



Information for staff on the use of the anti-plagiarism service Turnitin

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Trento University is active in combating potential cases of plagiarism in texts, following copyright law 633/1941.

Students must be made aware of the meaning of plagiarism and its consequences if plagiarism is found. To this end, an explanatory document on the use of the Turnitin plagiarism service, together with specific information on its processing of personal data, is available for students both in Italian and English in a folder entitled "[The Prevention of Plagiarism](#)".

The "Code of Ethics of Trento University" expressly states that "Any research activity is based on the correct recognition and correct attribution of intellectual results. Therefore, university students must avoid any form of plagiarism or improper use of others' intellectual activity. [...] With regard to the drafting of theses and papers, as well as when carrying out examinations, it is the specific responsibility of individuals to respect these rules, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and dishonest conduct. It is also the duty of all university members to report any case of plagiarism or improper use of others' intellectual activity of which they become aware".

The "Code of honour for Trento University students", among the specific conducts covered, mentions the plagiarism of the works of others, specifying that "the improper reproduction of others' intellectual activity in the preparation of a paper constitutes plagiarism, when the intellectual activity of others is not cited among the sources of the paper. Plagiarism involves the undue appropriation of ideas, concepts, presentations, data and any other information reported in written or in oral form, also in digital format, without having explicitly and correctly indicated the sources or without having obtained express consent from the author / inventor".

The "Charter of the Rights and Duties of Trento University Students" specifies the rights of the students, and underlines the duties and standards of behaviour required, according to various national and international laws. In point 12, lett. V) it is explicitly stated that a student "must not plagiarize the works of others. The student must be aware that plagiarism involves the improper reproduction or unsourced appropriation of another person's intellectual activity. When using others' ideas, concepts, presentations, data or any other information reported in written or oral form, including in digital format, for the purpose of drafting any type of document, the source must be correctly cited and, in the case of unpublished material, the express consent of the author / inventor must have been previously acquired in compliance with copyright".



In the section "[Rights and duties of doctoral students](#)" it states "Every member of the university community is required to avoid any form of plagiarism or improper use of others' intellectual activity, since any research activity is based on the correct recognition and attribution of intellectual results. Members are also required to report any case of plagiarism or improper use of intellectual activity of which they become aware. With particular regard to the drafting of theses and papers, as well as when carrying out exams, it is the specific responsibility of individuals to respect these rules, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and dishonest conduct ". The Turnitin service is used to check for possible forms of plagiarism in student texts. Therefore, it is crucial that students are provided with appropriate and adequate information about the use of this service and its use of personal data (Regulation (EU) 2016/679).

It should be noted that the files containing the writings uploaded to the Turnitin platform (also via the Turnitin plugin on Moodle) enter the databases of the company Turnitin LCC, provider of the plagiarism service, in purely anonymous form, and are then made available to all their clients. In this way, the need to protect the personal data of students and teachers who use the anti-plagiarism service is reconciled with that of allowing a broad comparison of the writings uploaded with those texts already present in the system, in order to verify any similarities and consequently prevent plagiarism.

It is important therefore that student texts which are to be submitted for plagiarism checking through the Turnitin service do NOT contain:

- Personal data¹

¹ It should be noted that according to art. 4 of EU Regulation 2016/679 (Gdpr) personal data means "any information concerning an identified or identifiable natural person" bearing in mind that "a natural person can be identified, directly or indirectly, by particular reference to an identifier such as a name, an identification number, location data, an online identifier or one or more characteristic elements of the person's physical, physiological, genetic, psychic, economic, cultural or social identity".



- Particular data² and personal data concerning criminal convictions and offences³.

It is therefore crucial that students' attention is drawn to the fact that any personal data in the text must be anonymised, making sure that from reading a text it is not possible to identify any person, even indirectly.

Any queries can be sent to the online education office (university extension 3316 or uff.didatticaonline@unitn.it).

² Particular data, according to art. 9 of the Gdpr, refers to data revealing racial or ethnic origin, political opinions, religious or philosophical beliefs, trade union membership, genetic data, biometric data intended to uniquely identify a natural person, data relating to health or a person's sexual life or sexual orientation.

³With regard to this type of data, Article 10 of the Gdpr specifies that "the processing of personal data relating to criminal convictions and crimes or related security measures on the basis of Article 6, paragraph 1, must only take place under the direction of the relevant public authority or if the processing is authorized by Union or Member State law which provides appropriate safeguards for the rights and freedoms of data subjects. Any register of criminal convictions must only be kept under the direction of the relevant public authority".