

Guidelines on How to Use iThenticate

What is iThenticate?

iThenticate is a text matching tool that is designed to be used by authors and co-authors to ensure the originality of written work before publication. The software compares your document with a large database of web pages, academic books and articles. After comparing your document to the database, iThenticate generates a similarity report for your submission. The report indicates how much of your document matches writing from previously existing sources (given as a %), and highlights all phrases that match text in an existing source, and provides links to those sources.

How is iThenticate used at the University of Waterloo?

Turnitin is embedded into our Learning Management System (LMS) in courses and is managed by instructors. Whereas iThenticate is managed by the individual account holder (i.e., the person submitting the document), and is not to be used for course-based assignments. iThenticate is designed for authors to check their own documents, such as book chapters or articles to be submitted for publication, grant proposals, [comprehensive examinations](#), theses and dissertations, as well as other writing directly connected with their role at the University of Waterloo. Account holders are not permitted to submit work that they have not authored or co-authored.

Graduate students are encouraged to use iThenticate as a part of good academic practice. In addition, PhD students are required to use iThenticate to review their written comprehensive exams. Further information can be found in the Graduate Studies Academic Calendar section on [Comprehensive Exams](#).

Creating folders for submissions

Although not required, users have the option to upload files into folders, which can be organized into folder groups.

To create a new folder group, select “New Folder Group” in the “New Folder” section on the right side of the homepage. Enter a folder group name, and click “Create”. To add folders to your folder groups, select “Create a Folder”.

To “Create a Folder”, select “New Folder” in the “New Folder” section on the right side of the homepage. In the “Folder Group” drop-down menu, select which folder group the new folder will belong to. Enter the folder name in the “Folder Name Field” and click “Create”.

The screenshot shows the iThenticate web application interface. At the top, there's a navigation bar with 'Folders', 'Settings', and 'Account Info'. The main content area is divided into three sections:

- Left Panel:** 'My Folders' section with a tree view showing 'My Folders', 'My Documents', and 'Trash'.
- Center Panel:** 'My Documents' folder view showing a table of documents.

Title	Report	Author	Processed	Actions
mobileapp edits part 2.docx 1 part - 1,199 words	2%		Aug 22, 2019 11:18:47 AM	[Icons]
Developing Best Practices for the Interpretation of Originality Reports in Turnitin® 1 part - 3,419 words	15%	Amanda Mokenzie	Jul 22, 2019 12:10:15 PM	[Icons]
- Right Panel:** 'Submit a document' section with options: 'Upload a File', 'Zip File Upload', and 'Cut & Paste'. It also shows '29,678 Documents remaining', 'Recent Uploads', 'New folder', and 'Folder Info'.

How to submit to the iThenticate Dropbox

On the right side of the homepage, users have three options under the Submit a Document tab: **Upload a File**, **Zip File Upload** (to upload multiple files), or **Cut & Paste** (text pasted into the submission box).

Upload a File

Select "Upload a File" and use the drop-down to select the folder you would like to store the file in. Enter the author's first name, last name, and document title in the relevant fields. Select "Chose File" to select your file from your file browser. To add another file, click "Add another file". Select upload to upload your files, or cancel to cancel the upload.

Zip File Upload

Select "Zip File Upload" and use the drop-down to select the folder you would like to store the file in. Enter the author's first name, last name, and document title in the relevant fields. Select "Chose File" to select the zip file from your file browser. Select upload to upload your files, or cancel to cancel the upload.

Cut & Paste

Select "Cut & Paste" and use the drop-down menu to select the folder you would like to store the submission in. Enter the author's first name, last name, and document title in the relevant fields. Copy your text into the submission text-box. Select upload to upload your text, or cancel to cancel the upload.

Please note:

- The file cannot exceed 400 pages or 200 MB
- The zip file upload accepts up to 1000 files or 200 MB of zipped information

Interpreting the Similarity Report

To view the similarity report for your file, locate the file under “My Folders” on the left side of your homepage. Once you select your document, the similarity score (%) will display in the “Report” column.

The similarity score is a measure of the similarity between your work and work found on websites, electronic journals and others’ work in the iThenticate database. In other words, the similarity report shows how much of the submission was not original. The similarity score percentage (%) represents the number of phrases that the program finds in common with database content and divides that number by the total number of words in the file. If, for example, the overall similarity score for a submission is 10%, then 10% of the document can be matched to sequences of phrases in the database. These words may be in one passage or may be in several, separate passages.

A lower percentage rating indicates that most of the content is original and a higher percentage rating indicates that much of the content matches content found in other sources. Quoted material and references may show up as matches, and therefore it is important for you to review matches to determine if there are any problems.

***Note that there is no “safe” percentage. The percentage in the report cannot fully evaluate whether text has been plagiarized.**

The similarity report highlights content that matches sources in the iThenticate database, and can help you identify issues with referencing and paraphrasing. After taking a close look at the highlighted sections, you can make a decision about which parts need to be re-written and which parts are referenced accurately.

For More Information

If you need help using iThenticate at the University of Waterloo:

- Visit the [iThenticate training webpage](#)
- Contact the [Office of Academic Integrity](#)

If you need help with referencing, paraphrasing, or other writing skills:

- Visit the [Writing and Communication Centre](#)
- Find guides for referencing sources on the [Library website](#)