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Information on the use of plagiarism detection software

The University of Trento has acquired appropriate software (Turnitin), with a view to preventing the plagiarism of texts. This software assists teaching staff to check that citations and bibliographical references are inserted correctly in theses and texts and that the definitive written work produced by students intending to graduate, as well as masters' and doctoral students, are authentic and the product of their own intellectual creative effort.

Ethical practice prohibits the partial or complete self-attribution of words, ideas, research, discoveries and visual images made by others, in whatever language these are officially presented, or the failure to cite sources.

The University of Trento Code of ethics, the Students Honour Code and the Students Charter of Rights and Duties of the University of Trento provides, in addition to other specific forms of conduct, for the prohibition of plagiarism of the work of others.

The University of Trento Code of ethics, addressed to the whole University community, expressly provides that "All research activity is based on the correct recognition and attribution of intellectual achievements. University members must therefore avoid every form of plagiarism or the improper use of the intellectual activity of others. [...] With particular regard to the writing up of theses and texts, including the undertaking of examinations, it is the specific responsibility of individuals to uphold these rules, avoiding all forms of plagiarism and dishonest conduct. It is furthermore the duty of all university staff to flag every case of plagiarism or the improper use of the intellectual activity of others of which they may become aware".

Under the Code of conduct, addressed to all students, "plagiarism consists in the improper reproduction of the intellectual activity of others in the elaboration of a written text of any kind, where such intellectual activity is not cited in the sources of the written text, or the unacknowledged appropriation of ideas, concepts, presentation, data or any other information reproduced in written work (including digital versions), or the oral expressions



of others, without having expressly and correctly indicated the sources or having obtained the express consent of the author or inventor”.

In the Student Chart of Rights and Duties of University of Trento are specified the rights of the students, highlighting duties and behavior standards, recognizing the provisions of various domestic, national and international legislation. In point 12, letter V) is explicitly indicated that each student “does not plagiarize the work of others. Students are aware that plagiarism consists in improper reproduction or misappropriation of the intellectual activity. For the use of ideas, concepts, presentations, data and every other information reported in written or oral interventions of others to write elaborations of every kind, also in digital format, or oral presentation, the source must be correctly cited. In case of unpublished material, the expressed consent of the Author/inventor must be obtained beforehand in compliance with copyright”.

Rights and duties of PhD students can be found at the following link

<https://www.unitn.it/ateneo/52918/diritti-e-doveri-dei-dottorandi-e-delle-dottorande>, where the documents mentioned above can be found. One of the duties is that “every member in the university community is obliged to avoid every form of plagiarism or improper use of the intellectual activity of others, since every research activity is based on the correct recognition and attribution of the results of the ingenuity, and to report every case of plagiarism or improper use of other person’s intellectual activity. With particular regard to the drafting of thesis and elaborations, as well as in the conduct of examination test, it is specific responsibility of every individual to respect these rules avoiding every form of plagiarism and dishonest conduct”.

The law on copyright (law no. 633 of 22 April 1941) protects intellectual property of the creative kind. These are intellectual works and as such are protected by the same law, which confers a range of exclusive economic and capital rights in the work (distribution, communication, reproduction, translation, etc.) as well as moral rights (rights to authorship and integrity of the work, etc.).

Article 70 of law no. 633/41 provides as follows: “1. The summary, citation or reproduction of extracts or parts of works and their communication to the public are free to use for the purposes of criticism or discussion, within the limits justified by these purposes and so long



as they do not constitute competition in the economic exploitation of the work; if used for educational purposes or scientific research, such use must occur for the purposes of illustration and not for commercial ends. [...] 3. The summary, citation or reproduction must always be accompanied by a mention of the title of the work, the author(s) name, that of the editor and, if the work is a translation, that of the translator, where these are indicated in the copied work”.

In addition, law no. 475 of 19 April 1925, on the prohibition of the false attribution of the work of others by prospective graduates and those wishing to obtain diplomas, offices, appointments and public positions provides under art 1.1 that “ whosoever, in the course of examinations or selection procedures prescribed or required by authorities or public administrations for the conferral of degrees or any other rank or scholastic or academic title, for recognition of qualifications to teach and the exercise of professions, for the issue of diplomas or licenses, presents as their own work dissertations, studies, publications, technical projects and in general, work that has been produced by others, shall be liable to a term of imprisonment of three to twelve months [...]”.

Those writing theses, likewise any other work produced in order to complete academic examinations or for the purpose of research, should be aware of their own and others’ rights but also of the obligations imposed by ethical considerations and the law. This means that in the course of academic examinations, in theses for graduation in first degrees, masters’ degrees and doctorates, attention must be paid to the methodology of structuring and drafting of the text, including the use of citations, data and images and their insertion into the text, so as to avoid the risk of incurring the disciplinary measures, civil sanctions and criminal penalties that are provided for by law.

Turnitin LLC, provider of the antiplagiarism software, informs that the files containing the written works uploaded on the platform merge in its databases anonymously and that they are made available to all their costumers enabled to use the antiplagiarism software. On one hand, the confidentiality of information is protected and on the other it the teachers of the University are allowed to make a wider comparison with the text already inserted to verify any analogies and therefore to prevent plagiarism.



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The eventual report of similarities does not constitute conclusive evidence of plagiarism.
This evaluation is up to the teacher.

Since the service is offered via internet, the software supplier and the University of Trento are not liable for any cases of online piracy which may arise through unauthorized access to and improper use of material uploaded into the data base.

Within the meaning of (Regulation (EU) 2016/679), the personal data supplied will be used by the University of Trento solely for the institutional purposes set out above, in accordance with the principles of fairness, lawfulness and transparency.