TURNITIN USER GUIDE

INTRODUCTION

Overview of TURNITIN software

The TURNITIN software is purposefully meant to serve as an educational tool for detecting plagiarism in academic writing. The software scans for text similarities by comparing academic or any other written material/work against a myriad of databases of published and unpublished materials of other writers that are available online, and then generates a colour coded similarity index report specifying the extent of text matching detected in that piece of work.

The similarity index report generated by the TURNITIN software, identifies matches, in a different text source, of those portions of the scanned text which can be located in the software's repository. These matching texts will be expressed as a percentage (Similarity index) in each report, signaling the overall total and serves as guidance only to the instructor.

TURNITIN does not, in any situation, indicate the satisfactory level of text matching or indicate whether an incidence of plagiarism has occurred. Institutional specific norms and policies are the sole judge as to whether plagiarism has occurred or not in any situation. The similarity index report generated should therefore not be used as the only basis for action. To declare any work as plagiarized or depicting academic impropriety must be based on an in-depth investigation of the submitted material and the suspected plagiarized material.

Rationale for using TURNITIN in UDS
The University for Development studies (UDS) in its efforts to enhance quality teaching, learning and especially research, introduced the use of the TURNITIN software to check the originality of academic writing.

The introduction of this software in UDS is one of the surest ways by which management can boost the efforts of faculty, staff and students to uphold one of the University's core values, which is Integrity. The introduction and use of the software is by no means to serve as a punitive measure to faculty members, students and staff, but rather to make available the opportunity to identify any incidence of perceived plagiarism that may occur so that they can make the necessary corrections. TURNITIN will ease the process of guaranteeing academic integrity in the university, which covers preventing all forms of plagiarism. It will go a long way to instill the necessary confidence in the originality of works produced by faculty members, staff and students not only within the University but on the global landscape.

Use of TURNITIN at UDS
Supporting learning
UDS acknowledges the use of TURNITIN Originality Reports as a medium of aiding students produce high quality and original research through good academic writing practice including: in-text citation, referencing and paraphrasing. TURNITIN Originality Report increases academic integrity hence its use by students and faculty members should be encouraged. Students should be given the chance to submit draft works for assessment to TURNITIN.

Determining plagiarism

TURNITIN is one of the ideal methods of unravelling academic impropriety where similarities in text of a submitted document are detected by matching against other sources in the repository. Faculty members are encouraged to use the TURNITIN software for effectual evaluation of submitted works in order to detect possible cases of plagiarism. Students are under obligation to provide electronic versions of their assignments to be submitted through TURNITIN when it is requested for by their supervisors or lecturer. Students must however be pre-informed and be educated on how the system works. Documents/assignment must not be secretly checked through the TURNITIN.

Evaluation and TURNITIN Data

The impact and general usage of the TURNITIN service would be monitored by UDS to assess the institution's trend of level of usage. This will be reported internally. Exceptional staff who may not have used the software previously will be identified and supported with their training needs.

Training

Every staff is entitled to training in order to use the services provided in the TURNITIN to effectively explain the generated originality report. Students should also be provided with the needed support in their use of the TURNITIN to submit, retrieve and review their originality reports.

Conditions of use

This TURNITIN software is available for use throughout the academic year on condition that Library staff, Deans of Faculty and Heads of Department;

1. Will be committed to providing sufficient guidance about good academic practice (integrity) in all types of assessment for their students
2. Will acquaint students with the way(s) in which the software may be used
3. Understand the limitations of TURNITIN and will diligently review subsequent originality reports.
4. Will commence, according to the University policy, investigative procedures in instances where TURNITIN appears to suggest a breach of academic integrity. Originality reports must however be completely reviewed before initiating the formal procedures.
5. Will maintain detailed records of TURNITIN use at all times for evaluation purposes or for any subsequent appeal
6. Will not compromise the University's appeals mechanisms and will provide the opportunity for appeal when the need arises.

GUIDELINES
Common sources of plagiarism
1. Direct copying (published and unpublished) without crediting or acknowledging the source.
2. Translating (from one language to another) without acknowledging the source.
3. Paraphrasing someone else's work, or one's own without appropriately acknowledging the source.
4. Putting together portions of the work of other authors or one's own into a new document.
5. Resubmitting one's own authored work which has previously been graded

6. Collusion (unauthorized collaboration, presenting work as one's own independent work, when it has been produced in whole or in part in collusion with other people).
7. Copying the work of other students with or without their knowledge and presenting it as your own.
8. Ghost-writing – hiring a writer to produce a work at a fee without the hired agency or writer taking any credit to the original work produced.

Implementation Guidelines
These guidelines are meant specifically for student work.

1. The acceptable file formats for uploads to check for originality in TURNITIN are;
   o Microsoft Word (DOC and DOCX)
   o Corel WordPerfect
   o HTML
   o Adobe PostScript
   o Plain text (TXT)
   o Rich Text Format (RTF)
   o Portable Document Format (PDF)
   o OpenOffice (ODT)
   o Hangul (HWP)
   o PowerPoint (PPT)

2. File size of a document to be submitted may not exceed 40 MB. Such large file sizes may be reduced by deleting non-text content like images.

3. Text only files may not exceed 2 MB.

Use of the TURNITIN Originality report
1. Students are required to submit all theses, long essays and assignments to TURNITIN to generate an originality report with a similarity index through their various departments/faculties or campus libraries.
2. Instructors/Faculty members are encouraged to use TURNITIN on regular basis to familiarize themselves
3. The following similarity indices of Text Matching based on TURNITIN colour coding are acceptable in UDS.
   a. Overall Similarity Index should not exceed 20 %
   b. Permitted single source similarity index is 2% and below
   c. Acceptable number of words in an unbroken string (sentence/phrase) should not exceed 10 words
4. Well acknowledged or properly cited direct quotations can be ignored
5. Bibliography, cover page and declaration information should be ignored during the visual inspection as this can inflate the similarity index.
6. Limitations of the TURNITIN software should be taken into consideration when reviewing the originality report.

Procedures for Submission of Work to TURNITIN

1. TURNITIN, as an educational tool, is available to all faculty members, staff and students of the University for Development Studies (UDS); and permitting students to submit some, if not all, of their assignments to the system as part of their educational programme is highly recommended.

2. The Instructors must pre-inform students as and when they are required to submit their assignments/lab reports/long essays/theses/dissertations to the system.

3. The system can permit unlimited submissions of students' works (draft), in order to provide the opportunity for review after the originality reports have been generated before submitting their final work. The decision as to the number of submissions permitted by each student should be determined by the concerned lecturer/supervisor and communicated appropriately.

4. High similarity indexes can be realized in instances where re-submission to TURNITIN has been done for the same work (draft) with the intention of editing out the matching sections detected. To avert these situations, draft work or any works in progress should NOT be submitted to the TURNITIN standard repository until it is due for final submission.

5. To create a database against which works of current students can be checked against that of past students, assignments/lab reports/long essays/special topics and undergraduate project reports/dissertations can be submitted to the TURNITIN STANDARD REPOSITORY.

6. Theses/reports/assignments of graduate students are to be compulsorily scanned through TURNITIN software and the corresponding originality report be attached to the work before submitting to the graduate school for final assessment.

7. MA/MPhil/PhD supervisors are advised to encourage their students to submit early drafts of sections of theses for originality checking, so that their students fully understand how to use the software when preparing their thesis.

Investigating Plagiarism

1. Procedures for examining suspected plagiarized work as stated in the Plagiarism policy would be applied where TURNITIN appears to indicate so.

2. A Graduate Studies Committee can be constituted to help with the investigative process in the case of graduate thesis, the Graduate Studies Committee of the relevant department must be involved in the investigation.

3. The reported similarity index should not be used as the only basis for action. Percentage levels above the recommended levels can be flagged for interpretation and investigated

further. In such cases, the full report should be examined to detect the magnitude of the matching text.

4. Thorough investigation must be carried out on any student's work that is doubtful. The plagiarized material is a perquisite to initiate the investigative procedure.

5. The judgment of work not being plagiarized is the responsibility of the lecturer/supervisor/Graduate Studies Committee or any other appropriate authority as TURNITIN cannot be the sole evidence of work that has been originally produced.

Procedures for Submission of Work at Departmental Level
Graduate Level
1. Throughout the process of graduate long essay, dissertations or thesis supervision, students must be permitted to make a number of submissions in order to scan and review the TURNITIN originality report generated, to reduce the similarity index as necessary. Students' work should NOT be submitted to either the TURNITIN standard repository or the institutional repository at this stage.

2. Supervisors should assist students to interpret the TURNITIN reports in order to help them review their written material.

3. All graduate students are required to submit the final copies of their thesis for scanning through the system either at their departments or at the Campus Libraries. The originality report generated should be printed and signed by the supervisor(s) and then attached to the thesis before submitting to examiners for marking.

4. The necessary corrections must be effected after marking and a final generated TURNITIN originality report will be submitted to the Departmental Advisory Committee for review.

5. The Departmental Advisory Committee should be responsible for reviewing the report and making the necessary recommendations if the Committee suspects academic impropriety in the thesis.

6. Investigative procedures will be initiated according to UDS Plagiarism Policy.

7. The Departmental Advisory Committee should permit a student one opportunity to resubmit their work along with a new TURNITIN report if the initial submission is suspected to breach academic integrity.

8. All final graduate theses/dissertations must be deposited into the UDS Institutional Repository and the TURNITIN standard repository.
9. The Final deposition of graduate theses/dissertations/long essays into the STANDARD TURNITIN Repository shall only be done by the appropriate University Library staff at the request of the Graduate School. This can be done only after submission of the final hard bound copy along with the electronic version.

Undergraduate Level

1. Undergraduate students from all departments must also be encouraged to submit their assignments/dissertations/project reports through the TURNITIN to minimize the incidence of copying, as part of the supervision process. Supervisors should therefore be available to readily provide assistance to their students in the interpretation of the originality reports to facilitate revising the detected portions.

2. The various Faculties/Departments may decide on the exact modalities to implement in the review of TURNITIN reports of undergraduate students' work. These must be duly communicated to students prior to the start of the project dissertations.

3. Final submitted works that may be judged to have been plagiarized should undergo investigative processes according to the University's Plagiarism policy.

Limitation of the software

1. TURNITIN does not offer a ready solution to plagiarism. Its use is therefore not a substitute for good academic writing practices, for example, correct citation and referencing.

2. There are significant gaps in its search base. For example, TURNITIN may not be able to accomplish the following:

   a. detect plagiarized work from books or sources which are 'old' and not available on the Internet
   b. detect work which is plagiarized by translating from one language to another, for example, French text translated to English
   c. search all electronic journals
   d. detect images, graphs, mathematical equations that may have been plagiarized.
   e. scanned handwritten documents cannot be recognized.
   f. files that are encrypted, password protected, read only files, also system files cannot be submitted to TURNITIN.