POLICY ON ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

Policy Owners	DVC: Research and Innovation DVC: Academic Registrar
Division/ Unit/ Department	Senate Research Ethics Committee Postgraduate School Division for Teaching Excellence Central Academic Administration
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* This Policy replaces the Plagiarism Policy.

1. PREAMBLE

1.1.   This Policy On Academic Misconduct provides a framework to define academic misconduct and its reporting, along with presenting and explaining the relevant processes and procedures that apply once an allegation of academic misconduct is made at the University of Johannesburg ("the University").

1.2.   The Policy on Academic Misconduct replaces and expands on the Policy on Plagiarism. It deals broadly with matters of academic misconduct throughout the University, including at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, as well as in all matters of research, both in respect of students of the University and persons affiliated or connected with the University.

1.3.   Academic misconduct is a serious matter with implications for students, staff, and related parties, due to the trust placed in the academic fraternity as a whole, and the reputation of the University.

1.4.   The Policy on Academic Misconduct arises from the need to provide clear and consistent definitions and procedures related to academic misconduct in order to both safeguard those alleging misconduct in good faith as well as those who may have uninformed or malicious allegations of misconduct made against them. At all times, procedures related to allegations must be consistent, fair and transparent.

1.5.   This policy must be read in conjunction with the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), the Policy on Research Ethics, the Policy on Research Integrity, the Authorship Policy, and the Regulations for Student Discipline (all of which can be found on the University's intranet.

2. PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework to define academic misconduct and set out its proper management, along with detailing and explaining relevant processes and procedures in respect of academic misconduct. This policy must be read together with the SOPs.

The framework of this Policy on Academic Misconduct aims to:

2.1.   Define academic integrity and academic misconduct.

2.2.   Describe responsibilities for combatting academic misconduct through developmental means.

2.3.   Establish processes and procedures to manage allegations of academic misconduct at undergraduate and postgraduate levels, and academic misconduct involving University staff members (who are not also registered as students), or such other person affiliated with the University that would be subject to this Policy on Academic Misconduct.

3. HIERARCHY OF TERMS

3.1.   In the event of any conflict, ambiguity or any inconsistency between the provisions of this Policy on Academic Misconduct and another document, the document that shall take precedence shall be dealt with as follows:

3.2.   In respect of matters associated or dealing with Academic Misconduct:

3.2.1.   Firstly, the Student Agreement;

3.2.2.   Secondly, this Policy on Academic Misconduct;

3.2.3.   Thirdly, the SOPs;

3.2.4.   Fourthly, the Academic Regulations;

3.2.5.   Thereafter, any other document finding application.

3.2.6.   In respect of matters not associated or dealing with Academic Misconduct, but which still have a bearing on this Policy on Academic Misconduct:

3.2.7.   Firstly, the Student Agreement;

3.2.8.　Secondly, the Academic Regulations;

3.2.9.　Thereafter, any other document finding application.

3.3.　When applying the hierarchy of terms set out above, the provisions contained in the document with a higher level of authority shall take precedence over such document with a lower level of authority for the purposes of resolving any such conflict, ambiguity or inconsistency. However, in all cases, all applicable documents should be read together with the other documents insofar as possible, with any conflicting provisions being dealt with in terms of the hierarchy of terms.

4. SCOPE

4.1.　This Policy On Academic Misconduct applies to all Affiliates of the University.

4.2.　To the extent applicable, this Policy on Academic Misconduct shall extend and be applicable to such persons who, by their consent given in their Student Agreement, subjects themselves to this Policy on Academic Misconduct, resulting from any misconduct that the student may have committed while being a student of the University.

5. DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1.　Where applicable, words and expressions defined in the Academic Regulations shall have similar meanings ascribed to them herein, save that where any term, word or expression that has been defined in this Policy on Academic Misconduct conflicts with a similar term, word or expression in the Academic Regulations, then for the purposes of applying this Policy on Academic Misconduct, the definition contained herein shall apply.

5.2.　The following words and expressions shall have the following meanings assigned to them and cognate words and expressions bear corresponding meanings:

5.3.　**Academic Regulations** means the academic regulations of the University, as amended from time to time, which can be accessed on the University's intranet.

5.4.　**Affiliate** means undergraduate and postgraduate students, students registered for short learning programmes, postdoctoral research fellows, full-time and part-time staff, visiting academics and research associates, or any other person engaging in teaching, learning or research and affiliating themselves to the University in the process.

5.5.　**Faculty** means Faculty, College or School at the University, as defined in the Academic Regulations.

5.6.　**Academic integrity** means a commitment to uphold fundamental values and behaviours essential to the responsible conduct of research, teaching, learning, and assessment activities by students and staff. These values include honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility and courage.[1]

5.7.　**Academic misconduct** means a breach of academic integrity brought about by any action or omission which gains or assists others in gaining an unfair academic advantage. Academic misconduct does not include honest mistakes or legitimate differences of opinion. Types of academic misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:

5.8.　**Cheating** means any activity that contravenes or subverts academic rules or regulations with the intention of gaining an unfair academic advantage. For the purposes of this Policy On Academic Misconduct, the term cheating is used within the context of teaching and learning

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[1] International Center for Academic Integrity. Fundamental Values. https://academicintegrity.org/resources/fundamental-values.

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activities and excludes fabrication, falsification and plagiarism as discussed under 5.9, 5.10 and 5.12 below.

5.9. **Fabrication** means the invention of data or results and recording or reporting of them.

5.10. **Falsification** means the manipulation of research materials, equipment or processes, or changing or omitting data or results such that the data or results are not accurately represented in the research record.

5.11. **Generative artificial intelligence (GAI)** means artificial intelligence capable of generating new content (such as text, image, video, audio, 3-D model, interactive and programming code content) from data it has learned from.[2]

5.12. **Plagiarism** means the appropriation of another person's ideas, processes, results, presentations, words or any compilation of such (whether published or unpublished) without appropriate credit through recognised methods of referencing. Plagiarism also includes the use of substantive text, images, or other outputs generated through artificial intelligence applications without declaration. The use of one's own work without appropriate referencing constitutes a form of plagiarism. Plagiarism further includes paraphrasing the work of others by selectively altering words or phrases, changing the order of words, or closely following the structure of one or more arguments. Where the original source is cited through a recognised method of referencing, it remains important that the text makes it clear that the original source is being cited or paraphrased. Where any reference to 'plagiarism' is used, it should not be confused with the assignment and transfer of intellectual property rights set out in the any agreement or the University's Policy on Intellectual Property.

5.13. **Contract cheating** means cheating through collaboration with a third party.

5.14. **Collusion** means unauthorised collaboration between students within the context of assessment and includes any and all other forms of dishonest or unscrupulous acts committed with the intention to misrepresent, defraud or subvert the standard academic processes involved in teaching and learning, assessment and research.

5.15. **Data** means information of some kind, usually in a relatively raw (unprocessed or unanalysed) form that arises from a data collection research activity or process. This includes (but is not limited to) output from measuring instruments of any description in electronic or printed form, completed questionnaires or survey instruments, hand-written or typed notes, audio or video recordings, digital images or photographs, x-rays or other images, transcripts, sketches or diagrams, charts and spread sheet or other electronic content derived from a primary data source.

5.16. **Standard Operating Procedures** means the Academic Misconduct Standard Operating Procedures of the University, as amended from time to time.

5.17. **Written submission** means any form of written document submitted for assessment or review for any undergraduate or postgraduate programme or module including but not limited to an assignment, research proposal, research report, dissertation or thesis.

6. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

6.1. *Academic Integrity – Research, Teaching and Learning*

As defined above, academic integrity rests upon a set of values underpinning responsible academic conduct. The scope of academic activities encompassed by academic integrity is broad, covering both

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[2] IBM. What is generative AI? https://www.ibm.com/topics/generative-ai.

research as well as teaching and learning activities. In published literature on academic integrity different terminology is often used in relation to research and other academic activities. When the focus is on research, the terms research integrity and research misconduct are often used. While terminology may differ, often in different disciplines or parts of the world, the fundamental values of integrity – whether referring to research or the broader academic project – are very similar: honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage.[3]

6.2. Academic Misconduct

6.2.1. Academic Misconduct in Research

Academic misconduct in research is often referred to by the narrower term of research misconduct; while academic integrity in this context is often referred to as research integrity. Research conduct spans a spectrum ranging from responsible conduct of research through questionable research practices to research misconduct.

- *Responsible conduct of research* (RCR): The ideal research behaviour that aligns with the values of honesty, accuracy, efficiency and objectivity (the Singapore Statement on Research Integrity also includes accountability, professional courtesy and fairness and good stewardship).[4] There is no one universal definition of RCR and it may draw on a mix of statute, academic policy, academic regulations, codes of conduct, personal values and character.
- *Questionable research practices* (QRPs): QRPs are practices representing deviations from RCR but they do not fit the definition of research misconduct. Often, QRPs are practices aimed at improving the chances of getting research accepted for publication by engaging in deceptive data analysis or selective reporting of results. Dishonest practices in authorship are another form of QRP.
- *Research misconduct*: Traditionally, research misconduct is defined as fabrication, falsification and plagiarism. For the purposes of this Policy On Academic Misconduct, research misconduct includes fabrication, falsification, plagiarism and conducting research without prior ethical approval.

6.2.2. Plagiarism

While the definition of plagiarism implies that it is intentionally deceptive, it is acknowledged that unintentional plagiarism may occur. However, in considering the intent of an individual who plagiarises it is important that their level of academic maturity and experience is taken into consideration. Unintentional plagiarism can only be explained by a lack of both of these (experience and maturity), and a lack of awareness regarding writing practices that may lead to plagiarism. Consequently, unintentional plagiarism is something confined to junior academic levels and first-time allegations of plagiarism. It is fully expected that senior students, and in particular postgraduate students, have the requisite knowledge and understanding of plagiarism as a form of academic misconduct and are equally knowledgeable about how to avoid it.

6.2.3. Irresponsible Use of Generative AI

The University Practice Note on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Teaching, Learning and Research, published in 2023, acknowledges that GAI can be used responsibly to supplement teaching, learning and research and if used in this way may be associated with benefits for students and researchers. However, the sophisticated capabilities of GAI can also be used irresponsibly to subvert the learning and scientific

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[3] International Center for Academic Integrity. Fundamental Values. https://academicintegrity.org/resources/fundamental-values

[4] World Conference on Research Integrity. Singapore Statement. 2010. https://www.wcrif.org/downloads/main-website/singapore-statements/223-singapore-statement-a4size/file

knowledge generation processes to the point that the integrity of these processes may be threatened. Furthermore, valid and reliable detection of GAI use in this way is currently not possible. These problems make it important to set out constraints on GAI use for teaching, learning and research and to distinguish between responsible and irresponsible use, the latter constituting a form of academic misconduct. Responsible use of GAI is characterised by:[5,6]

a) Transparency – any and all use of GAI is declared.

b) Active engagement – GAI output is used as a stimulus for further probing, questioning and exploration of other viewpoints in the teaching and learning or research process.

c) Critical evaluation – GAI output is approached critically and checked or cross-referenced for accuracy. Consideration of the possibility for bias and inaccuracy is always present when working with this output.

d) Human agency and contribution – the student or researcher's knowledge and insight is integrated with GAI output utilising the two characteristics above (b) and c)) and writing submitted for teaching and learning or research purposes is that of the student or researcher, for which they take full responsibility.

e) Learning and skill development support – responsible use of GAI supports and enhances the student or researcher's learning and skill development and does not subvert these processes.

Use of GAI that is not characterised by a) – e) above may be considered irresponsible and a form of academic misconduct. Greater detail on responsible and irresponsible use of GAI and the intersection of irresponsible AI use with other forms of academic misconduct is provided in the SOPs.

6.2.4. Fabrication and Falsification

Both of these forms of research misconduct are aimed at misrepresenting research data in some form or another – either by inappropriately changing valid data or by making up data that does not exist. The purpose of fabrication and falsification of research data is typically to give a researcher some kind of illegitimate advantage brought about by doing this, where should the research data not have been fabricated or falsified, such advantage would not have occurred (or not reasonably have occurred given the parameters of the research). Such an advantage might be related to completion of research (i.e. where data collection is taking a long time or is cumbersome) or it might be related to making research results appear more favourable that they really are which may aid in determining an assessment outcome or acceptance of research for publication. In addition to being morally wrong due to its deceptive nature, in some disciplines (e.g. health research or research on animals) undetected fabrication or falsification of research data may result in physical or emotional harm or damage to individuals or groups.

Intent of the researcher falsifying or fabricating is an essential part of defining this behaviour. In other words, an error made in data transcription is not regarded as falsification of data. However, all care must be taken to ensure that these errors do not occur, and to ensure the integrity of research and research results. In other words, a reasonable and dutiful researcher (assuming a case-by-case level of expertise associated with that researcher) cannot rely on negligence – which negligence led to the false or misleading research data – where such negligence ought not to have occurred, taking into consideration

[5] Lissack M, Meagher M. Responsible Use of Large Language Models: An Analogy with the Oxford Tutorial System. The Journal of Design, Economics and Innovation. 2024;10(4):394.

[6] University of Johannesburg. Practice Note on Generative Artificial Intelligence in Teaching, Learning and Research. University of Johannesburg: Johannesburg; 2023.

the researcher's experience and knowledge. To be considered falsification, an alteration of data must be done with the intent to deceive. Researchers are always expected to use practices of data capture, transcription and storage that are robust enough to reduce such errors to the absolute minimum in keeping with the responsible conduct of research.

6.2.5. Conducting Research Without Prior Ethical Approval or Without the Required Permits/Gatekeeper Permissions

Obtaining prior ethical approval from a Faculty Research Ethics Committee when necessary (see the UJ Policy on Research Ethics) is mandatory and in some instances (e.g. health research) required by law; this extends also to obtaining the required permits and/or gatekeeper permissions. This is essential in order to safeguard the rights and welfare of human research participants and the welfare of animals (if the research involves animals). Where ethical approval must be renewed (refer to the relevant Faculty Research Ethics Committee Standard Operating Procedures), continuing research after the expiry of ethical approval and without renewing this approval is also a form of research misconduct.

6.2.6. Errors and Differences of Opinion

It is important to note that honest errors are not considered research misconduct. However, as described above, researchers are expected to have appropriate training and to employ best practices in writing, data management and compliance with research ethics norms and standards at all times in order to minimise such errors. Likewise, the differing opinion of another researcher or academic regarding the way in which research data has been presented, analysed or interpreted is, on its own, not evidence of research misconduct.

When considering whether a researcher's conduct falls within the bands of conduct that constitutes a permissible "error and difference of opinion", the conduct of the affected party should be subjected to the reasonable person/expert test. In most cases, the reasonable person test shall be applied (for example, where an undergraduate student is undertaking a simple experiment as part of their coursework), which test assesses whether a reasonable person in the same or similar circumstances as the affected party would have reasonable performed the same or similar acts as the affected party (as judged objectively and independently). To evaluate the conduct or opinion of the researcher who holds themselves out as an expert in a specific field, the reasonable expert test shall be applied (i.e., where the researcher possesses specialized knowledge and expertise due to their experience, accolades, and profession).

Where the reasonable expert test is applied, the question posed shall be whether a reasonable expert (taking into consideration the experience and profession of an expert in the same or similar position as the affected party) would have performed in the same or similar way as the affected party (as judged objectively and independently). Additionally, did the affected party's actions, opinions, or decisions align with what would be expected of a competent professional with similar expertise under similar circumstances.

6.3.   *Academic Misconduct in Teaching & Learning*
6.3.1.   Cheating and Contract Cheating

Cheating includes specific examples such as constructing answers from another student or source (such as notes or material either in hard copy, on an electronic device including through the use of GAI, or in any other manner not expressly sanctioned by the assessors of the assessment) in an assessment,

submitting the work of another person in an assessment as one's own or accessing, disseminating or using assessment questions or answers obtained in an unauthorised way prior to an assessment. Contract cheating enlists the assistance of others for the purposes of gaining an unfair academic advantage and has the potential to bring about misconduct on a large scale. Forms of cheating are not confined to the above description and may include other behaviours and/or activities of omissions in line with the definition given in 5.8.

6.3.2. Collusion

In many settings, collaborative approaches to learning amongst groups of students are encouraged. Additionally, some types of assessment are legitimately designed for collaboration (e.g. group assignments). However, where assessments are intended to be engaged in by individuals solely (i.e. not group work) then collaboration with others to complete such an assessment is regarded as a form of misconduct. Where one individual assists another to cheat (as described above in 6.3.1) this is also considered to be collusion. Here, both parties have colluded and hence, have engaged in academic misconduct, and both parties may be disciplined.

7. RESPONSIBILITIES FOR COMBATTING ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

7.1. *Responsibilities of Academic and Academic Support Staff Towards Students*

7.1.1. Executive Deans/Deans and, where appropriate, Executive Directors/Senior Directors/Directors, must ensure that all academic and academic support staff involved with research and teaching and learning activities are provided with adequate training in, and information on, academic misconduct, methods for collection, transcription, storage, analysis and archiving of research data, responsible use of GAI and on appropriate discipline-specific writing conventions and referencing techniques when using literature sources. This responsibility is delegated to Heads of Departments, Course/Programme Co-ordinators and Lecturers. Their obligation extends, where appropriate, to ensure that structured opportunities exist and are employed for staff and students to develop the necessary knowledge and skills to avoid plagiarism.

7.1.2. It is the responsibility of all academic and academic support staff involved with research and teaching and learning activities to:

(i) Know, understand and consistently apply the University Policy on Academic Misconduct and serve as a role model for students and junior staff in the avoidance of academic misconduct in their own work (whether the work is for teaching and learning purposes or for research).

(ii) Make students aware of the Policy on Academic Misconduct, and of the serious consequences of academic misconduct (in as prominent and continuous a manner as possible).

(iii) Inculcate in students an awareness of the importance of academic integrity and associated values in their own and in others' work, of thinking independently and expressing their own ideas in an academically acceptable fashion.

(iv) Instill a comprehension of which referencing techniques and writing conventions are appropriate to a particular academic discipline to ensure authentic and original academic work.

(v) Highlight the responsible use of GAI in teaching, learning and research.

(vi) Emphasize the importance of careful and rigorous methods for collection, transcription, storage, analysis and archiving of research data and when certain analytic procedures (e.g. dealing with outlying values or imputing missing values in a data set) are justified.

(vii) Provide information on the disciplinary consequences of academic misconduct.

7.1.3.   Academic staff responsible for module oversight must ensure that a signed declaration accompanies all written submissions (see Annexures A and B) submitted electronically (e.g. assignments uploaded via Moodle) or on paper. The declaration form should be attached to individual written submission as an annexure.

7.1.4.   Research supervisors must ensure that research at masters or doctoral level submitted for assessment must be accompanied by an affidavit (see Annexure C). The affidavit must, at a minimum, contain:

(i)   A statement by the student that the work submitted is their own original work and that all use of GAI in preparation of the work has been declared.

(ii)   Acknowledgement by the student that where their own previously published or assessed work is used this is clearly referenced as such; and

(iii)   Acknowledgement by the student that all sources used by the student are clearly and adequately referenced and acknowledged as may be appropriate.

(iv)   Acknowledgement by the student that where GAI has been used it has been used responsibly as set out in the Policy on Academic Misconduct.

(v)   Acknowledgement by the students that all data collected for the purposes of the research (if applicable) is authentic and accurate and has not been inappropriately altered in any way.

(vi)   Acknowledgement that the student understands what academic misconduct is and what the consequences of academic misconduct are.

(vii)   Acknowledgement that ethical approval has been obtained prior to commencement of the research if this was necessary.

7.1.5.   All practical and available means of electronic plagiarism detection must be used by academic and academic support staff to assist with plagiarism detection (see the SOPs for more details).

7.1.6.   It is currently not recommended to use AI detectors in an attempt to identify AI-generated outputs because of the lack of validity and reliability of these applications.

7.2.   *Responsibilities of Students*

7.2.1.   Students have the responsibility to ensure that they know and understand what academic misconduct and academic integrity are, as explained in this Policy on Academic Misconduct, and what the consequences of academic misconduct are.

7.2.2.   Students are expected to know and apply the referencing techniques appropriate to a particular academic discipline, as made available to them by academic and academic support staff, to ensure that the authenticity and originality of written or presented works of academic creativity are not compromised by a lack of understanding of proper referencing.

7.2.3.   Students are expected to know what responsible use of GAI is, how it is characterised and to use GAI only in this manner.

7.2.4.   Students are expected to know and apply carefully, after receiving appropriate training, rigorous methods for collection, transcription, storage, analysis and archiving of research data and when certain analytic procedures (e.g. dealing with outlying values or imputing missing values in a data set) are justified.

7.2.5.   Students are expected to seek assistance from academic and academic support staff when unsure about any aspect of possible academic misconduct in their work.

8.   MANAGEMENT OF ALLEGED ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

8.1.   *Committees Responsible for the Management of Alleged Academic Misconduct*

8.1.1.   The Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee (FAMC)

8.1.1.1. Each Faculty and, where appropriate, each academic support division, must provide for an existing committee or a committee to be established to manage cases of alleged academic misconduct.

8.1.1.2. The responsibilities of the FAMC are:

(i)   To investigate, according to its SOPs, cases of alleged academic misconduct referred to it.

(ii)   For each allegation, to decide within a reasonable time whether there are *prima facie* grounds for academic misconduct and whether it requires referral.

(iii)   If the allegation of academic misconduct requires referral, to refer it to the Senate Academic Misconduct Committee.

(iv)   To advise Faculty members on matters related to academic misconduct, in conjunction with the Faculty Research Ethics Committee and Faculty Higher Degrees Committee where necessary.

(v)   To submit a report to the Faculty Board on cases of alleged plagiarism and the manner in which they have been dealt with at least once per year.

(vi)   To establish and keep up-to-date a Faculty Academic Misconduct Register in which all confirmed cases of academic misconduct are recorded.

8.1.1.3. The FAMC must have a charter and SOPs, and these must be approved by the relevant Faculty Board or equivalent structure.

8.1.1.4. It is recommended that the FAMC is a separate committee (not a sub-committee of an existing committee) chaired by a senior academic and that all members of the FAMC receive training in academic and/or research integrity.

8.1.1.5. The FAMC should be constituted with an appropriate mix of experience to manage cases of alleged misconduct in both undergraduate and postgraduate studies. When required, the FAMC should co-opt relevant expertise onto the committee to assist it in assessing allegations of Academic Misconduct.

8.1.2.   Faculty Higher Degrees Committees (FHDC)

8.1.2.1. Faculty Higher Degrees Committees may become aware of alleged academic misconduct during the research proposal review process or during the postgraduate assessment process.

8.1.2.2. Alleged cases of academic misconduct discovered or brought to the attention of Faculty Higher Degrees Committees must be referred to the relevant FAMC once pertinent factual information about the allegation has been obtained.

8.1.3.   Faculty Research Ethics Committees (FREC)

8.1.3.1. Faculty Research Ethics Committees may become aware of alleged academic misconduct during the research proposal review process or during the monitoring and ethical clearance renewal process.

8.1.3.2. Alleged cases of academic misconduct discovered or brought to the attention of Faculty Research Ethics Committees must be referred to the relevant FAMC once pertinent factual information about the allegation has been confirmed.

8.1.4. The Senate Research Ethics Committee (SREC)

8.1.4.1. The Senate Research Ethics Committee may be requested to advise on allegations of research misconduct referred to it, as one of the functions set out in its charter.

8.1.5. The Senate Higher Degrees Committee (SHDC)

8.1.5.1. The Senate Higher Degrees Committee may become aware of alleged academic misconduct during the postgraduate assessment process or by other means.

8.1.5.2. Alleged cases of academic misconduct discovered or brought to the attention of the Senate Higher Degrees Committee must be referred to the relevant FAMC once pertinent factual information about the allegation has been confirmed.

8.1.6. Office For Research Integrity

8.1.6.1. The Office for Research Integrity assists and supports in investigations of academic misconduct at postgraduate level and involving academic staff.

8.2.   *Alleged Undergraduate Academic Misconduct*

Alleged undergraduate academic misconduct is managed as shown in Figure 1, depending on whether the alleged misconduct is (i) plagiarism, irresponsible use of GAI, fabrication or falsification or (ii) cheating, contract cheating or collusion.

8.2.1. Plagiarism, Irresponsible GAI Use, Fabrication or Falsification

8.2.1.1. This applies to written work such as assignments or undergraduate research.

8.2.1.2. A lecturer suspecting one of these forms of academic misconduct does an initial assessment of the work in question, assisted by the HOD.

8.2.1.3. If prima facie evidence is not found of these forms of academic misconduct, this is considered to fall into Level 0 and the student should be counselled on their writing or referencing style, GAI use or data collection/management skills and techniques to understand any shortcomings and improve on these aspects (whichever apply).

8.2.1.4. If prima facie evidence is found of these forms of academic misconduct, the lecturer and HOD proceed according to which type of academic misconduct is alleged.

8.2.1.5. If the alleged type of academic misconduct is plagiarism or irresponsible use of GAI, the lecturer and HOD consult the relevant spectrum in the SOPs and determine which extent of plagiarism or irresponsible use of GAI best applies.

8.2.1.6. The lecturer and HOD then consult Table 1 below and based on the academic year of the student, plagiarism or irresponsible use of GAI level and offence (first or greater) determine the academic misconduct level.

If this is **Level 1**, the following apply:

a) The student is allowed to resubmit the work in question within a time specified by the lecturer.

b) If the student resubmits and the plagiarism or irresponsible use of GAI has been addressed, a mark capped at 50% is awarded.

c) If the student does not resubmit, a mark of 0% is awarded.

d) The student's details and details of the academic misconduct are entered into the Faculty Academic Misconduct register maintained by the FAMC.

If this is **Level 2**, the following apply:

e) The student is referred to the Student Ethics and Judicial Services (SEJS) by the lecturer and HOD, together with a report of the alleged academic misconduct and any relevant evidence.

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f) Once an outcome is received from SEJS, the student's details are entered into the Faculty Academic Misconduct register.

8.2.1.7. If the alleged type of academic misconduct is fabrication or falsification, the lecturer and HOD consult the fabrication/falsification spectrum in the Academic Misconduct SOPs and determine which level of fabrication/falsification best applies.

8.2.1.8. The lecturer and HOD then consult Table 1 below and based on the academic year of the student, fabrication/falsification level and offence (first or greater) determine the academic misconduct level.

8.2.1.9. The student is referred to the SEJS by the lecturer and HOD, together with a report of the alleged academic misconduct and any relevant evidence.

Lecturer Suspects Academic Misconduct (AM)
(Plagiarism/Data Fabrication/Data Falsification/ Research Without Ethical Approval)

Scope:
- Assignments or similar.
- Undergraduate research (proposals and research reports).

Lecturer/Invigilator Suspects Academic Misconduct (AM)
(Cheating/Contract Cheating/Collusion)

Scope:
- Written/online assessments.
- Assignments or similar.

Initial Assessment by Module Lecturer and HOD

Initial Assessment by Invigilator or Module Lecturer and HOD

Criteria:
- Evidence and extent of AM.
- Student's year of study and academic maturity.
- First or subsequent (alleged) offence.

Level (0 / 1 / 2)

Level 0
- No *prima facie* evidence of AM.
- Student can be counseled on writing style and/or generative AI use and/or referencing/citation techniques and/or data collection/management techniques or referred.

Level 1

Plagiarism or Irresponsible Generative AI Use
- Student allowed to resubmit within specific period.
- If student resubmits and plagiarism/AI use has been addressed, mark capped at 50%.
- If student does not resubmit, mark = 0%.
- Student details are entered into the Faculty AM register maintained by the Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee (HoD notified).

Fabrication or Falsification
- Referral to Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee (FAMC).
- FAMC investigates and makes recommendation. If there is evidence of academic misconduct the case is referred to SEJS.

Level 2
- Case is referred to Student Ethics & Judicial Services (SEJS).
- Once outcome received from SEJS, student details are entered into the Faculty AM register maintained by the FAMC (HoD and Dean notified).
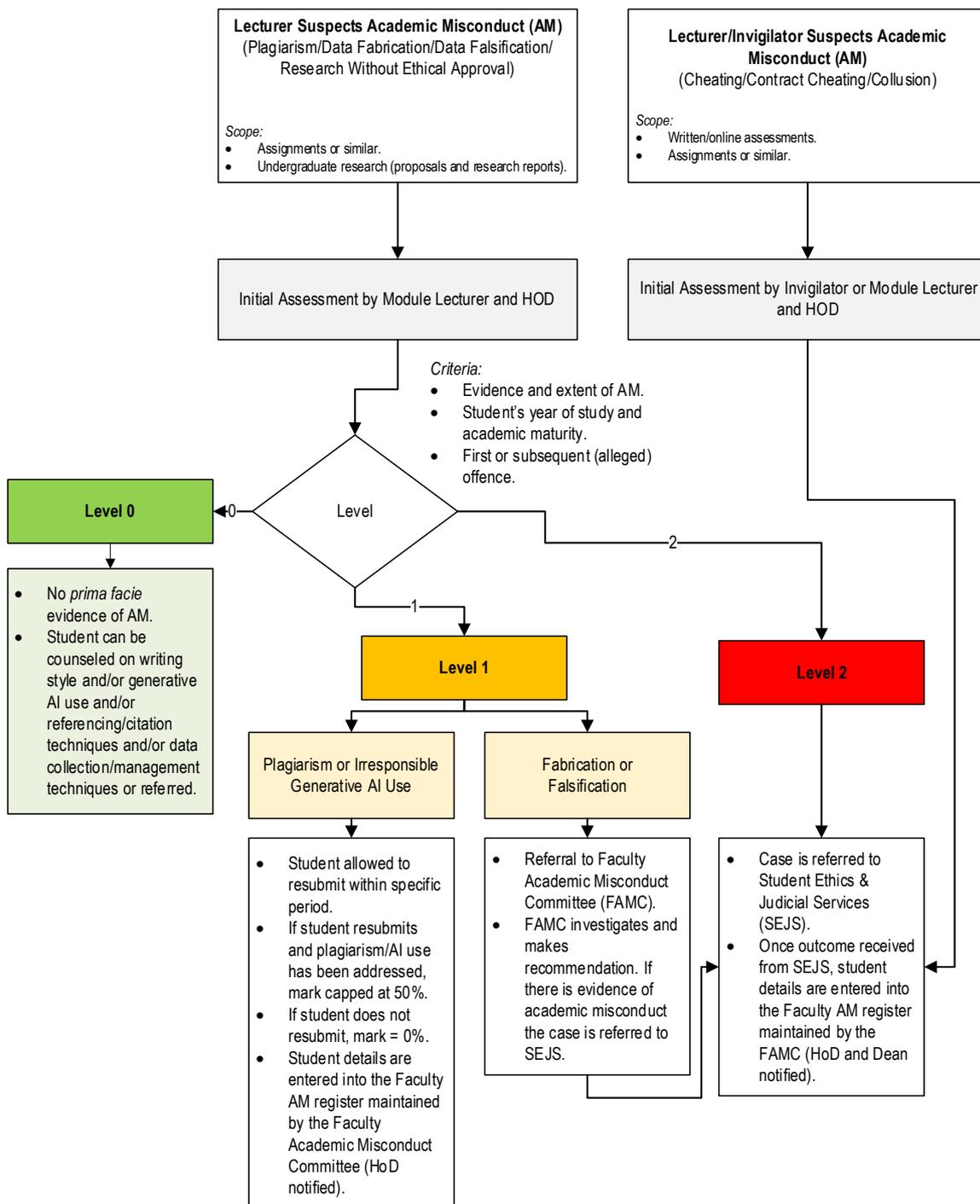
Figure 1: Management of Undergraduate Academic Misconduct

8.2.1.10. Once an outcome is received from SEJS, the student's details are entered into the Faculty Academic Misconduct register.

8.2.2. Cheating, Contract Cheating or Collusion

8.2.2.1. Allegations of cheating, contract cheating or collusion are managed as set out in the Academic Regulations.

Table 1: Undergraduate Plagiarism, Irresponsible GAI Use, Fabrication, Falsification & Research Without Ethical Approval: Levels 1-2

Level	Type	Characteristics
1	Plagiarism	- First or second year undergraduate student, minor or moderate level, first offence. - Third- or fourth-year undergraduate student, minor level, first offence.
	Irresponsible Use of GAI	Any year, minor level, first offence.
	Fabrication	Any year, moderate level, first offence.
	Falsification	Any year, moderate level, first offence.
2	Plagiarism	- First or second year undergraduate student, minor or moderate level, second or subsequent offence. - First - fourth year undergraduate student, major level, first or subsequent offence.
	Irresponsible Use of GAI	Any year, major level or minor level subsequent offence.
	Fabrication	Any year, major level, first or subsequent offence.
	Falsification	Any year, major level, first or subsequent offence.
	Research Without Ethical Approval	Any research requiring ethical approval.

8.3. *Alleged Postgraduate Academic Misconduct*

8.3.1. Alleged academic misconduct confined to coursework components of postgraduate qualifications are managed as set out in Sections 8.2.1 and 8.2.2 above.

8.3.2. Alleged postgraduate academic misconduct is managed as shown in Figure 2.

8.3.3. Postgraduate academic misconduct may be alleged by one or more research supervisors, other students, other researchers, reviewers (as part of a Departmental, Higher Degrees or Research Ethics Committee review process), postgraduate assessors or a journal (following initial editorial screening or peer-review).

8.3.4. If the source of an allegation of academic misconduct is a postgraduate assessor, this must be communicated (via the relevant Faculty Office and research supervisor(s)) to the FHDC.

8.3.5. The FHDC establishes whether there is *prima facie* evidence of academic misconduct and compiles a report describing events leading up to the allegation and relevant evidence.

8.3.6. The FHDC then refers the allegation to the FAMC.

8.3.7. If the source of the allegation is a source other than a postgraduate assessor, the allegation together with relevant evidence is communicated in writing directly to the FAMC.
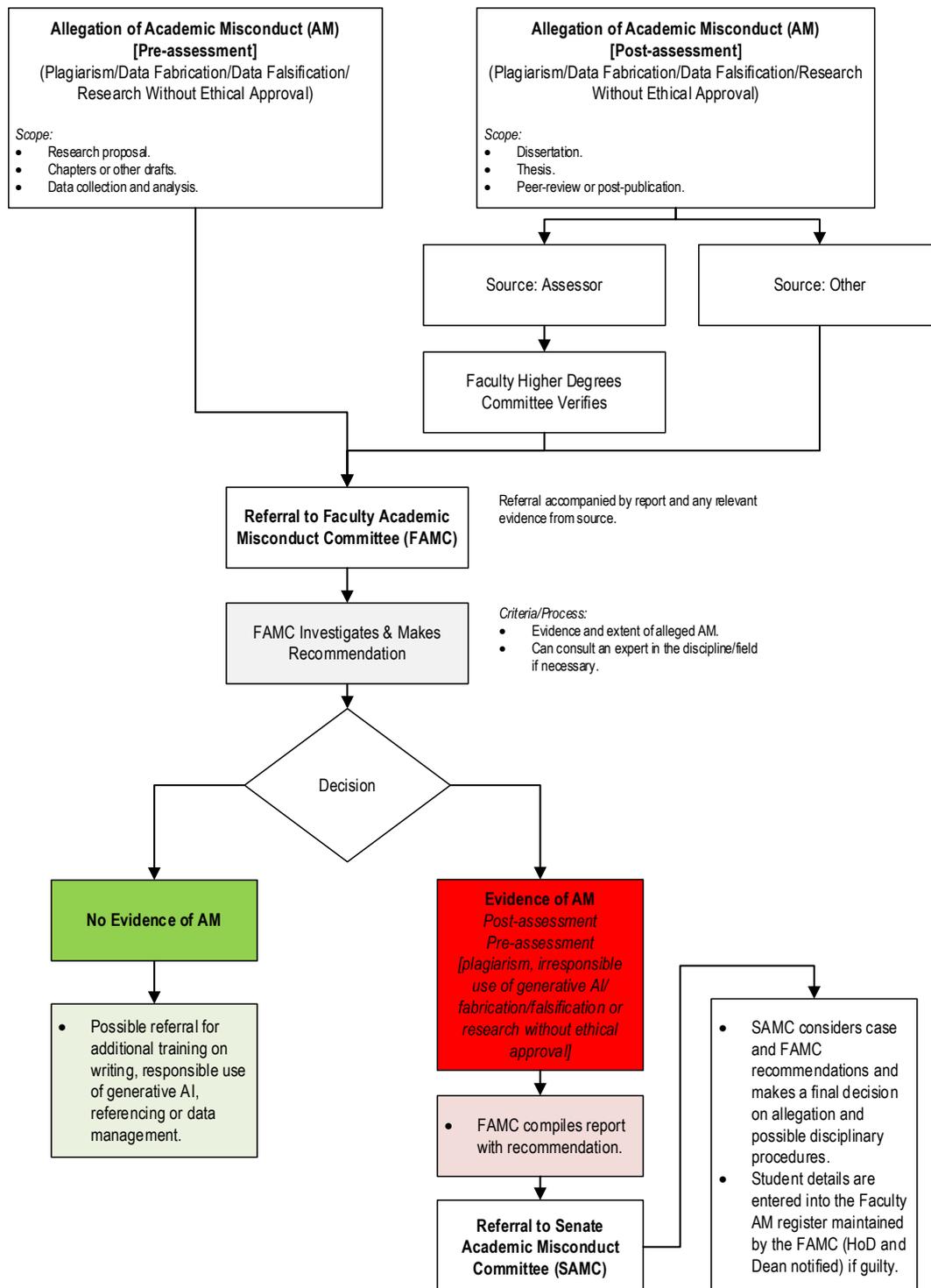
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┌──────────────────────────────┐      ┌──────────────────────────────────┐
│ Allegation of Academic       │      │ Allegation of Academic           │
│ Misconduct (AM)              │      │ Misconduct (AM)                  │
│ [Pre-assessment]             │      │ [Post-assessment]                │
│ (Plagiarism/Data Fabrication/│      │ (Plagiarism/Data Fabrication/    │
│ Data Falsification/          │      │ Data Falsification/Research      │
│ Research Without Ethical     │      │ Without Ethical Approval)        │
│ Approval)                    │      │                                  │
│ Scope:                       │      │ Scope:                           │
│ • Research proposal.         │      │ • Dissertation.                  │
│ • Chapters or other drafts.  │      │ • Thesis.                        │
│ • Data collection and        │      │ • Peer-review or post-publication.│
│   analysis.                  │      │                                  │
└──────────────────────────────┘      └──────────────────────────────────┘
```

Source: Assessor   Source: Other

Faculty Higher Degrees Committee Verifies

Referral to Faculty Academic Misconduct Committee (FAMC)

Referral accompanied by report and any relevant evidence from source.

FAMC Investigates & Makes Recommendation

Criteria/Process:
• Evidence and extent of alleged AM.
• Can consult an expert in the discipline/field if necessary.

Decision

No Evidence of AM

• Possible referral for additional training on writing, responsible use of generative AI, referencing or data management.

Evidence of AM
Post-assessment
Pre-assessment
[plagiarism, irresponsible use of generative AI/ fabrication/falsification or research without ethical approval]

• FAMC compiles report with recommendation.

Referral to Senate Academic Misconduct Committee (SAMC)

• SAMC considers case and FAMC recommendations and makes a final decision on allegation and possible disciplinary procedures.
• Student details are entered into the Faculty AM register maintained by the FAMC (HoD and Dean notified) if guilty.

Figure 2: Management of Postgraduate Academic Misconduct

8.3.8. The FAMC, on receipt of an allegation of academic misconduct, investigates the allegation and recommends a course of action according to the Academic Misconduct SOPs.

8.3.9. The FAMC refers its recommendation (and accompanying report) to the SREC which considers the latter and adds its own recommendation after which the SREC refers the matter to the SHDC for a final decision regarding the allegation and possible disciplinary procedures.

8.3.10. Once an outcome is received from the SHDC, the student's details are entered into the Faculty Academic Misconduct register and the outcome is also entered into the student's academic record.

8.4. *Alleged Academic Misconduct Involving Staff*

Alleged academic misconduct involving staff registered for a qualification at the University is dealt with according to either 8.2 or 8.3 above. Alleged academic misconduct involving staff not registered for a qualification follows the same processes as 8.2 or 8.3 with the exception that, instead of referral to either SEJS (8.1) or SAMC (8.2) the matter is referred to the Human Capital Management Division (Employment Relations).

9. JURISDICTION OVER PRIOR STUDENTS TO CONDUCT MISCONDUCT PROCEEDINGS

9.1. The University envisages the circumstances whereby a student of the University may commit, or may have committed, any form of recognised academic misconduct while participating and/or conducting their studies at the University (such as while they were an undergraduate or postgraduate student of the University). However, the student's misconduct may not have been discovered or revealed to the University (for any reason whatsoever) until a date after the student graduated from the University, or otherwise concluded (or terminated) their studies or engagement with the University.

9.2. As an example, this could have arisen as a result of, amongst other things:

9.2.1. Plagiarism that was committed whilst a student, but which was well-hidden so as to shroud the existence of plagiarism, but which at a later date was revealed to the University.

9.2.2. Cheating or collusion on assessments that is only disclosed to the University after graduation.

9.2.3. The use of GAI in the student's published work, which use was unknown to the University but was later divulged through a compliant made by a third party for intellectual property infringement, and it is subsequently uncovered that the student failed to disclose that they had utilized GAI in their publication.

9.3. The fact that any academic misconduct perpetrated by the former student was only uncovered following the conclusion or termination of their engagement with the University should not absolve the former student from the consequences and repercussions of such conduct, and should not deprive the option and rights of the University to undertake any applicable proceedings and/or recourse against the former student.

9.4. Due to the abovementioned circumstances, the student, by their signature to their Student Agreement, agrees to give their consent to the University, and agrees to subject themselves to the University's perpetual right of jurisdiction over the student in respect of – amongst other proceedings and aspects set out in this Policy on Academic Misconduct – misconduct and disciplinary proceedings against the student for any and all academic misconduct committed whilst being a student of, or otherwise engaged by, the University.

9.5.   Accordingly, the student acknowledges and agrees that the University may, at any time following the conclusion and/or termination of their engagement with the University:

9.5.1. investigate the student in respect of any and all allegations (or otherwise) of academic misconduct conducted by the student whilst they were a student of the University;

9.5.2. pursue, hold and finalise any applicable proceedings as set out in this Policy on Academic Misconduct as if the student were still a student of the University, but which proceedings shall be subject to the presiding rules at the time the academic misconduct was committed; and/or

9.5.3. otherwise deal with the student in terms of any other rules and regulations of the University that would have been applicable to the student at the time they committed the academic misconduct.

9.6.   The University's right to pursue, hold or finalise such proceedings against the student, or otherwise deal with the student in terms of the rules and regulations of the University at the applicable time, shall not be extinguished by time or become unenforceable for any reason whatsoever, it being acknowledged by the student of the severity in committing any form of academic misconduct or dishonesty.

10. VERSION CONTROL

Approved by Senate 17th September 2025

ANNEXURE A: PLAGIARISM AND GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE DECLARATION (RESEARCH)

PLAGIARISM AND GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)
CHECKLIST AND DECLARATION

Student Name	
Student Number	
Proposal/Report/Dissertation/Thesis Title	
Supervisor Name	

1. Checklist					
Date Submitted to Turnitin					
Were matches removed (similarity)?	Yes		No		
If yes, please provide details and motivation below:					
Qualitative impression of matches in similarity report (by supervisor):					
The student must declare below any and all assistance obtained from generative AI sources[1] during preparation of the research proposal, report, dissertation or thesis. This includes generative AI used for accessing, summarising, coding or in any other way processing information and generative AI used for any aspect of writing including generating text, revising spelling or grammar or in any other way improving or summarising existing text.					

2. Student Declaration

a) Plagiarism is to present someone else's ideas or words as my own.

b) Where material written by other people has been used (either from a printed source or from the internet), this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced. I have used the required Faculty standard for citation and referencing. Every contribution to and quotation from the work of other people in this research proposal has been acknowledged through citation and reference.

c) I know that plagiarism is wrong:
   i. I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's Policy On Academic Misconduct in this regard.
   ii. I know that I would plagiarise if I do not give credit to my sources, or if I copy sentences or paragraphs from a book, article or internet source without proper citation.
   iii. I declare that I have written my own sentences and paragraphs throughout this document and I have credited all ideas I have gained from other people's work.

d) I declare that this document is my own original work.

e) I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

f) I have acknowledged the use of any generative AI tools[1] where relevant above.

g) I acknowledge awareness of any updates to the generative AI tools used, up to the date of this submission. This includes AI plug-ins or assistants included in existing programs, such as Grammarly or Atlas.ti. I take responsibility for any fabricated references or factual errors stemming from the use of these tools.

h) I have appropriately cited or indicated the use of AI-generated content in the document where applicable.

i) I acknowledge that any undeclared use of generative AI will constitute academic misconduct and will be dealt with according to relevant University policy.

j) I understand that I will be held accountable and liable for any academic misconduct that arises in breach of any relevant University policy, as well as for the legal or financial consequences of such infringements.

Student Signature:	
Date:	

3. Supervisor Statement (Similarity & Plagiarism)

I am satisfied that matches in the attached similarity report are not consistent with plagiarism. I confirm that I have also taken reasonable steps to check the attached document for evidence of plagiarism that may not be detected through similarity checking and I am satisfied that there is no evidence of plagiarism.

4. Supervisor Statement (Generative AI)

I am satisfied that, to the best of my knowledge, the student has declared all sources of generative AI used in preparation of the attached document. Furthermore, use of generative AI in preparation of the

attached document is in line with responsible use of generative AI set out in the Policy on Academic Misconduct.	
Supervisor Signature:	
Date:	

1 = Generative AI is AI capable of generating content (text, images, audio or video) in response to a user prompt. Examples include ChatGPT (OpenAI), Gemini (Google), Copilot (embedded in Microsoft's Edge browser) and even applications such as Grammarly (Grammarly Inc.).

PLAGIARISM AND GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)
DECLARATION

Student Name	
Student Number	
Assignment/Submission Title	
Lecturer Name	
Module Name & Code	

Student Declaration
The student must declare below any and all assistance obtained from generative AI sources[1] during preparation of the research proposal, report, dissertation or thesis. This includes generative AI used for accessing, summarising, coding or in any other way processing information and generative AI used for any aspect of writing including generating text, revising spelling or grammar or in any other way improving or summarising existing text.
a) Plagiarism is to present someone else's ideas or words as my own.   b) Where material written by other people has been used (either from a printed source or from the internet), this has been carefully acknowledged and referenced. I have used the required Faculty standard for citation and referencing. Every contribution to and quotation from the work of other people in this research proposal has been acknowledged through citation and reference.   c) I know that plagiarism is wrong:

i.	I understand what plagiarism is and am aware of the University's Policy On Academic Misconduct in this regard.
ii.	I know that I would plagiarise if I do not give credit to my sources, or if I copy sentences or paragraphs from a book, article or internet source without proper citation.
iii.	I declare that I have written my own sentences and paragraphs throughout this document and I have credited all ideas I have gained from other people's work.

d) I declare that this document is my own original work.

e) I have not allowed, and will not allow, anyone to copy my work with the intention of passing it off as his or her own work.

f) I have acknowledged the use of any generative AI tools[1] where relevant above.

g) I acknowledge awareness of any updates to the generative AI tools used, up to the date of this submission. This includes AI plug-ins or assistants included in existing programs, such as Grammarly or Atlas.ti. I take responsibility for any fabricated references or factual errors stemming from the use of these tools.

h) I have appropriately cited or indicated the use of AI-generated content in the document where applicable.

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j) I understand that I will be held accountable and liable for any academic misconduct that arises in breach of any relevant University policy, as well as for the legal or financial consequences of such infringements.

Student Signature:	
Date:	

1 = Generative AI is AI capable of generating content (text, images, audio or video) in response to a user prompt. Examples include ChatGPT (OpenAI), Gemini (Google), Copilot (embedded in Microsoft's Edge browser) and even applications such as Grammarly (Grammarly Inc.).

ANNEXURE C: AFFIDAVIT

AFFIDAVIT: MASTER'S AND DOCTORAL STUDENTS
TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This serves to confirm that I, _____
(Full Name(s) and Surname)

ID Number _____ Student number_____

enrolled for the Qualification _____ in the

Faculty of _____,

herewith declare that my academic work is in line with the Policy on Academic Misconduct of the University of Johannesburg which I am familiar with. I declare that:

a) The work submitted is my own original work and that all use of generative artificial intelligence in preparation of the work has been declared.
b) Where my own previously published or assessed work is used, this is clearly referenced as such; and
c) that all sources used by me are clearly and adequately referenced and acknowledged as may be appropriate.
d) Where generative artificial intelligence has been used, it has been used responsibly as set out in the Policy on Academic Misconduct.
e) All data collected for the purposes of the research (if applicable) is authentic and accurate and has not been inappropriately altered in any way.
f) Ethical approval was obtained prior to commencement of the research (this item may be deleted if not necessary).
g) I understand what academic misconduct is and what the consequences of academic misconduct are.

I further declare that the work presented in the (minor dissertation/dissertation/thesis) is authentic and original unless clearly indicated otherwise and in such instances full reference to the source is acknowledged and I do not pretend to receive any credit for such acknowledged quotations, and that there is no copyright infringement in my work. I understand that academic misconduct is a serious offence and that should I contravene the Policy on Academic Misconduct notwithstanding signing this affidavit, I may be found guilty of a serious criminal offence (perjury) that would amongst other consequences compel the UJ to inform all other tertiary institutions of the offence and to issue a corresponding certificate of reprehensible academic conduct to whomever request such a certificate from the institution.

Signed at _____on this _____day of _____ 20___.
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Signature_____ **Print name**_____