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LONDON SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

Handout of

The Originality Report and Similarity Index

on Turnitin

Originality Report and Similarity Index on Turnitin and Issues of Plagiarism

Students often ask the question "What percentage of Plagiarism is acceptable in an Assignment"?

The answer to this question is 0%.

Plagiarism is a serious offence. It is your responsibility to maintain academic integrity at all times when producing written work.

Students are expected to write Assignments using their own ideas and opinions. They should critically evaluate what others have said about the topic that they are writing about. They should state why they agree or disagree with what has been previously written about the topic. Ideally, your work should be truthful and ethical and reflect your own effort. It should embody your own thoughts and insights. Please note that it is your responsibility to produce work which is your own and that if you are using ideas and concepts of others they are appropriately referenced. You must read around the subject, not just the prescribed text, and plan the structure of your Assignment carefully.

Students should indicate clearly the relevant sources that they have used with their in-text citations and then at the end of the Assignment attach a References List using the **Harvard System of Referencing and Citation**. **A Handout on the Harvard System of Referencing is available on the Student Portal under the Course Info tab in the Academic Skills Folder. Under the same tab you can also find Assignment Samples which have been marked by Lecturers and are of a high standard. Please note that your References List does not form part of the Word Count for your Assignment and neither does the Appendix which is attached at the end of an Assignment.**

Examples of information that could be included in an **Appendix** comprise figures, tables, charts, graphs of results, statistics, questionnaires, transcripts of interviews, pictures, maps, drawings and letters.

All assignments have to be submitted via the Student Portal using your username and password. Under each Module you will find a link to submit your assignment. The first time that you submit your Assignment in Turnitin, you will be able to see the Originality Report in approximately 15 to 20 minutes. For every resubmission after this, the Originality Report will take up to 24 hours. You can submit your assignment via Turnitin BEFORE the deadline date several times to obtain an Originality Report. A percentage will be shown on this Report. If your Report shows a percentage which is high, you can try and improve your work and reduce it by ensuring that you amend your Assignment by writing it in your own words and demonstrating your own ideas and insights. Please ensure that you leave enough time if you wish to resubmit your work in Turnitin and **that you are submitting your work within the deadline date for each Assignment. Also, please note that ONLY the last submission will be accepted by your Lecturer and this will be the version that will be marked.**

What is Turnitin?

Turnitin is an electronic text matching system that compares text in a student assignment against a database of sources. The database contains copies of electronic text on the Internet, in published works, on commercial databases, and in assignments previously submitted to Turnitin by students in universities all over the world, including assignments obtained from Internet sites that sell student papers and write assignments for students which they charge for. Turnitin detects plagiarism and indicates what percentage of your Assignment matches Internet sources.

Turnitin provides an Originality Report in which 'matched' text is underlined, colour coded, and linked to either the original source or a similar document on its database. The Report also provides an indication of the proportion of the submitted work that matches other sources, and this is known as the Similarity Index.

Plagiarism Checking

The Turnitin software purely highlights sections of matched text from other sources, and returns an overall percentage of material.

What Turnitin can do

- It highlights sources of plagiarised material.
- It encourages students to think about their referencing and citation skills.
- Acts as a deterrent against plagiarism.

The Overall Similarity Index Percentage and Understanding Scores

The Similarity Index shows a percentage and colour coding as follows:

- **Blue** – no matching text. Blue indicates no text has been matched. This could mean that the work has no references at all and that there is little or no use of direct quotes.
- **Green** (one matching word to 24% matching text)
- **Yellow** (25% to 49% matching text)
- **Orange** (50% to 74% matching text)
- **Red** (75% to 100% matching text)

Types of Frequently Found 'Acceptable' Matched Text

There are certain types of matched text that Turnitin will find which can either be safely excluded or ignored with discretion. These matches will be included in the overall similarity score for a Similarity Index and be highlighted as matches in a student's work.

These include:

- **Quotations:** Properly referenced quotations can be ignored. These can **be excluded using the filter.**
- **References and Bibliography:** Other students will have used the same references at some point and these will show up.
- Matching formats: e.g. the **same essay title.**
- **Tables, Graphs, Maps, Pictures and Charts** showing shared or copied data or statistics.
- **Appendices** may also have a large amount of matching text as other students may well have used the same sources.
- Small matches that form **common phrases in a sentence or subject terminology** will be detected. These can be removed using the **small match filter.**
- **Paraphrasing text from a source** will be highlighted even where words in the phrase have been changed. If the source has been cited, it remains the academic judgment of the Lecturer to decide if the text has been suitably paraphrased.

An example of paraphrasing is given below:

Original Sentence: Any trip to Italy should include a visit to Tuscany to sample their exquisite wines

Paraphrased Sentence: Be sure to include a Tuscan wine-tasting experience when visiting Italy.