

## **POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 This policy aims to serve the vision of the University of South Africa (UNISA): Towards the African University shaping futures in *the* service of humanity.
- 1.2 It aims to advance the mission of the university, the relevant part of which states that the university aims at research and knowledge development (that is) guided by academic integrity, quality and good practice. These three terms are defined as follows:
  - a) Academic integrity can be defined as the meaningful and concerted effort to ensure concern for human dignity, honesty, trust, fairness, truthfulness, accuracy, respect and responsibility in teaching, research and community engagement.
  - b) Quality is defined to mean that teaching, research and community engagement must meet the national and international benchmarks and standards set for academic work.
  - c) Good practice refers to the disciplinary rules in all disciplines and includes, amongst others, aspects related to experimentation, data gathering, presentation of results, referencing and writing as required by every discipline.
- 1.3 Implicit in the value of academic integrity that UNISA aims to uphold is the idea that ethical conduct should guide research, teaching and learning as well as community engagement.
- 1.4 This policy must be read with all other relevant and applicable policies. In particular, unless the context indicates otherwise, it includes the definitions contained in these policies.
- 1.5 It is accepted that the values of academic integrity will only become established practice if the primary aim of the policy is to educate students and employees.

### **2. POINTS OF DEPARTURE**

- 2.1 All research and innovation, teaching and learning and community engagement at UNISA must be based on academic integrity, quality and good practice.
- 2.2 In addition, the constitutional right to academic freedom<sup>1</sup> which includes the right to protect the products of the research enterprise, must be upheld.
- 2.3 It is acknowledged that copyright and intellectual property is protected by statutory law and common law rules respectively. In addition, other activities that undermine academic integrity (like fraud, theft and other forms of dishonesty) are dealt with by the common law.

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<sup>1</sup> Section 16(1)(d) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996  
Approved – Council – 10.06.2017

- 2.4 Such infringements will be dealt with by the Department: Human Resources (in respect of employees) and the Registrar (in respect of students) in line with ordinary disciplinary procedures.
- 2.5 This policy is therefore intended to address the institution's position to acts of academic dishonesty and not to supplant external legal processes in terms of the common law including legislation.
- 2.6 In all instances the basic approach of this policy is not punitive but focused on education.

### **3. LIMITATION**

- 3.1 This policy does not deal with copyright infringements.
- 3.2 Copyright in all material and research produced at UNISA vests in the university.
- 3.3 Copyright infringement will therefore be dealt with by the university based on the relevant legislation.
- 3.4 This policy does not deal with misconduct.

### **4. DECENTRALISED APPROACH**

- 4.1 Apart from the legal measures not dealt with in this policy, it is accepted that academic integrity is discipline specific. This means that the concerns and benchmarks for academic integrity will differ depending on the discipline.
- 4.2 To this end all Colleges or Schools in UNISA must develop their own standards, guidelines and processes to ensure academic integrity and to combat academic dishonesty.
- 4.3 These measures should be discipline specific and fit in with the teaching and learning, research and innovation and community engagement projects of the specific School and, by extension, the relevant College.
- 4.4 All Schools and Colleges must establish Committees for Academic Integrity that will draft their own terms of reference, which must be approved at the relevant College Board. The terms of reference must provide for the inclusion of student representation. These will be specific and informed by the academic conventions of the various disciplines.
- 4.5 The College Committees for Academic Integrity will establish rules and regulations for specifically the educational aspect of academic integrity, but will also deal with cases of academic dishonesty.
- 4.6 UNISA will establish a Senate Committee for Academic Integrity that will deal with appeals from decisions of the various Colleges. Such appeals will be heard based on the terms of reference of the Senate Committee.
- 4.7 The Academic Integrity Sub-committee of the UNISA Research Ethics Review Committee will deal with cases of academic dishonesty committed by employees.

### **5. APPLICATION OF POLICY**

- 5.1 This policy is applicable to all UNISA employees involved in teaching and learning, research and innovation or community engagement and students.

- 5.2 This includes full-time, part-time, permanent and contract employees.
- 5.3 After approval of College/School guidelines by the Senate Committee of Academic Integrity, these must be published in the various brochures on myUnisa and on UNISA social media platforms for the information of students.
- 5.4 Such information should also be included in the conditions of employment of all academic appointees.

## **6. ADDENDUM**

- 6.1 This policy is provided with an addendum that sets out the basic definition and types of academic integrity transgressions (A1), guidelines for policy implementation (A2) guidelines for corrective measures to be imposed for transgression identified in the policy on academic integrity (A3), and declaration of originality (A4).
- 6.2 Colleges and/or Schools should use this addendum to formulate their own rules and procedures for dealing with academic dishonesty.



# **ADDENDUM**

## **A1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY TRANSGRESSIONS**

Academic integrity transgression refers to conduct or omission in any teaching and learning, community engagement or research endeavour that violates the values associated with academic integrity and includes any act that is designed to give an unfair or undeserved academic advantage. An important risk associated with academic dishonesty is its effect in undermining public trust in the quality and academic integrity of academic outputs by UNISA employees and students. Academic outputs refer to all academic and scholarly works (e.g. artistic works, electronic works, literary works, multimedia products, research outputs), written or otherwise, created by employees and students for teaching and learning, community engagement or research. All academic activities including output, written or otherwise, submitted by employees, research associates or students are expected to be based on sound ethical grounds and should be the result of a person's own skill and labour.

Conduct that may lead to the contravention of the academic integrity policy include, but is not limited to the following:

### **1. PLAGIARISM**

Without taking away from the ordinary meaning of plagiarism, plagiarism can be defined as the appropriation of another's work, whether intentionally or unintentionally, without proper acknowledgement.

#### **1.1 Misrepresentation**

In the plagiarism context misrepresentation generally means not acknowledging one's sources in a transparent manner. Such misrepresentation could influence the assessment of the document, whether for purposes of grading an assignment or to determine the contribution that a thesis or article makes to a field. By not mentioning sources that were actually used the author creates the impression that someone

else's work and/or ideas is his own. By including sources that were not used, an author misrepresents the span of the research done. By referring to direct sources discussed in a secondary source in a way that makes it seem as if the author actually consulted the primary works, he/she misrepresents the skill and labour that went into the creation of the work.

## **1.2 Rationale for combatting plagiarism**

As can be seen from the above examples plagiarism does not only harm or offend the authors that were not properly acknowledged. Financial resources are wasted in the form of receiving subsidies for recycled works that appears to create new knowledge, and healthy competition between classmates, academic employees and institutions is hampered. From a copyright perspective acts of plagiarism are likely to infringe the economic rights of the copyright owner and the original author's rights. Some instances of plagiarism are nothing but fraud in the criminal sense of the word. In general, plagiarism impacts negatively on graduateness and the academic project as a whole. UNISA will therefore not tolerate plagiarism.

## **1.3 A positive approach**

Despite zero tolerance for plagiarism, UNISA is committed to providing education and guidance on how to avoid plagiarism. As plagiarism relates to knowledge and understanding of the conventions for writing in a particular academic field, education about the different guises of plagiarism and how to avoid it is a way to improve student learning and research quality.

## **1.4 Wrongfulness**

Only wrongful misrepresentations will be regarded as plagiarism. Wrongfulness refers to the convictions of the academic community as to what constitutes plagiarism. The interests of all stakeholders have to be weighed, taking all relevant factors into account. Stakeholders can be for example UNISA, the complainant, the authors whose works were copied from, the author that allegedly committed plagiarism, supervisors, examiners, the academic journal that published the work, tax payers and society in general. Relevant factors to determine the wrongfulness of a misrepresentation could include, but are not limited to:

- a) The nature of the work.
- b) The nature and extent of the misrepresentation.
- c) The conventions of the specific discipline, including College/School guidelines on plagiarism and how to avoid it.
- d) The level of the student or employee who is accused of plagiarism (e.g. first year student or full professor).
- e) The author's plagiarism history.
- f) Whether the misrepresentation was committed intentionally.
- g) Whether the misrepresentation was committed negligently.
- h) The motive for committing the misrepresentation.
- i) If and how the plagiarism detection software was used (see the Procedures for Master's and Doctoral Degrees).

- j) The relevant relationships, e.g. employer-employee, student-supervisor or co-author relationships and the nature/quality thereof.
- k) The (potential) harm caused by the misrepresentation e.g. embarrassment to the university, waste of limited journal space, subsidies, bursaries, rewards, awards and/or promotions having been awarded to the alleged plagiarist and/or his/her institution.
- l) Although generally a right cannot correct a wrong, the fact that an allegedly plagiaristic article does contribute to the knowledge field and the extent of such contribution can also be taken into account.
- m) Consistency in dealing with plagiarism matters.
- n) National and international ethical standards.
- o) Public policy.

## **2. CHEATING**

Cheating, as a violation of academic integrity, refers to obtaining or attempting to obtain, or aiding another to obtain, credit for work, or an improvement in any assessment, by dishonest or deceptive means. Some examples of cheating include:

- 2.1 Collaboration on any form of formative or summative assessment, without the permission of the lecturer;
- 2.2 Completing an assessment or taking an examination on behalf of another student;
- 2.3 Possession, distribution, and/or use of unauthorised materials or technology before or during any examination or when preparing formative assessments;
- 2.4 Contracting (ghost or contract cheating) another person or a professional agency to produce academic work, sometimes original work, on his/her behalf and then submitting it as his/her own academic output. It *inter alia* includes the practice of submitting a purchased research paper or assessment as one's own work and purchasing an examination question paper which has illegally been made available prior to the examination date;
- 2.5 Copying from another student for the purpose of completing any assessment.

## **3. FALSIFICATION**

Falsification refers to the intentional misrepresentation or alteration of any information, source, results, data, process, materials or citation in the process of creating an academic output. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a) Altering results or evidence;
- b) Referencing a source in a footnote or bibliography that the author did not use;
- c) Selectively omitting or altering data that does not support a desired conclusion.
- d) Committing negative outcomes or rejecting research results based on self-interest.

#### **4. FABRICATION**

Fabrication is related to falsification and refers to the intentional invention of facts, results or other information. An example of fabrication is to create results for surveys or interviews that never took place.

#### **5. TRANSGRESSIONS RELATING TO CO-AUTHORSHIP, DENIAL OF CONTRIBUTION AND UNFAIR ORDERING OF AUTHORS**

The above practices refer to an increasing tendency by authors' to dilute the credit awarded to other contributors including cases arising out of co-authorship between supervisors and students. The practice taints academic integrity and harms present and future collaborative relationships. A contributor will be deemed to be an author if he/she meets the following criteria:

- a) A contributor must make a substantial intellectual contribution to the conceptualisation or design of the work or the collection, analysis or interpretation of data for the work. Contributors who meet this criterion should be given the opportunity to participate in the review, drafting, and final approval of the manuscript.
- b) A contributor must assist in the drafting of the work or revising it critically for important intellectual content.
- c) A contributor must give final approval of the version to be published.
- d) A person must agree to be accountable (publicly and academically) for all aspects of the work, including the accuracy and academic integrity of the work and the integrity of the contributions of co-authors.<sup>2</sup>

Contributors who do not meet all the criteria should be listed in the acknowledgments with their permission.

#### **6. COMPLICITY IN AND FACILITATION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

Facilitation of academic dishonesty refers to instances where a person deliberately or negligently permits his or her work to be used by others in the pursuit of any academic activity which violates academic integrity. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- a) Knowingly and without authorisation using or allowing UNISA tuition materials, such as study guides and tutorial letters, to be used for academic offerings at other institutions;
- b) Knowingly allowing another to copy from one's paper during an examination or in an assignment;
- c) Knowingly and without authorisation distributing assessment questions or substantive information about the material to be tested before the scheduled assessment;
- d) Collaborating in academic work contrary to an explicit instruction;
- e) Writing an assignment or taking an examination for another student; or
- f) Signing a false name on an academic exercise.

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<sup>2</sup> INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE OF MEDICAL JOURNAL EDITORS.

<http://www.icmje.org/recommendations/browse/roles-and-responsibilities/defining-the-role-of-authors-and-contributors.html>

## **7. TRANSGRESSIONS OF RESEARCH ETHICS OR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

Transgressions of the rules and standards relating to research ethics, as contained in the UNISA Policy on Research Ethics, as well as those relating to the ethical or professional code of specific disciplines, that may apply to employees, research associates and students, constitutes a breach of academic integrity.

## **8. CRIMINAL ACTIVITY THAT TRANSGRESS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Criminal activity that transgress academic integrity may include the commission of fraud, theft (e.g. of examination papers), the misuse of research funds, distribution of academic material obtained unlawfully, assault and intimidation. These activities also constitute a serious breach of academic integrity.

## **9. SEXUAL HARASSMENT THAT TRANSGRESS ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Sexual harassment that transgress academic integrity refers to unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favours and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when in the context of teaching, research and community engagement the conduct is made a term or condition of an individual's employment, education, living environment or participation in a University community.

## **10. TRANSGRESSIONS OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND OUTREACH**

Transgressions of the academic integrity policy in community engagement and outreach pertain to, but are not limited to, the following:

- a) Perpetuating cognitive elitism;
- b) Discrediting and undermining existing and indigenous knowledge frameworks in communities;
- c) Displaying a condescending and patronising attitude towards communities, including the deliberate "dumbing down" of content shared with resource-poor communities;
- d) Unfair and unequal power relations in academic collaboration with communities and stakeholders;
- e) Abuse of power and failure to report abuses of power;
- f) Perpetuating a *closed* culture of decision making and covert agenda setting internally and externally;
- g) Failing to authentically listen to, reflect on and include community participation in the planning, preparation and implementation of initiatives;
- h) Using dishonesty and misrepresentation in order to solicit stakeholder buy-in and funding;
- i) Creating expectations that cannot be met and making false promises;
- j) Subjecting communities to poorly planned, substandard community engagement and outreach activities;
- k) Corrupt use of university and community resources for personal benefit;

- l) Vested interests in the selection of community beneficiaries;
- m) False representation of qualifications and experience as an attempt to gain the respect and trust of communities and stakeholders;
- n) Using community engagement and outreach initiatives as a platform to source and expand client base for the purpose of marketing personal business interests;
- o) Using community engagement and outreach initiatives as an avenue to prey on vulnerability and act out predatory behaviour.

## **A2. POLICY IMPLEMENTATION**

### **1. INSTITUTIONAL RESPONSIBILITY**

- 1.1 To foster an enabling environment through leadership modelling that affirms the values of academic integrity.
- 1.2 To practise openness in institutional decision-making and agenda setting.
- 1.3 To raise awareness amongst employees, research associates and students of the importance of academic integrity practices and the potential harmful effects of academic integrity transgressions.
- 1.4 To monitor departures from the academic integrity policy and institute robust structures and mechanisms to mitigate ethical risks;
- 1.5 To ensure the review and currency of this policy as new academic integrity issues emerge.
- 1.6 To alert all students of the availability of open source plagiarism detection software as soon as they register.

### **2. EMPLOYEE RESPONSIBILITY**

- 2.1 All employees and research associates must be fully aware that academic integrity transgressions can seriously affect their scholarly and/or professional status and progress at UNISA and other higher education institutions. In the most serious cases it can result in dismissal from the university and/or formal cancellation/retraction of current/previously submitted academic outputs. Also, the university may indicate the nature and outcome of all plagiarism offences/penalties when it is required to provide a reference or conduct statement for the particular employee or research associates, provided that the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, 4 of 2013 are adhered to.
- 2.2 All employees and research associates have a moral obligation and professional responsibility to act as role models of scholarly conduct by avoiding academic integrity transgressions in their own work and by expressing a positive emphasis on the value of learning and ethical professional growth.
- 2.3 Academic employees and research associates have a responsibility to ensure that all students are provided with guidance and awareness/understanding on how to identify and avoid academic integrity transgressions, how to consistently apply the related

conventions and must be made aware of the consequences of academic integrity transgression.

- 2.4 Employees must ensure that all engagement and outreach activities are well prepared, clearly defined and of an acceptable academic standard.
- 2.5 Employees must actively include the voice and participation of communities in the planning, preparation and implementation of community engagement and outreach.
- 2.6 Employees must create a sound opportunity for effective and ethical student involvement.
- 2.7 Employees must practice sound governance, ethical and transparent stewardship over all resources allocated to academic employees by the institution for community engagement and outreach.
- 2.8 All employees and research associates have a moral obligation and professional responsibility to report academic integrity transgressions in their work environments. All whistle-blowers are protected in terms of the Policy on Prevention of Fraud, Corruption and Irregularities.

### **3. STUDENT OBLIGATIONS**

- 3.1 Students have the responsibility to uphold the Academic Integrity Policy.
- 3.2 Students have the responsibility to maintain the academic integrity principles set out below in the production and presentation of academic outputs, regardless of the presentation format and/or work type:
  - a) Each student should only submit his/her own original academic work, except when formal group work was required in the production of the academic output;
  - b) Each student should accurately indicate in all academic outputs when information is used that was produced by another scholar by referencing it in accordance with a recognised referencing convention system;
  - c) No student should use, present or submit someone else's electronic works, multimedia products or artistic works as if it were his/her own;
  - d) Each student should accurately indicate the download/access date and the uniform resource locator (URL) of the internet web page when information is used from a website, web page or other electronic source;
  - e) No student should allow another person(s) to use or copy from his/her academic output and present it as their own work;
  - f) Each student must observe all rules applying to written assessments, whether these are venue based or not. Unless explicitly stated otherwise a student may not ask the advice or seek the inputs from any other person, reference or resource, either with their consent or not, while undertaking a written assessment.
  - g) Each student is required to attach a signed Declaration of Originality (see Annexure A4) for each academic output submission (e.g. assignment, project, manuscript, dissertation and thesis);
  - h) Each student has the responsibility to request assistance from employees should they require guidance and/or advice about plagiarism in their academic outputs;

- i) Students have a moral obligation to report academic integrity transgressions in academic, community engagement and/or research environments. All whistle-blowers are protected in terms of the Policy on Prevention of Fraud, Corruption and Irregularities; and
- j) All students must be fully aware that academic integrity transgressions can seriously affect their academic status and progress at UNISA and other higher education institutions. In the most serious cases it can result in dismissal from the university and/or formal cancellation/retraction of current/previously submitted academic outputs. Also, the university may indicate the nature and outcome of all plagiarism offences/penalties when it is required to provide a reference or conduct statement for the particular student, provided that the provisions of the Protection of Personal Information Act, 2013 are adhered to.

### **A3. GUIDELINES FOR CORRECTIVE MEASURES TO BE IMPOSED FOR CONTRAVENING THE POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

1. An employee, a research associate or student who is guilty of contravening the Policy on Academic Integrity will be subject to the applicable disciplinary code.
2. The Policy on Academic Integrity recognises that the relevant corrective measures for contravening the Policy on Academic Integrity:
  - a) should be appropriate
  - b) relate to the degree of the contravention,
  - c) the relevant level of academic maturity of the person committing the contravention (e.g. at first year level matters which may technically meet the requirements of the definition of plagiarism,) will not necessarily be referred for disciplinary investigation – a consultative approach may be more appropriate.
3. The Policy on Academic Integrity recognises the need to distinguish between less serious academic integrity contraventions that may occur as a result of a lack of understanding, even ignorance, with regard to what constitutes a contravention (e.g. plagiarism), as opposed to a more premeditated contravention of academic integrity.

In the case of less serious contraventions, absence of intent on the part of the person committing the contravention is present, whereas in the case of serious contraventions, a deliberate intention to deceive and gain an unfair advantage is present.

4. The contraventions can be divided in the following categories:

#### **4.1 Category 1 contraventions (minor ('naïve') contraventions)**

These contraventions are first-time, minor contraventions resulting from ignorance, lack of academic maturity and/or inaccuracy in working with and/or acknowledging information sources in academic outputs. Such cases are usually restricted to undergraduate students.

#### **4.2 Category 2 contraventions (less serious (moderate) contraventions)**

These contraventions refer to cases in which information sources have been dealt with in a consciously injudicious way. It includes:

- (a) repeated category 1 contraventions,

- (b) minor contraventions at a more senior academic level and
- (c) first-time minor contraventions perpetrated by postgraduate students; or
- (d) first-time minor contraventions perpetrated by employees.

#### **4.3 Category 3 deliberate (serious) contraventions**

These contraventions are major, serious infringements by students or employees in circumstances where they acted intentionally or negligently, or failure on their part to take reasonable steps to ensure that they comply with their obligations to prevent any form of academic misconduct as stipulated in this policy. These contraventions pose a significant legal risk to the university.

- 5. Allegations of contraventions of academic integrity should be investigated and dealt with in accordance with the relevant disciplinary rules and procedures provided for in the Employee Disciplinary Code or Student Disciplinary Code.
- 6. The objective of **academic integrity penalisation** is to deal with it in a fair, transparent and consistent manner. Anyone suspected of category 2 or category 3 academic integrity contraventions must be informed in writing by the relevant Head of Department, Director of School or Executive Dean of the alleged academic integrity contravention and be given a chance to respond to the allegations in writing or in person within a reasonable time period.

## **7. CORRECTIVE MEASURES**

Academic integrity contraventions must be dealt with according to the following guidelines:

### **7.1 Category 1 contraventions (minor contraventions)**

These cases (*usually related to undergraduate students*) should be dealt with by the department/school/college concerned, primarily with a focus on academic/scholarly development rather than punishment. One or more of the following corrective measures may be taken:

- a) A verbal discussion about the importance of academic integrity and an explanation of the consequences of continued contraventions;
- b) A mark of zero is allocated to the submitted academic output (student submissions);
- c) Compulsory attendance of awareness course(s) may be considered;
- d) Academic output may be redone.

### **7.2 Category 2 contraventions (moderate contraventions)**

These cases (*employees and students*) are dealt with by the department/school/college concerned. The relevant College Academic Integrity Subcommittee provides assistance in the assessment of the seriousness of the research-related contravention. One or more of the following sanctions may be imposed:

- a) A written notice about the importance of academic integrity and an explanation of the consequences of continued contraventions;

- b) A mark of zero is awarded to the submitted academic output (student submissions);
- c) Compulsory attendance of awareness course(s);
- d) Academic output may be redone.

Cases dealing with repeated contraventions and/or cases that are deemed to border on Category 3 violations should be referred to the Department: Human Resources (in the case of employees) or the Registrar (in the case of students). Consultation could be sought from the UNISA Academic Integrity Subcommittee of URERC in case of research-related violations if needed.

### **7.3 Category 3 contraventions (serious contraventions)**

All these cases must be referred to the Registrar, in the case of students, or the Department: Human Resources, in the case of employees, for investigation. The referral should be accompanied by a preliminary assessment report. An appropriate sanction for the misconduct is imposed according to university's Employee or Student Disciplinary Code.

## **8. ASSESSMENT FACTORS**

The following assessment factors should inform the seriousness of an alleged academic integrity contravention (e.g. plagiarism) case:

- 8.1 The significance of the plagiarised content on the submitted academic output;
- 8.2 The extent and/or amount of the plagiarism in the submitted academic output. Note that this is not equivalent to the % reported by the plagiarism detection software as that number is merely a reflection of the sources that contain text similar to previously submitted material;
- 8.3 The academic/research experience of the employee, research associate or student;
- 8.4 The level of exposure to the university's academic integrity, including plagiarism awareness actions; and
- 8.5 Previous contraventions e.g. plagiarism.

## **9. PROCEDURE**

- 9.1 The Dean of the Students, not Registrar in the case of students, or the Department: Human Resources, in the case of employees, will only investigate written complaints of an alleged academic integrity contravention, together with the necessary documentary and/or oral evidence. Such a complaint may be made anonymously.
- 9.2 All category 3 cases of alleged academic integrity contraventions (e.g. plagiarism) must be properly documented. A written report must be submitted to the Registrar, in the case of students, or the Department: Human Resources, in the case of employees, for inclusion in a formal register. The aim of the register is to enable monitoring of offenders and to ensure the consistent application of penalties and/or corrective measures. This includes the cases where the allegations were found to be unfounded.
- 9.3 Appeals are dealt with according to the existing disciplinary guidelines.

- 9.4 Technology-assisted tools (anti-plagiarism software) - complemented by a visual manual inspection, is used for the detection of plagiarism.

#### **A4. PLAGIARISM AND ORIGINALITY DECLARATION**

All research in all disciplines must be based on integrity, quality and good practice. All work must meet the ideal of academic integrity. Academic integrity can be defined as the meaningful and concerted effort to ensure honesty, trust, fairness, respect and responsibility in research. All research in the institution, whether a first-year assignment or a doctoral thesis, should be guided by this ideal.

The opposite of academic integrity is academic dishonesty. In line with UNISA's policies, the following activities are forms of academic dishonesty and can result in disciplinary action being taken.

- Copying/cut-and-paste/patch-writing: This type of dishonesty involves just copying someone else's work either word-for-word or changing it slightly without indicating that it is copied by, for example, putting it in inverted commas or brackets.
- Absence of references: This involves using someone else's ideas, thoughts, insights or data without acknowledging that they are not your own.
- Cheating/falsifying information: This is the manufacturing of data which does not exist or leaving out contradictory evidence, also sometimes called cherry-picking.
- Padding: This refers to the practice of referring to sources that were not consulted, but which makes the footnotes and/or bibliography seem more impressive.
- Too many quotes: This form of dishonesty is one where more than 15% of the work consists of quotes.
- Incorrect referencing: Incorrect referencing shows a lack of good practice and disciplinary expertise but excludes insignificant referencing mistakes.
- Helping someone cheat: This might range from the innocuous (allowing someone to copy from you) to the more severe (providing someone with the means to cheat). It is the reason why students are not allowed to hand in the same assignment, even if they worked in a group.

To a large extent the University relies on the honesty of the students when doing postgraduate work. However, the University does require that all documents are accompanied by a declaration of honesty. The template for this declaration is provided below. Students are welcome to copy it and complete it electronically and attach it to their document before submission.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY DECLARATION**

Declaration: .....

1. I understand what academic dishonesty entails and am aware of UNISA's policies in this regard.
2. I declare that this assignment is my own, original work. Where I have used someone else's work I have indicated this by using the prescribed style of referencing. Every contribution to, and quotation in, this assignment from the work or works of other people has been referenced according to this style.
3. I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.
4. I did not make use of another student's work and submitted it as my own.

NAME: .....

STUDENT NUMBER: .....

MODULE CODE: .....

SIGNATURE: .....

DATE: .....