



جامعة المجمعة
Majmaah University

Handbook of Academic Integrity Policy

Majmaah University

College of Education

Department of English Language





English Department



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1. Preface

This handbook has been developed to guide students of the English Language Department at Majmaah University in conducting ethical scientific research. It offers a thorough overview of core research ethics, aligned with the values of academic integrity and the institutional and national policies governing scholarly work. Ethical research is the cornerstone of reliable knowledge and academic progress. Adhering to ethical guidelines is essential for ensuring transparency, accountability, and respect for research participants.

In addition to research ethics, this guide also addresses issues of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism, and other forms of misconduct. It outlines expectations for all types of student submissions—such as projects, assignments, research papers, and theses—emphasizing that ethical conduct applies to every stage and form of academic work.

This handbook serves not only as a reference for students but also as a shared resource for supervisors and staff members to ensure their guidance supports responsible research behavior. It emphasizes the importance of following both Majmaah University's internal policies and the broader legal and moral obligations rooted in Islamic Sharia. Both undergraduate and MA students are encouraged to use this handbook throughout all stages of their academic work, including assignment preparation and submission, as well as the entire research process from proposal writing to thesis submission, to ensure their work meets the highest standards of scientific and ethical conduct.



2. Academic Integrity and Institutional Alignment

Academic integrity is fundamental to the credibility of scholarly work and the reputation of the institution. At Majmaah University, promoting ethical research is a shared responsibility.

This handbook adheres to:

- A) The Saudi National Policy on Scientific Integrity (2024)
- B) Majmaah University regulations

It highlights:

- A) Best practices for ethical research
- B) Avoidance of misconduct
- C) The role of supervisors and instructors in promoting ethical scholarship

The goal is to foster a research culture that values truthfulness, fairness, and accountability.

3. Student Responsibilities

Students must:

- Conduct original and authentic research.
- Avoid plagiarism, data fabrication, or misrepresentation.
- Be honest in collecting, analyzing, and presenting data.
- Acknowledge all sources accurately to respect intellectual property.
- Obtain IRB approval if human participants are involved.
- Maintain confidentiality and data protection, especially with sensitive topics.
- Retain data securely for at least five years post-submission.
- Submit the projects, assignments, research papers, or theses with Turnitin similarity under 30%.

For IRB guidelines, [please visit the Research Ethics Committee website and follow the instructions](#)



4. Supervisor/ Instructor Responsibilities

Supervisors or instructors are expected to:

- Initiate discussions on research ethics from the beginning.
- Ensure methods and tools comply with ethical standards.
- Review student work to identify ethical issues such as plagiarism.
- Provide constructive feedback on ethical challenges.
- Report major violations to the department or ethics committee.
- Make sure students submit projects, assignments, research papers, or theses with a Turnitin similarity score under 30%.



5. Core Ethical Principles

- **Accountability:** Researchers are responsible for their decisions and actions.
- **Objectivity:** Research must be unbiased and evidence-based.
- **Transparency:** Authors must disclose their contributions and sources.
- **Documentation Integrity:** Maintain accurate and complete records

✘ 6. Understanding and Avoiding Cheating and Plagiarism

Cheating refers to any dishonest behavior intended to gain an unfair academic advantage. This includes giving or receiving unauthorized assistance during exams, copying homework, using prohibited materials, submitting the same work for multiple courses, or submitting someone else's work as one's own. Cheating violates academic integrity and undermines fairness among students.

Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's words, ideas, or work without proper citation—either through direct copying, improper paraphrasing, or failing to acknowledge sources. Plagiarism is a serious offense at **Majmaah University**, undermining academic trust and integrity.



6.1 Types of Plagiarism:

- **Direct Plagiarism:** Copying text without citation or quotation marks.
- **Improper Paraphrasing:** Rewording ideas from a source without giving proper credit.
- **Self-Plagiarism:** Reusing one's own previous work without disclosure or permission.
- **Ghostwriting:** Submitting work completed by someone else.
- **False Authorship:** Listing individuals as authors who did not contribute.

Maintaining **academic honesty** is essential for personal development, fairness among students, and institutional credibility. All forms of academic misconduct will be addressed according to **Majmaah University's [internal regulations](#)**.

6.2 Plagiarism Detection and Similarity Threshold:

All assignments, research papers, projects, or theses must be submitted via approved plagiarism detection tools such as **Turnitin** or **SafeAssign** through Blackboard. A **maximum similarity score of 30%** is allowed. Exceeding this threshold indicates potential improper referencing or copied content and may result in the submission being rejected.

However, students are typically allowed to revise and resubmit their work. It's important to note that some academic sections, such as the *Materials and Methods* in research from the same discipline, may naturally produce higher similarity. Instructors and assessors must interpret reports carefully, differentiating between standard academic phrasing and actual plagiarism.

6.3 Consequences of Plagiarism:

Depending on the severity of the case, plagiarism may result in:

- Grade penalties or thesis rejection
- Suspension or graduation delays
- Loss of academic privileges
- Legal action or degree withdrawal in extreme cases

The **Head of Department** will document any serious cases and refer them to the **College Disciplinary Committee** for further action.

6.4 Support and Prevention:

- Students may receive **personalized plagiarism training** to help them improve.



- **Graduate students** are granted free access to Turnitin to check drafts.
- **Undergraduate instructors** may enable SafeAssign, allowing students to review similarity scores before final submission.
- **Supervisors/instructors** must submit a **Declaration of Originality** with final submissions, subject to approval by the **Department Council**.

6.5 How to Avoid Plagiarism:

- Always cite sources correctly using appropriate academic citation styles.
- Paraphrase properly and avoid copying structure or wording.
- Use university-approved similarity-check tools responsibly.
- Refer to the **Turnitin Guide for Instructors** for best practices.

6.6 Plagiarism Awareness and Preventive Education

The English Language Program (ELP) publishes a clear plagiarism policy accessible to all students and instructors.

The department organizes annual workshops, seminars, and orientation sessions to:

- Promote awareness about academic integrity
- Present case studies and real examples
- Clarify plagiarism policies and the consequences of misconduct

7. Practice and Policy on Academic Integrity

7.1 Policy Framework and Communication

Academic integrity at Majmaah University is governed by the *Student Behaviour and Discipline Regulations*, particularly **Article 11 (Page 6)**. Any student found guilty of academic misconduct, including but not limited to **plagiarism, cheating in reports, research, field training, duties, or graduation projects**, will be subject to formal disciplinary actions.

7.1.1 Procedure for Handling Violations:

1. **Instructor Identification and Documentation:**



- If a student is suspected of misconduct, the instructor must collect **documented evidence** (e.g., similarity reports, email correspondence, graded assignments).
- 2. **Incident Report Submission:**
 - A **formal incident report** must be submitted by the instructor to the **Student Violations Subcommittee** at the college level. This report should include:
 - Student information (name, ID, course code)
 - Description of the violation
 - Evidence supporting the claim
 - Instructor's recommendation, if applicable
- 3. **Committee Investigation and Decision:**
 - The Subcommittee will review the case, invite the student for questioning (if necessary), and issue appropriate sanctions based on the severity and frequency of the violation.

7.1.2 Possible Sanctions:

- **⚠ First Offense:**
 - Written warning and counseling on academic integrity.
 - Grade deduction or cancellation of the specific assignment/test.
- **🔄 Second Offense:**
 - Automatic failure in the specific course or assignment.
 - A formal note in the student's academic record.
- **🚫 Repeated or Severe Misconduct** (e.g., use of ghostwriters, fake data, thesis plagiarism):
 - Suspension for one academic semester or more.
 - Dismissal from the academic program in extreme or repeated cases.
 - Notification to scholarship or funding bodies (if applicable).

7.1.3 Appeals Process:

- Students have the right to **appeal** the decision within 10 working days of receiving the committee's ruling.
- Appeals must be submitted in writing to the **college dean**, who will forward them to the **Higher Disciplinary Committee**.

7.2. Course-Level Communication

7.2.1 Syllabus Declaration

Each instructor must include an **academic integrity clause** in their 1st class orientation.



7.2.2 First Class Orientation

- During the first week of class, the instructor should:
 - Explain the types of academic violations
 - Provide real examples
 - Clarify procedures and consequences

7.2.3 Values-Driven Academic Culture

Alignment with Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs):

- Academic integrity is reflected in **PLO V2**, aligned with **Institutional Learning Outcome (ILO) 3.1 on integrity**.
- Student performance is continuously monitored to ensure the integration of ethical conduct across the learning experience

7.3 Instructional Practice: Alternative Assessment Strategies

Design for Integrity:

- Faculty are encouraged to use:
 - **Frequent, low-stakes assessments** to minimize pressure.
 - **Varied formats and personalized assignments** to reduce cheating opportunities.

Oral defense, project journals, and reflections as authenticity checks

7.4 Technology-Enabled Integrity Enforcement

7.4.1 Plagiarism Detection

Majmaah University mandates the use of **Blackboard**, **TURNITIN**, and **SafeAssign** for all submissions. These tools:

- Cross-check student work with databases
- Generate similarity reports

7.4.2 Randomized Online Testing

Faculty must use random question banks in online exams to prevent cheating.



8. Ethical Use of AI Tools

AI tools (ChatGPT, Grammarly, ProWritingAid) can assist but **must be used ethically**.

8.1 Permissible Uses:

- Grammar and spelling corrections
- Summarizing or translating content
- Brainstorming ideas or improving clarity

8.2 Prohibited Uses:

- Writing full chapters or major content
- Creating fake data, results, or citations
- Misusing AI to substitute original thought

8.3 Best Practices:

- Acknowledge AI use in your thesis (e.g., methodology or acknowledgments)
- AI-generated content must not exceed **20%**
- Review all AI outputs for accuracy and bias
- You remain fully responsible for your submission

8.4 Violations:

Undisclosed or excessive AI use equals misconduct, with penalties similar to plagiarism.

9. Final Reminders

9.1 Final Reminders for Students

- Follow Majmaah University's Research Ethics Code.
- Stay honest in designing and reporting research.
- Keep detailed records of your methods and data.
- Ask your supervisor \ instructor before using digital tools.
- Cite all sources and check for similarity before submitting.



- Avoid unauthorized assistance that may compromise your independence.

9.2 Final Reminders for Supervisors /Instructors

- Provide ethics briefings at the beginning of supervision.
- Review drafts vigilantly for any misconduct.
- Promote ethical AI use and discourage dependence.
- Offer feedback that fosters student learning.
- Report serious violations promptly for formal action.

10. Closing Note

Ethical research is a shared responsibility. Students and supervisors or instructors must uphold Majmaah University's core values of **academic integrity, excellence, and trustworthiness**. Success in academia is earned through **knowledge, credibility, and principled conduct**.



The content of this handbook is based on the following referenced sources.

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Majmaah University's [internal regulations](#)

Scientific Research and Project Committee. 2025