

# Plagiarism Procedures for the Faculty of Engineering of Stellenbosch University

3 November 2017<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Approved by the Faculty Board on 3 November 2017, with subsequent editorial improvements.

# 1 Contextualisation

These procedures should be read together with the "Policy on Plagiarism" (**SU Policy**) and the "SU Procedure for the investigation and management of allegations of plagiarism" (**SU Procedures**), with commencement date 1 December 2016. Phrases in italics in the Faculty's procedures were copied verbatim from the SU Policy or the SU Procedures.

This document describes the faculty specific implementation of the SU Policy and SU Procedures, in particular Section 5.1.2 of the SU Procedure: *Less serious cases, as determined in accordance with the factors set out in the Policy, are dealt with at department or faculty level, where appropriate and according to internal faculty processes which must be approved by the Dean or Faculty Board and documented in writing for reporting purposes.*

# 2 Definitions

The following definitions are taken from the SU Policy and the SU Procedures:

**Academic activity:** [SU Policy Section 3] *Any activity that contributes to or is part of the broad academic project of the University. This includes all activities in teaching and learning, research, writing and publishing and community interaction.*

**Acknowledgement:** [SU Policy Section 3.2] *Reference indicating the source of previously expressed ideas or published material and the details of the publication.*

**Blameworthiness (intent or negligence) of the person committing plagiarism:** [SU Policy Section 7.1] *Did the person commit plagiarism knowingly (intentionally), or in circumstances indicating that he/she should reasonably have known of the plagiarism (negligently)? A state of blameworthiness (either intent or negligence) is required to make a finding of plagiarism. To determine intent or negligence, all the circumstances must be taken into account, including but not limited to the following factors:*

- *The extent of the plagiarism: How much of the work presented as part of an academic activity constitutes plagiarism, in relation to the part of the work constituting an own intellectual contribution? Is the plagiarism contained in the work so extensive that it is not possible to determine or assess own intellectual contribution?*
- *The importance of the academic activity: Did the alleged plagiarism occur in a small assignment, a final thesis, or an article submitted for publication?*
- *Harmfulness of the plagiarism: The extent of harm that the plagiarism has caused or can potentially cause to personal and institutional reputation, taking into account all the circumstances,*

*including the seniority of the person committing the plagiarism, the relevant academic activity and the extent of the plagiarism.*

- *Repeated acts of plagiarism.*

**Complainant:** [SU Procedures Section 3.2] *Any person making allegations and/or disclosures of plagiarism, including protected disclosures.*

**Less serious cases:** [SU Procedures Section 5.1.2 footnote 1] *May include first time offenders, more junior students, limited extent of plagiarism, negligence rather than blatant intent.*

**More serious cases:** [SU Procedures Section 5.1.3 footnote 3] *May include repeat offenders, extensive evidence of plagiarism in a significant piece of work such as a thesis, post graduate students especially those at Masters and PhD level, academic staff, evidence of gross negligence or blatant intent, etcetera.*

**Plagiarism:** [SU Policy Section 3.5] *The use of the ideas or material of others without acknowledgement, or the re-use of one's own previously evaluated or published material without acknowledgement (self-plagiarism).*

**Respondent:** [SU Procedures Section 3.5] *A person(s) against whom allegations or disclosures of plagiarism have been made, including students (undergraduate, postgraduate or visiting), postdoctoral fellows and employees (temporary or permanent) of SU, as well as any person whose thesis or written work ... were published under the name of SU, and remains published under SU's name.*

**Self-plagiarism:** [SU Policy Section 3.6] *The re-use of one's own previously evaluated or published material without acknowledgement or indication thereof. [SU Procedures Section 5.1.12] However in certain circumstances a student may justifiably submit very similar work for assessment; for example if a question is posed for an assignment and then repeated as an examination question. Lecturers should consider each case on its merits before making an allegation of self-plagiarism.*

### **3 Principles**

The Faculty endorses all the principles given in the SU Policy and SU Procedures and, for the purposes of this document, emphasises the following principles and instructions:

- a) Allegations of plagiarism are a serious matter; hence the investigation thereof must be conducted in accordance with the highest standards of integrity, accuracy and fairness. [SU Procedures Section 1.2]*
- b) All cases of plagiarism must be handled consistently according to established processes, either at department, faculty or central management level. [SU Policy Section 6.4]*
- c) The management of allegations of plagiarism must be appropriate to both the academic status of the member and the academic setting of the alleged plagiarism. Hence the University's policy approach to plagiarism is based on developing and fostering an awareness of plagiarism and its*

*ramifications, particularly among undergraduate students and in the context of the University's Learning and Teaching Policy. This means that first-time junior offenders such as first year students will be treated differently to repeat offenders, or more senior students. [SU Policy Section 8]*

- d) *Departments and Faculties are responsible for establishing processes for the detection, reporting and investigation of allegations of plagiarism that are compliant with the University's overarching policy and procedures. Such processes could include an internal memo containing the following information: Detail on the appropriate use of Turnitin (or similar similarity-detection software) in a specific environment; the identification of persons in a department who are responsible for receiving allegations of plagiarism; and measures to facilitate further investigation. [SU Policy Section 9.5]*

## **4 Confidentiality**

- a) *All facets of the investigation must be kept confidential, i.e. made available only to those with a direct involvement in the reporting and investigation of the matter as outlined in Section 4(c) of the Faculty's procedures [SU Procedures Section 4.2.1].*
- b) *The Complainant's identity may only be disclosed to the Respondent if he/she has consented thereto in writing or orally during the investigation process. However, in instances where the Complainant is the Respondent's lecturer or supervisor, his/her identity will be apparent. [SU Procedures Section 4.2.2]*
- c) *The Respondent's identity must not be disclosed before it has formally been decided that he/she is guilty of plagiarism, unless the Respondent has consented thereto in writing, and provided that the Respondent's identity may be disclosed to all the relevant parties in the investigation process including, where applicable, the Departmental Chairperson, the Dean, the Research Integrity Officer (RIO), the Director: Legal services, the Manager: Student Discipline, the Vice-Rector (Research, Innovation and Postgraduate Studies and/or Learning and Teaching) and person(s) formally delegated to handle such issues. [SU Procedures Section 4.2.3]*
- d) *Should maintaining complete confidentiality of the Complainant/Respondent's identity throughout the entire process not be reasonably possible, the Complainant should be informed of this in writing if and when such a stage in the investigation process is reached. [SU Procedures Section 4.2.4]*

## **5 Faculty procedures to discourage plagiarism**

### **5.1 Departmental procedures**

Departments may introduce procedures, that comply with the SU Policy and SU Procedures, in addition to that given in this section. The departmental procedures should be made known to students, for example through module frameworks.

### **5.2 Plagiarism declarations**

The Faculty requires that students submit signed plagiarism declarations (similar to the one given in Appendix A) with

- a) All summative assessments (except those completed under supervision of staff, such as tests), including postgraduate assignments; and
- b) Formative assessments, when required by teaching staff.

Note that the procedures that apply to postgraduate theses and dissertations are given in Section 8.

*Notwithstanding this requirement (for plagiarism declarations), students who submit work without such a written declaration are in no way absolved from responsibility for plagiarism and from compliance with the requirements of this Policy (SU Policy Section 9.1).*

### **5.3 Use of Turnitin facilities**

The Faculty requires that, where reasonable practicable, students submit for evaluation by Turnitin (or similar facilities):

- a) All summative assignments (except those completed under supervision of staff), including all written work submitted for degree purposes at a postgraduate level; and
- b) Formative assessments, when required by teaching staff.

Students will be allowed to submit an assessment to Turnitin (or similar facility) only once, unless expressly permitted to submit it more than once by the lecturer(s) responsible for the assessment. Students will normally only be allowed to submit an assessment a second time when a lecturer gave the students feedback on the first submission and are required to submit an improved version of the assessment in the normal course of the module.

### **5.4 Zero tolerance**

All potential cases of plagiarism that come to the attention of staff involved in assessments will be handled in accordance with these Faculty procedures and no such cases will remain unreported nor handled by the staff in another way.

## **5.5 All forms of communication is included**

The Faculty considers all forms of communication to be relevant as far as plagiarism is concerned, including text, formal and informal engineering drawings, and computer programmes.

## **5.6 Author of the source text**

If the author of the work that was plagiarised is a student at Stellenbosch University, the author may be held responsible as an accessory to plagiarism if the author intentionally provided the work to the Respondent or knowingly allowed the Respondent access to the work. If the Respondent obtained the author's work without the author's knowledge, the author will not be considered to be an accessory.

# **6 Faculty procedures for less serious cases**

Please refer to the Definitions section above for a description of what constitutes a less serious case.

*Such processes must be fair and, in accordance with the developmental and remedial approach described in the Policy, and should ideally provide an opportunity for discussion with the student prior to finalising the case and determining an outcome. [SU Procedures Section 5.1.2]*

*Departments and faculties must attempt to conclude their investigation as quickly as possible and preferably within two weeks for investigations involving students [SU Procedures Section 6.1]. The periods referred to in this Procedure may be extended by the Vice-Rector concerned or his/her delegated authority, or the Director: Legal Services, if he/she is of the opinion that valid reasons exist for such an extension [SU Procedures Section 6.2].*

Fulfilling the above requirements, the Faculty's procedure for these cases is:

- a) The "presiding chairperson" in the procedure can be either (where "department" refers to the home department of the module where the plagiarism occurred or, if not related to a module, the Complainant's department):
  - i. A senior academic staff member appointed by the department's management committee, a vice-dean or the dean (this option is used when the departmental chairperson is the Complainant);
  - ii. An academic staff member of level senior lecturer, or more senior, appointed by the relevant departmental chairperson; or
  - iii. The relevant departmental chairperson him/herself.
- b) The Complainant reports, in writing (e.g. via email), the suspected case of plagiarism to the presiding chairperson.
- c) The presiding chairperson enquires from the Legal Services Division whether the Respondent has any previous plagiarism offences on

record<sup>2</sup>. If the Respondent has any such offences, the procedure for more serious cases is followed.

- d) The presiding chairperson notifies the Respondent of the allegation in writing (e.g. by email or letter) preferably within one week of receiving the written allegation (as required by SU Procedures Section 5.1.6). A template for such an email or letter is given in Appendix B.

The same communication offers the Respondent the opportunity to choose one of the following:

- i. Accept the outcome proposed in the communication without a meeting (the presiding chairperson may decide whether this opportunity will be offered);
- ii. Attend a meeting with the Complainant and presiding chairperson; or
- iii. Have his/her case referred to the Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC).

The Respondent is also informed that, if he/she *chooses to be supported by a legal representative, the case will automatically be referred to the CDC*, but in all cases the Respondent has the right to *seek advice or support from anyone of his/her choosing*. [SU Procedures Section 4.1.3]

- e) If the Respondent chooses to have the case referred to the CDC, to be supported by a legal representative or does not attend the above-mentioned meeting, the matter is handled further according to the procedure for more serious cases. Otherwise, the procedure continues as given below.
- f) At the above-mentioned meeting of the presiding chairperson, the Complainant and the Respondent, the Respondent is given the opportunity to *state his/her case, ... to ask questions; present information/evidence in his/her defence; and question or raise points about any information given by any witness* [SU Procedures Sections 4.1.2, 4.1.3]. Thereafter the Respondent leaves the meeting.
- g) After the Respondent left the meeting, the presiding chairperson and the Complainant attempts to reach a consensus decision, including a determination of remedial action. If they cannot reach consensus, the case is referred to the Dean.
- h) If the abovementioned meeting concludes that the reported plagiarism is of a more serious nature, the procedure for such cases is followed further. If the meeting concludes that the plagiarism is of a less serious nature, the remainder of the procedure in this section is followed.
- i) The presiding chairperson sends a letter or email to the Respondent. The letter or email may attach the report that is to be sent to Legal Services

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<sup>2</sup> Less serious cases are not noted on the students' official records, but the Legal Services Division keeps centralised records of these cases.

(template in Appendix C), instead of repeating the details. This correspondence must include at least the following:

- i. The finding of the meeting mentioned above;
  - ii. The consequences for the student (this will typically include that mark of zero be awarded to the student for the whole assessment where plagiarism occurred, and that the student will not be given the opportunity to improve this mark);
  - iii. The remedial training that will be provided (SU Procedures Section 5.1.11), for example that the student is required to write an essay related to his/her plagiarism.
  - iv. Informing the Respondent that he/she should, within 5 working days of the receipt, sign the letter and return it to the presiding chairperson if the Respondent accepts the finding, consequences and remedial training.
  - v. Informing the Respondent that failure to return the signed letter within above period, will result in the case being referred to the CDC.
- j) If the Respondent does not return the signed letter within 5 working days, the case is referred to the CDC and the procedure for more serious cases is followed. However, the presiding chairperson may give an extension for the returning of the signed letter if circumstances warrant it, at the discretion of the presiding chairperson.
  - k) If the Respondent does return the signed letter within 5 working days, the consequences are implemented.
  - l) The department of the presiding chairperson keeps the records of the case for at least 5 years (SU Procedures Section 7.2). The records must include (SU Procedures Sections 5.1.9 and 7.3):
    - i. The original report by the Complainant;
    - ii. The findings of the abovementioned meeting, with justification for decisions made;
    - iii. The letter signed by the Respondent.
  - m) The presiding chairperson sends a brief report signed by the student to the Legal Services Division (Student Discipline) before the end of the semester in which the case was finalised (SU Procedures Section 7.4). A template for the report required by Legal Services is given in Appendix C.

## **7 Faculty procedures for more serious cases**

Note that for cases involving postgraduate and research contexts, the procedure in Section 8 is applied first.

Please refer to the Definitions section above for a description of what constitutes a more serious case.

The Faculty's procedure for these cases is:

- a) The Complainant reports in writing (e.g. via email) the suspected case of plagiarism to the chairperson of the Complainant's department (SU Procedures Section 5.1.4). If the departmental chairperson is the Complainant, another senior academic staff member (appointed by the department's management committee, a vice-dean or the dean) fulfils the role of the departmental chairperson in this procedure.
- b) The chairperson (or his/her delegate) and other persons the chairperson deems necessary (which may not include the Complainant [SU Procedures Section 5.1.5]) reviews the allegation [SU Procedures Section 5.1.7]. The persons performing the review *determine (1) whether a finding of plagiarism can be upheld and (2) what the gravity of the plagiarism is, in accordance with the factors as given in Section 7 of the Policy* [SU Procedures Section 5.1.8].
- c) If the review indicates that it would be more appropriate, by discretion of the chairperson or the abovementioned delegate, the case is handled according to the procedures for less serious cases or for research contexts. Otherwise, this procedure is applied further.
- d) The chairperson notifies the Respondent of the allegation in writing (e.g. via email) preferably within one week of receiving the written allegation [SU Procedures Section 5.1.6]. The same communication informs the Respondent that the case is being referred to the Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC).
- e) The chairperson refers the case to Legal Services Division (Student Discipline) for investigation in terms of the Student Disciplinary Code and arranges the necessary support from the Faculty to facilitate the investigation [SU Procedures Section 5.1.3].
- f) *In instances where the CDC determines that a case of plagiarism which was referred to them and Legal Services can actually appropriately be dealt with at departmental or faculty level, the CDC will retain jurisdiction and can then, at its discretion, either refer the case back to the department or faculty, or can conclude the matter and determine the final outcome.* [SU Procedures Section 5.1.10].
- g) The department of the chairperson keeps the records of the case for at least 5 years [SU Procedures Section 7.2]. The records must include [SU Procedures Sections 5.1.9 and 7.3]:
  - i. The original report by the Complainant;
  - ii. The notification sent to the Respondent;
  - iii. Record of the referral to Student Discipline.

## 8 Faculty procedures for postgraduate and research contexts

For plagiarism encountered in postgraduate modules, Sections 5, 6 and 7 of the Faculty Procedures is applied. This section only applies to postgraduate research contexts.

In this section "thesis" also includes dissertations and other research assignments, "supervisor" refers to the relevant postgraduate student's research supervisor(s) or co-supervisor(s) (Afr: studieleier), "department" refers to the relevant student's home department and "Turnitin" may be substituted with other similar facilities.

### 8.1 Prior to submission for examination

The Faculty's procedures for the avoidance of plagiarism prior to the submission of a thesis for examination (as required by SU Policy Section 9.3) are the following:

- a) Notwithstanding the following procedures, *the primary responsibility for avoidance of plagiarism and for complying with the policy requirements remains with the student or researcher, who will be held accountable should the work involve plagiarism or in any other way fail to meet the required standards of ethical conduct* [SU Policy Section 9.3].
- b) If the supervisor finds at any time an indication that the student has falsified research results, used the work of other researchers (including survey papers) without acknowledging the source or committed other similar transgressions, the SU's "Procedure for the Investigation of Allegations of Breach of Research Norms and Standards" is used in preference to this procedure, unless there is good justification not to.
- c) In situations where a supervisor reviews thesis proposals, research papers, drafts of theses or other similar documents to which a student has contributed as author: if a supervisor finds an indication that a student has committed plagiarism other than that referred to in the previous paragraph (e.g. inadvertent plagiarism through insufficient or inappropriate referencing; the supervisor may use Turnitin for this purpose and/or rely on his/her knowledge of the relevant literature), the supervisor discusses the required corrections with the student and gives the student at least one opportunity to correct the document. If the student persists in committing plagiarism in spite of the guidance of the supervisor, the reporting procedure given below is followed:
  - i. Before the student submits his/her thesis for examination, except for theses that have been classified as confidential through the normal procedures of the Faculty, the supervisor arranges for the thesis to be submitted to Turnitin and gives the student the opportunity to improve the thesis, if appropriate.
  - ii. *The student and supervisor should concur that the Turnitin or similar report is acceptable* [SU Policy Section 9.3] before the thesis is

submitted for examination. The supervisor determines in consultation with the postgraduate coordinator, taking the context of the student's work into account, a reasonable threshold for the similarity index.

- iii. If student and supervisor do not concur, the student is given one opportunity to revise the document before repeating the evaluation using Turnitin.
  - iv. If the similarity is still not acceptable to the supervisor after the opportunity to revise the document, the supervisor submits a complaint according to these procedures.
  - v. If the student and supervisor concur that the Turnitin report is acceptable, this is communicated to the postgraduate coordinator in a way prescribed by the department.
- d) When a student submits his/her thesis for examination to the department's postgraduate administrator, the document must contain the normal declaration stating that the work presented is the student's own work (as given in the Calendar Part 1). The student must sign the declaration, either on a paper copy or electronically in a PDF or similar copy.
  - e) In the case of a thesis that has been classified as confidential through the normal procedures of the Faculty, the supervisor is responsible, in consultation postgraduate coordinator, for determining whether the document contains plagiarism. If the supervisor finds plagiarism, the relevant procedure described above is followed.

## **8.2 Procedure when plagiarism is found before submission for examination**

The Faculty's procedure when plagiarism is found in research assignments, theses and dissertations is:

- a) Supervisors must report all suspected instances of plagiarism to their departmental chairperson or his/her delegate. If the departmental chairperson is the Complainant, another senior academic staff member (appointed by the department's management committee, a vice-dean or the dean) fulfils the role of the departmental chairperson in this procedure.
- b) The departmental chairperson or his/her delegate assesses the seriousness of the case. The case is further handled accordingly, using the Faculty's procedures for more or less serious cases.

## **8.3 After submission for examination**

After a thesis has been submitted for examination, the following procedures apply:

- a) *If an allegation of plagiarism is made by the examiner of a postgraduate research assignment or thesis, the examination process should be*

*suspended immediately until such time as the investigation, as described in SU Procedures Section 5.2.2, is completed. [SU Procedures Section 5.2.2]*

- b) If allegations of plagiarism are made after the student has passed the examination process and his/her thesis has been uploaded to SUNScholar (and is thus in the public domain), the steps outlined in SU Procedures Section 5.2.3 is followed.

## **9 Faculty procedures related to staff, researchers or research groups**

For these cases, the Faculty adopts the procedure given in SU Procedures Section 5.3.

## **10 Situations not provided for above**

In cases not provided for elsewhere in the Faculty's procedures, the Complainant follows a procedure approved by the Dean and reports the procedure followed to the Faculty Board at its next meeting.

## **11 Appeal process**

Please refer to SU Procedures Section 8.

## **Appendix A: Plagiarism Declaration**

The declaration below is an expansion of that given in Section 11 of the SU Policy.

- I have read and understand the Stellenbosch University Policy on Plagiarism and the definitions of plagiarism and self-plagiarism contained in the Policy [Plagiarism: The use of the ideas or material of others without acknowledgement, or the re-use of one's own previously evaluated or published material without acknowledgement or indication thereof (self-plagiarism or text-recycling)].
- I also understand that direct translations are plagiarism, unless accompanied by an appropriate acknowledgement of the source. I also know that verbatim copy that has not been explicitly indicated as such, is plagiarism.
- I know that plagiarism is a punishable offence and may be referred to the University's Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC) who has the authority to expel me for such an offence.
- I know that plagiarism is harmful for the academic environment and that it has a negative impact on any profession.
- Accordingly all quotations and contributions from any source whatsoever (including the internet) have been cited fully (acknowledged); further, all verbatim copies have been expressly indicated as such (e.g. through quotation marks) and the sources are cited fully.
- I declare that, except where a source has been cited, the work contained in this assignment is my own work and that I have not previously (in its entirety or in part) submitted it for grading in this module/assignment or another module/assignment.

## **Appendix B: Template for email to student in less serious cases**

### **B.1 Without attaching the report form in Appendix C**

Date

Dear student

You are suspected of plagiarism in the following situation:

- Student's name and student number:
- Module:
- Module's home department:
- Person who reported the suspected plagiarism:
- Assessment in which the suspected plagiarism occurred:
- Date of assessment:
- Description of suspected plagiarism:

As presiding chairperson, as defined in the Engineering Faculty's Plagiarism Procedures, I have considered the information currently at my disposal and have come to the conclusion that it is possible that you have committed plagiarism of a "less serious" type, as defined in Stellenbosch University's "Procedure for the investigation and management of allegations of plagiarism". Further, the Legal Services Division does not have record that you have committed plagiarism before at Stellenbosch University. I therefore am offering you the opportunity to have the reported plagiarism considered using the Engineering Faculty's procedures for less serious cases. This will entail, inter alia, one of the following options offered to you:

#### Option 1

1. You are required to attend a meeting with me and [Complainant/Other Name] at [time] on [date] in [place].
2. At the above meeting, I will summarise the evidence before us, and you will have the opportunity to state your case, submit evidence, ask questions and/or raise points about any information given by any witness. Thereafter you will be required to leave the meeting.
3. [Complainant/Other Name] and I will then consider the evidence and your response.

4. If we find that you have committed plagiarism of a more serious nature, the case will be handled according to the Engineering Faculty's procedure for such cases, which includes that it will be referred to the Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC).
5. If we find that you have committed plagiarism of a less serious nature, we will finalise the consequences for you. The consequences will provisionally be:
  - 5.1 You are awarded a mark of zero for the above-mentioned assessment, without the opportunity to improve this mark;
  - 5.2 You are required to write a 500-word essay on why what you did constituted plagiarism, what you should have done to avoid committing plagiarism and why plagiarism is a serious offence. This essay must be submitted to the presiding chairperson within one week of your acceptance of the findings of the meeting; and
  - 5.3 This instance of plagiarism will be report to the Legal Services Division and the report will be taken into account in any further cases where you are found to have participated in plagiarism.
6. You will receive a letter stating the consequences mentioned above. You will be required to sign the letter, as confirmation that you accept the consequences, and return the letter to the presiding chairperson within 5 working days of receiving the letter. If you fail to use this opportunity, the case will be referred to the CDC.

#### Option 2

You can inform the presiding chairperson, in writing (e.g. by email) before the above-mentioned meeting, that you acknowledge that you committed plagiarism, as reported above, that you accept the provisional consequences above, and that you decline the opportunity to attend the above meeting.

Please note that if at any stage you choose to have the case referred to the CDC, to be supported by a legal representative or do not attend the above-mentioned meeting, the matter will further be handled according to the Engineering Faculty's procedure for more serious cases.

Please note that in all cases you have the right to seek advice or support from anyone of your choosing.

Please confirm by return email that you acknowledge receipt of this email and whether you are willing to follow the above procedure, or rather prefer this matter to be referred to the CDC.

Regards

???

Presiding Chairperson

## **B.2 With an attached completed report form in Appendix C**

Date

Dear student

You are suspected of plagiarism in [module name]. The attached report form gives the details of the case.

As presiding chairperson, as defined in the Engineering Faculty's Plagiarism Procedures, I have considered the information currently at my disposal and have come to the conclusion that it is possible that you have committed plagiarism of a "less serious" type, as defined in Stellenbosch University's "Procedure for the investigation and management of allegations of plagiarism". Further, the Legal Services Division does not have record that you have committed plagiarism before at Stellenbosch University. I therefore am offering you the opportunity to have the reported plagiarism considered using the Engineering Faculty's procedures for less serious cases. This will entail, inter alia, one of the following options offered to you:

### Option 1

1. You are required to attend a meeting with me and [Complainant/Other Name] at [time] on [date] in [place].
2. At the above meeting, I will summarise the evidence before us, and you will have the opportunity to state your case, submit evidence, ask questions and/or raise points about any information given by any witness. Thereafter you will be required to leave the meeting.
3. [Complainant/Other Name] and I will then consider the evidence and your response.
4. If we find that you have committed plagiarism of a more serious nature, the case will be handled according to the Engineering Faculty's procedure for such cases, which includes that it will be referred to the Central Disciplinary Committee (CDC).
5. If we find that you have committed plagiarism of a less serious nature, we will finalise the consequences for you. The consequences will provisionally be as set out in the attached report form.
6. You will receive a copy of the report form stating the consequences mentioned above. You will be required to sign the report form, as confirmation that you accept the consequences, and return the form to the presiding chairperson within 5 working days of receiving the letter. If you fail to use this opportunity, the case will be referred to the CDC.

### Option 2

You can inform the presiding chairperson, in writing (e.g. by email) before the above-mentioned meeting, that you acknowledge that you committed plagiarism, as reported above, that you accept the provisional

consequences above, and that you decline the opportunity to attend the above meeting.

Please note that if at any stage you choose to have the case referred to the CDC, to be supported by a legal representative or do not attend the above-mentioned meeting, the matter will further be handled according to the Engineering Faculty's procedure for more serious cases.

Please note that in all cases you have the right to seek advice or support from anyone of your choosing.

Please confirm by return email that you acknowledge receipt of this email and whether you are willing to follow the above procedure, or rather prefer this matter to be referred to the CDC.

Regards

???

Presiding Chairperson

## **Appendix C: Template for report to Legal Services**



## ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT: HANDLING AND EVALUATION

Mr/ Ms .....

Student number: .....

A: What are we dealing with:

1. **'Academic Matter'** means an Academic Misconduct which arose from negligence, and which may be dealt with by the relevant Department.

2. **'Academic Misconduct'** means a breach of academic integrity. It includes, but is in no way limited to, the following:

2.1 **Plagiarism**, which is the use of the ideas or material of others without acknowledgement, or the re-use of one's own previously evaluated or published material without acknowledgement (self-plagiarism or text-recycling). In this definition acknowledgement will mean a reference indicating the source of previously expressed ideas or published material, and the details of the publication and self-plagiarism or text-recycling will be the re-use of one's own previously evaluated or published material without acknowledgement or indication thereof.

2.2 **Collusion**, which is co-operation among Students when academic work is falsely presented for assessment as an individual effort by one or more of the Students involved.

2.3 **Cheating** in examinations and assessments, for example when Students copy or allow their work to be copied, give or ask for assistance from another Student without permission, refer to unauthorised notes, books, electronic devices or other reference material, or take part in the assessment pretending to be another Student, or allow another Student to impersonate them.

2.4 **Fabrication** or invention of research, data, evidence, attendance at lectures or presentations, or committing any other misrepresentation relating to scientific or academic work.

2.5 Other (explain) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



E: Apply factors (identified in D) to facts (as set out in C) to reach a conclusion / outcome and provided short explanation to match conclusion / outcome:

(Mark with X)

E1: No action will be taken - the information at hand will be filed for future reference if appropriate	
E 2: Academic Misconduct is reasonably suspected - Dealt with Departmentally as per this form	
E 3: The matter is to be dealt with as a Disciplinary Matter by the CDC – Referred	

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F: In respect of an Academic Matter as listed in E2, the HOD makes the following recommendation to the lecturer responsible for the module:

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\_\_\_\_\_  
Head of Department

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Lecturer

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Hereby I ....., with student number ....., hereby accept the conclusion, outcome and recommendation in Sections E and F.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date