UHI

University of the Highlands and Islands

Originality checking policy

Table 1: Policy reference table

Item	Description
Lead Officer (Post)	Head of Corporate Systems Compliance
Responsible Office/ Department	Corporate Governance
Responsible committee and officer	QAEC, Chair QAEC
Review Officer (Post)	Head of Corporate Systems Compliance
Date policy approved	03/12/2019
Date policy last reviewed and updated	06/11/2023
Date policy due for review	Every 2 years or at the commencement of a new originality contract or after changes to licence terms and conditions or privacy policy
Date of Equality Impact Assessment	29/11/2019
Date of Privacy Impact Assessment	N/A

Policy summary table

Table 2: Policy summary table

Item	Description
Overview	The university and users of originality checkering software are required to adhere to the vendor's terms and conditions.
Purpose	The policy discharges the university's legal duty to ensure that it complies with the vendor's terms and conditions.
Scope	All staff and students using university originality checking software in the university's Virtual Learning Environment or accessing the software via the vendor's site.
Consultation	The original policy (the Turnitin policy) which this one supersedes, was discussed and approved by the LTQC in 2012 and AC on 14/06/2012. This policy was discussed and approved by the QAEC on 03/12/2019 and Academic Council on 11/12/2019.
Implementation and monitoring	Implemented by FE academic staff, HE Associate Deans, Programme Leaders, and Module Leaders. Monitored by the Head of Corporate Systems Compliance.
Risk implications	Failure to adhere to the policy: 1. may disadvantage students 2. may exceed licence limits, which may have financial implications and 3. could result in withdrawal of service by the vendor.
Link with strategy	Strategic aim 2 – learning and teaching
Impact assessment	Yes

Originality checking policy

The Turnitin Policy was approved by Academic Council on 16/6/2012. The Originality checking policy supersedes the Turnitin policy and includes the university's FE originality checking software, Urkund. The Originality checking policy was approved by Quality Assurance and Enhancement Committee on 3/12/2019 and Academic Council on 11/12/2019.

For FE, relevant Academic Partner policies apply. For HE, the Policy must be implemented in conjunction with the university's:
1. [Academic Standards and Quality Regulations](#).
2. [Assessment, feedback and feedforward policy](#) The relevant assessment cover sheet must be used and (if an originality checker is used) must include the originality checking section:

    a. [Assessment coversheet: SQA](#) (UHI login required)
    b. [Assessment coversheet: undergraduate](#) (UHI login required)
    c. [Assessment coversheet: postgraduate](#)(UHI login required)

Failure to adhere to the policy:

1. may disadvantage students
2. may exceed licence limits, which will have financial implications
3. could result in withdrawal of service by the vendor.

Although students own the copyright to their work, their formal acceptance of the university's regulations permits the use of originality checking software such as Urkund Turnitin and gives staff the right (subject to the software's licence terms and conditions) to submit student assignments to university endorsed externally hosted originality checkers such as Urkund or Turnitin. Staff are encouraged to use originality checking software as an educational tool to inform and educate students in scholarly writing and referencing. It is recommended that students should have **at least** one formative use of the originality checking software before it is used on summative assignments. Students using assistive technologies **must have** at least one formative use of the originality checking software before it is used on summative assignments.

Urkund (FE licence)

The University has purchased a licence for FE staff to use Urkund. Please note: Turnitin may not be used for FE courses.

Staff

The Urkund services, through the analysis, never determine what constitutes plagiarism. The assessment related to whether the controlled text is supposed to be considered to be

plagiarised or not is done entirely by the individual user in accordance with the rules and recommendations given by the relevant Academic Partner.

To comply with Urkund's licence, staff must adhere to the following:

1. Where Urkund is used, compliance with the Urkund licence agreement terms and conditions is a requirement.
2. If Urkund is to be used, students must be given access to information about Urkund at Induction.
3. Staff may not use Urkund on an individual basis – if plagiarism is suspected staff have to enter the entire cohort, providing students have been notified about the use of Urkund prior to the event.
4. Staff must keep a record of the use of Urkund which can be used in an appeal.
5. Staff are solely responsible for any and all use of their Urkund account.
6. Staff must maintain the confidentiality of their Urkund password and may not share their password with any other person.
7. Generic accounts may not be used to access Urkund.
8. Passwords and class identification numbers may not be posted to any public forum or placed in any file that is accessible in a peer-to-peer network.
9. If they suspect any unauthorized use of their Urkund account or access to their password or class identification number, staff must notify PI/Urkund immediately by sending an e-mail to support@urkund.com .

FE students

1. Where Urkund is used, compliance with the Urkund licence agreement terms and conditions is a requirement of undertaking the unit/module.
2. Students may only log in to Urkund if:
    a. they are enrolled in a unit/course for which they have been given an identification number and password and
    b. the password with which they are using Urkund is their own which has been specifically issued to them by the university.
3. Students must maintain the confidentiality of their password.
4. Students may not share their password with any other person.
5. If they suspect any unauthorized use of their account or access to their password or class identification number, students must notify PI/Urkund immediately by sending an e-mail to support@urkund.com .
6. Students should use only their student number in submitting work through Urkund and avoid providing any details that will compromise their privacy.

Turnitin (HE licence)

The University has purchased a licence for HE staff to use Turnitin. Use of Turnitin indicates acceptance of Turnitin's User Agreement. Please note: Urkund may not be used for HE courses.

Staff

The score and/or feedback received through the originality checker is but one piece of evidence about a student's writing ability. If a score is used to support an important decision about a student's performance, staff should review and evaluate the score and/or feedback to ensure the appropriate decision about performance or plagiarism. Staff must exercise their independent professional judgment in, and assume sole and exclusive responsibility for, determining the actual existence of plagiarism in a submitted assessment with the acknowledgement and understanding that originality checker reports are only tools for detecting textual similarities between compared works and do not determine conclusively the existence of plagiarism, which determination is a matter of professional judgment of the academic and university.

To comply with Turnitin's user agreement and to ensure correct use of Turnitin, staff must adhere to the following:

1. If Turnitin is to be used, students must be given access to information about Turnitin at Induction.
2. Staff may not use Turnitin on an individual basis – if plagiarism is suspected staff have to enter the entire cohort, providing students have been given access to information about Urkund prior to the event.
3. Staff must keep a record of the use of Turnitin which can be used in an appeal.
4. Staff are solely responsible for any and all use of their Turnitin account.
5. Staff must maintain the confidentiality of their Turnitin password and may not share their password with any other person.
6. Generic accounts may not be used to access Turnitin.
7. Passwords and class identification numbers may not be posted to any public forum or placed in any file that is accessible in a peer-to-peer network.
8. If they suspect any unauthorized use of their Turnitin account or access to their password or class identification number, staff must notify Turnitin immediately by sending an e-mail to legal@turnitin.com.
9. Staff may use Turnitin only for officially registered classes in the university's records system in which they are officially teaching and students are enrolled.
10. Staff must not state that their students are using Turnitin when the students are not registered with Turnitin.
11. Staff may only provide Turnitin class identification numbers and passwords to students who are properly enrolled in the relevant registered class.

12. If a request is received from Turnitin (made by another internal or external Turnitin user) to supply a copy of a past or present student's work, to ensure that applicable laws and privacy rights are not violated, staff must follow these steps:

    1. Forward the email to the Lead Officer of this Policy – details on page 1.
    2. Do not reply to the Turnitin email, keep it until you hear from the Policy Lead Officer.

    If the requester is internal, permission will normally be granted for the sharing of anonymised data. External requests may be granted permission to view anonymised data if the work is necessary to establish academic misconduct.

HE students

1. Where Turnitin is used, compliance with this policy is a requirement of undertaking the unit/module.
2. Students may only log in to Turnitin if:
    a. they are enrolled in a unit/module for which they have been given an identification number and password and
    b. the password with which they are entering the Turnitin site is their own which has been specifically issued to them by the university.
3. Students must maintain the confidentiality of their password.
4. Students may not share their password with any other person.
5. If they suspect any unauthorized use of their account or access to their password or class identification number, students must notify Turnitin immediately by sending an e-mail to legal@turnitin.com.
6. Students should use only their student number in submitting work through Turnitin and avoid providing any details that will compromise their privacy.
7. While students are still registered and after they have left the university, students' work will be retained under the university's name in the Turnitin database and may be further reproduced and used for disciplinary investigations concerning other students.

Version Control

Table 3:Version control

Version	Date	Author	Purpose/change
01	03/12/2019	Andy Brown	Original
02	06/11/2023	Andy Brown	UHI Assessment Cover Sheet links and request to view Turnitin submissions updated.