

iThenticate for HDR at UniSQ

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1.0 Introduction

The University provides HDR students with access to iThenticate so they can use it to check their own written work for plagiarism, missing citations, etc. before submitting it.

HDR students **are required** to use it to check the following work items:

- Their Research Proposal, prior to submitting it for Confirmation of Candidature;
- Their Research Proposal, once any revisions required by the Confirmation Panel have been integrated and prior to submission for approval by the GRS;
- Their theses, prior to submitting it for Examination;
- Their theses, once any revisions required by the Examiners have been integrated and prior to submission for approval by the GRS.

HDR supervisors **are required** to review the iThenticate Similarity Report for the theses their students submit for examination and indicate they are satisfied any issues identified in it have been addressed.

The GRS **recommends** that HDR students use it to check the manuscripts of research papers they are preparing prior to submission to a journal, as well as during the revision period. Many publishers now use iThenticate themselves, so running your manuscript through it before submitting to a journal may help speed up the editorial and review processes.

1.1 Why has the University implemented iThenticate?

iThenticate is provided as a tool to help HDR students and their supervisors ensure the written work submitted as part of an HDR project is free from issues that might impact on the integrity of the work. Whilst iThenticate might form part of an integrity investigation if that issue arises after submission, its primary purpose is to help ensure those investigations do not become necessary.

1.2 What databases/repositories does iThenticate check against?

Table 1: Databases/Repositories included in an iThenticate check

Database/Repository	Description
The Internet	An active archive of 90+ billion current and archived web pages
Publications	A collection of over 80 million articles from library databases, textbook publishers, digital reference collections, subscription-based publications, homework helper sites, and books
Crossref	A collection of published scholarly works
Crossref Posted Content	A collection of scholarly works that have been submitted but not yet published
Submitted Works	Items previously submitted to the repositories that are part of UniSQ's iThenticate account

1.3 Is iThenticate just like Turnitin?

iThenticate is a Turnitin product. The differences are in the user interface (you do not need to be enrolled in a class to use it), and in the databases/repositories it checks against.

Additionally, any document you submit to iThenticate is only held within UniSQ's unique iThenticate repository. There is no danger that your yet unpublished ideas will be accessible to others who submit a document to iThenticate or Turnitin.

2.0 Using iThenticate

2.1 How do I access iThenticate for the first time?

Confirmed Candidates and HDR Coordinators: The GRS will send you an email inviting you to create an account in UniSQ's own dedicated iThenticate environment. You will have 7 days from that point in which to create your account.

Provisional Candidates: Approximately three months prior to your confirmation deadline, the GRS will send you an email inviting you to create an account in UniSQ's own dedicated iThenticate environment. You will have 7 days from that point in which to create your account. If you need access sooner, please complete [this form](#). Please note that you will need to be logged into UniSQ's Microsoft 365 environment to access the form.

HDR Supervisors do not have access to UniSQ's iThenticate environment unless they are also the HDR Coordinator for their respective area.

Please note: Your iThenticate login information is confidential information that you are not permitted to share under the terms of the iThenticate Licensing Agreement.

2.2 How do I access iThenticate regularly?

The url for UniSQ's dedicated iThenticate environment is:

<https://unisqld.turnitin.com/home/>

Please save that url to your bookmarks. No other iThenticate url will allow you to log into the UniSQ iThenticate environment.

Please note that iThenticate is **not** linked to UniSQ's Single Sign On system.

2.3 How do I use iThenticate?

Turnitin has an excellent collection of iThenticate user resources, available from

<https://guides.ithenticate.com/hc/en-us/categories/22704965660941-User>

Please use that collection to familiarise yourself with the system.

2.4 How do I share my Similarity Report with my supervisors?

Unless they hold a role that otherwise gives them access to the iThenticate system, HDR supervisors do not have iThenticate accounts. You will, therefore, need to download a PDF version of the report to share it with your supervisors.

Alternatively, you and your supervisors may also choose to go over it together while you share your screen in Teams/Zoom/similar.

Your iThenticate login information is confidential information that you are not permitted to share under the terms of the iThenticate Licensing Agreement.

2.5 What is/is not an acceptable similarity percentage?

iThenticate is a tool for identifying parts of your text that *might* be problematic from a plagiarism detection standpoint. It is impossible to define what is and is not an acceptable similarity score. The percentage is indicative, not definitive.

Human intelligence is required to determine whether or not the highlighted parts of a Similarity Report may be plagiarism. For instance:

- The Similarity Report will highlight the content from published papers you are submitting as part of a thesis by publication.
- The Similarity Report may highlight content from previous drafts you have uploaded to iThenticate.
 - *Excluding these matches will bring the similarity percentage down considerably, and it would be correct to exclude them.*
- The Similarity Report will highlight those elements of a thesis that all or most UniSQ theses have in common, i.e.; the Title Page, parts of the Acknowledgements, Statements of Contribution, Certifications of Thesis, etc.
 - *This is expected and those matches can be ignored. If, however, an entire Table of Contents were to be identical to another student's submission, it would be worth reviewing.*
- You will also find that the system flags certain citations, text commonly used in citations (i.e. "et. al"), and Reference List/Bibliography entries as having been used without citation.

- *Whilst it may seem pointless to review these matches, it will be worth checking any thesis or publication that was not written by you but has a Reference List/Bibliography with a high similarity to yours to ensure you have not inadvertently duplicated elements of someone else's work.*

It is therefore important that you and your supervisors review each section of text that the system identifies as being similar to other documents.

2.6 What are “Integrity Flags,” and do I need to do anything about them?

Your Similarity Report may include Integrity Flags for review. These are:

- Characters in white text;
- Characters from alphabets other than English;
- Non Arabic numerals.

If these issues are flagged in your document, you will likely find that they are the result of a PDF conversion issue, white text used in a diagram, the use of special characters in a mathematical formula, etc.

It is still worth checking them. If they do not represent an integrity issue and do not impact upon the readability of the document, you will not need to do anything about them.

2.7 Does iThenticate have limitations?

Yes. It only checks for similarity in the text of the documents uploaded to it. It does not check images. Published articles that have been inserted into a thesis as images will therefore need to be checked using the PDF file as downloaded and not from within the thesis.

For the same reason, plates, microscopy images, photographs, and similar will need to be reviewed independently of iThenticate to ensure they are either appropriately cited or are original.

2.8 What about Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

UniSQ's implementation of iThenticate is limited to checking for potential plagiarism. That may be expanded to include checking for content generated by AI at a future time, but the introduction of oral thesis defences to the PhD examination for students who commenced in 2024 is, in part, intended to mitigate the risk of cheating using AI.

Principles for the appropriate use of AI in HDR research at UniSQ are being developed and will be communicated in due course.

3.0 Support for iThenticate

3.1 Technical Support

The first place to seek technical support for iThenticate is:

<https://help.turnitin.com/ithenticate/user.htm>

HDR Students: If you have an issue accessing or using the system that is not addressed there, please email grs@unisq.edu.au with your query. UniSQ ICT and iConnect are not resourced to support iThenticate.

HDR Supervisors and Coordinators: If you have an issue accessing or using the system that is not addressed in the user documentation, please email grsadmin@unisq.edu.au with your query.

3.2 Academic Support

HDR Students: The first place to seek guidance on similarity percentages and whether or not a match may be plagiarism is your supervisory team.

HDR Supervisors: Can seek guidance from their HDR Coordinator/similar.