Information for students regarding the use of Turnitin

This document summarises important information you should be aware of when working with Turnitin. It is recommended that you read the student manuals on Turnitin as well as the Stellenbosch University Plagiarism Policy.

How does Turnitin work?

- Turnitin is a tool to check the originality of your written work and it will provide guidelines where necessary to you regarding where and how you can improve it.

- Papers submitted to Turnitin can be compared against billions of internet documents, archived internet data that is no longer available on the live web, a local repository of previously submitted papers and subscription repository of periodicals, journals and publications.

- Turnitin compiles a comparison document called an Originality Report. This document details the matching or similar text between a submission made on Turnitin and any texts online and in its archive.

- The higher the percentage, the greater is the amount of text in the submission that came up as matching against information in Turnitin's repositories (i.e. the higher the unorginality). The percentage range runs from 0% to 100%. The percentage is generated by the amount of similar or matching text compared to the number of words in the submission in total.

- Turnitin also compares your assignment to the assignments of all the students in the class – the later you submit your assignment, the higher your percentage is likely to be.

Using Turnitin

- It is very important that you check that your quotation marks are closed and that you cite the author/s when using their words and ideas.

- Students should check the originality report and amend where necessary – this means that you may have to submit your assignment on Turnitin more than once. Allow at least twenty four hours for a resubmission! See below.

- Due to high student numbers in most cases, ensure that you submit your assignment well before the submission deadline. This should allow for enough time in the event of a backlog of originality reports. This also allows you time to correct any errors and to resubmit (where permitted by the lecturer/s) to Turnitin for your final originality percentage.

- When you submit your assignment more than once, the most recent submission is valid. All previous submissions are overwritten.

- Overwritten or resubmitted papers may not generate a new Originality Report for a full twenty four hours. This delay is automatic and allows resubmissions to correctly generate without matching to the previous draft.

- Do not change the file name when you resubmit.

- Should you experience any technical difficulties with Turnitin, please direct all enquiries to the Webstudies help-desk, email: webstudies@sun.ac.za.