

Plagiarism to cost students, faculty dearly

Pupils would face cancellation of registration, staff could be denied increments, barred from publication of papers

SAHIL MAKKAR

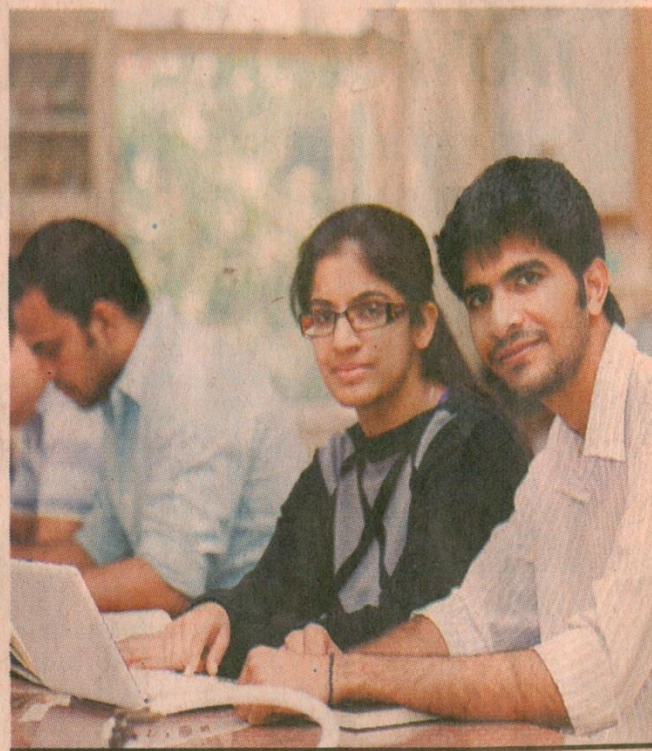
New Delhi, 17 September

The University Grant Commission (UGC) has come out with draft rules to make it difficult for students, researchers and the faculty at higher education institutes to plagiarise assignments, projects, theses, research work and dissertations.

The Draft UGC (Promotion of Academic Integrity and Prevention of Plagiarism in Higher Education Institutions) Regulations stipulate higher education institutes instal software to ensure papers submitted by students and the faculty are free from plagiarism at the time of submission.

The rules also make it mandatory for the authors to sign an undertaking that their work is original. The guides or supervisors approving the thesis would also have to sign an undertaking that the work assessed by them was original and free from plagiarism. The higher education institutes would allow researchers, faculty and students enrolled under the MPhil and PhD programmes access to the software to cross-check their respective scripts before submitting their thesis or paper.

"All higher education institutes shall submit to Information and Library



FACING THE PENALTY

FOR STUDENTS:

Level 1: Similarities above 10-40%: Such a student shall not be given any mark and/or credit for the plagiarised script and shall be asked to submit a revised script within a stipulated time period not exceeding six months

Level 2: Similarities above 40-60%: Such a student shall not be given any mark and/or credit for the plagiarised script and shall be asked to submit a revised script after a time period of one year, but not exceeding 18 months

Level 3: Similarities above 60%: Such a student shall not

be given any mark and/or credit for the plagiarised script and his/her registration for that course to be cancelled

FOR FACULTY, STAFF, RESEARCHERS:

Level 1: Similarities above 10-40%: Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript submitted for publication and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of one year

Level 2: Similarities above 40-60%: Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript and shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum period of two years. The

person would be denied a right to one annual increment and shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any UG, PG, Master's, MPhil, PhD student/scholar for two years

Level 3: Similarities above 60%: Shall be asked to withdraw manuscript; shall not be allowed to publish any work for a minimum of three years. The person shall be denied a right to two successive annual increments and shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any UG, PG, Master's, MPhil, PhD student/scholar for a period of three years. In case of repeat of this offence, the person shall be dismissed

Network (INFLIBNET) soft copies of all MPhil, PhD dissertations and these are carried out in its various departments after the award of degrees for hosting in the digital repository under the Shodh Ganga e-repository programme," the draft rules say. The INFLIBNET Centre is an autonomous inter-university centre of the UGC under the ministry of human resource development (MHRD).

These rules will come into effect after September 30 as the UGC is awaiting feedback from

all the stakeholders. "The intention behind these rules was to improve quality and standard of education of higher education institutes in the country," an MHRD official said.

The move will impact hundreds and thousands of students currently enrolled in India's 760 universities, including 43 central and 316 state public universities and 75 institutes of national importance. There are 38,498 colleges and another 12,276 stand-alone

institutions in the country. The UGC in its draft rules has proposed punishment for students, faculty and staff if they're found guilty of plagiarising original and published content.

For students, the punishment could range from losing credits to cancellation of their registration. "If plagiarism is proved on a date later than the date of award of degree or credit as the case may be, then his/her degree or credit shall be put in abeyance for a period

decided by the Academic Misconduct Panel (AMP) and Plagiarism Discipline Authority (PDA)," the rules say.

The higher education institutes would be mandated to set up AMP, comprising four senior academicians, including one from outside the institution, and PDA, a three-member committee headed by the head of institution. The PDA will take action on the recommendation of AMP. Its decision would be final and binding.

The same authorities will

decide on the action against faculty, staff and researchers if they are accused of plagiarism. Their punishment ranges from forcing them to withdraw their manuscripts and denial of increment for two successive years. They would also be prohibited from submitting their papers for three years. "They shall not be allowed to be a supervisor to any undergraduate, postgraduate, Master's, MPhil, PhD student/scholar for a period of three years," the rules say.