

## Turnitin Student Guidelines (Undergraduate, Honours, and Postgraduate diploma modules)

The aim of using Turnitin is to verify the originality of submission content. Students are expected to convey content with their own interpretations, rather than solely relying on the thoughts or ideas of others and should produce original work.

Turnitin is an originality checker that compares content of submitted works against extensive databases of academic texts, websites, and previously submitted works. It aids in identifying instances of similarity with existing sources by highlighting matched text content within the submission. A similarity check against the immediate student group of submissions within the module code is included. Turnitin also conducts submission integrity checks, including an artificial intelligence (AI) check to determine whether submitted works align to text provided by generative AI and/or modifying AI tools. Turnitin is meant to encourage academic integrity and originality, whilst guarding against plagiarism, copying, ghost writing, and other forms of dishonesty.

### Important considerations/rules for Turnitin enabled assessments:

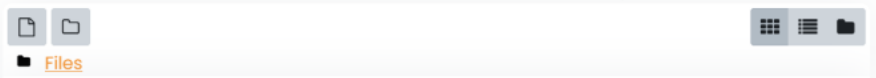
1. Turnitin is seamlessly integrated into the myModules and myExams submission platforms, requiring no further additional action from students to activate it.

You have already accepted the latest Turnitin EULA.

#### ▼ Add submission

File submissions

Maximum file size: 50 MB, maximum number of files: 1



- Students **must accept the Turnitin EULA** (End User License Agreement) for their first submissions made on the myModules platform and again on the myExams platform. Submissions will not be marked for students who have not accepted the EULA.

For this submission to be sent to Turnitin, you must accept the [Turnitin End User Licence Agreement](#).

**Submission status**

<b>Submission status</b>	Submitted for grading
<b>Grading status</b>	Not marked
<b>Time remaining</b>	Assignment was submitted 12 days 13 hours late
<b>Last modified</b>	Tuesday, 30 May 2023, 1:43 PM
<b>File submissions</b>	<div style="border: 1px solid #ccc; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 5px;"> <p><a href="#">Replacement page.docx</a></p> <p>For this submission to be sent to Turnitin, you must accept the <a href="#">Turnitin End User Licence Agreement</a>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"> <input type="button" value="I accept the Turnitin EULA"/> <input type="button" value="I decline the Turnitin EULA"/> </p> <p>Awaiting EULA </p> </div> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small;">Activate Windows Go to Settings to activate Windows.</p> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: x-small;">30 May 2023, 1:43 PM</p>

In order to proceed with your submission, you must accept.

For this submission to be sent to Turnitin, you must accept the [Turnitin End User Licence Agreement](#).

Once you have accepted the EULA, the following message should appear:

220515

Thank you for accepting the new Turnitin EULA. All future submissions will now be sent to Turnitin for processing.

The EULA is thus not required to be accepted for each Turnitin enabled module assessment

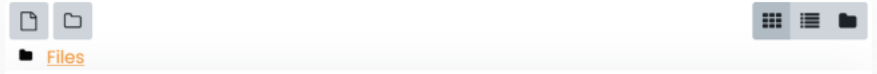


You have already accepted the latest Turnitin EULA.

▼ Add submission

File submissions

Maximum file size: 50 MB, maximum number of files: 1



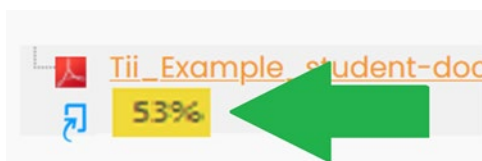
3. The **due date and closing date** for Turnitin enabled assessments **are the same** as that of the assessments to be completed by students. Students are not granted extensions for Turnitin assessments unless a student has submitted supporting evidence of circumstances that prevented the timely submission of formative or summative assessments. The Department of Assessment Administration must grant permission.
4. Turnitin **only allows** for MS Word documents or MS Word documents converted into PDFs with **selectable text** to be assessed. Turnitin reports will not be generated for scanned or handwritten assessments. Turnitin will not process PDF files without selectable text. In such cases, the University will deem the students to not have complied with the provision for usage of the Turnitin application and will provide the student with a 0% outcome for the assessment.
5. Students must **include the cover page** containing the title of submission, student number, name, and surname. Do not include honesty/plagiarism declarations as part of your submission, as they are already acknowledged by ticking the Honesty declaration when submitting online. All submissions submitted through Turnitin are permanently stored to protect intellectual property and help prevent future plagiarism by others.
6. Turnitin submissions must **include in-text citations and a bibliography / reference list** showing sources of information used to obtain additional information. Similarity identified hereto confirm the integrity of the content and has a very limited impact on the overall report findings (percentages).
7. Submissions are only accepted on the myModules or myExams platform for Turnitin enabled assessments. **No alternative platforms** (e.g. contingency link,



email, Invigilator App scripts) are made available to students for submissions for Turnitin enabled assessments.

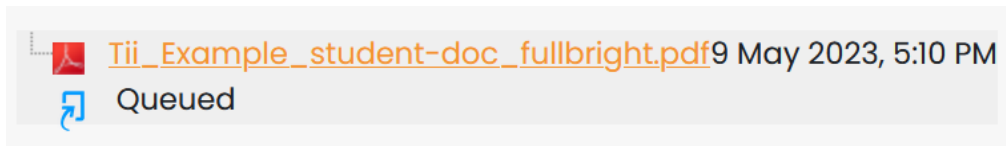
## 8. Formative Assessment (Assignments) Submissions:

- a. Students will have access to their Turnitin reports upon submission on the myModules platform within 48 hours. Example: Similarity Report completed:



The percentage attached to the submission is the actual Similarity Index for the submission itself and indicates that the report can be opened.

- b. The student **should not attempt to reload the submission** when the Turnitin submission status indicates **queued or pending**. Submissions shown as queued or pending are not errors but processed submissions that will complete within 48 hours.



- c. Students **will have three attempts** to submit the final version of their assessments before the due date on myModules. Students need to incorporate the time required for revision of their initial submission and subsequent submissions before the due date. Students must plan for unforeseen circumstances such as power outages or technical difficulties. Students are strongly advised to make a submission well in advance. Students may contact their lecturers or e-tutors to discuss their Turnitin reports for improvements on the submissions before submitting the final version.
- d. The **last submitted version** received from the student by the assessment due date will be considered as the final version and will be used to conduct a final



Turnitin check for purposes of marking / grading . Thus, preceding / earlier Turnitin reports are not considered for grading / marking purposes.

- e. Turnitin reports will not be generated for **corrupted or password-protected scripts**. Students should test their submitted file for corruption or password protection by opening the submitted file. If a file cannot be opened, it likely indicates that it is corrupt. In addition, students may test the readiness of their submissions for Turnitin by searching for phrases included in the submission which will be highlighted. If the searched phrases are not found, the document is possibly unreadable for Turnitin processing. In such cases, students must resubmit the file. Students may be contacted by the DSAA for assistance to submit the original file.

When Turnitin reports are not available, students can click on the information box for details on why the report was not generated. If the submission was made before the due date and time, students can reload the submission according to the specified file requirements, when applicable.



Note: Submissions shown as queued or pending are NOT errors, they are being processed and will complete within 48-hours.

## 9. Summative Assessments (Examinations) submissions:

- a. Some modules may enable Turnitin for formal examinations. These examinations are administered on the myExams platform.
- b. Off-timetable summative assessments are conducted on the myModules platform. Students must refer to their module sites for additional instructions.



- c. Students are reminded that:
- i. Only typed responses (MS Word document) or PDF with selectable text are accepted for Turnitin usage. Students may test the readiness of their submissions for Turnitin by searching for phrases included in the submission which will be highlighted. If the searched phrases are not found, the document is possibly unreadable for Turnitin processing.
  - ii. Students are required to accept the Turnitin EULA on their first myExams submissions.
  - iii. All submissions must be made on the myExams or myModules platform depending on whether the summative assessment is on or off timetable. No alternative submission platform (e.g. contingency link or Invigilator scripts) is accepted for Turnitin enabled assessments.
- d. Students **do not have access to the Turnitin reports on formal examinations submissions** on myExams platform. Students will be exposed to the Turnitin tool during their formative phase in preparation for the summative assessments.
- e. The **due time and closing time** in cases of Turnitin enabled assessments are **the same** as the time of the official examination. Assessment duration as indicated on the system for the Turnitin enabled assessment includes the 30 minutes uploading period for summative assessment submission. Thus, there is no separate allocation of 30 minutes after the stipulated due date and time.
- f. Formal examinations may require **concurrent usage of proctoring tools** such as Invigilator Application or IRIS. Students are thus required to follow instructions of both the Turnitin and the proctoring tools in their submissions. In cases of Invigilator Application usage, students will not be required to scan the full script on the Invigilator Application.
- g. **Students should not attempt to reload** the submission when the Turnitin submission status indicates **queued or pending**. Submissions shown as queued or pending are not errors but are being processed for lecturer's consideration after 48 hours.



- h. Turnitin reports **will not be generated for corrupted or password-protected files**. Students should test their submitted file for corruption or password protection by opening the submitted file. If a file cannot be opened, it likely indicates that it is corrupt. In addition, students may test the readiness of their submissions for Turnitin by searching for phrases included in the submission which will be highlighted. If the searched phrases are not found, the document is possibly unreadable for Turnitin processing. The University deems the students to not have complied with the provisions of the Turnitin application and will provide the student with a 0% outcome for irrecoverable corrupt or password protected files.
- i. When Turnitin reports are not available, students are requested to click on the information box for details. . In cases of errors like non-compliance with the file specifications, students are required to resubmit their files.



Note: Submissions shown as queued or pending are NOT errors, they are being processed and will complete within 48-hours.

## 10. Turnitin report analysis

- a. Once the Turnitin application has processed the student's submission, the outcome of the student submission will show the similarity index.
- The similarity report highlights matching text found in the student submissions with information available on a vast array of databases. Matches are specific instances of text that are the same as text available in sources within the Turnitin databases.
  - The similarity report reveals the sources of the matching text. Sources refer to the origin of those matches, such as web pages, submitted works (like student papers), or publications ( like journals).



- iii. The extent of matching text is indicated by an index of similarity, shown as a percentage.

## EXAMPLE: Originality Report

*Matches are numbered and coloured to identify the source*

The screenshot displays a document titled 'Tii\_Example\_Student-doc\_EXAMPLE.docx' with a 'Submission Details' and 'Help' menu. The main text area shows a paragraph about bilingual education with several highlighted sections. A blue highlight (1) covers the sentence: 'The pronouncements were based purely on political and ministerial directives. Apart from initiatives made to promote German for it to be a sole language of instruction at all levels of education (Kiango, 2005; Mpemba, 2007), the President of South Africa, Julius K. C. Nyerere, was quoted saying we could not do without English which he said was like the German of the world (Pretorius, 1984). This suggested that he wanted English to be used as a medium of instruction in secondary schools.' A purple highlight (3) covers: 'Five years into the implementation of its strategy - Unisa 2015: an Agenda for Transformation - Unisa has paused to reflect on progress, to reprioritize, and if necessary, to reformulate aspects of its strategic plan in the light of the changing institutional and higher education context.' A green highlight (4) covers: 'education'. On the right, the 'Sources Overview' shows an '89% OVERALL SIMILARITY' and a list of sources: 1. www.tandfonline.com (26%), 2. scholar.ufs.ac.za (23%), 3. www.unglobalcomp... (15%), and 4. www.njas.helsinki.fi (9%). Arrows connect the highlights to their respective sources.

The text on the left-hand side is the student submission. Each area of matching text in the submission content is highlighted in the colour of the source to which it is similar. In the above example, 26% of the text of the submission is similar to the source numbered 1. The student or reviewer will notice that the number 1 appears on a blue circle, and the percentage (26%) also appears in blue. The text in the student submission that matches source number 1, is highlighted in blue. Following the first source match, subsequent sources will use different colours for ease of reference. For example: The colour for number 3 is purple, and any part of the text that matches source number 3, will be highlighted in purple.

- b. The percentage shown on the similarity report is an indication of non-original content and is not a “percentage of plagiarism.” However, a higher percentage of the similarity index might indicate a higher risk of plagiarism (non-original content). All originality reports require further interrogation.
- c. There is no “acceptable percentage” of the similarity index as acceptable matches may differ among assessment expectations and specific disciplines. Students should consult their tutorial letters for guidelines on acceptable non-originality content . Direct copying information from one source or multiple sources, even if cited or referenced is unacceptable and will result in high similarity index.





- d. Whilst the similarity index might be low, it does not mean that academic misconduct (like plagiarism) may not exist in student submissions and thus students should take care in ensuring submission of their own original work.
- e. As a rule of thumb, the individual source matches in student submissions must be less than 5% per source. By selecting a source on the similarity report, students can see how many matches were found for a particular source, and where each match was located within the source.
- f. Originality reports are analysed to determine if academic misconduct (like plagiarism) occurred, whether inadvertently or with intent.
- g. The students can access the Turnitin report by clicking on the Similarity Index (%) block attached to the submission and improve their submission content based on the Turnitin report findings in the following three Turnitin repositories:
  - i. Internet Sources  
These sources include current and archived content on the Internet / websites and can include subject terminology or general language phrases.
  - ii. Publications  
These sources refer to copyrighted articles, books, and journals, as well as other formal publications. A student may not over utilise one specific source, even with due credit to the source. The determination of fair usage will be discipline (and publication) specific.
  - iii. Submitted Works  
These sources include papers previously submitted to Turnitin. Similarities in this category are often picked up due to subject terminology and popular prescribed materials. However, it may not indicate possible plagiarism and must be analysed by a subject expert (like an e-tutor, lecturer or marker).
  - iv. Artificial Intelligence (AI) generated text.



Turnitin's AI writing detection tool flags potential AI usage with a percentage. However, the percentage index of AI usage is not visible to students. Subject expert (lecturer or e-tutor) will apply professional judgement to determine the acceptability of AI usage in student's submissions and may refer students for disciplinary proceedings, if necessary.

- h. Students should improve the originality of their submissions based on their Turnitin reports and are forewarned not to manipulate content to obtain a so-called desirable percentage. The focus is on delivering original content with academic integrity.
- i. Students may be subjected to disciplinary proceedings should there be identification of potential academic integrity contraventions after reviewing the Turnitin report.
- j. Unisa does not mark submissions that, upon review of the Turnitin report, are suspected of violating academic integrity. The mark will however be released upon successful appeal of the disciplinary outcome.

## 11. Improving subsequent submissions

- a) The Turnitin report is a very useful educational tool from which students can learn a great deal about their own writing. Turnitin will generate a maximum of three (3) originality reports for formative assessments. The first and second reports can be used to improve the student's writing before submitting the final version of the assessment. The third Turnitin report is reviewed by the lecturer as part of the grading process.
- b) Highlighted text (a sequence of words) that matches a source exactly, should be checked by the student to determine whether quotations are required. If it is indeed intended to be a quotation, the student must ensure that it complies with the prescriptions for either integrated quotations or stand-alone quotations. If it is not intended to be a quotation, the student should consider paraphrasing it using own



words and to acknowledge the original source. (Online paraphrasing tools should not be used.)

- c) Whenever a section of text that shows a high similarity with an individual source, a student can decrease the similarity score and simultaneously improve the scientific and academic value of their submission by integrating other sources dealing with the same matter. For example, student may, for instance, include pinpoint citations to different sources expressing the same idea, and then also refer to any other differing or opposing viewpoints, again adding pinpoint citations. This would enrich student work by highlighting the variety of existing viewpoints. Students should focus on giving their own interpretation of the work done rather than attempting to reduce the similarity index.
- d) Remember that academic writing is a continuous process of writing, revising, rephrasing, summarising, rewriting, and editing. Turnitin can be a powerful learning tool that can assist students to, inter alia—
  - i. identify sections of text that the student took from other sources but failed to summarise or paraphrase sufficiently in their own words.
  - ii. identify sections for which the student leaned heavily on a particular source.
  - iii. identify phrases and sentences copied directly from sources without the proper use of quotation marks or indentation.
  - iv. determine whether the student kept the quotations within an acceptable range.
  - v. identify text for which the student failed to acknowledge sources (if any piece of text is highlighted and there is no footnote citation accompanying it and where a citation should be inserted).

## 12. Get HELP

- a) Students can refer to the myUnisa Turnitin FAQ List, as well as the Student Turnitin Training recordings.
- b) Academic content queries must be discussed with the lecturer, in order to meet with module expectations.



- c) Additional guidance is offered via the Unisa Library online guides relating to academic integrity, research ethics and referencing styles.
- d) Students should also familiarise themselves with the content of the Unisa policies associated with academic integrity and ethics, as well as the University's stance on academic misconduct.
- e) Lecturers cannot assist with technical problems related to Turnitin. For any queries regarding Turnitin and for technical assistance, please send an e-mail to [turnitin@unisa.ac.za](mailto:turnitin@unisa.ac.za) .
- i. Always write from a myLife e-mail account.
  - ii. Always type [turnitin@unisa.ac.za](mailto:turnitin@unisa.ac.za) in full.
  - iii. Always enter a student number in the subject line of the e-mail.
  - iv. Add the module code in the subject line of the e-mail.
  - v. To ensure that your query is assigned to the correct channel, you must include a description of the query and a screenshot of the error g.
  - vi. Sign the e-mail using both first name(s) and surname.

