Plagiarism and Copyright Policy

Introduction: How to Use This Tool

Organizations must consider the seriousness of plagiarism in the context of ethics, but also of law. Advances in electronic communication and technology have had a dramatic impact on the way organizations conducts business, and have greatly facilitated access to a wide range of information and media. This policy template provides a structure for defining your organization’s Plagiarism and Copyright Policy.

To use this template, fill in the blanks indicated by the square brackets and grey text, delete this introductory text, and delete or change all grey text to black before submitting or finalizing.

<table>
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<th>Policy Title</th>
<th>Plagiarism and Copyright Policy</th>
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<td>Policy Owner</td>
<td>Human Resources</td>
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<td>Policy Approver(s)</td>
<td>Manager of Human Resources</td>
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<td>Related Policies</td>
<td>Name other related enterprise policies both within or external to this policy.</td>
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<td>Related Procedures</td>
<td>Name other related enterprise procedures both within or external to this policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Storage Location</td>
<td>Describe physical or digital location of copies of this policy.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Effective Date</td>
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Next Review Date  List the date that this policy must undergo review and update.

**Purpose**

[Company name] believes in respecting and protecting the rights of intellectual property owners. This is not only a question of ethics, but also of law. Advances in electronic communication and technology, have had a dramatic impact on the way [company name] conducts business, and have greatly facilitated our access to a wide range of information and media. As a result, the risk of plagiarism and copyright infringement, either intentional or accidental, is of increasing concern.

The purpose of this policy is to define acceptable use of materials protected by copyright (also referred to as "copyright materials"), to outline the responsibilities of all users of copyright materials in all media, and to establish a framework for responsible practice.

[Company name] holds a “zero tolerance” position on plagiarism and copyright infringement. The goal of this policy is to inform employees at [company name] on the rules and procedures relating to plagiarism and copyright law compliance.

**Definitions**

**Plagiarism:** “The unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one’s own original work” (source: Dictionary.com v1.0.1).

**Copyright Infringement:** Copyright is a “legal right grant to an author, composer, playwright, publisher or distributor to exclusive publication, production, sale, or distribution of a literary, musical, dramatic, or artistic work” (source Dictionary.com v1.0.1). As such, copyright infringement is a breach or infraction of this legal right by another entity.
For more information visit the [Canadian Intellectual Property Office](http://hrinsider.ca/) website. From the website “The Copyright Office is responsible for registering copyrights in Canada, and is part of the Copyright and Industrial Design Branch of the Canadian Intellectual Property Office (CIPO), a special operating agency of Industry Canada. CIPO is responsible for administering Canada’s system of intellectual property rights: copyright, patents, trademarks, industrial designs and integrated circuit topographies.”

**Plagiarism Policy**

1. Plagiarism is not only dishonest and unethical, but is also considered a form of theft. Examples of plagiarism include:

   - Verbatim copying of complete sentences, paragraph(s), or entire bodies of work and presenting this work as your own by failing to apply quotation marks and citing the source.

   - Close paraphrasing of complete sentences, paragraph(s), or entire bodies of work and presenting this work as your own by failing to cite the source.

   - Presenting an idea or the intellectual property of another as your own without clear citation or acknowledgment of the source.

   - Copying other elements of another person’s work, such as original diagrams or infographics, without acknowledging the source.

   - Self-plagiarism consists of copying your own previously copyrighted work without reference to the original work. [Company name] allows limited verbatim copying of [company name]’s existing copyrighted work by current [company name] employees. However, any copying of any work created by a current [company name] employee while under the
employment of another company, such that the copyright of that work is not held by [company name], is considered plagiarism.

2. Unintentional plagiarism can take place as a result of inattention to detail or general sloppiness in one’s approach to the research and writing process. Regardless of the intention, this act is still considered plagiarism.

3. In order to protect the professionalism and integrity of the company, no employee of [company name] may commit plagiarism at any time.

4. [Company name] reserves the right to remove, delete, modify, or otherwise disable access to any materials found to be plagiarized in any way.

Copyright Policy

1. Copyrighted works include, but are not limited to: text (e.g. articles), images (e.g. photographs), graphics (e.g. logos), sound recordings (e.g. MP3s), video recordings (e.g. movies), or software programs. The following materials are not considered copyrighted materials: ideas, facts, processes, methods, systems, government works, and works in the public domain.

2. No employee of [company name] may reproduce any copyrighted work in violation of the law. Works are protected by [country] copyright law even if they were not produced in this country.

3. Copyrighted materials in many countries are not required by law to be registered, unlike patents and trademarks, and may not be required to carry the copyright symbol (©). Therefore, a copyrighted work may not be immediately recognizable. Assume material is copyrighted until proven otherwise.
4. If a work is copyrighted, you must seek out and receive the express written permission of the copyright holder to reproduce the copyrighted work in order to avoid violation.

5. [Company name] reserves the right to remove, delete, modify, or otherwise disable access to any materials found to be in violation of copyright law.

**Compliance Procedure**

1. To obtain permission to reproduce a copyrighted work, contact the copyright holder and request written permission. If written permission is not received, the work cannot be reproduced.

2. Always use quotation marks to indicate verbatim copying of text and always provide proper citation of source material.

3. To avoid inadvertent violation of this Policy, rigorous research and writing practices must be employed at all times. Be highly cautious if copying and pasting text or images into documents for note-taking purposes - this practice can increase one's vulnerability to unintentional plagiarism or copyright violation.

4. If an employee needs help interpreting or applying the plagiarism and copyright rules outlined in this Policy, or has questions regarding any other related issue, he/she should contact [name and contact information].

**Process for Addressing Plagiarism or Copyright Infringement**

Commission of plagiarism or copyright infringement is a serious offense and is considered professional misconduct. Some or all of the following actions may be taken in response to an alleged infringement.
1. Knowledge of any allegations of plagiarism and/or copyright infringement is on a need-to-know basis. Absolute discretion and confidentiality are expected from all individuals involved in the investigation and any subsequent disciplinary action.

2. All instances of actual or suspected plagiarism or copyright infringement must be reported to [name and contact information].

3. Once the allegations of plagiarism or copyright infringement have been confirmed via manual testing and have been fully documented, the matter will be addressed with the offending employee’s immediate supervisor. A decision on actions to be taken will be reached at this time and discussed with the appropriate officers in [company name]’s Human Resources Department.

4. Any disciplinary action will be delivered by the offending employee’s supervisor and/or [name other roles] under the guidance of [company name]’s Human Resources Department. The full extent of the offending employee’s violation will be explained with specific visual reference to the infringing and infringed upon works.

5. Any published or unpublished works that exist by the offending employee will be reviewed for other instances of infringement. Any infringing published work will be immediately removed from [company name]’s Web properties. Any infringing unpublished work will be removed from production and held by management pending destruction.

6. Copies of all documentation regarding the incident of plagiarism or copyright infringement will be placed in the offending employee’s personnel folder.

7. The professionalism and integrity of [company name] is a shared responsibility. Failure to report suspected plagiarism or copyright infringement is a punishable offense.

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Policy Non-Compliance

[Company name] maintains a “zero tolerance” position on plagiarism and copyright infringement. Failure to comply with this Policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including immediate termination of employment.

Employee Declaration

By reading and signing a copy of this policy, an employee of [company name] will indemnify and hold [company name] harmless for any breach of this policy or law as it relates to plagiarism or copyright.

I, [employee name], have read and understand the above Plagiarism and Copyright Policy, and agree to adhere to the rules outlined therein.

______________________________  ______________________________
Employee Signature               Date

Revision History

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