

# Turnitin® Guidelines for Instructors

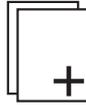
## What is Turnitin®?

Turnitin® is a text-matching tool that is commonly used to help detect plagiarism, but it can be integrated into course activities as an educational tool to help students practise proper scholarly writing skills.



### Check

Turnitin® compares submitted documents to its database and sources on the web.



### Add

Submitted files are housed on the Turnitin® server, which is based in the U.S., and on our local LEARN server.



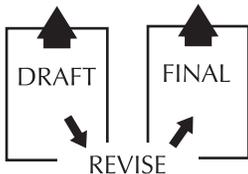
### Report

For each submission, an originality report is generated which provides information about matched text.

## Should I use Turnitin®?

I'm looking for a **scholarly writing tool**.

Student and instructor sees originality report for student submission.



Draft submissions' originality report helps students implement proper scholarly writing skills for final submission.

I'm looking for a **text-matching only tool**.

Only the instructor sees originality report for student submission.



Single submission does not allow students to make revisions based on the originality report.

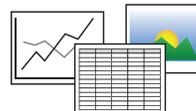
## Considerations and Limitations



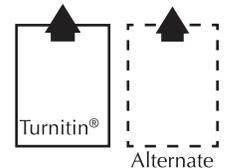
Does not verify authorship



May require extra marking time<sup>1</sup>



May not work for graphs, images, or tables<sup>2</sup>



For privacy and security reasons, must provide alternate assignment, e.g. scaffolded/annotated

## Preparing Students for Turnitin®



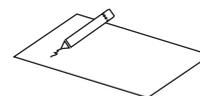
Provide rationale for Turnitin® use<sup>3</sup>



Discuss discipline-specific citation conventions<sup>1</sup>



Introduce the concept of original thought<sup>4</sup>



Clearly define plagiarism within the context of your discipline<sup>5</sup>



Discuss academic integrity and provide resources<sup>3</sup>



Remember that mastering the skill of scholarly writing takes time and that students are bound to make errors along the way.

*Unsure if Turnitin® is right for your course? Contact the Centre for Teaching Excellence (CTE) or Centre for Extended Learning (CEL).*

## Implementing Turnitin®



### Contact LEARN support.

Turnitin® dropboxes must be enabled by LEARN support.

The following statement **must** appear in **every** course outline:

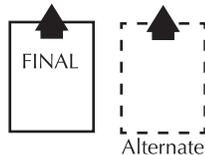
**Turnitin.com:** Text matching software (Turnitin®) may be used to screen assignments in this course. Turnitin® is used to verify that all materials and sources in assignments are documented. Students' submissions are stored on a U.S. server, therefore students must be given an alternative (e.g., scaffolded assignment or annotated bibliography), if they are concerned about their privacy and/or security. Students will be given due notice, in the first week of the term and/or at the time assignment details are provided, about arrangements and alternatives for the use of Turnitin® in this course.

It is the responsibility of the student to notify the instructor if they, in the first week of term or at the time assignment details are provided, wish to submit the alternate assignment.

### Scholarly writing tool

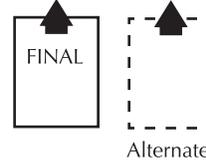


- Number of submissions set by instructor
- Ungraded
- Dropbox closes before final deadline



- Single submission
- Graded

### Text-matching only tool



- Single submission
- Graded

## Interpreting Turnitin® Reports



### Check

Check Similarity Index for percentage of common phrases.



### Review and Assess

Review and assess the highlighted text within the document for originality and proper citation.



### Grade

Grade assignment as usual.

### Similarity Index

A percentage representing the number of words found in common with database content, divided by the total number of words in the file.

Blue:	≥0 to <20%	
Green:	≥20 to <40%	
Yellow:	≥40 to <60%	
Orange:	≥60 to <80%	
Red:	≥80 to ≤100%	



Note: There is no "safe" colour or percentage: no percentage or colour in the originality report can fully evaluate whether text has been plagiarized.

1. W. Sutherland-Smith and R. Carr, "Turnitin®.com: Teachers' Perspectives on Anti-plagiarism Software in Raising Issues of Educational Integrity," *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 94-101, 2005.
2. W. Sutherland-Smith and R. Carr, "University of Waterloo Turnitin® School of Accounting and Finance Pilot Results," 2008, unpublished.
3. A. Ledwith and A. Risquez, "Using anti-plagiarism software to promote academic honesty in the context of peer reviewed assignments," *Studies in Higher Education*, vol. 33, no. 4, pp. 371-384, Jul. 2008.
4. A. Johnson and R. Clerehan, "A rhyme of one's own: How 'original' do we expect students to be?" *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 37-47, 2005.
5. R. Goddard and R. Rudzki, "Using an electronic text-matching tool (Turnitin®) to detect plagiarism in a New Zealand university," *Journal of University Teaching & Learning Practice*, vol. 2, no. 3, pp. 12-24, 2005.

*Unsure if Turnitin® is right for your course?  
Contact CTE or CEL.*