

TURNITIN FAQs for Post Graduate Students at The UWI

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What is Turnitin?

Turnitin is a web-based service that allows both lecturers and students to check written work submitted for improper citation or *potential* plagiarism by comparing the work against databases of web pages (current and archived), student papers, newspapers, magazines, scholarly journals, and books. Turnitin.com has a database of over a million papers submitted to them, and papers pulled from the Internet and various "paper mills," (i.e., services that sell term papers). Turnitin can detect similarities which may or may not be intentional.

Why do I need to use Turnitin?

It is a requirement at the Post Graduate level for students at The UWI to submit their work only after Turnitin analysis. This is intended for instructional purposes, to alert the student to improper citation practices and to help to avoid potential plagiarism. Using Turnitin can highlight areas of your work, which are in need of revision, prior to final submission. This can ensure proper attribution of quoted material, or appropriate rephrasing using your own thoughts and/or words. You need to use Turnitin as part of an overall approach to maintaining academic integrity.

How do I sign up for a Turnitin account?

- Contact the Office of Graduate Studies and Research to collect your UWI GRIP Card which provides the information necessary
- After collecting the information, visit the Turnitin website www.turnitin.com then click on create account
- Under **New Students Start Here** click on Create a User Profile
- Below **Have you Ever Used Turnitin?** Scroll down until you see **Create a New Account** and click on **Student**.
- **Under Create a New Student Account**, please insert credentials (i.e. **Class ID and enrolment password**). These should have been provided by the Office of Graduate

Studies and Research along with your GRIP Card), complete the rest of the form and follow instructions.

How does Turnitin work?

You submit an electronic copy of your written work, which is compared against various databases. Turnitin produces an **Originality Report** that will assist you in revising your work. The Originality Report summarizes and highlights matching text, using varying colours.

After I have created an account how do I submit a paper?

- Log in to Turnitin with your e-mail address and the personal login password you created.
- Once you login you will see a list of your classes. Click your class title to see the list of assignments associated with it.
- In the assignment list look for the title of your assignment. To the right of the title click the **Submit** icon.
- Where you see **Choose a paper submission method**, leave the default setting as **single file upload**.
- Enter a submission title, i.e., the title of your paper.
- To upload a file, click on the **Browse** button, find the paper on your disk or computer, then click **Upload**.
- You can submit papers in Microsoft Word, plain text, RTF, PDF, or Postscript formats.
- Be sure it is the paper you want to send, then click **submit**.
- You can submit several assignments one at a time for checking by the Turnitin software. When submitting multiple files your previous submission will be deleted. Hence if you would like a copy of your report for future reference please save or print the report before submitting a new file.

The following training video provides information on submitting papers
http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/student-training/submitting-a-paper

How do I read the Originality Report?

For help with understanding and interpreting **Originality Reports** generated by Turnitin, on the page with the Originality Report, click the **help** button toward the upper right. There you will find Turnitin's best information for working with and interpreting reports. Please also review the information under the heading "**How do you keep from having too many matches for papers on general or common topics?**" on this list of FAQs.

You can also view the following video on the Turnitin website.

http://turnitin.com/en_us/training/student-training/viewing-originality-reports

How long does a Turnitin originality check take?

Originality Reports should usually be ready within 1 hour. However it may take up to 24 hours during peak times such as the middle or the end of semesters when many papers are being submitted to Turnitin.

Are student papers kept confidential?

Yes. UWI postgraduate students whose papers are submitted to the GRIP container (i.e. 3154417) are not submitted to any Turnitin repository and are, therefore, removed at the end of the due date. (A due date is the "...date the assignment ends..." This is usually set by the instructor or administrator of the class.) Additionally, "no student papers are made available to another user within the Turnitin system".¹

Is a paper that receives a high similarity rating necessarily plagiarised?

No. A high similarity rating does not necessarily mean that a student has plagiarized; it only indicates that your supervisor should review the paper for *possible* plagiarism. There are several reasons besides plagiarism that a paper would receive a high similarity rating. For instance, if a student includes many properly cited references in one paper, it might show a high similarity rating. This may not signal plagiarism but may indicate that the student is placing too much emphasis on reporting other peoples' opinions and not enough on his/her own thoughts and analysis. Additionally, if the student has previously submitted the paper to Turnitin prior to the final submission, it might show a high similarity rating but the submission would have to have been saved to the Turnitin database – either inadvertently or deliberately.

Is a paper that receives a LOW similarity rating necessarily free from having plagiarized?

No. A low rating does not necessarily mean that a student has not plagiarized. Careful check and analysis of the similarity report should be done to determine whether the paper contains plagiarized material. For more information please read the following:
http://www.turnitin.com/en_us/training/student-training/about-originalitycheck.

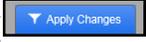
Does Turnitin check against newspaper articles and books to ensure that students have not cut and pasted from them?

Yes. Most of the world's newspapers are available on the Internet, making it easy for Turnitin to check papers against these sources. However, not all books are available on the Internet, but Turnitin is able to check papers against those books that reside on the Internet.

How do you keep from having too many matches for papers on general or common topics?

Turnitin's database uses a very careful source analysis, which eliminates as many irrelevant matches as possible, while still noting suspect matching passages. If the Originality Report for your first draft shows a high percentage of matching text, review and edit your assignment for proper citation. Include more original analysis and comment, then send it to Turnitin again. You can set the software to exclude bibliographies and small matches by doing the following:

¹ http://www.turnitin.com/en_us/training/instructor-training/viewing-originality-reports

1. On the web-based version of your originality report generated by Turnitin, click on the **funnel** icon () which is on the bottom right side of the page. This icon allows you to “view/edit filters and settings”
2. In the pop-up box that appears, check the boxes to **Exclude Quotes** and **Exclude Bibliographies**
3. Click on **Apply Changes** ()

As a student, where can I learn more about plagiarism?

If a student has any questions about plagiarism or citing sources, he or she should not hesitate to talk to the library staff.

Where do I go for help with Turnitin at UWI?

You can send an email to turnitgrad@uwimona.edu.jm or (876) 977-0655.