

Thesis checking (Turnitin) guidelines for thesis students

Modified 16 February 2022 – Dean of Postgraduate Research

The purpose of thesis checking (via Turnitin) is to help to educate students about plagiarism and the inappropriateness of copying material without proper referencing. Our aim is not to conceal or disguise plagiarism but to train students not to plagiarise.

Plagiarism is copying material (text, data or figures) from another source without a clear and adequate acknowledgement of the original source. Using quotation marks to quote someone is not plagiarism as long as the source is acknowledged.

Plagiarism is not acceptable.

All thesis students will be required to use thesis checking (currently Turnitin) to check their thesis proposals and individual thesis chapters. Turnitin is a thesis checking system designed to detect **plagiarism** by identifying similarity.

Frequently, researchers will wish to describe ideas or results from other writers' work. To avoid plagiarism, it is necessary to ensure that;

- (a) The original authors' words are rephrased (i.e., paraphrase); and
- (b) The original authors are credited for their work by providing appropriate citations (even after paraphrasing).

Turnitin will help to identify where rephrasing has not been sufficient. Plagiarism does not normally apply to a bibliography (references) and may not be of significant concern in "Methods" sections where there are common and standardised ways of describing technical methods.

- Turnitin is accessible to all thesis students via the "Postgraduate Research Student" LEARN site.
- A given document (file) can be submitted to Turnitin only twice. Files submitted from our LEARN site will not be added to the Turnitin repository, so multiple submissions of the same file will not appear as incidents of self-plagiarism.

- Turnitin can take some time to produce a report (usually about 15 minutes, but it can take up to 24 hours at busy times).

Process for use of Turnitin

1. Students submit a file to Turnitin on the “Postgraduate Research Student” LEARN site under the ‘Turnitin Thesis Checking’ page (or by clicking here <https://learn.canterbury.ac.nz/course/view.php?id=12255§ion=13>). The maximum file size is 20 MB. The system will be set up to ignore text in quotations and bibliographies.
2. A report is generated that the student must then supply to the Senior Supervisor.
3. The Senior Supervisor and student meet to discuss the report and determine if further action is required.