AIR UNIVERSITY ANTI PLAGIARISM POLICY - 2023
(To be read in conjunction with HEC Anti-plagiarism policy 2023, Version 2.0)

General

1.   Air University Anti-Plagiarism Policy revolves around several segments related to anti-plagiarism principles, types of plagiarism, clear complaint lodging procedure, the composition of the University *Anti-Plagiarism Standing Committee*, grounds and *penalties of plagiarism*, the constitution of National Plagiarism Standing Committee at HEC, appellate process, etc. Introducing this policy, Air University firmly believes that its implementation would significantly enhance academic integrity and quality, thereby augmenting overall quality standards in Academia and Research.

2.   Air University endeavors to prevent Plagiarism with a zero-tolerance strategy while providing a thorough understanding of plagiarism and its repercussions on their academic career. Failure of understanding can result in dismissal from the university, civil claims, and even undertakings. Air University always ensures individual intellectual rights, transparency of work, and research within the allowable limits of the similarity index for all documentation within the domain of the university. This policy is prepared as an outflow from HEC Anti Plagiarism Policy 2023.

Aim

3.   The aim of this policy is to provide procedures and guidelines for preventing, detecting, and dealing with plagiarism across the Air University faculties with appropriate punitive actions if deemed appropriate.

Scope

4.   The University's anti-plagiarism policy is applicable to all academic and research activities conducted by FMs, Staff, and Students/ Research Scholars of the university. The focus is largely on research work by students of undergraduate, postgraduate, and PhD scholars, as well as their assessments and publications. Air University uses Turnitin software for plagiarism checking. Standard Turnitin settings are attached as **Appendix 'A'**.

Plagiarism

5.   Plagiarism is defined as the copying of phrases, clauses, sentences, paragraphs, or larger excerpts from published or unpublished work, including lawful collaboration, without acknowledging the source.

Academic Integrity and Significance

6.   The purpose of this policy is to ensure academic integrity and quality research among all stakeholders of the university. This will provide a vigilant monitoring system and detection of malpractices and plagiarism. There are three important baseline aspects covered in this policy, which are: -

(a) Raising awareness of plagiarism among research scholars, mentors/supervisors, and other staff involved in active research.

(b) Establishing an institutional mechanism to educate and train stakeholders on how to avoid and monitor plagiarism.

(c) Formulating a system to detect, prevent, and penalize plagiarism.

Responsibility of Supervisor

7. The principal responsibility of the Supervisor is to:

(a) Teach students how to avoid plagiarism.

(b) Techniques of using appropriate reference sources

(c) Check student research work before submitting the final thesis to QEC.

(d) Suggest any changes if required before the submission of the final draft.

(e) Co-relate the final report by QEC with his / her own report.

Responsibility of Academic Staff

8. Academic staff must also act quickly when plagiarism is found, ensuring that appropriate action is taken in time and that fair punishment is enforced when necessary. Plagiarism must not be presumed when a Turnitin originality report raises suspicion of plagiarism. The paper must be researched before being discussed with the student. The supervisor is expected to run any manuscript of research work, whether his/her own or that of scholars, through the Institution's suitable detection procedures like Turnitin software, AU library, and departmental thesis.

Responsibility of the Research Scholar / Student

9. The scholar should have a thorough understanding of how to write research, thesis, and dissertation. The student should ensure the following: -

(a) The student should be well-versed in the effects of plagiarism as well as the consequences of such activities.

(b) The research scholar is to submit a manuscript to plagiarism detection mechanisms present in the QEC department available at Air University.

(c) Students must follow the AU criteria of similarity index which should not exceed 18%. (1% margin is kept due to software limitation)

(d) It is the utmost important duty of any scholar to see that he/she does not attempt any unfair means / old data in the research work either during experimental data collection or data analysis or report writing or publication of research articles, research journals or presentation of scientific findings in conferences.

(e) Scholars/Students must make sure that the document they are submitting is in proper documenting style (i.e., IEEE, Chicago, MLA, APA, etc. And is free of plagiarism.

10. **Previously Published Research.**   To avoid self-plagiarism, the mentor must give a certificate to the scholar if the scholar reuses previously published research data and publications. Permission and with full consent of the supervisor, the QEC department shall request the Turnitin administrator to delete/exclude published data. A formal letter/email shall

be written by the supervisor to QEC in order to delete/exclude specific published research. The data must include the relevant email address and the ID of the document.

11.   **Research Work Co-authorized.**   If the study work is co-authored with others, a consent letter from co-author (s) must be acquired by the supervisor.

12.   **Research Work Co-supervised.**   If the research works co-supervised by other faculty from any other institute, consent must be acquired by him/her. Both supervisor and co-supervisor agreed on conducting research work with signature on the consent.

Checking of Similarity Index through Turnitin Software

13.   **Air University Policy.**   Though the HEC allows a similarity index <=19.0%), it is observed that the similarity indexes change rapidly during successive checking due to continuous additions in the server of Turnitin and system limitations of showing 19.5% as 19%. It is therefore decided to keep the similarity index to 18% to prevent any issues for the supervisor and the student. Supervisors ensure that before sending any report they must give a certificate of the similarity index of less than 18% to QEC. Additionally, supervisors ensure that all single sources must have a similarity index >=5%. These steps facilitate the students/scholars to publish their work without any inch of doubt.

14.   **Procedure for Checking Plagiarism.**   A checklist of actions is also attached as **Appendix 'B'**. Following is the procedure for checking the similarity index at Air University by the QEC: -

   (a)   The supervisor shall check the final document and forward the document to the program coordinator If a similarity report is <= 18%.
   (b)   All program coordinators forward the final document to QEC.
   (c)   The program coordinator must ensure the presence of only the following parts of the document that will be submitted to QEC.
      1)   Title page along with the name of the student
      2)   Title page along with student registration ID
      3)   Title page containing Thesis title.
      4)   Abstract
      5)   Introduction to Conclusion
      6)   Document text shall be in MS Word only.
   (d)   It is the prime responsibility of the program coordinator to ensure that the data shared by the student is in the correct format i.e., thesis title, spelling, name, and registration ID.
   (e)   QEC shall generate the final report as per HEC advised standard form within one week time and shall dispatch it to the respective department.
   (f)   The first page of the report shall be signed by the QEC person who has checked the report and finally signed & and stamped by the Director Quality.
   (g)   No student is allowed to collect their report directly from QEC. The report shall be sent to the department program coordinator by mail.

(h) All final documents (thesis, research paper, or article) once signed by Director QEC will be saved in the Turnitin repository so that no change shall be made to it in the future.

Request for the Deletion of Submission in the Turnitin Repository

15. Papers can be deleted from the Turnitin software that was mistakenly added to the repository. With the permission and full consent of the supervisor, the QEC department shall request the support center Turnitin to delete a submission from the repository. Once the paper ID has been deleted, Turnitin responds to the administrator. However, it is requested that all supervisors ensure the correct setting of the Turnitin software as per **Appendix 'A'** before checking any document. Similarly, the supervisor shall send the verification certificate as per **Appendix 'C'** to exclude any self-authored paper. Both processes will take 1- 2 weeks for the deletion/exclusion of submission.
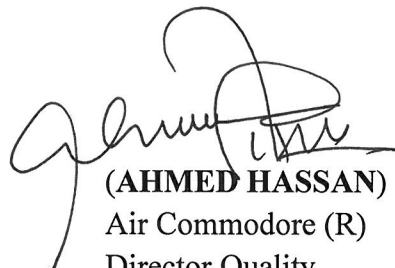
Request for Turnitin Account

16. If any faculty member or PhD scholar requires a Turnitin account for research purposes, he/she shall follow the formal procedure and request it through email to QEC through their HOD / Dean. An email shall contain the following credentials:
   a. Name
   b. Designation
   c. Department
   d. University Email ID
   e. Consent of HOD / Dean

17. Due to the limited number of accounts, QEC provides accounts only to the supervisors and HoDs.

Timetable for Departments

18. Departments/program coordinators shall share the thesis documents, list of students, their registration ID, and title of the thesis and email to the QEC Department. It is preferred that program coordinators should email once a week to avoid any delays. QEC shall take one week to generate a similarity report which will be shared with the respective departments.

(AHMED HASSAN)
Air Commodore (R)
Director Quality
Air University, Islamabad
Tel # 0519153289