

**Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University  
Guwahati, Assam, India**

**Code of Ethics in Academics and Research  
Policy**



**(Approved by the Board of Management in its  
51<sup>st</sup> Meeting held on 27/09/2019)**

## **1. Preamble:**

- 1.1. The legitimacy, credibility, support, and autonomy of higher education institutions rest on the quality of their activities and services related to teaching and learning, research and outreach, as well as the integrity and transparency of their procedures.
- 1.2. While ethical principles may be embedded in a specific historical period, context and culture, there are certain fundamental and universal core values and principles that guide higher education and academic work. These ethical values and principles need to be made explicit by higher education institutions in an Institutional Code of Ethics.
- 1.3. Institutional Codes of Ethics in Academics and Research of KKHSOU serve to subscribe to codes of conduct defined by *University Grants Commission (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Education Institutions) Regulation, 2018*.

## **2. Definitions:**

- 2.1. *Academic Integrity* is the intellectual honesty in proposing, performing and reporting any activity, which leads to the creation of intellectual property;
- 2.2. *Author* includes a student or a faculty or a researcher or staff of KKHSOU who claims to be the creator of the work under consideration;
- 2.3. *Faculty* refers to a person who is teaching and/or guiding students enrolled in KKHSOU in any capacity whatsoever i.e. regular, ad-hoc, guest, temporary, visiting etc;
- 2.4. *Institutional Academic Integrity Panel* shall mean the body constituted at Institutional level to consider recommendations of the departmental academic integrity panel and take appropriate decisions in respect of allegations of plagiarism and decide on penalties to be imposed. In exceptional cases, it shall investigate allegations of plagiarism at the institutional level;
- 2.5. *Plagiarism* means the practice of taking someone else's work or idea and passing them as one's own.
- 2.6. *Researcher* refers to a person conducting academic / scientific research in KKHSOU;

- 2.7. *Script* includes research paper, thesis, dissertation, chapters in books, full-fledged books and any other similar work, submitted for assessment / opinion leading to the award of master and research level degrees or publication in print or electronic media by students or faculty or researcher or staff of KKHSOU; however, this shall exclude assignments / term papers / project reports / course work / essays and answer scripts etc.;
- 2.8. *Source* means the published primary and secondary material from any source whatsoever and includes written information and opinions gained directly from other people, including eminent scholars, public figures and practitioners in any form whatsoever as also data and information in the electronic form be it audio, video, image or text; Information being given the same meaning as defined under Section 2 (1) (v) of the Information Technology Act, 2000 and reproduced here in Regulation 2 (l);
- 2.9. *Staff* refers to all non-teaching staff working in KKHSOU in any capacity whatsoever i.e. regular, temporary, contractual, outsourced etc.;
- 2.10. *Student* means a person duly admitted and pursuing a programme of study including a research programme in any mode of study (full time or part-time or distance mode);
- 2.11. The *University* implies Krishna Kanta Handiqui State Open University (KKHSOU).
- 2.12. *Year* means the academic session in which a proven offence has been committed.

### **3. Objectives of the Code of Ethics in Academics and Research:**

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. To establish institutional mechanism through education and training to facilitate responsible conduct of research, thesis, dissertation, promotion of academic integrity and deterrence from plagiarism.
- 3.3. To develop systems to detect plagiarism and to set up mechanisms to prevent plagiarism and punish a student, faculty, researcher or staff of KKHSOU committing the act of plagiarism.

#### 4. Duties of the *University*

The *University* would establish the mechanism as prescribed by the Regulatory Authority in Code of Ethics in Academics and Research, to enhance awareness about responsible conduct of research and academic activities, to promote academic integrity and to prevent plagiarism.

##### 4.1 Awareness Programs and Trainings:

4.1.1 The *University* 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.

4.1.2 The *University* shall conduct sensitization seminars/ awareness programs on responsible conduct of research, thesis, dissertation, promotion of academic integrity and ethics in education for students, faculty, researcher and staff.

##### 4.2 Curbing Plagiarism:

4.2.1 The *University* shall declare and implement the technology based mechanism using appropriate software so as to ensure that documents such as thesis, dissertation, publications or any other such documents are free of plagiarism at the time of their submission.

4.2.2 Every student submitting a thesis, dissertation, or any other such documents to the *University* shall submit an undertaking indicating that the document has been prepared by him or her and that the document is his/her original work and free of any plagiarism.

4.2.3 The undertaking shall include the fact that the document has been duly checked through a Plagiarism detection tool approved by the *University*.

4.2.4 Each supervisor shall submit a certificate indicating that the work done by the researcher under him/her is plagiarism free.

4.2.5 The *University* shall submit to INFLIBNET soft copies of all theses after the award of degrees for hosting in the digital repository under the "Shodhganga : a reservoir of Indian theses".

- 4.2.6 The *University* shall create Institutional Repository on institute website which shall include dissertation / thesis / paper / publication and other in-house publications.

## 5. Levels of Plagiarism

The *University* will quantify plagiarism in to different levels as follows in ascending order of severity for the purpose of its definition:

- i. Level 0: Similarities upto 10% - Minor similarities, no penalty
- ii. Level 1: Similarities above 10% to 40%
- iii. Level 2: Similarities above 40% to 60%
- iv. Level 3: Similarities above 60%

## 6. Similarity checks for exclusion from Plagiarism

The similarity checks for plagiarism shall exclude the following-

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

## 7. 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 Institutional Academic Integrity Panel (IAIP) of the *University*.

The *University* Authority can also take *suomotu* notice of an act of plagiarism and initiate proceedings under the Code of Ethics. Similarly, proceedings can also be initiated by the University on the basis of findings of an examiner. All such cases will be investigated by the IAIP.

7.1. The composition of DAIP will have the following composition:

- i. Chairman - Head of the Department/School

- ii. Member - Senior academician from outside the department/school, to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of the *University*.
    - iii. Member - A person well versed with anti plagiarism tools, to be nominated by the Head of the Department/School.
  - a. The tenure of the Committee shall be two years. The quorum for the meetings shall be 2 out of 3 members (including Chairman).
  - b. The DAIP shall investigate cases of plagiarism as per the provisions mentioned in the Code of Ethics.
  - c. The DAIP after investigation shall submit its report with the recommendation on penalties to be imposed to the IAIP within a period of 45 days from the date of receipt of complaint / initiation of the proceedings.
- 7.2. The composition of IAIP will have the following composition:
- i. Chairman - Pro-VC/Dean/Senior Academician of the *University*.
    - ii. Member - Senior Academician other than Chairman, to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of the *University*.
    - iii. Member - One member nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of the *University* from outside the *University*.
    - iv. Member - A person well versed with anti-plagiarism tools, to be nominated by the Vice-Chancellor of the *University*.
  - a. The Chairman of DAIP and IAIP shall not be the same. The tenure of the Committee members shall be three years. The quorum for the meetings shall be 3 out of 4 members (including Chairman).
  - b. The IAIP shall also investigate cases of plagiarism as per the provisions mentioned in the Code of Ethics.
  - c. The IAIP shall send the report after investigation and the recommendation on penalties to be imposed to the Vice-Chancellor of the *University* within a period of 45 days from the date of receipt of recommendation of DAIP/ complaint / initiation of the proceedings.
  - d. The IAIP shall provide a copy of the report to the person(s) against whom inquiry report is submitted.

## 8. Penalties

### 8.1. Penalties in case of plagiarism in submission of thesis and dissertations-

Institutional Academic Integrity Panel (IAIP) 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 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 IAIP and approved by the Vice-Chancellor of the *University*.

### 8.2 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 and shall be asked to submit a revised script to comply the requirements.
- 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 *University*.

*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 IAIP and approved by the Vice-Chancellor of the *University*.

*Note 3:* Each of the paper publication/thesis/dissertation by the student, faculty, researcher or staff of the *University* would be checked for plagiarism in Plagiarism Detection Software/Tool at the time of forwarding/submission.

*Note 4:* If there is any complaint of plagiarism against the Vice-Chancellor of the *University* a suitable action, in line with the Code of Ethics, shall be taken by the Controlling Authority of the *University*.

*Note 5:* If there is any complaint of plagiarism against any member of DAIP/IAIP, then such member shall recuse himself/herself from the meeting(s) where his/her case is being discussed/investigated.

## **9. Review**

The Code of Ethics in Academics and Research of KKHSOU will be reviewed annually as part of the *University's* review of policy compliance or in response to changes in legislative or regulatory requirements.

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