



QH Supplement 15G: Requirements for the use of Turnitin

1. Scope and purpose

- 1.1 Turnitin is the authorised text-matching software at NTU. These requirements aim to ensure that NTU's practices in relation to the use of Turnitin are fair, applied consistently to all students on taught courses, and help students to learn appropriately.
- 1.2 The requirements apply to all taught courses at undergraduate and postgraduate level.
- 1.3 The requirements apply only to assessments with a significant written element; they do not apply to practical assessments or practical exams.
- 1.4 Assessment and feedback plans should reflect these requirements and clarify when and how (developmentally or summatively) Turnitin is used.

2. Turnitin as a developmental tool

- 2.1 All students encounter Turnitin through the NTU online course on Plagiarism provided by Library and Learning Resources. They will be provided with the following guidance:
 - a. How to upload to Turnitin;
 - b. How to interpret a Turnitin report;
 - c. How to use a Turnitin report to make improvements to work in progress, and to identify skills gaps.
- 2.2 For all written summative assessments, students have the opportunity, but not requirement, to check their Turnitin report before final submission and amend the work to take account of any issues flagged. A single self-check opportunity per summative assessment is permitted.
- 2.3 Students have access to their Turnitin reports at the point of summative submission.

Additional Guidance

- 2.4 This Supplement sets out the minimum expectations for guidance on the use of Turnitin at NTU. This will be met by students completing the NTU online course on plagiarism.
- 2.5 It is recognised that supporting students in understanding and employing good academic practice in writing is part of normal course provision and is also supported by sessions provided by Library and Learning Resources. Access to Turnitin as a self-checking tool can provide additional benefits in that context.
- 2.6 Text-matching software has a role to play in helping students understand what plagiarism is, how markers check for inappropriate source use, and the possible consequences thereof. In order to use this tool appropriately, students will be provided with guidance in interpreting a Turnitin report. This guidance will be provided via the NTU online Plagiarism course which is available to all students.
- 2.7 In addition, course teams may, at their discretion, provide students with opportunities to practise using Turnitin on formative work, but this is not mandated.
- 2.8 As well as helping students to understand and avoid plagiarism, Turnitin can be a valuable tool in the identification of skills gaps such as poor paraphrasing, patch-writing and over-reliance on wording from the source text. Through using the self-check facility, and any formative opportunities provided by the course team, students can be taught to view a Turnitin report as a form of personalised feedback which can help identify and address gaps in their academic skills.

3. Turnitin as a tool to support plagiarism detection

- 3.1 Turnitin is used for all written summative submissions wherever possible. Where it is not used, the course team provides a clear rationale for the choice and this is transparent to staff and students.
- 3.2 Staff are not obliged to read every Turnitin report. Course teams may determine how many reports are checked per assessment; a high Turnitin similarity index will not be the only or the main criterion for such checking.
- 3.3 Clear and timely information is provided to students on when and how Turnitin will be used by academic staff marking their work.

Additional Guidance

- 3.4 It is for the course team to determine the criteria for how many and which reports are checked. While markers will likely want to check those reports with a high similarity index, this should not be the only criterion for checking, as small but significant instances of plagiarism can then routinely be missed. Sampling methods should be fair and demonstrably unbiased. For example, checking only the Turnitin reports of international students would constitute bias, while systematically checking every fifth Turnitin report would not.
- 3.5 While a Turnitin report can highlight sections of text which match text published elsewhere, academic judgment is necessary to ascertain whether the matched text actually constitutes plagiarism. A Turnitin report should never be used as evidence of plagiarism without the mediation of a trained marker. It is recommended that

Turnitin report reading takes place at an early stage in the marking process. Early Turnitin checking is vital in order to: i) allow time for consultation and informed decision-making around academic integrity; ii) ensure that PAP notifications and similar can feed into marking decisions; and iii) reduce delay in informing students about academic integrity issues that can affect the timing and/or outcome of their grade and feedback.

- 3.6 Students should be given access to their Turnitin report on their final submission at the point at which there is no further opportunity for students to amend the piece of work in question.

4. Staff development

- 4.1 All staff who mark written student work receive appropriate training, including how to interpret a Turnitin report.
- 4.2 All staff who mark written student work are provided with guidance on the use of Turnitin reports in academic integrity procedures and Improving Academic Integrity notifications.

Additional guidance

- 4.3 A Turnitin report is a text-matching tool to support the identification of plagiarism and can only be used effectively in conjunction with academic judgment. It is vital, therefore, that academic staff are able to use Turnitin appropriately and effectively. In order to ensure this policy is adopted uniformly, all staff who mark written student work will need—at a minimum—to be able to:
 - a. understand and use key options and settings for Turnitin within NOW;
 - b. interpret a Turnitin report to ascertain whether any given instance of text-matching constitutes plagiarism;
 - c. together with the course team, provide a consistent experience regarding Turnitin use for students on the course.
- 4.4 Where possible, staff development around Turnitin should be framed in the context of academic integrity and assessment design, rather than simply as a matter of identifying plagiarism.

5. Academic irregularity

- 5.1 Where a Turnitin report is used as evidence of poor academic integrity – including Improving Academic Integrity notifications – the student is provided with the relevant Turnitin report at an appropriate stage in the investigation.

6. Applicability

- 6.1 These requirements apply to the online submission of assessment through NOW and PebblePad. An exception is made for courses provided through the Wiley

platform (Engage), which integrates use of an alternative text-matching tool.
Online summative assessment is currently not permitted through other platforms.

Policy owner
CADQ

Change history			
<i>Version:</i>	<i>Approval date:</i>	<i>Implementation date:</i>	<i>Nature of significant revisions:</i>
Sept 2019	11.09.19	01.10.19	New Supplement
Sept 2020	16.09.20	01.10.20	Renumbering of Supplement (from 15H to 15G)
Sept 2021	07.09.21	01.10.21	Update to 1.3 clarify that these requirements do not apply to practical exams
Sept 2022	22.09.22	01.10.22	None
Sept 2023	14.09.23	01.10.23	None
Sept 2024	19.09.24	01.10.24	None

Equality Impact Analysis		
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Sept 2019	01.07.19	CADQ