

Turnitin Policy

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Author:

Head of Learning Resources

THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

POLICY ON THE USE OF TURNITIN SOFTWARE

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Turnitin software helps students develop their understanding of how to cite sources as part of an academic argument and to understand and avoid plagiarism. The system looks for similarities between a submitted piece of student work and other documents and then provides an Originality Report. From this, the student can identify where they might have paraphrased the original text too closely or quoted without referencing and also where they may have referenced correctly but relied too heavily on the work of others without sufficiently developing their own analysis of ideas. The Originality Report provides a percentage score, which indicates how much of the text matches sources in Turnitin's database and online. However, there is no magic number that indicates plagiarism has taken place; the student's and the tutor's interpretations of the originality report play a vital role in understanding the significance of the percentage within the context of a particular submission.
- 1.2. The GSA Policy on Academic Misconduct¹ covers plagiarism and how the GSA considers cases of suspected academic misconduct.

2. Adoption of Turnitin

- 2.1. Turnitin is available to all academics through Blackboard and it is recommended that, where appropriate, all courses which include assessment of written work make use of Turnitin as an educational tool by allowing their students to submit their assignments to the system.
- 2.2. It is acknowledged that only a proportion of student work is text-based. Academic staff will therefore be the final judges of whether Turnitin would be useful in their course, although any discretion in this regard will be subject to departmental or school policy.
- 2.3. In cases where academic staff have elected not to use Turnitin, either generally or for a given assignment, they can retrospectively use Turnitin as part of the process for considering cases of suspected academic misconduct as set out in Section 2.3 of the GSA Policy on Academic Misconduct.
- 2.4. The Learning Resources department will provide support for the use of Turnitin when accessed through Blackboard. Support is available for both staff and students in the form of self-paced online guides, dedicated Twilight Classes and the Learning Technology Help Desk.

3. Use of Turnitin

- 3.1. Turnitin has valuable formative and summative applications. All summative assessment uses should be accompanied by formative assessment opportunities to maximise its capacity as a learning tool. Good practice therefore means that all Turnitin assignments will be set up to

¹ GSA Policy on Academic Misconduct is online at

http://www.gsa.ac.uk/media/495864/academic_misconduct_policy_october_2012.pdf

allow at least one draft submission before the final submission and the student will have access to the Originality Reports arising from each submission.

3.2. Academic departments may determine:

3.2.1. Whether or not to use Turnitin (see 2.2 above)

3.2.2. The number of assignments that students will be required to submit to Turnitin

3.2.3. The limit on the number of times each student will be permitted to submit their assignment to Turnitin (at least one revision must be allowed)

3.2.4. Whether to check all Originality Reports for any given assignment

3.2.5. Whether to give the student immediate access to the Originality Report upon submission or to reserve the report for discussion between student and tutor

3.3. When Turnitin is used with summative assessment, the final scripts should be submitted to the Turnitin repository. Submission to the repository builds a critical mass, or library, of our own submissions in order to reduce the risk of repeat submissions within GSA. Submitting to the repository also contributes to the wider effort to reduce plagiarism in Higher Education beyond our own institution. Concerns regarding the ethical soundness of uploading student work to the repository are mitigated by our ability to maintain the anonymity of all students.

3.4. The submitted papers in the repository are used only for comparison purposes and are not released or shown to any other users. It may occur in the future that another tutor at another institution may contact the GSA if any of their student submissions match some text in a GSA student's paper. The tutor at the other institution can request permission to view the GSA student's paper. It would be up to the GSA tutor who originally set the assignment to give or deny that permission.

3.5. Students have the right to make the case that a paper should be withheld from the repository. This should be made in writing to the course tutor.

3.6. Academics must ensure that the approach to be adopted in using Turnitin is clearly communicated to students either before or at the time the assignment is set by explicitly including appropriate instructions within the assignment brief.

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