CODE OF ETHICS

Ethics and honesty are fundamental pillars of academic activities, whether in teaching or research. Teaching and research are esteemed professions built upon principles of integrity and moral rectitude. However, there are instances where some individuals, whether intentionally or unintentionally, present another person's work as their own. Such acts not only tarnish the academic atmosphere within the institution but also undermine the reputation of both the institution and the individual. Hence, it is imperative for the institution to establish a robust policy on plagiarism to prevent such occurrences.

DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM:

- Plagiarism is the act of presenting someone else's work as one's own without proper acknowledgment.
- This encompasses copying or reproducing content from published or unpublished sources, including the Internet, without crediting the original source.
- Plagiarism extends to the replication of phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, or longer excerpts that exceed the boundaries of legitimate collaboration without acknowledging the source.

TYPES OF PLAGIARISM:

a. Secondary sources (Inaccurate citation): Secondary Source Plagiarism occurs when a researcher utilizes a secondary source, such as a Meta study, but only cites the primary sources contained within it. This form of plagiarism not only neglects to attribute the work of the authors of the secondary sources but also creates a false impression of the depth of research conducted.

b. Invalid sources (Misleading citation, Fabrication, Falsification): Invalid Source Attribution arises when researchers reference either an incorrect or non-existent source. While this may result from careless research rather than an intent to deceive, it can also serve as an attempt to bolster the list of references and conceal inadequate research.

c. Duplication (Self-plagiarism, Reuse): Duplication occurs when a researcher reuses content from their own previous studies and papers without proper attribution. The ethical considerations

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surrounding duplication are widely discussed and can vary depending on the nature of the content replicated.

d. Paraphrasing (Plagiarism, Intellectual theft): Paraphrasing involves taking another person's written content and altering the words, giving the impression that the idea or research is original, when in reality, it originated from an uncited external source. Paraphrasing can range from simple rewording to completely rewriting the content while retaining the original idea or concept.

e. Repetitive research (Self-plagiarism, Reuse): Repetitive Research Plagiarism occurs when data or text from a similar study with a similar methodology is repeated in a new study without proper attribution. This often transpires when studies on a related topic yield similar results, but the earlier research is not correctly cited.

f. Replication (Author Submission Violation): Replication involves submitting a paper to multiple publications, leading to the same manuscript being published more than once. This may constitute an ethical breach, particularly if a researcher presents a paper as new when it has already been published elsewhere.

g. Misleading attribution (Inaccurate Authorship): Misleading Attribution entails an inaccurate or insufficient list of authors who contributed to a manuscript. This occurs when authors are not credited for their partial or significant contributions to a study, or conversely, when authors are cited in a paper despite not making any contributions.

h. Unethical collaboration (Inaccurate Authorship): Unethical Collaboration arises when individuals collaborating on a project violate a code of conduct. Utilizing written work, outcomes, and ideas resulting from collaboration without acknowledging the collaborative nature of the study and the participants involved is unethical. Using others' work without proper attribution constitutes plagiarism.

i. Verbatim plagiarism (Copy-and-Paste, Intellectual Theft): Verbatim Plagiarism entails copying another person's words and works without providing proper attribution, indentation, or quotation marks. This can manifest in two forms: first, plagiarists may cite the source they borrowed from without indicating it as a direct quote, and second, no attribution is provided at all, essentially claiming the words of someone else as their own.

j. Complete plagiarism (Intellectual Theft, Stealing): Complete plagiarism is an extreme scenario wherein a researcher appropriates a study, manuscript, or other work from another researcher and submits it under his/her own name without any acknowledgment or authorization.

DETECTING PLAGIARISM: It is the primary responsibility of an institution or individual to differentiate between original content and plagiarized work. Detecting plagiarism requires judgment from someone knowledgeable in the subject matter and familiar with the definition of plagiarism. This individual should also be acquainted with the tools available for detecting plagiarism. VITS will

utilize the most effective tools/software to identify plagiarism. It is crucial for an academic institution like VITS to educate its students and faculty members about the definition of plagiarism, the methods of detection, and the consequences if plagiarism is detected.

GUIDELINES TO CHECK PLAGIARISM

1. Plagiarism reports must be generated using available software at the time of submission of Ph.D. theses, research reports, credit assignments, and other documents claimed to be original.

2. Exclusions during the plagiarism check should be limited to the following:
   1. Quotations
   2. Bibliography/References/Citations
   3. Phrases
   4. Small matches up to 10 words
   5. Format
   6. Ideas/works or language of the lab/team/group or the supervisor(s)
   7. Small similarities less than 1%
   8. Mathematical Formulae
   9. Names of Institutions, Departments, etc.

3. In cases of self-plagiarism or instances where the published work of a researcher from the lab/group is identified during the plagiarism check, a certificate (Plagiarism Self Exclusion Certificate) must be issued by the Supervisor. This certificate should specify and attach the articles that have been published by the student based on the thesis work. Only these articles should be excluded from the check. No other articles of the Supervisor or the student should be excluded. This information will be for the reference of the library, which will conduct the final check.

4. The final plagiarism check by the library is essential to ensure the accuracy of the report submitted at the time of thesis/other document submission.

5. For B.Tech/M.Tech/Ph.D. theses, the library will issue the final Plagiarism Verification Certificate certifying and authenticating the check performed by the student/Department. This certificate must be submitted to the Exam Branch during thesis submission, along with a certificate from the students signed by the Supervisor.

GUIDELINES FOR ACTION WHEN PLAGIARISM IS REPORTED

When a case of plagiarism is reported, the following procedure will be followed:

- The Principal of VITS will establish a committee comprising experts from various departments to determine whether plagiarism has occurred and, if so, to what extent. This committee will then submit its report to the competent authority for a final decision.
- The committee will utilize the best available software provided by UGC, INFLIBNET, the National Knowledge Commission, or specified software made available by the Institution for detecting plagiarism.
- The responsibility for plagiarism shall lie with the student in the case of a Ph.D. thesis and with the first author in the case of a research paper.
- Depending on the severity of the offense, a student may face one or more of the following penalties:
  - Fine, warning, or both.
  - Rustication for a specified period or permanent expulsion from SVEC.
  - Withdrawal of the degree awarded for plagiarized work.
- Depending on the severity of the offense, a supervisor/teacher may face one or more of the following penalties:

  - Warning, withholding of increments, or both.
  - Removal from VITS.
  - Any other punishment as determined by the committee.

The severity of the punishment will be determined by the Principal based on the committee's recommendations and confirmed by the Governing Body based on the recommendations of the College Academic Committee.

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