

2013

1. **Onderwerp van de klacht**  
vermoeden van plagiaat
  
2. **Advies van de commissie aan het college van bestuur: klacht gegrond.**

NWO lodged a complaint against defendant regarding a suspected violation of the Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice. In his Vidi application defendant has, according to NWO, failed to refer to the source of the first paragraph of his abstract, and has not referenced the publication of another publication each time text from it was used in his proposal.

The review committee assessed the admissibility of the complaint and decided to review the complaint, as the defendant is an employee of the University

According to the Complaints Procedure Scientific Integrity of the University the committee submits recommendations concerning complaints to the Executive Board.

The committee requests that the Executive Board informs NWO regarding both its preliminary and definitive judgment.

The review committee held a hearing of the parties concerned.

After that the review committee received notice from NWO that defendant had retracted his Vidi-application.

The committee is of the opinion that defendant by this act showed that he understands the seriousness of the situation and is willing to limit the damage done.

The committee considers, based on the written evidence, the written admission by defendant in the email exchange with NWO, as well as his ready acknowledgement of the facts during the hearing, that it is beyond doubt that in his Vidi-proposal defendant has indeed used texts from two sources without proper referencing those. The committee further notes that defendant stated during the hearing that he does not rule out the possibility that there are more instances of unreferenced text from external sources, and that he did not check the text himself after he was made aware by NWO of the facts.

The committee therefore concludes that this is a case of plagiarism.

Within the University the responsibility for maintaining academic integrity lies with all those involved in education and research. The general principles of professional scientific conduct must be observed at all times.

The Netherlands Code of Conduct for Scientific Practice (Association of Universities in the Netherlands (VSNU) - 2005, amended in 2012) contains an elaboration of these principles, which are also endorsed by the University and are considered guidelines for the University, as intended by Article 1.7 of the Higher Education and Research Act (WHW). Violations of scientific integrity include the plagiarizing of (parts of) publications and results of others.

“ Science only functions with the honest recognition of intellectual property of each individual's contribution to knowledge. This applies to the entire range from student papers and theses to scientific publications and dissertations. It not only concerns copying literally, but also paraphrasing, the omission of footnotes or sources, the covert use of data, designs and tables collected by others.

Copyright gives victims the option of redress through the courts, but even when there is no (longer a) direct victim, a researcher can be sued for plagiarism.” (Complaints procedure scientific integrity of the University, Appendix 1.)

Concerning the plagiarism at hand, the committee considers the following:

- The exact nature and place of text parts that are plagiarized in the application are not considered relevant by the committee. The fact that the application was found to contain instances of plagiarism does not prejudge the scientific quality and originality of the proposal, which are for NWO to evaluate.
- The committee assumes that defendant did not deliberately try to plagiarize, but the committee does find that he has shown a severe lack of care in the preparation of his application. By not keeping the excerpts he found elsewhere and that were meant to inspire him, apart from his own texts, he created a situation in which text of external origin could easily end up in the final proposal unreferenced. This led to a situation that is not possible to correct after the submission of the application.
- The committee also considers that defendant has been passive after he had been made aware of the discovery of the plagiarism. He has not himself checked the text for possible other instances of unreferenced text elements. He has not sought any advice, nor has he informed or consulted his supervisors.

The committee noted that defendant did acknowledge to have full understanding of the Code of Conduct, that he expressed to deeply regret his mistake and his willingness to redress it if that possibility was open.

Considering the gravity of the facts and the importance of maintaining academic integrity and the reputation of the University on this point the committee advises the Executive Board as follows:

To take the disciplinary measure of a written reprimand against defendant, to be placed in his personnel record and to be made known to the Board of his Department and his supervisor and to inform the Governing Board of NWO of the above measure.

### **3. Oordeel van het college van bestuur over de gegrondheid van de klacht, met vermelding van de datum van de beslissing: 4 juni 2013, klacht gegrond.**

We take the disciplinary measure of a written reprimand against you, to be placed in your personnel record and to be made known to the Board of your Department and of your supervisor. We will also inform the Governing Board of NWO about this final judgment.

As stated earlier we interpret the retraction of your Vidi-application as an act that shows that you understand the seriousness of the situation and are willing to limit the damage done.