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UNIVERSITÄT
BERN

Guidelines of the University Executive Board concerning the procedure for dealing with plagiarism

The University Executive Board

does not tolerate violations of academic integrity. This also includes plagiarism that may compromise or damage the interests of universities (in particular admission for graduation from university using inadmissible means; expenses for investigating suspected plagiarism), public interests (plagiarism enables someone to acquire an academic title which ought not to have been obtained in this way) as well as the private interests of the authors of the plagiarized texts. The University Executive Board endeavors to ensure that, in the event of suspected plagiarism by students, the procedure is as uniform as possible and that a minimum standard is adhered to. It

is therefore

on the basis of Article 39 paragraph 1 item k of the Act governing the University of September 5, 1996 (UniG), taking into account Article 78a UniG and Article 47 of the University Ordinance of September 12, 2012 (UniV) and in addition to the regulations governing academic integrity of December 10, 2024, issuing the following guidelines:

Art. 1 Scope of application

These guidelines shall apply to all written works (in particular seminar papers, bachelors or masters theses and doctoral theses), presentations and presentation documents of students at the University of Bern in which plagiarism is suspected.

Art. 2 Trivial cases

¹ Obvious trivial cases fall below the threshold of a reprimand and are settled informally within the Institutes.

² A trivial case is deemed to be plagiarism of minimal quality and quantity.

Art. 3 Minor cases

¹ In cases where the indication of sources is incomplete or erroneous, marks will be deducted as appropriate when the work concerned is graded in accordance with the relevant study regulations.

² Plagiarism

- a. will result in the lowest grade possible for the work in question, in accordance with the relevant study regulations, as well as

b. a reprimand from the Dean.

³ Serious cases pursuant to Article 4 are reserved.

⁴ The faculties are free to decide on further measures.

⁵ The General Secretariat shall be notified of reprimands pursuant to paragraph 2.

Art. 4 Serious or repeated cases

¹ A case is deemed to be serious if:

- a. the plagiarism is significant in terms of quantity or quality; or
- b. if the student is in a higher semester; or
- c. the work in question is a final paper, a doctoral theses or postdoctoral theses.

² Repeated plagiarism is treated as a serious case, even if it or the previous case of plagiarism alone constitutes a trivial or minor case.

³ The Faculty concerned will investigate the facts if a serious or repeated case is suspected. If there is any doubt as to whether the case in question is serious, further action will be clarified with the General Secretariat.

⁴ Once the facts have been clarified, the Faculty concerned informs the General Secretariat of the result for the attention of the Rector and sends the relevant files (notification).

⁵ In the event of a serious or repeated breach, the following sanctions are available in particular:

- a. reprimand from the Rector;
- b. exclusion of the plagiarist from courses or from using particular University facilities by the University Executive Board;
- c. time-limited or unlimited exclusion of the plagiarist from study by the University Executive Board.

⁶ Plagiarism also results in the lowest grade possible for the work in question in accordance with the relevant study regulations.

Art. 5 Effective date

These guidelines are effective as of December 1, 2025, and replace the guidelines of August 28, 2007 / July 3, 2012.

Bern, November 18, 2025

On behalf of the University Executive Board

The Rector:

Prof. Dr. Virginia Richter