

How to interpret a Turnitin originality report

What is an originality report?

It is a tool that checks your assignment against various electronic resources for matching text. It will then highlight the areas of your assignment where a match has been found.

Examples of resources that are checked are:

- Electronic books
- Electronic journals
- Websites
- Student assignments that have already been submitted through Turnitin at Salford University and other higher education institutions.

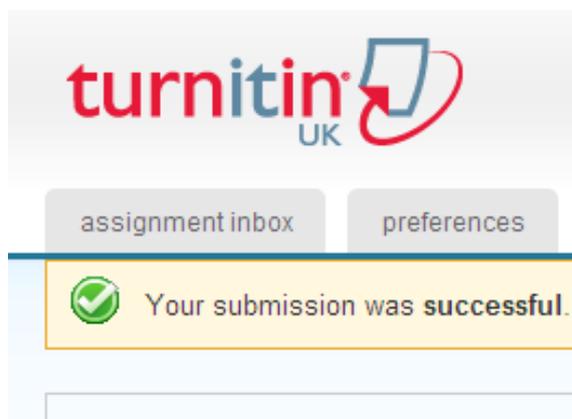
However, there will be many sources that are not checked against, such as new web content (e.g. today's news articles) and password protected sites (e.g. intranets).

An important point to note is that originality reports **do not detect plagiarism** – they merely highlight matched text, thus aiding you in checking that your work is correctly cited and referenced.

How do I access the originality report?

The report is produced when you submit an assignment to the draft folder. Your lecturer can tell you if your assignment has the option of draft submission, and where to find the link within BlackBoard.

The first time you submit your work to the draft folder, you will receive your originality report within minutes. To access the report, click on the 'assignment inbox' tab, as shown below:



- If your report is ready to view you will now see a percentage figure (if it is not ready you will see a grey box). This is known as the 'similarity index' percentage, which is the percentage of your document that has been matched to other sources.

- When you click on the percentage figure you will then be shown the more detailed originality report.

Turnitin DRAFT submissions

ASSIGNMENT INBOX & PORTFOLIO

START	DUE	POST	STATUS	ACTIONS
Turnitin DRAFT submissions				
PAPER	10-Feb-2011 <small>9:00AM</small>	30-Dec-2012 <small>11:59PM</small>	31-Dec-2012 <small>11:59PM</small>	● Submission for this assignment is complete. Hide details Resubmit

assignment title: Turnitin DRAFT submissions

assignment instructions: This DRAFT submissions area is intended as a formative learning tool only, where students can submit their DRAFT work and receive originality reports to help them in citing references correctly.

search criteria: internet, TurnitinUK student paper database, periodicals, journals, & publications

allow late submissions: yes

Paper Title	Report	GradeMark	Download
my assignment	15% <div style="width: 15px; height: 10px; background-color: green; margin: 2px auto;"></div>	Pending	

For any subsequent submissions it can take up to 24 hours to receive your report. This will overwrite your previous report, so if you want to keep a copy of it there are 'print' and 'download' buttons at the bottom of the originality report window.

You can submit your work into the draft folder as many times as you wish up to the hand in date of your assignment.

The 'similarity index'

This is the percentage of text in your assignment that has been matched to other sources.

If the figure is high, it does not necessarily mean that you have plagiarised as the report could be text matching against the following:

- Quotations that have been correctly referenced.
- Your bibliography, where the citations you have used could be exactly the same as those of another student.
- A common phrase or series of words used in context to the topic.

Similarly, a low or zero percent similarity index does not necessarily mean that plagiarism has not taken place. As there are many sources that Turnitin does not check against, the similarity index cannot be used as an indicator of whether plagiarism has occurred or not.

What information is included in the report?

- An overall 'similarity index' percentage. This indicates the amount of text in the whole assignment that has been matched with other sources.
- Text that has been matched will be number/colour coded for easy reference.
- The 'match overview' appears on the right hand side of the screen. This is a list of suggested original sources and the percentage of text that has been matched against each source.

The screenshot displays the Turnitin Document Viewer interface. On the left, a document is shown with several paragraphs of text. The first paragraph is highlighted in blue and contains a small blue square icon with the number '4'. The second paragraph is highlighted in purple and contains a small purple square icon with the number '3'. The third paragraph is highlighted in red and contains a small red square icon with the number '1'. The fourth paragraph is highlighted in pink and contains a small pink square icon with the number '2'. On the right side of the screen, a 'Match Overview' panel is visible. At the top of this panel, it shows 'SIMILARITY INDEX 87%' and 'GRADE -- OUT OF 0'. Below this, a list of sources is shown with their respective similarity percentages: 1. www.telegraphindia.com (26%), 2. Zhang, H. 'A coarse-t...' (25%), 3. Anderson, M.S. 'The p...' (20%), and 4. www.ifets.info (15%).

Similarity index – the percentage of text within the assignment that has been matched with other sources.

The matched text is highlighted and number/colour coded for easy reference.

The 'match overview' provides the suggested original sources plus a percentage breakdown of how much text is matched against each

Rank	Source	Percentage
1	www.telegraphindia.com Internet source	26%
2	Zhang, H. "A coarse-t..." Publication	25%
3	Anderson, M.S. "The p..." Publication	20%
4	www.ifets.info Internet source	15%

Viewing the Match Breakdown

By clicking one of the sources in the match overview, you can see how many times that particular source has been matched in your assignment.

At this point an arrow appears next to the source which you can click to show a list of additional sources that could be the original source of the text. This is known as the 'Match Breakdown' and is shown on the example below.

The image shows two screenshots from the Turnitin interface. The top screenshot is a 'Match Overview' window showing a list of matches. The first match is from 'www.telegraphindia.com' with a 26% similarity. A callout box points to the '3 matches' text, stating: 'The number of matches indicates the number of times the source is matched in your assignment'. Another callout box points to the '26%' similarity percentage, stating: 'Click here to see the full list of suggested original sources (the 'Match Breakdown.''. The bottom screenshot shows the 'Match Breakdown' window for the selected source. It lists several other sources with their respective similarity percentages: www.telegraphindia.com (26%), www.telegraph.co.uk (25%), www.medindia.net (23%), www.newkerala.com (23%), www.thaindian.com (23%), news.webindia123.com (23%), www.indianexpress.com (23%), and www.isc.co.uk (23%). A large arrow points from the '26%' in the Match Overview to the Match Breakdown window.

Source	Similarity
www.telegraphindia.com	26%
www.telegraph.co.uk	25%
www.medindia.net	23%
www.newkerala.com	23%
www.thaindian.com	23%
news.webindia123.com	23%
www.indianexpress.com	23%
www.isc.co.uk	23%

From the 'match breakdown' list you can click on any of the sources to view the content in its original format (see below).

The image shows a mobile application interface. At the top, a red header reads 'Match Breakdown'. Below it is a list of sources:

Rank	Source	Percentage
1	www.telegraphindia.com Internet source	26%
	www.telegraph.co.uk Internet source - 2 urls	25%
	www.medindia.net Internet source	23%

A callout box with an arrow points to the first source, containing the text: 'Click here to view the source in its original form.'

Below the list is a large arrow pointing to the newspaper page below. The newspaper page is 'The Telegraph' from Calcutta, India, dated Tuesday, March 29, 2011. The main article is titled 'Warning over cheating at Oxford' by Tom Rowley. The article text reads: 'London, March 28: Oxford University's degrees risk being tarnished because of a failure to clamp down on cheating at the elite institution, senior academics have warned. Two dons said the small number of plagiarism cases referred to them represented just "the tip of the iceberg".'

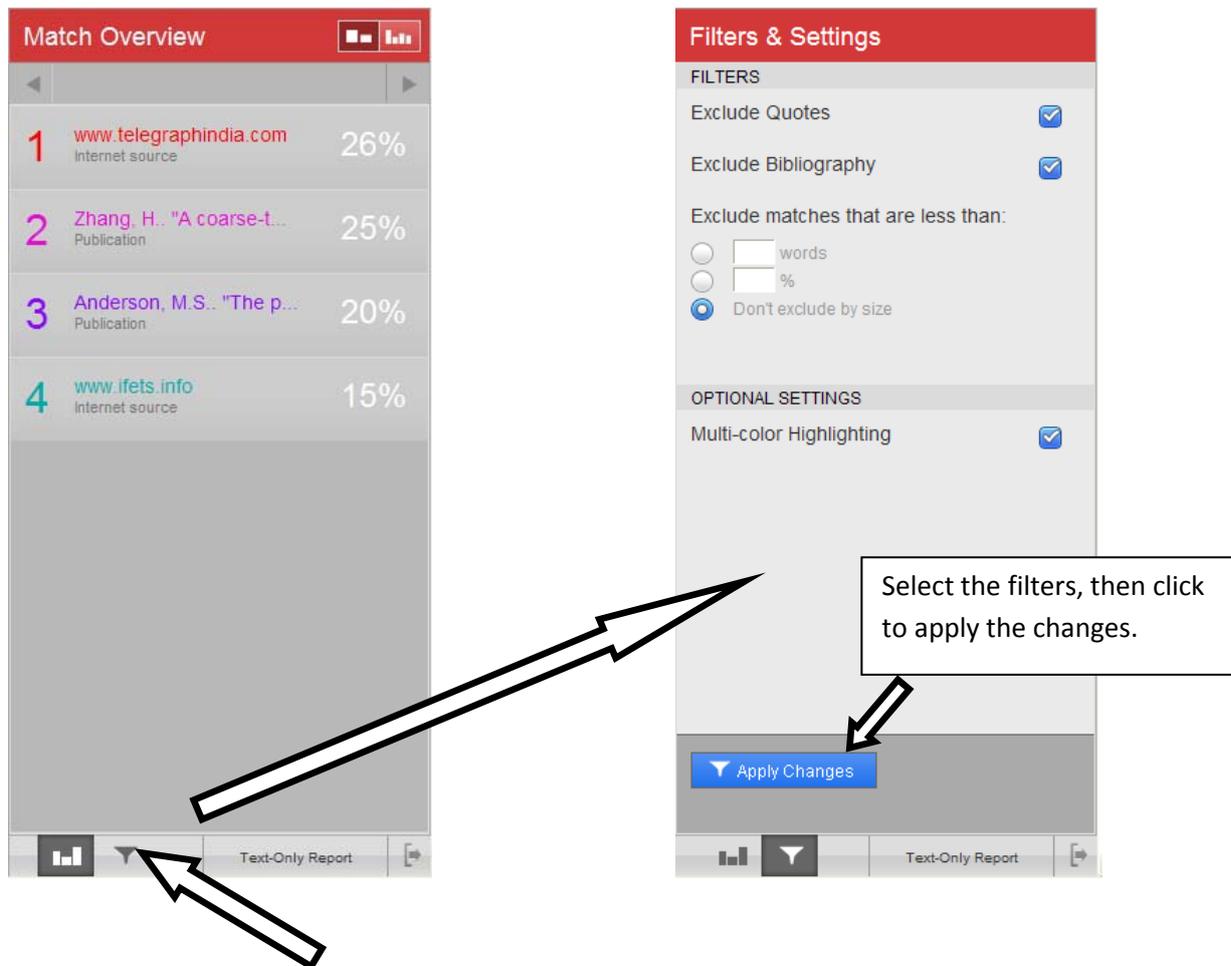
On the left side of the newspaper page, there is a navigation menu under 'IN TODAY'S PAPER' with links to: Front Page, Nation, Calcutta, Bengal, Opinion, International, Business, Sports, Entertainment, Sudoku, Crossword, Jumble, Gallery, and Horse Racing.

On the right side, there are links for 'email this page' and 'Print this page', and an advertisement for 'London School of Business & Finance'.

Filtering options

Some text matches are easily explained, such as quotations and bibliographies. You can exclude these from the originality report by clicking the filter button (see example below). Here, you can also exclude matches that are less than a certain number of words or less than a certain percentage.

If you select some/all of these filters, you also need to click on the 'apply changes' button for them to take effect.



Click on the 'filter' button to exclude quotes and the bibliography from the originality report. You can also exclude matches that are less than a certain number of words or percentage.

Use of originality reports by tutors

When you submit your assignment to the Turnitin FINAL submission area, a final originality report is included with it, which your tutor will be able to access. They will not use this to detect plagiarism – they will use this as an assistive tool to check any work that they already suspect to be plagiarised.