MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND EDUCATION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

AZERBAIJAN TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

Approved by
Vice-Rector for Science and Innovation
of Azerbaijan Technical University
S. Namazov

ANTI-PLAGIARISM AND ACADEMIC INTEGRITY POLICY

BAKU – 2025

1. GENERAL PROVISIONS

1.1. Introduction and Purpose

Azerbaijan Technical University (hereinafter – AzTU) defines the principles of academic integrity that must be observed by academic staff, researchers, students, and other individuals engaged in teaching, research, and administrative activities. Academic integrity is one of the fundamental values of the University and forms the basis of transparency, reliability, responsibility, and ethical conduct in education and research.

This Policy is based on the current regulatory and legal acts of the Republic of Azerbaijan, AzTU Charter, Strategic Development Plan, and relevant decisions of the Academic Council.

The main objectives of this Policy are:

1. To ensure transparent, honest, and ethical academic activity at AzTU;
2. To ensure originality in academic work and prevent plagiarism among students, academic staff, and researchers;
3. To ensure compliance with legislation and ethical standards in the preparation of scientific research, dissertations, graduation theses, teaching materials, and other academic works;
4. To contribute to the protection and strengthening of the University's academic reputation;
5. To promote academic integrity as a core indicator of responsibility and ethical behavior in education, research, and administrative processes.

This Policy contributes to the establishment of a fair, responsible, and intellectually sound academic environment at AzTU.

2. CORE PRINCIPLES

Academic integrity at Azerbaijan Technical University is based on fundamental principles regulating the activities of academic staff and students.

2.1. Transparency and Objectivity

All academic processes must ensure accurate, complete, and timely presentation of information, as well as objective and impartial assessment of results.

2.2. Responsibility and Accountability

Students and academic staff bear full responsibility for their academic activities, including the quality, accuracy, and reliability of submitted work and data.

2.3. Respect for Ideas and Intellectual Property

All sources must be properly cited, and respect must be shown for intellectual property rights.

2.4. Originality and Creativity

Academic work must demonstrate originality, creative thinking, and scientific innovation.

2.5. Ethical Conduct and Mutual Respect

All members of the academic community must adhere to ethical standards and mutual respect.

3. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity refers to the ethical conduct of research, teaching, dissertation writing, and other academic activities.

Compliance with academic integrity principles is mandatory for all members of AzTU.

This Policy is applied in accordance with relevant laws of the Republic of Azerbaijan, including:

- Law on Education
- Law on Science
- Patent Law
- Law on Copyright and Related Rights
- Law on Protection of Intellectual Property and Anti-Piracy

Administrative and criminal legislation is also taken into account where applicable.

3.1. Scope of Application

This Policy applies to all academic activities at AzTU, including:

- Bachelor, Master, and Doctoral students
- Academic staff
- Researchers and dissertation candidates
- Administrative personnel involved in academic activities

4. PLAGIARISM AND ITS TYPES

4.1. Definition of Plagiarism

Plagiarism is the presentation of another person's work, ideas, results, or intellectual output without proper citation.

4.2. Forms of Plagiarism

4.2.1. Use of text without citation

4.2.2. Use of data, tables, images without reference

4.2.3. Use of text, ideas, results without attribution

4.2.4. Reuse of own previous work without citation (self-plagiarism)

4.3. Types of Plagiarism

4.3.1. Total plagiarism
4.3.2. Partial plagiarism
4.3.3. Self-plagiarism
4.3.4. Automated plagiarism (use of AI-generated content presented as original work)

Plagiarism is considered a serious academic violation and entails liability under legislation and university regulations.

5. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY IN RESEARCH

5.1. Academic integrity in scientific research is a fundamental principle that ensures the reliability, objectivity, and transparency of scientific activity.

5.2. Researchers must comply with the following requirements during scientific activities:

5.2.1. present research results accurately, without distortion, and in an objective manner;

5.2.2. properly cite all sources used in accordance with established rules;

5.2.3. avoid appropriating the ideas, results, and materials of other authors;

5.2.4. adhere to ethical standards in the collection, processing, and analysis of data.

5.3. The following cases are considered unacceptable in scientific research:

5.3.1. the use of another person's text, ideas, or results without proper citation;

5.3.2. presenting information obtained from scientific sources without indicating the source;

5.3.3. presenting the results of other studies as one's own;

5.3.4. reuse of the author's own previous work without proper citation (self-plagiarism);

5.3.5. the presentation of fabricated or falsified data;

5.3.6. citing non-existent sources;

5.3.7. the deliberate distortion of research results.

5.4. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic misconduct in scientific research activities and leads to the application of relevant disciplinary measures.

5.5. In scientific research, the author's individual scientific contribution must be clearly reflected, and the originality of the work must be ensured.

5.6. Before submission, scientific research works must undergo similarity checking and comply with established regulatory requirements.

6. Similarity and Originality Check

At AzTU, teaching materials, scientific research works, dissertations, and graduation theses are checked using appropriate software to ensure compliance with academic integrity principles.

Originality is considered a primary priority in academic work. Each work must reflect the author's independent approach, the introduction of new ideas, scientific justification, and the presentation of results obtained through conducted analysis.

Quotations from sources are permitted, provided that established citation rules are followed. However, a high level of overall similarity may negatively affect the originality of the work.

The maximum allowable similarity thresholds for academic works at AzTU are defined as follows:

- 25% for bachelor level;
- 20% for master level;
- 5% for academic staff and researchers.

Works exceeding these thresholds are not accepted and are returned to the author for revision. After making the necessary corrections, the work may be resubmitted.

Approval of academic works or their progression to the next stage is granted only after the completion of the similarity check.

7. Use of Artificial Intelligence

In recent years, due to technological advancements, artificial intelligence–based tools have been widely used in academic activities. While these tools can be beneficial when

used appropriately, their improper or uncontrolled use may lead to violations of academic integrity principles.

At AzTU, the use of artificial intelligence tools must comply with academic integrity standards. The full or partial preparation of academic work using AI and presenting it as the author's original work is unacceptable and is considered an academic violation.

Artificial intelligence tools may be used only as supportive instruments. In this context, they may be used for idea generation, structuring text, and improving language and style. However, full responsibility for the content, results, and quality of the submitted work remains with the author.

Works generated through artificial intelligence that do not reflect the author's independent academic activity are not accepted for evaluation.

8. Research Involving Human Participants

All scientific research involving human participants at AzTU must be conducted in accordance with ethical principles and applicable legislation. Ensuring the protection of participants' rights, dignity, and safety is considered a primary priority in such research.

Prior to conducting such research, the researcher must formally apply to the University's Ethics Committee, providing detailed information on the purpose, methodology, and ethical considerations of the study, and obtain the necessary approval.

The application submitted to the Ethics Committee must include the following:

1. the purpose of the research and its scientific justification;
2. the methods and tools to be used;
3. mechanisms for protecting participants' rights;
4. measures to ensure the confidentiality of collected data.

Participants involved in the research must be fully and clearly informed in advance about the purpose, methods, and potential risks of the study, and their voluntary informed consent must be obtained. Participants must also be informed of their right to withdraw from the research at any time.

Researchers are responsible for ensuring the confidentiality and secure storage of participants' personal data.

9. Academic Misconduct

Failure to comply with established rules during academic activities at AzTU is considered academic misconduct.

Academic misconduct includes the following:

9.1. Cheating – Seeking or providing unauthorized assistance during assessment or other academic processes, using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, notes, or other aids without the instructor's permission.

9.2. Fabrication – Deliberate falsification or manipulation of data in academic work, presentation of unverified information, citation of non-existent sources, or alteration of real data.

9.3. Facilitation of Academic Misconduct – Knowingly assisting, enabling, or encouraging another person to commit academic misconduct.

9.4. Gaining Unfair Advantage – Actions aimed at obtaining unfair advantage over others in the academic evaluation process, including unauthorized access to exam materials, their distribution, or interference with the assessment process.

10. Other Forms of Academic Misconduct and Deficient Academic Behavior

Other actions that violate the principles of academic integrity are also considered academic misconduct at AzTU.

Such actions include:

10.1. Forgery – Falsification or alteration of official documents, certificates, assessment results, or other academic records.

10.2. Concealment of Plagiarism – Modifying text or materials in various ways and presenting them without proper citation.

10.3. Resubmission – Submitting the same academic work or parts thereof without the instructor's consent.

10.4. Interference in Examination and Assessment Processes – Actions intended to influence the outcomes of evaluation processes.

10.5. Unethical Behavior in Group Work – Misappropriating others' contributions, failing to fulfill assigned responsibilities, or creating unfair distribution in presenting results.

10.6. Unauthorized Access and Distribution of Information – Obtaining, sharing, or using academic materials, exam questions, or other information without authorization.

10.7. Conduct Contrary to Academic Ethics – Disrespectful behavior, pressure, or use of unethical influence toward others within the academic and research environment.

11. Implementation and Monitoring Mechanisms

At AzTU, appropriate governance and monitoring mechanisms are established to ensure the implementation of this Policy.

11.1. Responsible Structural Units
Relevant university units, including those responsible for research activities, teaching and learning, and the Ethics Committee, are involved in implementing this Policy.

11.2. Research Unit
The unit responsible for research ensures that scientific research, dissertations, and graduation works comply with academic integrity and originality principles, organizes similarity checks, and documents the results.

11.3. Academic Affairs Department
The Academic Affairs Department oversees transparency, objectivity, and adherence to ethical principles in the preparation, submission, and evaluation of academic work.

11.4. Ethics Committee
The Ethics Committee receives, investigates, evaluates, and makes decisions regarding cases of academic integrity violations.

11.5. Management of Violations
Reports of academic misconduct, plagiarism, or other unethical behavior are reviewed in accordance with established procedures. Based on the findings, the following measures may be applied:

1. return of the academic work;
2. requirement for revision;
3. annulment of assessment results;
4. application of disciplinary measures;
5. other actions in accordance with the University's internal regulations.

These mechanisms ensure that academic activities at AzTU are conducted in an ethical, transparent, and responsible manner, while also safeguarding the University's academic and research reputation.

12. Appeals Mechanism

12.1. Individuals who disagree with a decision related to academic misconduct may submit an appeal in accordance with established procedures.

12.2. The appeal must be submitted in writing within 5 (five) working days from the date the decision is communicated.

12.3. Appeals are reviewed by the relevant authorized body of the University.

12.4. During the appeal process, the basis of the initial decision is re-evaluated and a final decision is made.

12.5. The decision made upon appeal is final and binding.

13. Awareness and Training

At AzTU, systematic awareness and training activities are conducted to ensure that students, researchers, and academic staff understand and adhere to academic integrity principles.

13.1. Seminars and Trainings

Seminars, trainings, and awareness sessions on academic integrity are organized, covering the following topics:

- the essence of academic integrity and ethical principles;
- the concept and types of plagiarism;
- procedures for checking similarity and originality;
- proper citation practices;
- ethical use of artificial intelligence and other technological tools;
- consequences of academic misconduct and disciplinary measures.

13.2. Methodological and Training Materials

Methodological and training materials on academic integrity and anti-plagiarism rules are developed and provided to users. These materials explain ways to prevent plagiarism, citation rules, academic writing standards, and requirements related to similarity checks.

14. Annexes

To ensure the effective implementation of the Academic Integrity and Anti-Plagiarism Policy at Azerbaijan Technical University (AzTU), a set of annexes has been developed. These annexes support the maintenance of accuracy, transparency, and accountability in academic work at the University.

Annex 1: Anti-Plagiarism Checking Procedure

This annex explains the step-by-step procedure for plagiarism checking of all academic works conducted at AzTU. The procedure includes the following stages:

1. The student or academic staff submits the work in the prescribed format;
2. The work is systematically checked using the StrikePlagiarism software;
3. Determination of the similarity percentage and documentation of the results;
4. If the similarity percentage is within the accepted threshold, the work is approved; otherwise, it is returned to the author;
5. After making the necessary revisions, the author resubmits the work.

Annex 2: Classification of Similarity Percentages

This annex outlines the evaluation and classification of similarity levels in academic works:

- 0–20%: Acceptable; originality is preserved.
- 21% and above: Not acceptable; the work is returned to the author for revision.

This classification is applied to maintain the originality of academic work and to minimize the risk of plagiarism.

Annex 3: Disciplinary Measures for Academic Misconduct

This annex defines the classification of consequences and disciplinary measures applied for academic misconduct at Azerbaijan Technical University. In cases of violations of academic integrity principles, the following measures may be applied:

- **Warning** – Applied in cases of minor violations; the author is formally warned and required to revise the academic work.
- **Reprimand** – Applied in more serious cases; official records are made regarding the academic work.
- **Annulment of Grade** – If plagiarism or other academic misconduct is detected, the grade assigned to the academic work is cancelled.
- **Expulsion** – In cases of repeated or severe violations, a decision may be made to temporarily or permanently expel the student from the University.

When applying disciplinary measures, the nature, severity, and recurrence of the violation are taken into account.

This annex serves to ensure that academic activities at AzTU are conducted in a transparent, responsible, and ethical manner and acts as a key regulatory framework for compliance with academic integrity rules.

15. Responsibilities of Participants in Academic Activities

15.1. Responsibilities of Students

15.1.1. To comply with academic integrity principles;
15.1.2. To ensure the originality of submitted academic work;
15.1.3. To properly cite all sources used;
15.1.4. To avoid plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct;
15.1.5. To use artificial intelligence and other technological tools ethically.

15.2. Responsibilities of Academic Staff
15.2.1. To promote academic integrity principles in the teaching process;
15.2.2. To familiarize students with proper citation and academic writing rules;
15.2.3. To ensure objective and fair assessment of academic work;
15.2.4. To ensure appropriate actions are taken when academic misconduct is identified.

15.3. Responsibilities of Supervisors
15.3.1. To oversee the scientific work of students and researchers;
15.3.2. To support the preparation of work in line with academic integrity principles;
15.3.3. To provide guidance in preventing plagiarism risks.

15.4. Responsibilities of the University
15.4.1. To ensure the implementation of the academic integrity policy;
15.4.2. To organize awareness and training activities;
15.4.3. To ensure objective investigation of academic misconduct cases.

16. Rules of Academic Conduct (Permitted and Prohibited Actions)

16.1. Permitted Actions
16.1.1. Use of sources in accordance with established citation rules;
16.1.2. Conducting academic activities in groups with the instructor’s permission;
16.1.3. Use of artificial intelligence tools as supportive instruments;
16.1.4. Proper use of scientific sources in the preparation of academic work.

16.2. Prohibited Actions
16.2.1. Plagiarism and self-plagiarism;
16.2.2. Cheating and use of unauthorized assistance;
16.2.3. Presentation of fabricated or falsified data;
16.2.4. Submission of work prepared by another person;
16.2.5. Presenting AI-generated content as the author’s own work;
16.2.6. Interference with examination and assessment processes.

17. Detection and Prevention of Academic Misconduct

17.1. Detection Mechanisms
17.1.1. Checking academic work using appropriate software;
17.1.2. Analysis of academic work by academic staff;
17.1.3. Submission of suspicious cases to the Ethics Committee.

17.2. Preventive Measures
17.2.1. Regular training on academic integrity;
17.2.2. Raising awareness among students on proper citation and academic writing;
17.2.3. Development and dissemination of methodological materials;
17.2.4. Preliminary review of work by supervisors.

17.3. Preventive Actions
17.3.1. Step-by-step checking of academic work;
17.3.2. Assigning individual tasks to students;
17.3.3. Strengthening supervision of academic activities.

18. Entry into Force and Revision of the Document

18.1. This Policy enters into force from the date of its approval by the authorized body of Azerbaijan Technical University.
18.2. This Policy is approved by the decision of the University Scientific Council.
18.3. The provisions of the Policy may be improved and updated when necessary.
18.4. Amendments and additions to the Policy enter into force after being approved in accordance with established procedures.

19. Conclusion

AzTU requires its academic staff, researchers, and students to adhere to academic integrity principles at a high level and provides institutional support in this regard.

Academic integrity forms the foundation of research activities, the teaching process, and a healthy academic environment. Adherence to these principles contributes significantly to maintaining the University's academic reputation, enhancing the reliability of scientific activities, and supporting the professional development of its members.