

**Department of Psychology
Faculty of the Humanities
University of the Free State**

**Departmental View and Guidelines in Respect of Plagiarism within
Research Undertakings**

This document provides an outline of the Departmental description and guidelines in respect of plagiarism in post-graduate research undertakings.

1. Plagiarism in Context

Plagiarism is technically not a legal construct *per se*. It has its origins from the Latin word *plagium* which means to "kidnap" and is used to refer to the taking of ownership of others' ideas and work. It is thus the unacknowledged use of someone else's intellectual property especially their words and their ideas. In academia, and particularly in research undertakings conducted and documented as part of research requirements for degree purposes, plagiarism is seen in a serious light that constitutes an academic offence. Plagiarism could be seen as an offence against the Law of Copyright, but could also be seen as a category of misbehavior within the delineation of a University's description of misconduct. The University of the Free State is in the process of refining and establishing a formalized policy on plagiarism. In the meanwhile the Department of Psychology has developed an interim description and guideline as to what plagiarism constitutes within the realm of research endeavors, specifically with regards to written documentation such as that required for degree purposes on post-graduate programme level. Examples of written documentation that lends itself enticingly and favorably to the misconduct of plagiarism include: research proposals; mini-dissertations, comprehensive dissertations, doctoral theses and articles.

2. What is Plagiarism?

The Compact Edition of the Oxford English Dictionary describes plagiarism as the action or practice of plagiarizing; the wrongful appropriation of purloining [stealing], and publication as one's own, of the ideas, or the expression of ideas of another. These ideas could be literary, artistic, musical or mechanical or any other.

Examples of plagiarism include the following:

- The fabrication of in-text references
- The paraphrasing of someone else's words and ideas in your own words without providing recognition of the original source

- The direct translation of another author's work (word by word) without referencing it as a quotation or without providing a reference/source
- The presentation of data that was generated by someone else without providing the original researcher(s) or the source's information and details
- The submission of a documented section of work or material that you have used previously in another assignment or project, without indicating where you have originally used the material. This is a form of "recycled plagiarism"
- The submission of documented material or work (as your own) that has been created by another author or person
- The abuse of the internet by simply downloading articles or sections of articles from the web and presenting these as your own work
- The copy and paste of sections of work from someone else's work and submitting it for evaluation as your work.

Plagiarism Contract

I(full names and surname)
 with student number.....
 hereby acknowledge that I am aware of the Department of Psychology's interim description and guidelines in respect of plagiarism. I understand what plagiarism involves, and I herewith declare that all written/documented work and material that I submit to my research supervisor, the Departmental Research Committee, and eventually to the external examiner, is my own work and that where applicable and required, reference has been made to other authors and sources of ideas. I accept that if I am found guilty of plagiarism I will take full-responsibility for my actions and accept that I will avail myself for any disciplinary hearing and steps to be undertaken by the Department of Psychology. I also hereby understand that I cannot hold my supervisor/ promoter or the Department of Psychology liable in any manner of way if I have been found guilty of this misconduct.

Signature:.....

Date:.....