

Turnitin

Overview for Students including Copyright and Data Protection



About this Guide

This is a **Overview of Turnitin**.

It is not technical guidance. For this, please see the University web site:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/turnitin>

Here you will find guidance on **Submitting Your Work to Turnitin, Viewing and Interpreting Your Originality Report** and **Getting Your Feedback** as well as where to get help and support.

See also the University web site for information about what plagiarism is, how to avoid it and what the University's approach is:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/plagiarism>

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Introduction

The University uses Turnitin for electronic submission (**e-Submission**) of work. This enables you to submit your work online and receive an e-mail receipt. You upload your work to Turnitin directly through Blackboard. Your programme, course or module may then also use Turnitin on an assessment-by-assessment basis for:

- **Originality Checking:** to help educate you to avoid plagiarism and to help detect plagiarism in assessed work
- **e-Feedback:** electronic feedback from tutors on your work

This is an overview of Turnitin for students who are required to submit work to it. It contains:

- an overview of Originality Checking and e-Feedback within Turnitin
- information relating to copyright and data protection which you must read so that you understand your rights

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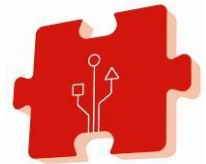
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This is not a technical guide to using Turnitin.

See the University's Turnitin web site at: <http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/turnitin> for instructions on submitting work, viewing and interpreting your originality reports, accessing electronic feedback and where to get help and support.

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Overview of Originality Checking in Turnitin

Where Originality Checking is being used for your assessment (check with your tutor); Turnitin checks your work for material which might have been included from other sources:

- the Internet (several billion URLs)
- a database of other students' work previously submitted to Turnitin
- essays from cheat sites
- many millions of articles from 500+ publishers (including, Gale, Emerald, IEEE, Informa UK, OUP and Sage)
- copyright free material, such as the Gutenberg Project

It then reports back to academic staff as to the extent of any 'unoriginal' material – this is text reproduced in your work which matches these other sources. Turnitin produces an 'originality report' (example below) for your tutors using coloured and numbered text to depict unoriginal material.

The screenshot shows a Turnitin report interface. At the top, there are navigation tabs for 'My First Essay - All About Turnitin' and 'turnitin'. The similarity index is 64%. The report title is 'Turnitin at Canterbury Christ Church University' and the subject is 'A Brief Summary for BBC Radio Kent Interview May 2009'. The background section contains text about the university's use of Turnitin, with several lines highlighted in red and numbered 1, 2, and 3. The 'What's the Deal With Plagiarism?' section contains text about plagiarism definitions, with several lines highlighted in purple and numbered 3 and 9. The 'Match Overview' sidebar on the right lists the following matches:

Match Number	Source	Similarity
1	www.canterbury.ac.uk Internet source	21%
2	en.wikipedia.org Internet source	11%
3	www.coursework.info Internet source	9%
4	Neil Selwyn. "Not nec..." Publication	5%
5	www.plagiarismadvice.org Internet source	4%
6	Attila Szabo. "Cyberch..." Publication	4%
7	Ranald Macdonald. Publication	3%
8	www.timeshighereducati... Internet source	3%
9	news.bbc.co.uk Internet source	2%

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Turnitin itself doesn't make any judgement as to whether or not your work is plagiarised, it simply offers information to support academic decision making.

The originality report does not identify plagiarism: it identifies matching text. It may identify common words and phrases such as "this" or "on the one hand" and it does not separate correctly cited sources from other matching text.

A low percentage indicates a low incidence of matching text and may indicate:

- Low use of direct quotes.
- Use of paraphrased or summarised text.

A high percentage of matching text may indicate:

- Relying too much on direct quotation resulting in poor academic writing.
- Cut and paste from sources.

There is no such thing as a right or wrong percentage. Your tutors will let you know what they expect in your work and will make judgements accordingly when they look at your originality report.

University Rules for Using Turnitin for Originality Checking

The University's Plagiarism Policy currently allows programmes and departments to use Turnitin at their discretion, but where used:

- you will receive a formative experience of Turnitin before submitting any work for final assessment for the first time.
- all students taking the assessment must submit to Turnitin.

From academic year 2012/13 the Plagiarism Policy will further require:

- all coursework for levels 4-7 (Undergraduate and Masters) will be submitted to Turnitin for originality checking:
 - where it is in a format acceptable by Turnitin and
 - unless your tutors feel it's not appropriate because of the nature of the assessment (this will be the exception to the rule).
- you will have an opportunity, and be encouraged to, submit at least one draft and view the originality report for each piece of coursework you're asked to submit to Turnitin.
- there will be an educational focus on the use of Turnitin early on in your programme to help you understand the meaning of originality reports and avoid plagiarism.

Advice about plagiarism, including the University's approach to preventing and dealing with it, can be found at:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/plagiarism>

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Research at CCCU on Turnitin for Originality Checking

During Michaelmas 2010/11 an evaluation was conducted of the University's use of Turnitin as a way of detecting and dealing with plagiarism and supporting student learning. This was led by the Learning and Teaching Enhancement Unit, closely supported by the Student Union.

Findings included:

- Turnitin is widely used (5000+ students in 17+ teaching depts.)
- Most students and staff have positive experiences
- Rules for using Turnitin are being followed
- There is evidence for Turnitin helping students avoid plagiarism
- There is an indication that students would welcome more guidance in interpreting originality reports

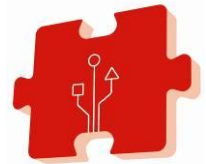
This research contributed directly to the development of University Plagiarism Policy, specifically an emphasis on using Turnitin to support students in learning about plagiarism and how to avoid it by improving writing.

For more information on the research and policy development see the University web site at:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/turnitin>

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Overview of e-Feedback in Turnitin

Where e-Feedback is being used for your assessment (check with your tutor); Turnitin enables tutors to attach feedback to a copy of your assessment which you can access directly through Blackboard.

Depending on your programme's arrangements for feedback, you might see some or all of the following types of feedback.

1. A **grade**
2. An **overall summary** of your work
3. A **breakdown** of how well you did in each area of the assessment e.g. how well you met the brief, knowledge of theory and literature, analysis and conclusions, presentation style etc.

The image shows two screenshots of the Turnitin feedback interface. The left screenshot shows a grid of assessment criteria with a score of 4 selected for 'Knowledge..'. A callout box labeled 'assessment criteria (headings for marking)' points to the 'Knowledge..' heading. Another callout box labeled 'level (how well you did in this heading)' points to the score '4'. A third callout box labeled 'level description (what it means to be at this level)' points to the text '4 - 59-50 SOUND' and 'Demonstrates a sound factual and/or conceptual knowledge base and uses appropriate terminology.' The right screenshot shows a similar grid with a score of 4 selected for 'Knowledge..'. A callout box labeled 'level (how well you did in this heading)' points to the score '4'. Another callout box labeled 'level description (what it means to be at this level)' points to the text '4 - 59-50 SOUND' and 'Demonstrates a sound factual and/or conceptual knowledge base and uses appropriate terminology.'

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4. Comments on specific sentences and paragraphs in your script:

inline comments written directly onto your script

highlighted comments linked to specific sentences

standard comments from a list of commonly used feedback relating to spelling, grammar, referencing etc

The screenshot shows a Turnitin report interface. At the top right, the 'SIMILARITY' is 64% and the 'GRADE' is 54 out of 60. The main text of the essay is highlighted in yellow. A 'General Comments' sidebar on the right contains feedback. Annotations include:

- grade**: A green box pointing to the '54' grade.
- standard comments**: A green box pointing to a blue 'NdRef' button in the 'General Comments' sidebar.
- highlighted text comments**: A green box pointing to a blue 'Expand - how does Turnitin compare students' work? Google?' comment on the essay text.
- inline comment**: A green box pointing to a blue 'Good link to more information' comment on the essay text.
- overall summary**: A green box pointing to the 'Overall though this is well researched, well structured and clear. Your work is improving.' comment in the 'General Comments' sidebar.

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Copyright and Data Protection

Please read the following regarding your rights with respect to copyright and data protection.

For students joining from September 2010, your licence to use Turnitin forms part of the Terms and Conditions of Registration, a copy of which is available on the University's Registry web site:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/registry/>

For students joining before September 2010, the University has an "implied licence" from you to submit your work to Turnitin on the basis of you receiving the information in this briefing pack.

In either case, you should read this carefully and raise any queries or concerns with your tutor.

Legal briefings tend to be quite long-winded and use elaborate language. Unfortunately, this is necessary for precision. See below for a summary of key points. If you have any queries or concerns, you should read this in conjunction with a full briefing which follows.

Summary of Key Points

Copyright

- Turnitin requires an electronic copy of your work to be forwarded for e-Submission. This may in turn may then be used for Originality Checking, to provide e-Feedback and/or for the purpose of archiving your work.
- Where used for Originality Checking, and your tutor wishes to compare your work with other students' work submitted to Turnitin, this copy of your work will be stored in Turnitin's database.
- The copyright in your work is not modified through using Turnitin; it remains either with you or the University – whichever is the current arrangement for your programme.

Data Protection

- As standard, your name, email address and course details are forwarded to Turnitin when your work is submitted
- The University may retain an archive copy of your work and associated data as described in **PPE21 – Retention of Examination Scripts and Course Work** which can be found on the University's Quality and Standards Office web site:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/quality-and-standards-office/policies-procedures-by-thematic-arrangement.asp>

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- Where used for Originality Checking, and if your tutor wishes to compare your work with other students' work submitted to Turnitin, this personal data will be stored in Turnitin's database
- Your personal data is protected under relevant law, including the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998
- You have a right under Section 10 of the DPA to see personal data held about you and to object if its use is likely to cause you substantial and unwarranted damage or distress; please raise with your tutor if you wish to do so

In Detail

Copyright

The University may make and may authorise third parties to make copies of any work submitted by you for assessment but only for the following purposes:

- i) e-Submission and assessment of your work;
- ii) where Turnitin is used for Originality Checking, comparison with databases of earlier answers or works or other previously available works to confirm your work is original,
- iii) also where used for Originality Checking, addition to databases of works used to ensure that future works submitted at this institution and others do not contain content from your work and
- iv) enabling e-Feedback on your work
- v) enabling the University to make an archive copy of your work

The University will not gain any commercial benefit or advantage in copying your work for assessment purposes. The copyright in your work is not modified through using Turnitin, it remains either with you or the University – whichever is the current arrangement for your programme.

When you submit work to the University for assessment it may be necessary for the University to make or allow third parties to make copies.

In order to protect the University's students against unfair competition the University needs to ensure that the University's students are not submitting work which has copied or plagiarised other work or which is not substantially their own work. When used for Originality Checking, this can be done by making and forwarding an electronic copy of your work and comparing it with a database of earlier works and other works available from various sources. A copy made for this purpose, from this or from another institution, will only be made if that comparison alerts the University, or another institution, to the need to consider the work more closely.

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The databases that allow the University to check for originality only function well if those databases are well maintained and current. The University may provide a copy of your work to the third party providers who maintain such databases.

An electronic copy of your work can be made and forwarded for the purpose of attaching e-Feedback to return to you electronically.

An electronic copy of your work also be made and forwarded for the purpose of enabling the University to archive your work.

Data Protection

Under the Data Protection Act 1998 personal data is defined as 'data which relates to a living individual who can be identified from that data or from that data and other information which is in the possession of... the data controller'.

In order for the University to make use of the Turnitin service it will be necessary for personal data relating to you to be transferred to countries not governed by EU Data Protection legislation. However, it should be noted that *iParadigms*, the company processing your data, are bound by the terms of its contract with the University to at all times abide by the Data Protection Act 1998. The University will act as Data Controller for the personal data submitted.

Use of Personal Data

In order for the Turnitin service to work you will be required to submit your work to the Turnitin service where they will be stored together with your name, email address, course details and institution. You may also opt to enter your address and phone number but this is not compulsory.

Where used for e-Feedback, once your material has been uploaded, a copy will be made for the purpose of attaching electronic feedback from tutors.

Where used for Originality Checking, once your material has been uploaded, a copy will be made for the purpose of producing an originality report. Your material will also be stored electronically in a database if your tutor decides to compare it with work submitted from this or any other department(s) within the University.

In practical terms, this means that academic staff within the University will be able to view originality reports for your work submitted to Turnitin and associate your name and e-mail address with them. If a member of academic staff in another institution is viewing an originality report for their students' work which contains text which has been matched with text in your work, that member of staff will not automatically see your personal data. Instead, they will simply see a reference to 'a paper submitted by Canterbury Christ Church University' and the date on which it was submitted.

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An electronic copy of your work may also be forwarded for the purpose of enabling the University to archive your work as described in **PPE21 – Retention of Examination Scripts and Course Work** which can be found on the University's Quality and Standards Office web site:

<http://www.canterbury.ac.uk/support/quality-and-standards-office/policies-procedures-by-thematic-arrangement.asp>

Rights of the Data Subject

As the Data Subject you have the right to see what personal information is held about you in relation to the Turnitin service. Where used for Originality Checking, Turnitin will seek to retain content submitted to it and associated personal data until the termination of this service or its successor, thus helping to accumulate as large a corpus of knowledge as possible against which to compare submitted content.

Under Section 10 of the Data Protection Act you also have the right to object to your personal data being processed in this way. However, it should be noted that this right is limited to processing which you feel is likely to cause substantial and unwarranted damage or distress to you or another and is not, therefore, a general right to withdraw your data.

Should you feel that the processing of your personal data in relation to the operation of the Turnitin service is likely to cause damage or distress to you of a substantial or unwarranted nature you should contact the University Data Protection Officer:

Robert Melville, Assistant University Secretary

01227 767700 extension 2281

foi@canterbury.ac.uk

Note: academic staff can submit your work to the service without the use of personal data should you decide to exercise this right. The right to objection relates to the storage of your personal data and does not extend as a right to object to academic staff making use of technology aimed at improving academic standards when assessing your work.

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Questions and Answers about Data Protection

Personal data is held by the University for automated use in IT systems, such as the student record system, email, the Virtual Learning Environment and also Turnitin.

Opting out of storage of personal data, either at enrolment or at a later date may mean opting out of all University's IT systems that use personal data.

Q Does the Data Protection Act apply?

A Yes. All personal data submitted to Turnitin (i.e. data that can identify an individual) is protected by the Data Protection Act.

Q Does the Freedom of Information Act apply?

A Yes. As the data is controlled by the University it is subject to a request under the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act.

Q What if a student does not want to submit personal data?

A Work can be submitted anonymously to Turnitin.

Q Can the student request that personal data is returned or destroyed?

A Yes. On request by the student the University, who is the controller of the data, can request that personal data is returned and/or destroyed at any time.

Q Does iParadigms own the data?

A No. Ownership of the data remains with the University and/or student. iParadigms has no interest in making any claim of ownership over the material submitted.

Q What safeguards are in place to protect the data?

A iParadigms is a member of the safe harbor regime which means that it has agreed to put in place extensive security measures approved by the European Union in order to ensure that the data is protected.

Q Where is the data held?

A The data is held by iParadigms on behalf of the University.

Q How long is the data held by Turnitin?

A All data held on behalf of the University is held to the University's order. This means that the data is held for as long as the University deems it necessary in order to maximise the benefit of the Turnitin application. It is recommended that data is held for at least 5 years.