Nirma University

Rules for Preventing Plagiarism

1. Preamble:

Nirma University aspires to facilitate the highest standards of knowledge and skill development through its academic and research programmes. It offers conducive and inspiring environment where ethics and honesty are integral to the education system. Over a period of time, it has generated a significant impact, which makes it mandatory for the University to follow the high standards of ethics.

One of the goals of the University is to prepare graduates who will be able to take their expertise to the society. As a part of this preparation at the University, the students are required to work on assignments, project/seminar reports, thesis, research papers, cases, etc. At the same time, it is expected that the faculty members should contribute in generation and dissemination of knowledge through research projects, by publishing/presenting research papers/articles/cases/books, etc. All these activities require inputs from libraries, laboratories, electronic resources, etc. In this context, plagiarism assumes importance as it undermines basic objective of higher education and harms the reputation of the University. It is therefore important to sensitize faculty, students and research staff regarding plagiarism, performed either willfully or ignorantly. The University shall strive to have 'Zero Tolerance' against plagiarism. This document will help in implementing academic integrity and honesty in academic and research practices at the University.

This document outlines both necessary and desirable academic practices and at the same time it emphasizes on practices that are not acceptable and unethical. It prescribes the procedures to investigate reported cases of plagiarism and to take appropriate actions by the authorities.

2. Definition and Scope:

As per the revised and updated illustrated [*]Oxford Dictionary, the word, **'plagiarism'** is a noun of 'plagiarize', which means (i) take and use the thoughts, inventions, etc. of another person as one's own. (ii) Pass off the thoughts etc. of another person as one's own.

Almost every activity in an academic environment can be a potential target of plagiarism. It includes essays, cases, books, research papers, presentations, project/seminar reports, dissertations, research papers, etc. Broadly, any of the following actions by any of the above mentioned individual will be considered as plagiarism:

i. Reproduction of someone else's work, in part or whole, without permission and presenting it as one's own work

_____[*] Revised and Updated Illustrated OXFORD Dictionary, Originally published, created and produced in Great Britain in 1998 by Dorling Kindersley Limited and Oxford University Press, special edition first published in India by Penguin Books India 2006, Reprinted 2008, pp.: 624.

ii. Buying/stealing/copying assignments, experimental results, etc.
iii. Reproducing by copying a section of a book or an article/report/dissertation without proper citation
iv. Copying figures/charts/graphs/images without acknowledging or claiming it/them as one's own
v. Quoting from a source *word for word* without giving reference
vi. Putting someone else's ideas without proper citation
vii. Paraphrasing
viii. Self-Plagiarism: reproducing/publishing one's own published work, in part or whole, without referring to earlier published work

Notwithstanding anything containing clause (i)-(viii), any other activity falling under the ambit of academic dishonesty, may also be covered under these rules.

These Rules for preventing Plagiarism are applicable to the students, faculty and staff members, research scholars, recognized Ph.D. guides and researchers of the University.

3. Precautionary Measures to Prevent the Plagiarism:

In order to prevent plagiarism, the University and the constituent institutes should take the following precautionary measures:

i) A copy of 'University Rules for Preventing Plagiarism' should be made available to all the students, faculty, staff, research fellows and collaborative organizations. A copy of the same should be put on the University Website.

ii) The viewpoint of University on 'Plagiarism and Rules on Plagiarism' should be included in Students' Handbook.

iii) The writing skill including, Research Papers, Thesis, Reports, Cases, etc. should be covered as part of the syllabus of 'Research Methodology' course of PG/Ph.D.

iv) For the awareness of the faculty members, the University should arrange special seminars/workshops on Plagiarism related topics on regular basis. The same should be covered as part of Induction/Orientation Programmes organized for the faculty members by the ADR Cell.

v) All constituent Institutes/Departments should organize lecture(s) on plagiarism related topics for all the newly admitted students as part of Orientation Programmes.

vi) For all PG/Ph.D. students the constituent institutes should organize rigorous workshop(s) covering the topics like, plagiarism, plagiarism detection, its consequences, preventive measures and the University Rules for Plagiarism, etc.

vii) The training programme on the use of Plagiarism Detection Software Tools should be organized for the students, faculty, staff and research fellows.

viii) All Project/Seminar Reports, PG Dissertations, Ph.D. Thesis, Research Papers, Cases and any such documents are to be checked with the standard Plagiarism Detection Software Tool, prescribed by the University. In case of Project/Seminar Reports, PG Dissertations, Ph.D. Thesis, the concerned student will have to submit a Plagiarism Report generated by a software tool (prescribed by the University) to the Department/Institute/University with a signature of the concerned Guide/Supervisor.

ix) The students submitting any kind of research work in form of reports/thesis must provide a 'Certificate of Originality of Work' with signature of the concerned Guide/Supervisor.

x) In order to avoid copying in course assignments, it is preferred that the faculty members should design assignments that encourage the students to analyze or evaluate rather than asking them to collect, describe or present some information, data, etc.

xi) The libraries of the constituent institutes of the University shall arrange latest books on 'Plagiarism and Related Issues'.

4. Guidelines for the Faculty Members, Guides/Supervisors, Students, and Research Scholars:

In order to prevent the plagiarism, the following guidelines for the Faculty Members, Guides/Supervisors, Students and Research Investigators are suggested:

4. 1 Guidelines for the Faculty Members and Guides/Supervisors:

i) Insist that the ideas implemented are original, or derived from existing theory with significant contribution from the project team members.

ii) If copyrighted material from outside source is used in the project work, then the permission from the original author must be obtained and clearly mentioned in the report.

iii) Ask student at every phase of the project how their work is different from others.

iv) Discuss with the student, the ethical issues in teaching-learning and the role of researcher in society, so that student gets sensitized towards plagiarism and be ethical.

v) Set a high quality standard for the students and also provide motivation by appreciating the good work of students in front of the research community time-to-time.

vi) Encourage student for time management and proper project planning.

vii) While assigning course work to students, be creative in designing assignment such that the student while answering has no other way than originality.

viii) Spread awareness in students / research community that research papers / proposals with plagiarism may get black listed by the research organization. Also discuss the different levels of penalties of plagiarism.

ix) Try to use and also teach the students the usage of antiplagiarism software. Insist to check every paper and project report on such software before submission.

In case of any kind of plagiarism found in the PG/Ph.D. thesis, the concerned guide/co-guide will be responsible and the committee may recommend to the Director General for necessary actions.

4. 2 Guidelines for the Students and Research Scholars:

i) Use the source material to study the preliminary requisites only, and not to replicate something readily available. Mention proper reference of the source material in project report.

ii) Always try to innovate i.e. find out a new method to solve the research problem.

iii) If the existing solution is used, then always try to add somewhat new contribution by improving the performance of the existing system.

iv) While implementing the existing system, try to find out a different method of implementation instead of using the existing method. The end results in both cases may be the same, however compare the system parameters and prove your system somewhat better in execution.

v) Instead of implementing existing applications, try to find out new application of the existing theory / technology.

vi) Regularly either discuss or publish the research work over internet for others to comment so that there is an automatic check on plagiarism for the work done.

vii) Directly use of the data, conclusions, and results of some other researchers shall not be used stating that these are the original findings of the proposed work. On the contrary, due acknowledgement/reference is to be given for the work already done and referred for the proposed research.

viii) Consent of a guide or co-authors to be taken before submitting the paper or presenting any research work.

5. Identification of Plagiarism:

The following method(s) can be used alone or in combination for identification of plagiarism:

i) Checking an individuals' work using a standard Plagiarism Detection Software Tool, as prescribed by the University.

ii) Examination of assignments for specific sentences or unusual phrases taken from known sources.

iii) Comparison of written assignments of two or more students having similar assignment questions,

iv) Also, the researchers may be asked to provide evidence of their research. Clear examples or a record of research effort will assist them to prove that no plagiarism has occurred.

6. Method of Inquiry in the Matter of Complaint of Plagiarism:

For any reported case/complaint of Plagiarism, there will be two separate committees for inquiry, (i) Institute Level Committee (ii) University Level Committee. The composition of the committees, their functions and the method of inquiry are described below:

6. 1 Institute Level Committee:

There shall be an Institute Level Committee to inquire into the matter of the alleged plagiarism against under-graduate and post-graduate students of the Institute.

The following items will be covered under the purview of the Institute Level Committee:

i) Plagiarism in any component of the Continuous Evaluation (CE)by the UG/PG students

ii) Plagiarism in Major/Minor Projects and Seminar Reports by the UG Students

In case of major plagiarism the committee will recommend the concerned HoI to forward it to the University Level Committee.

The Committee shall inquire into the matter of allegations and shall make necessary recommendations to the Head of the Institute (HoI) in this regard for penalty.

The Committee shall comprise:

i) Chairman

ii) Two Faculty Members

iii) Secretary

The concerned HoI will nominate one of the senior faculty members of the Institute as the Chairman and two other Professors / Associate Professors in the subject area of the alleged plagiarism as the members of the committee. Assistant Registrar / Deputy Registrar of the Institute shall work as the Secretary.

6. 2 University Level Committee:

There shall be a University Level Committee to inquire into the matter of the alleged plagiarism against doctoral students, faculty, staff & research scholars of any constituent Institute of the University and any related matter received from the Institute Level Committee.

The following items will be covered under the purview of the University Level Committee:

i) Plagiarism in any form by the Faculty, Staff and Research Scholars of the University. This will cover research findings, research papers, articles, books, reports, cases, etc.

ii) Plagiarism in Thesis/Dissertation, research findings, research papers, books, reports, etc. by the PG/Ph.D. Students

The Committee shall inquire into the matter of allegations and shall make necessary recommendations to the Director General in this regard.

The Committee shall comprise:

i) Chairman

ii) Two Faculty Members

iii) Secretary

The Dean-Faculty of Doctoral Studies & Research (FDSR) shall act as the Chairman of the Committee. The two other faculty members will be nominated by the Director General. The Deputy Registrar (Exam) of the University shall act as the Secretary in case of plagiarism by the students, whereas the Executive Registrar of the University shall act as the Secretary in case of plagiarism by the Staff, Faculty and the Research Scholars.

6. 3 Procedure to be adopted by the Committees:

On receiving application(s) of alleged plagiarism, the Committee(s) will comply the following steps with the principles of procedural fairness protecting the rights of the alleged. These rights includes right to:

i) Be informed of the allegations against them in sufficient detail to enable them to understand the precise nature of the allegations and to properly consider and respond.

ii) Within one-week of time respond to the allegations against him /her.

iii) The matter to be resolved in two weeks' time after responding to the allegations.

6. 4 Identification and Assessment of Alleged Plagiarism

For any reported case of the plagiarism, the Committee will first confirm prima facie if there is plagiarism or not. In a case of plagiarism, it will also decide the degree of plagiarism. The Committee will then submit its report along with its recommendations in terms of penalty to the HoI (in case of Institute Level Committee) or to the Director General (in case of University Level Committee). Depending upon the report and the recommendations of the Committee, the concerned HoI / Director General will decide the action to be taken.

7. Provision of Penalty:

In case of violation of any of the above Rules by any individual, the competent authority will take necessary actions against the person concerned. The following provisions of penalties are made:

7.1 Provision of Penalty - Institute Level Committee:

i) Written Warning (only once)

ii) Cancellation of results of component(s) of CE in which plagiarism is found

iii) Cancellation of results of all components of CE

7.2 Provision of Penalty - University Level Committee:

Minor Penalties for Faculty Members and Staff

i) Censure

ii) Withdrawal of PG guide ship

iii) Withdrawal of Ph.D. guide ship

Major Penalties for Faculty Members and Staff:

i) Withholding of Increment(s)

ii) Reduction to a lower stage in the time scale of pay for a specified period of time

iii) Reduction to a lower time scale of pay, grade, post or service

iv) Removal from service which shall not be disqualification for future employment under the University

v) Dismissal from service, which shall ordinarily be a disqualification for future employment under the University

Penalties for the PG/Ph.D. Students:

i) Cancellation of PG/Ph.D. registration

ii) Revocation of Degree at any stage/time after award of the Degree

Penalties for the Recognized Ph.D. Guides of National Laboratories/Outside Institution:

i) Withdrawal of PG/Ph.D. guide ship

ii) Information to their parent organization with a request to take the necessary actions against the concerned employee