
Turnitin FAQ's

Turnitin - Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is a similarity score?

The similarity score indicates the percentage of material in your assessment that can be found in other sources. So, it will pick up things like:

The Cover Page

The Assessment Question (because other students have used it too)

Correctly referenced quotes

Incorrectly referenced quotes

Any string of words that also appear in other assessments, textbooks or online documents

Common phrases

Authors' names

Titles of books

Bibliographies or Reference Lists

In other words it picks up things that are not relevant to referencing. Turnitin is only a tool and judgement needs to be used when you view your Originality Report. For example, your similarity score may be 18% but when you review your report and subtract the 1% for the essay question, 4 or 5% for common phrases and book titles, 5% for the reference list (these figures are just invented examples), the similarity score that is relevant to referencing may be quite small. After you have taken this irrelevant material into account you should make sure that the relevant material is referenced properly and no plagiarism is occurring.

Please remember that, as a guide, you should aim for a maximum of 10% quoted material in your assessment. In the disciplines studied at ACAP less is better. 0% of your assessment can be plagiarised, that is, none of your assessment should be copied material that is not referenced.

Q. Do I need to look at the Originality Report?

Turnitin does not make a judgement as to what is referenced properly, it simply highlights the non-original material in a piece of work. You should use the similarity score as a guide only and must then look at the Originality Report to determine whether or not changes need to be made to the assessment. You may have unwittingly forgotten to reference a quote, or you may need to consider paraphrasing if the amount of quoted material is too high.

Q. What do I do if my Similarity Score is high because of my Reference List/Bibliography?

As a guide, no more than 10% of your assessment should be quoted material, the reference list or bibliography is not included in this percentage. Students and educators can remove the reference list or bibliography from the score within the report by clicking on 'Exclude Bibliography' in the top left hand

corner of the Originality Report. This will not change the similarity score that appears next to your assessment, but will allow you to view the report without this included.

Q. What should my Similarity Score be?

As a guide, the similarity score, that is the percentage of an assessment which directly quotes other sources, should be no more than 10%. Please note that this refers only to direct quotes within the body of the text and does not include the reference list or cover sheets etc.

Q. If Turnitin says that text in my assessment is found in other sources; does that mean I have plagiarised?

Not necessarily. The similarity report does not detect plagiarism. It merely indicates sections of text that are found in other sources. For example, it will detect similarity if you have quoted another author in your assessment, whether the reference is appropriately acknowledged or not. When the originality report is returned you are able to check your referencing and to rewrite sections, if required, before submitting your assessment for marking.

High similarity scores do not necessarily constitute plagiarism, but would indicate that you should go back and work on the assessment to address the problems identified and improve the quality of the paper.

It is important to understand that Turnitin does not make a decision on what is plagiarised material and what is not. It only measures similarity between the submitted text and other texts.

Q. What does my educator see?

Your educator sees the same Originality Report as you see. Your educator can see what percentage of material is made up by your cover sheet or bibliography etc and will decide whether you meet the requirements. Obviously, if a high similarity score is returned after you have taken into account things like common phrases or authors' names, then you need to re-examine your assessment before you submit it for marking. Your educator views the Originality Report before marking your assessment.

Q. Where can I find instructions?

Instructions on how to submit an assessment using Turnitin can be found at [my.navitas-professional>Student Resources](#).

Q. Where can I find further information?

Students should familiarise themselves with the information provided in [my.navitas-professional>Student Resources](#). This includes User Guides, a 'How to' video and some other general information about Turnitin.

Students who are unsure of how to paraphrase or quote or would like more information on how much to quote, should refer to [my.navitas-professional >Student Resources](#).

The ACAP Library section has "Library eResources" which has information on copyright and plagiarism. The Academic Skills Guide, Referencing Guide and the Study Skills Guide are also available on [my.navitas-professional](#).

Q. What is Turnitin?

Turnitin is an online text-matching software that compares submitted texts with other texts which include Internet-based documents, articles from journals and periodicals, books and texts submitted to Turnitin in the past. Turnitin then reports the level of similarity between the submitted text and other texts. It is used by many academic institutions in Australia and around the world to promote academic integrity, to support students in developing academic writing skills and to detect plagiarism. ACAP is committed to promoting academic integrity among students, educators and staff and Turnitin is now operational in all modules for all delivery modes.

Q. What is Academic Integrity?

In an academic culture, it is understood that knowledge always builds on other knowledge, and originality grows from an understanding of other ideas. For this reason, academic writing by default involves the use of other texts and ideas, which is not only permitted, but expected. In using other texts, it is important to acknowledge the origin of the ideas and their authors. Simply copying text or ideas without explicit acknowledgement is considered dishonest, although it may not always be intentional. The term Academic Integrity refers to honesty and transparency in academic writing. Turnitin forms an important part of ACAP's approach to promoting academic integrity. It can help students develop the skills to successfully apply the principles of Academic Integrity in their academic writing.

Q. How does Turnitin work?

When students submit assessments electronically via my.navitas-professional., the assessments will automatically be submitted to Turnitin. Turnitin will generate a similarity report which the student is able to view. The similarity report indicates the level of similarity between the assessment and other documents on the Internet, academic databases, previous student assessments and assessments generated by 'paper mills'.

Q. How many times can I submit a draft?

Students are able to submit their draft multiple times prior to making the final submission for marking. Turnitin is a useful tool to support students in developing academic writing skills by giving them early feedback on unacceptable levels of similarity.

Q. What happens to my paper after I have submitted it?

All papers submitted to Turnitin will be automatically text matched with web based documents and other submitted papers contained in Turnitin's large databases. After this process has occurred, a digital copy of the assessment will be securely stored in the Turnitin database. Your assessment in its entirety cannot be viewed by anybody except the student, the educator and authorised ACAP staff.

Turnitin applies state of the art technology to protect student privacy and copyright, and complies with Australian and international privacy and copyright laws. For more information on privacy and copyright within Turnitin, please visit http://turnitin.com/static/pdf/datasheet_ip.pdf.

Q. How do I upload my paper using Turnitin?

ACAP has developed step-by-step guides for students on how to upload an assessment using Turnitin. More information, a 'How to...' guide and a demonstration video can be accessed in the Student Resources section of my.navitas-professional, under the heading 'Assessment'.

Q. What happens if plagiarism is detected?

Remember, Turnitin doesn't check for plagiarism. It only checks for text that is similar to text found elsewhere. This may be plagiarism, or it may not. If the assessment is showing a section or sections of text which appear in other documents the student will be able to view this prior to submitting the assessment for marking. This means that the student can check for plagiarism and, if required, amend the text accordingly. After the assessment is submitted for marking, the educator can examine the paper (and the Turnitin Report) and determine whether plagiarism has occurred. If the educator detects plagiarism, they will refer the case onto ACAP Academic Staff. According to the ACAP Student Handbook, plagiarism is the use of another person's thoughts and/or intellectual property without appropriate acknowledgement or reference. The penalties for plagiarism are severe and may lead to discontinuation of enrolment.

Q. Where can I get help with my academic writing?

ACAP offers a number of ways of accessing help with academic writing: We strongly recommend all students attend free Academic Skills Workshops, offered at the beginning of each term at each ACAP campus. For a copy of the current workshop schedule, please contact Student Support on your relevant campus. Academic Skills Workshop presentations are available online, and can be accessed by logging into my.navitas-professional. Student Support staff are available for individual consultations around general academic writing skills development, or to provide feedback on assessment drafts. Peer mentoring is offered at some ACAP campuses. Experienced students ('peers') are available to students to talk through any academic issues they may experience, and can also provide feedback on assessment drafts.

Q. Who uses Turnitin?

Turnitin is the worldwide standard in approximately 9000 educational institutions, across 110 countries. In Australia 29 out of the 36 universities use it as a tool to assist students about academic integrity, and to minimise the incidence of plagiarism.

Q. How does Turnitin help me?

The use of Turnitin will give an indication as to how much non original text is in an assessment so that students can re-write all or parts of their assessment to meet acceptable standards. It is also a valuable self-checking tool that will indicate citation omissions and will help referencing. Used properly, Turnitin will help raise the quality and integrity of students' work.

Q. What happens if my.navitas-professional is down and I can't submit my assessment through Turnitin?

All ACAP Web systems are continuously monitored to ensure that there is no unplanned 'down time'. In the unlikely event that my.navitas-professional is down at a time when you need to submit assessment, no late penalties will apply to your assessment and ACAP, through your educator will inform the class of any alternative arrangements.

Q. It's taking Turnitin more than 30 minutes to process my work, is there an error?

The average processing time is well under 30 minutes but occasionally, in periods of high demand or with very lengthy papers, Turnitin will take longer. Occasionally, Turnitin may take 24 hours to generate a report. It is important to leave yourself enough time for the Turnitin process to occur and for any subsequent amendments you may have to make to the assessment, prior to the assessment submission deadline.

It is recommended that you submit your assessment through Turnitin a few days prior to the final submission deadline, in order to give yourself adequate time to amend the assessment, if required.

Q. Can anyone read my assessment?

No. Within the my.navitas-professional system, only the student, the educator, and authorised ACAP staff have access to the assessment. If the assessment is used for moderation all identification is removed.

Within the Turnitin databases, your assessment is stored as a source for matching. If another student's work matches your work, their report will show an anonymous student paper: "X% match (Student papers from xx/xx/xxxx) submitted to Australian College of Applied Psychology." You will not be identified.

Tips

Submit your work early, at least a few days prior to the final assessment submission date, so that you have time to act on the report.

More information

See the Student Resources section of my.navitas-professional for more information on Turnitin, including a video demo and a step-by-step guide to submitting assessment through Turnitin.

1. Document History

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Aug2012	V1	Kathy Fleming Peter Somogyi	First Release