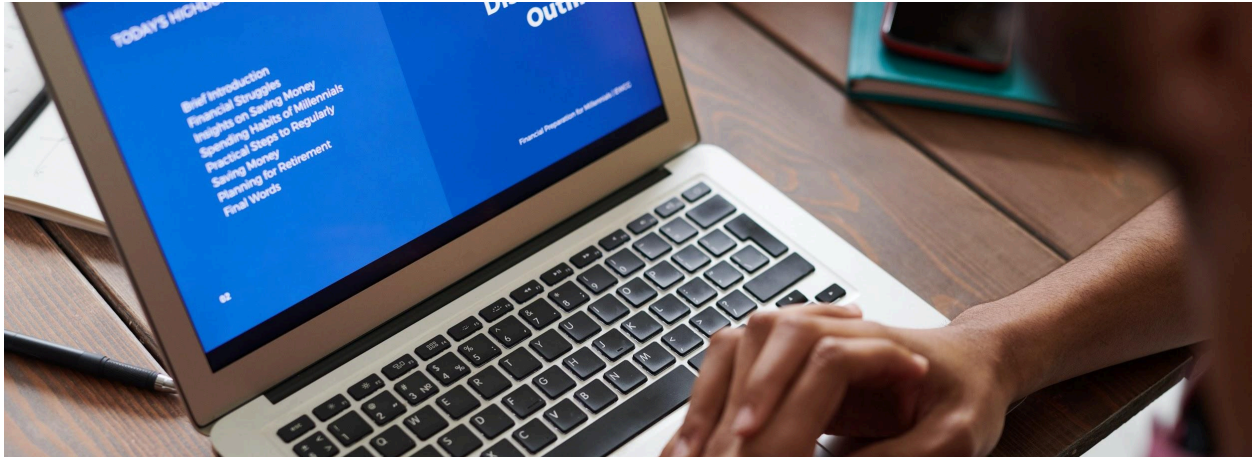


Faculty: Turnitin Use and Best Practices



What you'll find in this resource:

Introduction

Incorporating Turnitin in your class

Interpreting a Turnitin report

Best practices

Introduction

Toronto Metropolitan University has a contract with Turnitin Feedback Studio. This resource will introduce you to using Turnitin as a tool to promote academic integrity, detect academic misconduct, and provide suggestions about best practices.

For more information, see "[Understanding the Turnitin Similarity Report](#) (Instructor Guide)"

Incorporating Turnitin in your class

Note: [Turnitin - Toolbox - Digital Media Projects - Toronto Metropolitan University](#)

On September 1st 2022, instructors will continue to have access to Turnitin for originality checking, but will no longer be able to use the tool's grading and feedback functionalities. Users are encouraged to use the grading, annotation and feedback features available in the Brightspace Assignment tool in tandem with Turnitin Originality. Please visit our [Brightspace Assignment resource](#) to learn more."

If Turnitin.com is used in a course, students who do not want their work submitted to this service must, by the end of the second week of class, consult with the instructor to make alternate arrangements.

Interpreting a Turnitin report

(See [Understanding the Turnitin Similarity Report](#) Instructor Guide)

It is important to note that, according to Turnitin Feedback Studio, **“Turnitin actually does not check for plagiarism ... What we actually do is check your submissions against our database, and if there are instances where your writing is similar to, or matches against, one of our sources, we will flag this for your instructor to review.** Our database includes billions of web pages: both current and archived content from the internet, a repository of works other students have submitted to Turnitin in the past, and a collection of documents, which comprises thousands of periodicals, journals, and publications.”

- Turnitin is a tool that can help to detect plagiarism or citation problems. It does not **on its own** prove that a student has engaged in academic misconduct.
- You may wish to cross-check the matches by entering phrases or sentences into an internet search engine, with or without quotation marks enclosing the words, to assess whether the text is accessible through the web.
- Retrieval of potential or possible matches will allow for a complete review of the indicated source against the rest of the paper content. Multiple search results of matched text may demonstrate to the student that the language they have used is not original and has been replicated elsewhere.

***Red Flags Include*:**

- limited range of colour - indicates fewer sources are responsible (i.e., pre-existing essay used as “template”)
- text matches to work submitted to several other institutions, including high schools or extracurricular “tutoring” companies (i.e., khanacademy.com)
- text matches that are not solely bibliographic entries or legitimate quotations
- text matches broken up by non-matching nouns or adjectives that could be the result of synonym-swapping, insufficient “paraphrasing”, or text spinners/translation tools
- Similarity Report shows no matches at all (0% result) indicating no use of external sources, and no bibliographic entries

From the Turnitin website:

“Similarity Reports provide a summary of matching or highly similar text found in a submitted paper. When a Similarity Report is available for viewing, a similarity score percentage will be made available. Similarity Reports that have not yet finished generating are represented by a grayed out icon in the Similarity column. Reports that are not available may not have generated yet, or assignment settings may be delaying the generation of the report.

TITLE	SIMILARITY
Submission	0% 
Submission	6% 
Submission	43% 
Submission	58% 
Submission	80% 

The color of the report icon indicates the similarity score of the paper, based on the amount of matching or similar text that was uncovered. The percentage range is 0% to 100%. The possible similarity ranges are:

- Blue: No matching text
- Green: One word to 24% matching text
- Yellow: 25-49% matching text
- Orange: 50-74% matching text
- Red: 75-100% matching text”

Retrieved from: [Interpreting the Similarity Report](#) (For Students)

Best practices

Recommendations and best practices from the Academic Integrity Office

- **With guidance based on understanding how to interpret a Turnitin report, allow students to resubmit their assignments multiple times prior to the deadline.** Create a guide based on [Interpreting the Similarity Report](#) to help students understand how they may best use Turnitin in their processes. Encourage them to use Turnitin as a learning tool, one that can alert them to citation issues or other problems in their writing, such as an overreliance on verbatim language from sources. Enabling this feature is up to instructor discretion, and may not be appropriate in all circumstances.
- **Inform students on the syllabus and before assignments submitted to Turnitin that Turnitin will be used,** and explain how they can use it as a learning tool (see above) and how it serves to promote academic integrity.
- **Inform students that there is no strict threshold percentage that they need to stay below in order to avoid academic misconduct** (this is a common misunderstanding). Turnitin is only a tool that shows verbatim text matches with previously published or submitted work. While a high percentage may indicate academic misconduct, a low percentage (including 0%) also warrants further analysis, and **a few plagiarized sentences is still considered academic misconduct under Policy 60.**

- **Students are often unaware that self-plagiarism** (the submission of work for credit in multiple courses) **is academic misconduct**. Turnitin frequently identifies this type of misconduct, so it is a good idea to inform or remind them of it when introducing Turnitin and explaining how it works.

Questions or Urgent Requests? Contact:

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