Student guide: Turnitin originality reports

Updated: 21st February 2018

1. About this guide
This short guide is for students. It covers how to access Turnitin originality reports, if these have been made available to you, and provides some tips for understanding them.

2. What are Turnitin originality reports?
Turnitin is a text comparison system available through Blackboard. Text in submitted assignments is compared with sources in the Turnitin database, which include websites, online journals, newspapers and e-books, as well as student work submitted at Bristol or other institutions. An ‘originality report’ is automatically produced, which highlights any text matching a source in the database, and provides links to the sources.

3. Submitting papers and accessing reports
1. Log in to Blackboard and click on the relevant course or organisation.
2. Find the Turnitin submission point. This will have the assignment name, and a link saying ‘View/Complete’. Click on the link to submit your work, and follow the onscreen instructions. After you submit, the originality report won’t normally be available immediately. You may need to wait a few minutes, or sometimes longer.
3. To view the originality report, once again click on ‘View/Complete’ and you will come to your assignment inbox.
4. The % indicates the amount of matching text, but this is not necessarily plagiarism. Click on the % to access the originality report.

4. Tips
1. Turnitin does not itself identify plagiarism, it highlights matching text. Reports are interpreted and any plagiarism determined by academic judgement.
2. Quotes are only recognised if enclosed in double quote marks.
3. Graphical materials, such as diagrams, images or equations, are not checked.
4. For references to be excluded, you must add one of the following headings before them: Bibliography, References, or Referenced Works, on a new line and not followed by any punctuation. The heading should not appear in a header or footer.
5. Turnitin reports can include false positives, eg discipline-specific phrases (if writing up an experiment), or common sentences which, although not original, would not be considered plagiarism. Reports can be filtered – for example to exclude quotes, small matches (above 10 words), or references – using the “filter” button towards the bottom right of the report viewer.
6. A pdf of the ‘current view’ of the report can be downloaded for local storage or printing by clicking on the “printer” button towards the bottom left of the report viewer. However, this report is in black-and-white, and does not have any of the interactivity of the online report.

Further information on understanding plagiarism and academic integrity: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/students/study/teaching/integrity/