

KAAF UNIVERSITY

POLICY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, PLAGIARISM, AND RESPONSIBLE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE

A. PREAMBLE AND INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT TO ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND RESPONSIBLE AI USE

KAAF University is committed to fostering a culture of academic excellence grounded in integrity, originality, and ethical scholarship. In an evolving digital and knowledge-driven environment, the University recognizes both the enduring importance of academic honesty and the emerging influence of technological tools, including Artificial Intelligence (AI), on teaching, learning, and research practices.

This policy framework on Plagiarism, Academic Integrity, and AI Use establishes clear standards, expectations, and procedures to guide all members of the University community. It seeks to safeguard intellectual authorship, ensure the credibility of academic outputs, and promote responsible engagement with digital and AI-driven tools. By defining acceptable practices and outlining accountability mechanisms, the policy reinforces KAAF University's commitment to maintaining high academic standards while embracing innovation responsibly and ethically.

B. PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

KAAF University is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity, ethical scholarship, and intellectual honesty in all teaching, learning, and research activities. Plagiarism and all forms of academic dishonesty undermine the credibility of academic qualifications and are strictly prohibited.

This policy applies to all students (undergraduate and postgraduate), faculty, researchers, and staff engaged in academic work.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Define plagiarism and related academic misconduct
- Promote a culture of ethical scholarship
- Provide clear guidelines for proper attribution and originality
- Establish procedures for detection, reporting, and adjudication
- Define sanctions for violations

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Coursework (assignments, term papers, projects)
- Theses and dissertations

- Publications and research outputs
- Examinations (written, oral, take-home)
- Digital and online submissions

4. DEFINITION OF PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's work, ideas, expressions, data, or intellectual property as one's own without appropriate acknowledgment. This includes the use of words, concepts, structures, images, or research outputs without proper citation, whether done intentionally or unintentionally.

5. TYPES OF PLAGIARISM

Plagiarism may occur in various forms, including but not limited to the following:

5.1 Direct Plagiarism

- Copying text verbatim from a source without quotation marks and appropriate citation
- Presenting another author's work as one's own without acknowledgment

5.2 Paraphrasing Plagiarism

- Rewriting or rephrasing ideas, sentences, or concepts from a source without proper attribution
- Making superficial changes (e.g., synonyms, sentence restructuring) while retaining the original meaning without citation

5.3 Self-Plagiarism

- Reusing one's own previously submitted or published work, in whole or in part, without prior approval or proper acknowledgment
- Submitting the same work for multiple courses or purposes without authorization

5.4 Mosaic (Patchwriting) Plagiarism

- Integrating phrases, clauses, or ideas from multiple sources into a text without proper citation
- Mixing copied content with original writing in a way that obscures the original sources

5.5 Data and Research Plagiarism

- Using data, figures, tables, images, or research findings without acknowledgment
- Presenting another researcher's results, methodologies, or interpretations as one's own

5.6 Contract Cheating (Ghostwriting)

- Submitting work produced wholly or partially by another individual, organization, or third-party service
- Purchasing or outsourcing assignments, theses, or research outputs

5.7 Collusion

- Unauthorized collaboration with others in producing academic work intended to be completed individually
- Sharing or jointly producing work without explicit approval

5.8 Source-Based Plagiarism

- Misrepresenting or fabricating sources
- Citing sources that were not consulted
- Inaccurate or misleading referencing

6. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY PRINCIPLES

All students and researchers must:

- Produce original work
- Accurately cite all sources (APA 7th or approved style)
- Acknowledge contributions of others
- Report research truthfully
- Avoid fabrication, falsification, and misrepresentation

7. PLAGIARISM DETECTION AND SIMILARITY THRESHOLDS

All submissions shall undergo plagiarism checks using approved tools (e.g., Turnitin).

Approved Thresholds:

- Overall Similarity Index: $\leq 20\%$
- Individual Sections: $\leq 15\%$ (excluding references, methodology, quotes)

Submissions exceeding thresholds:

- Must be revised and resubmitted
- May trigger investigation for misconduct

8. RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Students

- Ensure originality of all submissions
- Properly cite all sources
- Submit plagiarism reports where required

8.2 Supervisors

- Guide students on academic writing and referencing
- Verify originality before submission

8.3 Faculty/Examiners

- Enforce policy consistently
- Report suspected misconduct

8.4 Graduate School

- Monitor compliance
- Maintain plagiarism detection systems

9. PROCEDURES FOR HANDLING PLAGIARISM

The University shall adopt a structured, transparent, and fair process in handling all suspected cases of plagiarism. The process shall be guided by principles of natural justice, due process, and proportionality.

Step 1: Detection

- Identification of potential plagiarism through:
 - Approved plagiarism detection software (e.g., Turnitin), and/or
 - Academic review by supervisors, examiners, or faculty
- A preliminary similarity report shall be generated and documented

Step 2: Preliminary Review

- The responsible academic (e.g., course instructor or supervisor) shall:
 - Assess the nature, extent, and context of the similarity
 - Distinguish between:
 - Acceptable similarity (e.g., properly cited material), and
 - Potential academic misconduct
- Minor or technical issues may be resolved at this stage through guidance and revision, where appropriate

Step 3: Formal Investigation

Where misconduct is suspected:

- The case shall be formally referred to the Academic Integrity Committee or Disciplinary Committee
- The student shall:
 - Be notified in writing of the allegation
 - Be provided with evidence (e.g., similarity report, marked script)
 - Be given an opportunity to respond and present a defense
- The Committee shall:
 - Review all relevant documentation
 - Determine whether a violation has occurred
 - Ensure impartiality and absence of conflict of interest

Step 4: Decision and Sanction

- The Committee shall determine:
 - The severity of the offence
 - The intent (deliberate vs. negligent)
 - The academic level (undergraduate, Master's, PhD)
 - Any prior offences
- A formal decision shall be:

- Documented
- Communicated to the student in writing
- Recorded in the student's academic file where applicable

10. SANCTIONS

Sanctions shall be applied proportionately, taking into account the severity, intent, academic level, and recurrence of the offence.

10.1 Minor Offence (Low-Level / First-Time / Unintentional)

Examples:

- Poor referencing
- Minor citation errors
- Limited unattributed paraphrasing

Sanctions:

- Formal written warning
- Mandatory revision and resubmission
- Academic guidance or integrity training

10.2 Moderate Offence (Substantial / Negligent Misconduct)

Examples:

- Significant unattributed content
- Repeated minor offences
- Partial outsourcing or improper collaboration

Sanctions:

- Reduction of marks or failure of assignment/course
- Academic probation for a defined period
- Mandatory academic integrity training

10.3 Major Offence (Serious / Deliberate Misconduct)

Examples:

- Extensive plagiarism
- Contract cheating
- Fabrication or falsification of data
- Submission of entirely non-original work

Sanctions:

- Suspension from the programme for a specified period
- Termination of candidature
- Revocation of awarded degree (in post-award cases)
- Possible reporting to relevant professional or regulatory bodies (where applicable)

Repeat Offences

- Repeat violations shall attract escalated sanctions, which may include immediate suspension or termination

Record Keeping

- All confirmed cases shall be formally documented
- Records shall be maintained by the Graduate School / Academic Affairs Office for institutional tracking and quality assurance

11. APPEALS

KAAF University provides a formal mechanism for students to appeal decisions arising from allegations of plagiarism or academic misconduct. The appeals process is designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and accountability, while upholding the integrity of academic standards.

11.1 Right to Appeal

Students have the right to appeal any disciplinary decision where there are reasonable grounds, including:

- Procedural irregularities in the investigation or decision-making process
- Evidence of bias, discrimination, or conflict of interest
- Significant errors in the evaluation or interpretation of evidence
- Emergence of new and material evidence not previously considered

11.2 Submission of Appeal

- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the Graduate School or designated Academic Appeals Office
- The appeal must:
 - Clearly state the decision being challenged
 - Specify the grounds for appeal
 - Provide supporting evidence or documentation
- Appeals must be lodged within ten (10) working days of official notification of the decision

11.3 Appeals Review Process

- Upon receipt, the appeal shall undergo an initial review for admissibility
- A duly constituted Appeals Committee, independent of the original decision-making body, shall:
 - Review all relevant documentation
 - Request additional information where necessary
 - Ensure impartial and objective consideration

11.4 Determination of Appeal

The Appeals Committee may:

- Uphold the original decision
- Modify the sanction where appropriate
- Overturn the decision and recommend corrective action
- Order a re-hearing or re-evaluation in exceptional cases

11.5 Communication of Outcome

- The outcome of the appeal shall be communicated to the student in writing
- Decisions shall normally be issued within twenty-one (21) working days of receipt of the appeal

11.6 Finality of Decision

- Decisions of the Appeals Committee, subject to ratification by the Academic Board, shall be final and binding
- No further internal appeal shall be entertained

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE POLICY

1. POLICY STATEMENT

KAAF University recognizes the transformative role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education and research. The University permits the responsible, ethical, and transparent use of AI tools, while safeguarding academic integrity, originality, and intellectual authorship.

2. PURPOSE

This policy aims to:

- Define acceptable and prohibited uses of AI
- Promote ethical integration of AI in academic work
- Prevent misuse and academic misconduct
- Ensure transparency in AI-assisted work

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to:

- Coursework and assignments
- Theses and dissertations
- Research and publications
- Examinations and assessments

4. DEFINITION OF AI TOOLS

AI tools include, but are not limited to:

- Text-generation systems (e.g., ChatGPT-like tools)
- Language editing tools
- Coding assistants
- Data analysis and visualization tools

5. PRINCIPLES OF RESPONSIBLE AI USE

All AI use must adhere to:

- Transparency – full disclosure
- Accountability – student remains responsible
- Integrity – AI must not replace intellectual effort
- Ethical compliance – no fabrication or deception

6. 6. ACCEPTABLE LEVEL AND USE OF AI (THRESHOLDS AND GUIDELINES)

AI use shall be limited, supportive, and proportionate, subject to the following guidance:

6.1 Acceptable Level of AI Contribution

- AI-assisted content should not exceed 20–30% of the total work, and must be limited to support functions only
- The core intellectual components (≥ 70 –80%) must be:
 - Original thinking
 - Analysis and interpretation

- Argument development
- Conclusions

6.2 Functional Boundaries of Acceptable AI Use

AI is permitted for:

- Grammar and language editing
- Structuring and formatting guidance
- Idea brainstorming (non-substantive)
- Coding assistance and debugging
- Data visualization and presentation
- Literature search support (with independent verification)

6.3 Non-Substitutive Requirement

- AI must not generate the central argument, analysis, or conclusions
- Students must demonstrate independent intellectual engagement at all times

6.4 Programme-Level Discretion

- Faculties and supervisors may:
 - Set stricter AI limits
 - Prohibit AI use in specific assessments
 - Define discipline-specific AI guidelines

7. PROHIBITED USES OF AI

The following are strictly prohibited:

- Generating full assignments, theses, or exam responses
- Submitting AI-generated content as original work
- Fabricating data, references, or citations
- Using AI during examinations without authorization
- Replacing critical thinking, analysis, or interpretation

8. AI USE IN RESEARCH

AI tools:

- Cannot be listed as authors
- Must not generate primary research findings
- Must not fabricate datasets or empirical results

Researchers must:

- Verify all AI-assisted outputs
- Ensure reproducibility and validity

9. MANDATORY AI DISCLOSURE

All students must include an AI Use Declaration in submissions.

Declaration must state:

- Name of AI tool(s) used
- Purpose of use

- Extent of AI involvement
- Confirmation of original intellectual contribution

10. DETECTION AND VERIFICATION

The University may:

- Use AI-detection tools
- Conduct oral defenses to verify authorship
- Require drafts and process documentation

11. VIOLATIONS AND SANCTIONS

Misuse of AI constitutes academic misconduct and may attract:

- Revision or resubmission
- Failure of assignment/course
- Academic probation
- Suspension or termination
- Revocation of degree (in severe cases)

12. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Students

- Use AI ethically and transparently
- Declare all AI usage

Faculty

- Provide guidance on acceptable use
- Design AI-resilient assessments

University

- Provide training on AI literacy
- Update policy as technology evolves

APPENDIX: AI USE DECLARATION FORM
KAAF UNIVERSITY

ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI) USE DECLARATION FORM

1. Student Information

- Full Name: _____
- Student ID: _____
- Programme: _____
- Course Title/Code: _____
- Lecturer/Supervisor: _____
- Type of Submission:
☐ Assignment ☐ Term Paper ☐ Project ☐ Thesis/Dissertation ☐ Other: _____
- Title of Work Submitted: _____

2. AI Tools Used (if any)

Please list all AI tools used in the preparation of this work:

AI Tool Name	Purpose of Use

3. Nature of AI Use

Indicate how AI tools were used in this work (tick all that apply):

- ☐ Grammar and language editing
- ☐ Structuring and formatting assistance
- ☐ Idea brainstorming (non-substantive)
- ☐ Coding/debugging support
- ☐ Data visualization
- ☐ Literature search support (verified independently)
- ☐ Other (specify): _____

4. Extent of AI Contribution

- Estimated percentage of AI-assisted content: _____%

Declaration of Compliance:

- ☐ I confirm that AI use does not exceed the permitted threshold (20–30%)
- ☐ I confirm that all core intellectual work (analysis, arguments, conclusions) is my original work

5. Description of AI Use (Mandatory Brief Statement)

Provide a brief explanation of how AI tools were used:

6. Verification and Responsibility Statement

I hereby declare that:

- I have used AI tools only in accordance with KAAF University policy.
- All AI-assisted outputs have been critically reviewed, verified, and validated by me.
- This submission represents my original intellectual work, and AI has not replaced my independent thinking, analysis, or interpretation.
- I have fully disclosed all AI use in this document.
- I understand that failure to comply with this policy constitutes academic misconduct and may attract sanctions.

7. Student Declaration

- Student Name: _____
- Signature: _____
- Date: _____

8. Supervisor/Lecturer Verification (Optional for coursework; mandatory for thesis/dissertation)

- Name: _____
- Comments (if any): _____
- Signature: _____
- Date: _____