CrossCheck/iThenticate tips and tricks - how to interpret the results

This is a one-pager that may be used as a quick reference guide. For more detailed information please check the Springer CrossCheck guide or the training page of iThenticate.

iThenticate is a tool detecting text similarities. It does not detect plagiarism. The similarities may be an indication of plagiarism. If the iThenticate similarity report is showing matching text, the following points can assist you with interpreting the results.

- It is more important to look at the individual scores of the sources than the overall similarity index. This example is applicable to a document of approximately 5,000 words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>iThenticate percentages:</th>
<th>Action required?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individual score 1-5%</td>
<td>In general no sign of potential plagiarism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual score &gt;10%</td>
<td>Should be screened quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual score &gt;20%</td>
<td>Should be checked carefully</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- A low similarity score does not mean there is no plagiarism.
- A high similarity score does not mean there is plagiarism.
- When you find a very high similarity percentage (for example 80%) for an article that has already been published it is most likely that the match found is to the paper itself. The source needs to be excluded from the matches. Unless it was published somewhere else than Springer.
- Please be alert to false positives. False positives could be methods & materials (e.g. standard text), the reference list, properly cited and/or quoted text or text for which permission has been received.
- The quality of the reused text can be more important than the amount of words.
- Some suggestions for handling similarities:
  - A large match in the results or conclusions is a reason for rejection.
  - If an author has cut and paste from various sources and it seems to be a minor issue, work with the authors to revise. This decision is dependent on the interest in the paper and the level of misconduct.
  - Patchwork plagiarism is more difficult to evaluate. A decision could be to reject without review.
  - Self-plagiarism (text recycling) should be evaluated in a similar way as plagiarism.
- Please also note the following:
  - iThenticate cannot compare figures or tables,
  - iThenticate cannot compare different languages,
  - iThenticate cannot find paraphrased text,
  - Common phrases are not excluded,
  - Only publications by participating publishers and societies, libraries and affiliates are in the CrossCheck database. In addition different internet sources including repositories and Wiki’s such as Wikipedia are indexed.

**General advice:** Always look at the context of the match and keep iThenticate’s limitations in mind.