) Thesis Supervisor (Member)

This committee will review holistic presence of similarity within the submitted thesis/document and may propose certain changes or justified exclusion within the text allowed by the similarity check software. However, any recommendation regarding the change/exclusion of scientific and technical data will be forwarded to Dean Research, which afterwards will be communicated to the concerned Doctoral Committee for their review and comments.



A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of stylized, overlapping loops and lines.

2. Zero Tolerance Policy in core area:

The core work carried out by the student, faculty, staff and researcher shall be based on original ideas and shall be covered by Zero Tolerance Policy on Plagiarism. In case Plagiarism is established in the core work claimed then Plagiarism Disciplinary Authority (PDA) shall impose a maximum penalty. The core work shall include assignments, projects, abstract, summary, hypothesis, observations, results, conclusions and recommendations.

3. Level of Plagiarism in non-core areas

For all other (non-core) cases, plagiarism would be quantified into the following levels in ascending order of severity for its definition:

- I. Similarity up to 10% - excluded
- II. Level 1: Similarity above 10% and up to 40%
- III. Level 2: Similarity above 40% and up to 60%
- IV. Level 3: Similarity above 60%

4. Detection/Reporting/Handling of Plagiarism

If any member of the academic community suspects, with appropriate proof, that a case of plagiarism has happened in any document, he or she shall report it to the competent/designated authority of the University. Upon receipt of such a complaint or allegation, the University authority shall refer the case to the Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP) of the university who in turn shall submit a report to the Plagiarism Disciplinary Authority (PDA).

The university can also take *suo moto* notice of an act of plagiarism and initiate proceedings under these regulations. Similarly, proceedings can also be initiated by the university based on findings of the examiner.

5. Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP)

- i. AMP shall be constituted to investigate the allegation of plagiarism and submit the report to the PDA.
- ii. The AMP shall have the power to assess the level of plagiarism and thus recommend penalty (ies) accordingly.
- iii. The AMP shall consist of four members who shall be senior academicians with good publication records with at least one member nominated by the President from outside the university. The chairman of AMP shall be an academic functionary (Pro President/Dean/Senior Academician) of the university. The third member shall be a reputed academician from the discipline in which the plagiarism is alleged. The fourth member shall be an expert well versed with anti-plagiarism tools.
- iv. The AMP shall follow the principle of natural justice while deciding about the allegation of plagiarism against the students, researcher, faculty member or any other employee of the university.
- v. The AMP shall send the report after investigations and its recommendations on penalties to be imposed to the PDA preferably within a period of 45 days from the date of complaint/initiation of the proceedings in case of *su motu* notice.



- vi. The AMP shall provide a copy of the report to the person(s) against whom the inquiry report is submitted.

6. Plagiarism Disciplinary Authority (PDA)

- i. PDA shall be constituted by the university to consider the recommendation of the AMP and take an appropriate decision after giving a hearing to the accused person(s).
- ii. There shall be three members in PDA chaired by the President. The other members shall be Dean (Research) and one senior Academician not below the rank of Professor in the relevant discipline from outside the university.
- iii. The decision of the PDA shall be final and binding.

7. Penalties

Penalties in the case of plagiarism shall be imposed on students pursuing studies at the level of UG, PG, Masters, M.Phil., Ph.D., faculty & staff of the university only after Academic Misconduct on the part of the offender has been established without doubt, when all avenues of appeal have been exhausted and individual in question has been provided enough opportunity to defend himself or herself in a fair or transparent manner. Since the act of plagiarism, witting or unwitting, is potentially detrimental to the academic credibility and social reputation of the individual concerned, all proceedings of investigations and imposition of penalties shall be conducted in camera so as to prevent encrustation of stigma and slur upon the individual concerned.

(a) Penalties for Students including Ph.D. students

Plagiarism Disciplinary Authority (PDA) based on recommendations of the Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP), shall impose a penalty considering the severity of the Plagiarism.

- i. **Level 1: Similarities above 10% and up to 40%** - Such student(s) shall not be given any mark and/or credit for the plagiarized script/project report/Ph.D. Thesis/Synopsis etc. and shall be asked to submit a revised version within a stipulated time not exceeding 6 months.
- ii. **Level 2: Similarities above 40% and up to 60%** - Such student(s) shall not be given any mark and/or credit for the plagiarized script/project report/Ph.D. Thesis/Synopsis etc. and shall be asked to submit a revised version after a time which is not less than one year but not exceeding eighteen months.
- iii. **Level 3: Similarities above 60%** - Such student shall not be given any mark and/or credit for the plagiarized script/project report/Ph.D. Thesis/Synopsis etc. and his/her registration for that course is to be canceled.

Note 1: Penalty on repeated plagiarism – Such student(s) shall be punished for the plagiarism of one level higher than the previous level committed by him/her. In a case where plagiarism of the highest level is committed then the punishment for the same shall be operative.

Note 2: Penalty in cases where the degree/credit has already been obtained– if plagiarism is proved on a date later than the date of award of degree or credit then his/her degree or credit shall be put in abeyance for a period decided by the AMP and PDA.



(b) Penalties for Faculty, staff, researcher

- i. **Level 1: Similarities above 10% and up to 40%** - Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of one year.
- ii. **Level 2: Similarities above 40% up to 60%** - Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of two years and shall be denied a right to one annual increment and shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any UG, PG, Master's, M.Phil., Ph. D. student/scholar for a period of two years.
- iii. **Level 3: Similarities above 60%** - Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of three years and shall be denied a right to two successive annual increments and shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any UG, PG, Master's, M.Phil., Ph. D. student/scholar for a period of three years.

Note 1: Enhanced penalty on repeated plagiarism – Shall be punished for the plagiarism of one level higher than the lower level committed by him/her. In a case where plagiarism of the highest level is committed then the punishment for the same shall be operative. In case of level 3 offense is repeated then the concerned person shall be dismissed.

Note 2: Penalty in a case where the benefit or credit has already been obtained – If plagiarism is proved on a date later than the date of benefit or credit obtained then his/her benefit or credit shall be put in abeyance for a period decided by the AMP and PDA on the recommendation of the AMP.

Note 3: If there is any complaint of plagiarism against the Head of and HEI, a suitable action, in line with these regulations, will be taken by the Competent Authority/Governing Board/Governing Council as the title may be.

