

# **Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University)**

## **Mullana – Ambala, Haryana**

### **Standard Operating Procedure for Ensuring Academic Integrity in Research and Curbing Plagiarism – Version 0.1**

#### **1. Background**

University Grants Commission has notified UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMISSION (PROMOTION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PREVENTION OF PLAGIARISM IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS) REGULATIONS, 2018 dated 23.07.2018 with the following objectives:

- a. To create awareness about responsible conduct of research, thesis, dissertation, promotion of academic integrity and prevention of misconduct including plagiarism in academic writing among student, faculty, researcher and staff.
- b. To establish institutional mechanism through education and training to facilitate responsible conduct of research, thesis, dissertation, promotion of academic integrity and deterrence from plagiarism.
- c. To develop systems to detect plagiarism and to set up mechanisms to prevent plagiarism and punish a student, faculty, researcher or staff of MM (DU) committing the act of plagiarism.

These SOPs are applicable to students, faculty, researchers and staff from the date of its notification in the official gazette i.e. 23.07.2018.

Maharishi Markandeshwar (Deemed to be University) has adopted the above mentioned regulations as per the decision taken with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor to be ratified by the Academic Council / Board of Management in their next meeting.

These SOPs have been issued as mandated in Clause 4 of the UGC Regulations as above.

**2. Actions to be taken by various University Authorities for creating academic integrity in near future**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Action to be taken</b>	<b>Action Accountability</b>	<b>Time Line</b>
1	MM(DU) shall instruct students, faculty, researcher and staff about proper attribution, seeking permission of the author wherever necessary, acknowledgement of source compatible with the needs and specificities of disciplines and in accordance with rules, international conventions and regulations governing the source	Academic Branch	Within one week from the date of issuance of SOPs
2	MM(DU) shall conduct sensitization seminars/ awareness programs every semester on responsible conduct of research, thesis, dissertation, promotion of academic integrity and ethics in education for students, faculty, researcher and staff.	Dean Academics/ Dean Research	Every Semester
3	MM(DU) shall, subject to flexibility provided in the regulations/norms & standards/ guidelines of the respective Statutory Body for the Degree programs concerned.		
3(a.)	Include the cardinal principles of academic integrity in the curricula of Undergraduate (UG)/ Postgraduate (PG)/Master's degree etc. as a compulsory course work/module.	Boards of Studies/ Academic Council	Within 3 months from the date of issuance of SOPs
3(b.)	Include elements of responsible conduct of research and publication ethics as a compulsory course work/module for Masters and Research Scholars.	Boards of Studies/ Academic Council	Within three months from the date of issuance of SOPs
3(c.)	Include elements of responsible conduct of research and publication ethics in Orientation and Refresher Courses organized for faculty and staff members of the HEI MM (DU).	Dean Academics	Every Year

3(d.)	Train student, faculty, researcher and staff for using plagiarism detection tools and reference management tools.	Dean Academics	Every Year
3(e.)	Establish facility equipped with modern technologies for detection of plagiarism.	Registrar	Within three months from the date of issuance of SOPs
3(f.)	Encourage student, faculty, researcher and staff to register on international researcher's Registry systems.	Head of the Institution/ Chairman DRC/ HOD	Within three months from the date of issuance of SOPs

The actions by MM(DU) authorities shall be completed within the specified timelines and reported in the meeting of Academic Council.

**3. Action to be taken by various persons / MM(DU) authorities for curbing plagiarism**

- a. MM(DU) shall establish Academic Integrity Research Cell (AIRC) consisting of the following:
  - i. Controller of Examinations – Convener
  - ii. One Senior Faculty Member to be appointed by each Dean of Faculty – Member.
  - iii. Chief Librarian – Member
- b. AIRC shall appoint suitable person(s) for carrying out the Similarity Index Check for dissertations/thesis/ reports/ draft research paper for Post Graduate and Doctoral Programs as mandated in the Study Scheme/Curriculum for respective Degree Programs by the Academic Council. Such authorized person(s) shall be responsible for running the dissertations / thesis / reports / draft research paper documents in the authorized Similarity Index Check Software and issue a Certificate under his / her signature that document with specified ID number consisting of X pages and Y words has been checked by him / her which consists of Similarity Index of overall Z percentage.
- c. The mechanism as defined at (b) above shall be made accessible to all engaged in research work including student, faculty, researcher and staff etc., as far as possible to equip them to check the Similarity Index at their own level, before the document is submitted to AIRC.
- d. Every student submitting a thesis, dissertation, or any other such documents to the AIRC in PDF (Read Only) format in a Compact Disc 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. It will also mention that the document contains X pages and Y words. The undertaking shall be countersigned by the Research Supervisor as well as Co-Supervisor, if any. The document in the Compact Disc shall be retained by AIRC for future reference.
- e. AIRC / its Authorized Person shall carry out the Similarity Index Check Software within 3 working days and issue a Certificate as mentioned in Clause 3(b) above further stating that the document has been duly checked through a Plagiarism detection tool approved by the MM(DU). The complete Similarity Check Report shall be sent by AIRC / its Authorized Person to the Chairman, Research Advisory Committee (RAC), Research Supervisor, Supervisor and Co-Supervisor, if any, and the Student in the Electronic Format / Soft Copy.
  - f. Concerned Research Supervisor and Co-Supervisor, if any, shall submit a certificate to Chairman RAC indicating that the work done by the researcher under him / her is plagiarism free as per policy laid down by MM(DU).
  - g. Chairman RAC shall constitute a sub-committee consisting of not more than three members of RAC including Research Supervisor to verify the claim of Student and Research Supervisor that the work submitted by the student is plagiarism free as per policy laid down by MM(DU). The sub-committee shall submit its report to Chairman RAC within five working days by specifying the particular level of plagiarism as per Clause 6 below.
  - h. Research Supervisor shall instruct the Student to submit hard bound copy of the dissertation / thesis / report through him / her along with a soft copy in a CD through him to the Chairman RAC with the certificate that the hard bound copy of the dissertation / thesis / report consisting of X pages and Y words is same as submitted by him / her to AIRC for Similarity Index Check. This certificate shall be countersigned by the Research Supervisor and Co-Supervisor, if any.
  - i. Chairman RAC shall conduct the meeting of RAC which will consider the dissertation / thesis / report on merit and authorize the Research Supervisor to submit the hard copies to the Examination Branch for evaluation. Examination Branch on receipt of the hard copies of dissertation / thesis / report may cross check the authenticity of the document submitted viz-a-viz electronic / soft copy available with AIRC.

- j. MM(DU) shall submit to **INFLIBNET** soft copies of all Masters, Research program's dissertations and thesis within a month after the award of degrees for hosting in the digital repository under the "**Shodh Ganga e-repository**".
- k. MM(DU) shall create Institutional Repository on institute website which shall include dissertation / thesis / paper / publication and other in-house publications.
- l. The procedure as at 'd', 'e', 'f' and 'g' shall be followed for submitting a draft research paper by the Student. Once the Sub-Committee has verified the draft research paper being plagiarism free as per levels defined in Clause 6 below, the Student / Research Supervisor may submit the same to reputed peer reviewed and indexed journals for publication as per policy of MM(DU). Any Research Paper submitted by the student without following the proper procedure as above shall be viewed seriously and attract disciplinary action.

#### **4. Similarity Checks for Exclusion from Plagiarism**

The similarity checks for plagiarism shall exclude the following:

- a. All quoted work reproduced with all necessary permission and/or attribution.
- b. All references, bibliography, table of content, preface and acknowledgements.
- c. All generic terms, laws, standard symbols and standards equations.

#### **Note:**

The research work carried out by the student, faculty, researcher and staff shall be based on original ideas, which shall include abstract, summary, hypothesis, observations, results, conclusions and recommendations only and shall not have any similarities. It shall exclude a common knowledge or coincidental terms, up to fourteen (14) consecutive words.

#### **5. Levels of Plagiarism**

Plagiarism would be quantified into following levels in ascending order of severity for the purpose of its definition:

- a. Level 0: Similarities upto 10% - (Minor similarities, no penalty)
- b. Level 1: Similarities above 10% to 40%
- c. Level 2: Similarities above 40% to 60%
- d. Level 3: Similarities above 60%

#### **6. Department Academic Integrity Panel (DAIP)**

- a. Registrar, MM(DU) shall notify a DAIP for each department whose composition shall be as given below:
  - i. Chairman - Head of the Department

- ii. Member - Senior academician from outside the department, to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor.
- iii. Member - A person well versed with anti-plagiarism tools, to be nominated by the Head of the Department.

The tenure of the members in respect of points (ii) and (iii) shall be two years. The quorum for the meetings shall be 2 out of 3 members (including Chairman).

- b. The DAIP shall follow the principles of natural justice while deciding about the allegation of plagiarism against the student, faculty, researcher and staff.
- c. The DAIP shall have the power to assess the level of plagiarism and recommend penalty (ies) accordingly.
- d. The DAIP after investigation shall submit its report with the recommendation on penalties to be imposed to the UAIP within a period of 45 days from the date of receipt of complaint / initiation of the proceedings.

#### **7. University Academic Integrity Panel (UAIP)**

- a. Registrar, MM(DU) shall notify a UAIP with the approval of the Vice-Chancellor whose composition shall be as given below:
  - i. Chairman - ProVice-Chancellor/Dean/Senior Academician of the MM(DU).
  - ii. Member - Senior Academician other than Chairman to be nominated by the Vice- Chancellor.
  - iii. Member - One member to be nominated by the Vice -Chancellor from outside the MM(DU).
  - iv. Member - A person well versed with anti-plagiarism tools to be nominated by the Vice -Chancellor.

The Chairman of DAIP and UAIP shall not be the same. The tenure of the Committee members including Chairman shall be three years. The quorum for the meetings shall be 3 out of 4 members (including Chairman).

- b. The UAIP shall consider the recommendations of DAIP.
- c. The UAIP shall also investigate cases of plagiarism as per the provisions mentioned in these regulations.

- d. The UAIP shall follow the principles of natural justice while deciding about the allegation of plagiarism against the student, faculty, researcher and staff of MM(DU).
- e. The UAIP shall have the power to review the recommendations of DAIP including penalties with due justification.
- f. The UAIP shall send the report after investigation and the recommendation on penalties to be imposed to the Vice-Chancellor within a period of 45 days from the date of receipt of recommendation of DAIP / complaint / initiation of the proceedings.
- g. The UAIP shall provide a copy of the report to the person(s) against whom inquiry report is submitted.

### **8. 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 Departmental Academic Integrity Panel (DAIP). Upon receipt of such a complaint or allegation the DAIP shall investigate the matter and submit its recommendations to the University Academic Integrity Panel (UAIP) of the MM(DU).

The authorities of MM(DU) can also take *suomotu* notice of an act of plagiarism and initiate proceedings under these regulations. Similarly, proceedings can also be initiated by the MM(DU) on the basis of findings of an examiner. All such cases will be investigated by the UAIP.

### **9. Penalties**

Penalties in the cases of plagiarism shall be imposed on students pursuing studies at the level of Masters and Research programs and on researcher, faculty & staff of the MM(DU) only after academic misconduct on the part of the individual 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.

#### **a. Penalties on Student in case of plagiarism in submission of dissertation / thesis / report / research paper**

University Academic Integrity Panel (UAIP) shall impose penalty considering the severity of the Plagiarism.

- i. Level 0: Similarities upto 10% - Minor Similarities, no penalty.

- ii. Level 1: Similarities above 10% to 40% - Such student shall be asked to submit a revised script within a stipulated time period not exceeding 6 months.
- iii. Level 2: Similarities above 40% to 60% - Such student shall be debarred from submitting a revised script for a period of one year.
- iv. Level 3: Similarities above 60% -Such student's registration for that programme shall be cancelled.

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

**Note 2:Penalty in case 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, as the case may be, then his/her degree or credit shall be put in abeyance for a period recommended by the UAIP and approved by the Vice-Chancellor.

**b. Penalties in case of plagiarism in academic and research publications**

- i. Level 0: Similarities up to 10% - Minor similarities, no penalty.
- ii. Level 1: Similarities above 10% to 40%
  - a) Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript.
- iii. Level 2: Similarities above 40% to 60%
  - a) Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript.
  - b) Shall be denied a right to one annual increment.
  - c) Shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any new Master's, M.Phil., Ph.D. Student/scholar for a period of two years.
- iv. Level 3: Similarities above 60%
  - a) Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript.
  - b) Shall be denied a right to two successive annual increments.
  - c) Shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any new Master's, M.Phil., Ph.D. Student/scholar for a period of three years.

**Note 1: Penalty on repeated plagiarism -** Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript and shall be punished for the plagiarism of one level higher than the lower level committed by him/her. In case where plagiarism of highest level is committed then the punishment for the same shall be operative. In case level 3 offence is repeated then the disciplinary action including suspension/termination as per service rules shall be taken by the MM(DU).



**Note 2: Penalty in 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, as the case may be, then his/her benefit or credit shall be put in abeyance for a period recommended by UAIP and approved by the Vice- Chancellor.

**Note 3:** MM(DU) shall create a mechanism so as to ensure that each of the paper publication/thesis/dissertation by the student, faculty, researcher or staff of the MM (DU) is checked for plagiarism at the time of forwarding/submission

**Note 4:** If there is any complaint of plagiarism against the Vice-Chancellor, a suitable action, in line with these regulations, shall be taken by the Board of Management of the MM(DU).

**Note 5:** If there is any complaint of plagiarism against the Head of Department/ Authorities at the University level, a suitable action, in line with these regulations, shall be recommended by the UAIP and approved by the Competent Authority.

**Note 6:** If there is any complaint of plagiarism against any member of DAIP or UAIP, then such member shall excuse himself/herself from the meeting(s) where his/her case is being discussed/investigated.