



## **Student information and consent form for the use of Turnitin UK text-matching software in the Centre of African Studies (effective from October 2015)**

### **1 Introduction**

The University subscribes to Turnitin UK software which is widely used in UK universities and matches text in work submitted to the software to that in a large database of online sources. This document explains how Turnitin UK will be used by the Centre of African Studies and explains the implications of submitting your work to the software.

You are asked to read the information thoroughly and then sign/submit the declaration to show that you consent to your work being submitted to Turnitin UK as described here. Without your written consent the Centre of African Studies cannot submit your work to the software.

You are reminded that Turnitin is only one method of checking the originality of your work. Examiners may initiate the standard investigative procedures if they have unresolved queries about the originality of your work, regardless of whether Turnitin has been used or whether it has substantiated any concerns.

The University Advocate may decide to prosecute a student suspected of plagiarism or collusion to plagiarise<sup>1</sup>, even where that student has not consented to the use of Turnitin. In such circumstances the student may be specifically asked by the Advocate to consent to submission to Turnitin and a failure to consent will be provided as part of the evidence against him or her.

### **2 Plagiarism and good academic practice: your responsibilities**

You should ensure that you are familiar with the discipline-specific guidance about referencing conventions and good academic practice which is issued by the Centre of African Studies and can be found at <http://www.african.cam.ac.uk/mphilintro/current/plagiarism>. If, after reading the guidance, you have any outstanding queries you should seek clarification at the earliest opportunity from your Director of Studies or supervisor.

You should also familiarise yourself with the University's Statement on Plagiarism which is appended to this document. This statement is posted on the University's plagiarism website [www.cam.ac.uk/plagiarism](http://www.cam.ac.uk/plagiarism), which also features links to useful resources and guidance.

### **3 About Turnitin UK text-matching software**

#### **a) Who controls the service?**

This University is the recognised Data Controller for the data held and processed by, or on behalf of, the service. An American company, iParadigms, is the Data Processor.

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<sup>1</sup> This includes allowing another student to copy your work

b) How does Turnitin UK work?

Turnitin UK may detect direct plagiarism, paraphrasing and collusion as submitted work is compared with a vast database of online material and with a 'private' database of previous submissions. Therefore, submitting work to the database helps to protect it from future attempts to plagiarise it, and helps to maintain the integrity of the University's qualifications.

The software makes no judgement about whether a student has plagiarised, it simply shows the percentage of the submission that matches other sources and produces an originality report which highlights the text matches and, where possible, displays the matching text and its immediate context.

In many cases the software highlights correctly cited references or innocent matches. Therefore, Examiners will carefully review all originality reports to determine whether the work does contain plagiarism.

#### **4 How will Turnitin UK be used in the Centre of African Studies?**

Work submitted for assessment in the Centre of African Studies will only be submitted to Turnitin on the request of an examiner who has serious concerns.

What will happen if matches are identified between my work and another source?

If Turnitin UK detects matches between your work and another source, the Examiners will review the resulting originality report to judge whether the matches are innocent, or whether you have appropriately referenced these matches (if not, this may constitute plagiarism), and/or whether you have made excessive use of material from other sources (which may be poor academic practice).

The Examiners will mark your work purely on the basis of its academic merit. However, depending on the extent and context of the matches, your work may be referred to the Proctors for further investigation. In such cases the Turnitin UK originality report may be used as evidence. If you are found to have plagiarised the penalty may be severe and your degree may be withheld.

#### **5 Will Turnitin UK affect my intellectual property rights or copyright?**

The copyright and intellectual property rights of the submitted material remain wholly with the original owner (normally the student, with the exception of some collaborative or sponsored research projects). However, you are asked to permit Turnitin UK to:

- *reproduce your work to assess it for originality;*
- *retain a copy of your work for comparison at a later date with future submissions.*

#### **6 Will my personal data be retained by Turnitin UK?**

Material submitted to Turnitin UK will be identified by your examination number, course details and institution: personal data will not be used.

#### **7 What will happen if text submitted by another student matches that in my work?**

a) Matches to text submitted from other HE institutions

If a report generated by another institution identifies a match to your work, the report will only show the extent of the match and the contact details of the University's Turnitin UK Administrator. If approached, the Turnitin UK Administrator will attempt to contact you about the matter. The contents of your work will not be revealed to a third party outside Cambridge without your permission.

b) Matches to text submitted from within the University

If a match is found to material submitted from within the University, the Examiners can obtain the full text without approaching you.

**8 How do I apply for my work to be removed from Turnitin UK?**

Work submitted to Turnitin UK will be stored indefinitely on the Turnitin UK database unless you specifically request that it be removed. To maximise the effectiveness of the software, it is hoped that such requests will be kept to a minimum. However, once examinations have been concluded, you may at any time contact Barbora Sajrtova (bs481@cam.ac.uk) to request that your work be removed.

**9 Sources of further information and support**

The University's plagiarism website: [www.cam.ac.uk/plagiarism](http://www.cam.ac.uk/plagiarism)

Turnitin UK's website: [www.turnitinuk.com](http://www.turnitinuk.com)

## University-wide Statement on Plagiarism

The General Board, with the agreement of the Board of Examinations and the Board of Graduate Studies, has issued this guidance for the information of candidates, Examiners and Supervisors. It may be supplemented by course-specific guidance from Faculties and Departments.

Plagiarism is defined as submitting as one's own work, irrespective of intent to deceive, that which derives in part or in its entirety from the work of others without due acknowledgement. It is both poor scholarship and a breach of academic integrity.

Examples of plagiarism include **copying** (using another person's language and/or ideas as if they are a candidate's own), by:

- *quoting verbatim* another person's work without due acknowledgement of the source;
- *paraphrasing* another person's work by changing some of the words, or the order of the words, without due acknowledgement of the source;
- *using ideas* taken from someone else without reference to the originator;
- *cutting and pasting* from the Internet to make a pastiche of online sources;
- **submitting someone else's work** as part of a candidate's own without identifying clearly who did the work. For example, buying or commissioning work via professional agencies such as 'essay banks' or 'paper mills', or not attributing research contributed by others to a joint project.

*Plagiarism might also arise from colluding* with another person, including another candidate, other than as permitted for joint project work (i.e. where collaboration is concealed or has been forbidden). A candidate should include a general acknowledgement where he or she has received substantial help, for example with the language and style of a piece of written work.

Plagiarism can occur in respect to all types of sources and media:

- *text, illustrations, musical quotations, mathematical derivations, computer code, etc;*
- *material downloaded from websites or drawn from manuscripts or other media;*
- *published and unpublished material, including lecture handouts and other students' work.*

Acceptable means of acknowledging the work of others (by referencing, in footnotes, or otherwise) is an essential component of any work submitted for assessment, whether written examination, dissertation, essay, registration exercise, or group coursework. The most appropriate method for attribution of others' work will vary according to the subject matter and mode of assessment. Faculties or Departments should issue written guidance on the relevant scholarly conventions for submitted work, and also make it clear to candidates what level of acknowledgement might be expected in written examinations. Candidates are required to familiarize themselves with this guidance, to follow it in all work submitted for assessment, whether written paper or submitted essay, and may be required to sign a declaration to that effect. If a candidate has any outstanding queries, clarification should be sought from her or his Director of Studies, Course Director or Supervisor as appropriate.

Failure to conform to the expected standards of scholarship (e.g. by not referencing sources) in examinations may affect the mark given to the candidate's work. In addition, suspected cases of the use of unfair means (of which plagiarism is one form) will be investigated and may be brought to one of the University's Courts. The Courts have wide powers to discipline those found guilty of using unfair means in an examination, including depriving such persons of membership of the University, and deprivation of a degree.

The University's plagiarism and good academic practice website ([www.cam.ac.uk/plagiarism](http://www.cam.ac.uk/plagiarism)) provides more information and guidance.

## Discipline Regulation 6

No candidate shall make use of unfair means in any University examination. Unfair means shall include plagiarism\* and, unless such possession is specifically authorized, the possession of any book, paper or other material relevant to the examination. No member of the University shall assist a candidate to make use of such unfair means.

\* Plagiarism is defined as submitting as one's own work, irrespective of intent to deceive, that which derives in part or in its entirety from the work of others without due acknowledgement.

**Consent form for the use of Turnitin UK text-matching software on assessed work in the Centre of African Studies  
(effective from October 2015)**

General confirmation

*Please read the statements and check the boxes to indicate your agreement.*

- I confirm that I have read and understood the information contained in this document, including the University-wide Statement on Plagiarism and Discipline Regulation 6.
- I undertake not to commit plagiarism, or collude with others in the committing of plagiarism, in any work submitted for assessment at the University and understand that the penalties may be severe if I am found to have done so.
- I confirm that I understand that, if I am required to submit electronic **and** hard copies of a piece of work for assessment, both copies must be identical in content and that any differences will be treated as an attempt to defraud the examination.
- I confirm that I understand that, if I am required to submit work only in electronic format, I have been advised to keep an electronic copy of the work until the examination results are published.

Use of Turnitin UK

*Please read the statement and check the box to indicate your agreement.*

- I **agree** that any piece of assessed work which I submit electronically in 2015-16 may be screened with Turnitin UK, as described in the accompanying information, and added to the Turnitin UK database.<sup>1</sup>

Personal details

Name (please print): .....

College: .....

Course: .....

Signature: .....

Date: .....

Please make a copy of this form for your own records and return the original to:

Barbora Sajfrtova, HSPS Faculty Turnitin UK contact

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<sup>1</sup> Any work submitted will be added to the Turnitin UK database. On request it can be removed from the database once the examinations have been concluded. However, retaining the work on the Turnitin UK database will help to maintain the integrity of the University's qualifications; work that is withdrawn will no longer be protected against future attempts to plagiarise it.