



MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

PLAGIARISM POLICY

Policy No.	MMU/BPS/AA/003/2018
Version	01
Principal Responsibility	Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies
Effective Date

Policy Approval

This policy shall be known as the Plagiarism Policy of Maasai Mara University (herein after referred to as “the Policy”) shall take effect on the date of approval by the University Council.

In exercise of the powers conferred by Statute 17 (2d) of Maasai Mara University section 35(1) (a) (iii) of the Universities Act No. 42 of 2012 and section 19 of the Charter for Maasai Mara University 2013, Maasai Mara University Council affirms that this Policy has been made in accordance with all relevant legislations.

Dated the day of2018

Signed:

Dr. Samuel Agonda Ochola, PhD
Chairman of Council, Maasai Mara University

P.O. Box 861-20500 Narok, Kenya
Telephone: +254 - 205131400
Email: chaircouncil@mmarau.ac.ke
Website: www.mmarau.ac.ke

© copyright Maasai Mara University 2018

Foreword

Plagiarism is a serious crime in the field of academic and scientific research. Scholars continuously rely on others' previous knowledge to develop new findings in their various fields of study. It is therefore important that one acknowledges previous works of other scholars as they package their findings. The Maasai Mara University community of scholars are actively engaged in academic research and dissemination of new knowledge to the world and for general public consumption. The academic outputs in terms of research papers, seminars and conference presentations should be of the highest international standards. Towards this end, the University is guided by the values of academic excellence and professionalism and is committed to providing a professional plagiarism policy that will guide the university community in conducting research and disseminating knowledge in the highest levels of academic pursuits.

The plagiarism policy provides guidelines for identifying, defining, preventing and dealing with incidents of plagiarism. The general aim is to inform Maasai Mara University community of scholars the need to uphold integrity, honesty and professionalism in conducting studies and research. This will help promote quality in research and academic output amongst the university community.

I therefore urge our scholars, both staff and students, to familiarize themselves with the plagiarism policy and to uphold the highest levels of integrity in all their academic activities.

Prof. Mary K. Walingo, PhD, MKNAS, MBE

Vice-Chancellor

MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

VISION

To be a world class university committed to academic excellence for development.

MISSION

To provide quality university education through innovative teaching, research and consultancy for development.

CORE VALUES

- Excellence
- Teamwork
- Professionalism
- Equality and social justice
- Creativity and innovations
- Transparency and accountability

TABLE OF CONTENT

Cover Page.....	i
Policy Approval.....	ii
Foreword.....	iii
Vision, Mission and Core Values.....	iv
TABLE OF CONTENT.....	1
INTRODUCTION.....	2
1.1 Rationale for the Policy.....	2
1.2 Objectives.....	2
1.3 Scope of the Policy.....	2
1.4 Overall.....	3
2.0 DEFINITION AND CATEGORIES OF PLAGIARISM.....	3
2.1 Definition of Plagiarism.....	3
2.2 Categories of Plagiarism.....	3
3.0 DETECTION OF PLAGIARISM.....	4
4.0 CONFIRMATION OF PLAGIARISM.....	5
5.0 ACCEPATBLE AND UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF PLAGIARISM.....	5
6.0 PROCEDURES AND PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM.....	6
6.1 Procedures.....	6
6.2 Procedures for Implementation of Plagiarism Policy.....	6
6.3 Penalties for Plagiarism.....	6
7.0 APPEAL.....	7
8.0 REVIEW OF THE POLICY.....	7
9.0 APPENDICES.....	8
APPENDIX I PLAGIARISM INCIDENT REPORTING FORM FOR STUDENTS.....	8
APPENDIX II PLAGIARISM INCIDENT REPORTING FORM FOR STAFF.....	9
APPENDIX III PLAGIARISM CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE.....	10

INTRODUCTION

Maasai Mara University recognizes that academic integrity should be hallmark of research and scholarship. Honesty should be at the forefront of all academic activities undertaken by staff and students. It is in recognition of the afore-mentioned that this plagiarism policy is developed and adopted as a tool that will guide the conduct of research and studies within the purview of Maasai Mara University.

Academic research entails the discovery, harnessing and development of new ideas and knowledge that are aimed at the improvement of society. The advent of Information Communication Technology has led to easy storage and retrieval of a lot of data which is at the disposal of the researcher. This policy is therefore developed to guide on best practices in research, to acknowledge previous works, guide on how to avoid the pitfalls of academic fraud in research and the dissemination of new knowledge.

This plagiarism policy aims to uphold and enforce high standards of academic honesty and integrity both in and out of the classroom. The policy establishes and follows a process for defining and addressing academic dishonesty when it occurs. Plagiarism is a major form of academic fraud which must be addressed systematically.

1.1 Rationale for the Policy

Maasai Mara University has developed highly competitive and market driven academic programs which have been accredited by the Commission for University Education. This has led to an increase in enrolment of students interested in both undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Together with this is the growing number of faculty who administer the various programs.

The large number of students and academic staff are getting increasingly engaged in research, thereby producing large volumes of documented data which needs to be protected and utilized appropriately. New knowledge that is generated must be disseminated within the acceptable guidelines as provided for by plagiarism policy. The demand for higher education and competition for job market can lead to the desire for quick-fix options that can compromise quality of research. There is the attendant temptation to get quick results without paying due regard to the desired ethical practices in research. This plagiarism policy is therefore developed to guide on the best practices for research and dissemination of knowledge.

1.2 Objectives

- i) To define plagiarism and its categories.
- ii) To establish originality of research projects, theses and academic papers of Maasai Mara University within the acceptable international standards.
- iii) To provide frameworks of dealing with cases of plagiarism.

1.3 Scope of the Policy

This policy shall apply to all bona fide Maasai Mara University community of scholars, who include academic staff, visiting scholars, collaborators and students.

1.4 Overall Responsibility

The overall responsibility on the operationalization and implementation of this policy shall be vested on the Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies.

2.0 DEFINITION AND CATEGORIES OF PLAGIARISM

2.1 Definition of Plagiarism

In this policy, the following definitions of plagiarism shall apply:

- i) An act or instance of using or closely imitating the language and thoughts of another author without authorization and the representation of that author's work as one's own, as by not crediting the original author (Without acknowledging the original author) (Dictionary.com)
- ii) Presenting someone else's work, ideas or materials, including the work of other students, written or oral, as one's own. (Indiana University, School of Education)
- iii) The act of copying or stealing someone else's words or ideas and passing them off as your own work.

2.2 Categories of Plagiarism

The following are the common categories of plagiarism, all of which constitute serious violations of academic honesty.

i) Direct Plagiarism

The word-for-word transcription of a section of someone else's work, without attribution and without quotation marks.

ii) Self Plagiarism

Self-plagiarism occurs when a student submits his or her own previous work, or mixes parts of previous works, without permission from all supervisors involved.

Previous term papers, submitting the same piece of work for assignments in different classes.

iii) Mosaic Plagiarism

When a student borrows phrases from a source without using quotation marks, or finds synonyms for the author's language while keeping to the same general structure and meaning of the original.

iv) Accidental Plagiarism

Accidental plagiarism occurs when a person neglects to cite their sources, or misquotes their sources, or unintentionally paraphrases a source by using similar words, groups of words, and/or sentence structure without attribution.

Students must learn how to cite their sources and to take careful and accurate notes when doing research. Lack of intent does not absolve the student of responsibility for plagiarism.

Generally, plagiarism takes the following forms:

- Submitting someone's work as their own.
- Taking passages from their own previous work without adding citations.
- Re-writing someone's work without properly citing sources.
- Using quotations, but not citing the source.
- Interweaving various sources together in the work without citing.
- Citing some, but not all passages that should be cited.
- Blending cited and uncited sections of a piece of work.
- Providing proper citations, but fails to change the structure and wording of the borrowed ideas.
- Inaccurately citing a source.
- Relying too heavily on other people's work. Failing to bring original thought into the text.

DETECTION OF PLAGIARISM

This is the process of locating instances of similarity within an article or document. Detection of plagiarism can be either manual or software-assisted. Manual detection requires substantial effort and excellent memory on the part of instructors and supervisors. Software-assisted detection allows vast collections of documents to be compared to each other, making successful detection much more likely.

The process of detecting plagiarism shall begin at the department level where students submit their concepts of scholarly work. All scholarly works shall be subjected to plagiarism software. The supervisor/lecturer is advised to look out for the following as they read through the documents submitted for plagiarism check:

i) Observe citations throughout the paper.

Check if the citation styles required are consistent. Mixed citation styles may be a pointer to cases of plagiarism. MLA vs APA.

ii) Observe the writing styles or language used in the paper

Check if the language style is above or below the student's level.

iii) Look for signs that the paper is outdated

Check if the citations are outdated, several years old. The document may include statements that are no longer true.

iv) Observe the font used in the paper

A document may contain mixed font sizes and styles. This may point to cases of cut-and-paste case or copy-paste.

v) Observe the reference and bibliography lists

All citations in the body document must be included in the reference/bibliography lists. Similarly, all references in the reference/bibliography lists must appear in the body document. Any inconsistency should raise an alarm.

vi) Look for signs that the paper veers away from the topic.

The document presented for examination may be consistent with the topic, objectives, methodology and expected findings as originally set out in the earlier sections.

4.0 CONFIRMATION OF PLAGIARISM

Using antiplagiarism software or an online service. Supervisors get Instructor ID and they submit electronic copies of papers as given by students. The service generates the report. Levels of plagiarism are determined by the Board of Postgraduate Studies.

The plagiarism software is available at Maasai Mara University for use by staff and students and is accessible at the Library, Board of Postgraduate Studies and University website www.mmarau.ac.ke.

5.0 ACCEPTABLE AND UNACCEPTABLE LEVELS OF PLAGIARISM

There is a very distinct difference between what search machines flag as matching text (similarity index) and plagiarism. Most search machines will highlight ANY matching material in a paper—even if it is properly quoted and cited. Something appearing as unoriginal is not necessarily plagiarized, it just means that the material matches something in the Search Machines' databases.

It is left to the instructors to look at a paper and the originality report to make the determination of whether or not something is plagiarism, and to what extent—intentional plagiarism, unintentional plagiarism, improper/lack of citation, or mere coincidence.

Best practices from instructors suggest that that antiplagiarism tools be used as a teaching tool to address citation and academic honesty, not only as a punitive tool.

The proposed similarity limit for any scholarly work in Maasai Mara University is 20% for whole document and 2% from a single source. Reports of 21-24% shall be deemed minor and the student/staff shall be advised to correct the document before re-submission. Anything above 25% shall be deemed plagiarized.

6.0 PROCEDURES AND PENALTIES FOR PLAGIARISM

The following procedures shall be followed when implementing the Antiplagiarism Policy and the subsequent penalties shall apply where necessary

6.1 Procedures

Where an examiner detects a suspected instance of plagiarism in a student's assignment or examination, taking account of the specific context and nature of the case, any of the following courses of action may be followed:

- a) Discussion directly with the student to provide advice about correct citation and how to avoid plagiarism in the future. The student may be required to resubmit the work without any further penalty;
- b) Referral of the alleged instance for review according to the School's plagiarism advisory arrangements. The student may receive a verbal or written warning, will receive advice about correct citation and may be required to resubmit the work with or without an academic penalty;
- c) Referral of the alleged instance to the Chairperson, Board of Postgraduate Studies, or their nominee, for resolution via the University's disciplinary procedures. In some contexts, a first instance may require referral directly to the University Plagiarism Committee, or their nominee.

6.2 Procedures for Implementation of Plagiarism Policy

- a) All students wishing to present their proposals, projects and theses at the departmental level present a plagiarism report signed by the supervisors and Chair of Department.
- b) The Chair of Department shall forward the plagiarism report to the Chairperson, Board of Postgraduate Studies.
- c) Staff shall submit their documents directly to the Chairperson, Board of Postgraduate Studies.

6.3 Penalties for Plagiarism

Any reported incident shall be referred to the Chairperson, Deans' Committee and Director of Research, resolution under the University's disciplinary procedures and, if established, will be classified as MINOR (above 20%, less than 25%) or MAJOR (anything above 25%) and subject to the following penalties which may be applied in whole or in part, with respect to students and staff:

- a) Re-submission, where the maximum grade awardable is D- or equivalent;
- b) Exclusion from the program;
- c) Exclusion from the University (for staff).

Specifically, the following shall apply:

a. STUDENTS

MINOR	MAJOR
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Academic Counseling2. Resubmission of work after Correction3. Warning	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Revocation of the award2. A Failing Grade in the Affected Course

b. STAFF

MINOR	MAJOR
<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Warning2. Retraction of work	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Blacklist2. Revoke recognition/award3. Dismissal4. Legal action

Where a case of plagiarism referred to the Board of Postgraduate Studies or their nominee has been proven, the outcome of the case will be detailed on the student's record by the Board of Postgraduate Studies

Major cases of plagiarism by staff shall be referred to Staff Disciplinary Committee.

7.0 APPEAL

If not satisfied with the report/verdict, the affected party shall be given the chance to appeal by writing to the Vice-Chancellor. The Vice-Chancellor may convene a meeting involving Director of Research, Registrar Academic Affairs and Chairperson of the Board of Postgraduate Studies to review the plagiarism report and give a final verdict.

8.0 REVIEW OF THE POLICY

This policy shall be subject to review every four years or as the need arises.

**APPENDIX I PLAGIARISM INCIDENT REPORTING FORM FOR STUDENTS
MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY**

**Plagiarism Incident Reporting Form
(To be completed by Supervisor/Instructor/staff)**

This form is to be completed and submitted to the Maasai Mara University Plagiarism Committee.

Please attach all relevant information on all cases of plagiarism.

Name of Student: _____

Registration Number: _____

Department: _____

School: _____

Course Name: _____

Name of Staff Member: _____

Description of plagiarism incident:

Supervisor's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's comments:

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Dean/Director/Chairman of Dept. Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX II PLAGIARISM INCIDENT REPORTING FORM FOR STAFF

MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

Plagiarism Incident Reporting Form

This form is to be completed and submitted to the Maasai Mara University Plagiarism Committee.

Please attach all relevant evidence for all cases of plagiarism.

Name of Staff: _____

PF No: _____

Mobile: _____

Department: _____

School _____

Name of person reporting plagiarism: _____

Description of plagiarism incident: _____

Signature of person reporting: _____ Date: _____

Telephone of reporter(Optional): _____

Dean/Director/Chairman of Dept. Signature: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX III PLAGIARISM CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

MAASAI MARA UNIVERSITY

NAME: _____

REG. NO: _____

SCHOOL: _____

TYPE OF SCHORLALY WORK: _____

I _____ declare that I have examined the aforementioned scholarly work by the above-named person and I am satisfied that the work is free of any plagiarized material and have submitted it for assessment/publication.

NAME _____ SIGN _____ DATE _____

Chairman of DPGC