How to Use Turnitin in D2L
Updated: August 4, 2021

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What is Turnitin Originality Checker?

Turnitin Originality Checker is an integrated tool in Brightspace/D2L used to detect possible plagiarism in student assignments, based on textual similarities with other resources on the web and in the Turnitin database. It generates a percentage “originality” score for assignments based on their similarity with other web resources. It also supplies instructors with a line-by-line Similarity Report, which links directly to flagged resources for comparison against student submissions.

Limitations of Turnitin

Turnitin works best for detecting direct, word-for-word copying of plagiarized texts in student assignments. It may or may not detect inappropriate paraphrasing or so-called “mosaic plagiarism,” in which students take ideas or concepts that are not their own, but merely change the wording of a text.

Turnitin does sometimes produce false flags. Just because a student has a low originality score does not mean their essay was plagiarized. Students that quote other texts extensively may find portions of their essay flagged by Turnitin, even if they quoted and attributed their sources correctly. Assignments that ask students to draw heavily on a course textbook or other common course materials may also yield many more flags, as the content of the submissions may closely mirror that of the course material. Even
content that most likely falls into the category of “common knowledge” might be incorrectly flagged for merely coincidental similarities with other documents on the web.

At the end of the day, Turnitin is only a helpful tool. On its own, it cannot determine conclusively whether or not a student cheated. It is up to the discretion of the instructor in all cases as to whether flagged portions of a student submission do in fact constitute plagiarism and whether or not students are quoting, paraphrasing, or citing their sources appropriately.

**Turnitin as Both Enforcer and Deterrent**

Turnitin is primarily used to check student submissions for plagiarism. It can also, however, be used as a strong deterrent against student cheating, by discouraging students from engaging in this behavior before it becomes a disciplinary issue.

The key to this is detailed instruction and transparency about expectations related to academic dishonesty. Here are some practical steps you can take to deter plagiarism:

1. Link students to the NSCC Student Policy on Academic Dishonesty and include this information in your syllabus. Warn students of the consequences of plagiarism at NSCC and in your course.
2. Link students to helpful resources that define plagiarism and explain how to avoid it, using correct quotation and citation practice. For instance, the NSCC Library has an excellent Libguide and tutorials on Avoiding Plagiarism. Particularly if your course emphasizes writing or research skills, consider integrating these tutorials into a graded assessment like a quiz.
3. Tell students that all work will be checked by Turnitin in advance of the due date. Students will also be automatically informed when Turnitin is enabled in a submission folder when they go to turn in their assignment. The knowledge that their work will be automatically scanned for similarities may deter many students from engaging in blatant plagiarism.
4. Consider allowing students to submit multiple drafts to a submission folder to check their Turnitin score, and correct any flagged issues with quotation and citation of sources. In this way, Turnitin becomes not just a policing tool for instructors, but an educational opportunity for students.
How to Activate Turnitin for Assignment Dropbox Submissions

1. From your course Home, select Assessments and then Assignment Dropbox
2. Select the Assignment you wish to activate Turnitin for from the list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Folder Type</th>
<th>New Submissions</th>
<th>Completed</th>
<th>Evaluated</th>
<th>Feedback Published</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No Category</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Assignment</td>
<td></td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>0/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>ePortfolio Final Project</td>
<td></td>
<td>0/1</td>
<td>0/1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Submission</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>1/1</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

![An image of the Dropbox Folders section in an online course platform](image-url)
3. Select “Edit Folder”
4. Navigate to the Turnitin tab.
5. Check the box next to “Enable Grademark for this folder”
6. Check the box next to “Enable Originality Check for this folder”
7. If you want students to see their Turnitin originality scores after they submit this assignment, check the box next to “Allow learners to see Turnitin similarity scores in their dropbox folder.” You may also specify on this screen if you want to automatically sync grades to Brightspace, and whether you want all assignments to automatically be checked for Originality, or only certain flagged assignments.
8. If you select “More Options in Turnitin” you can set additional options. You can choose to not have paper stored in the Turnitin database, or you can create a rubric, select which sources you want to compare student papers against, or exclude certain, high-similarity elements like bibliographies from the Similarity Report.
9. Select “Save and Close.” You will be returned to the Assignment Dropbox page, where you will now see an icon with a pair of binoculars and a sheet of paper next to the assignment which has Turnitin activated.
10. Students will also see this icon next to assignments in Assignment Dropbox activated. When they select an assignment to go to the submission folder, they will also see a disclaimer informing them at the top of the page that “This assignment will be submitted to Turnitin®.”
How to Interpret the Originality Score for Student Submissions

1. In the Assignment Dropbox, you can view student submissions by selecting the link to “New Submissions” in the list of assignments.
2. The Submissions screen that opens shows all user submissions. Beneath each submission, there is a color-coded bar under “Turnitin Similarity” which indicates at a glance the similarity match percentage between a user submission and documents on the web. In the example below, one essay is 9% similar with other documents, one is 0%, and one is a whopping 96% similar. No particular score is considered “bad” but generally similarity scores over 20% or so deserve further investigation. 9% is negligibly low and 96% is extremely high.

3. Select the percentage bar to view the score in more detail.
4. Below is an example of an essay that has been blatantly plagiarized. In fact, it was copied and pasted word-for-word from the Wikipedia page on “Plagiarism.” On this screen, Turnitin shows the match score of 96% and has highlighted text that has been matched with Internet sources. Select the score number (in this case, 96) on the right hand side bar to view where individual chunks of text have been highlighted.
5. In this case, it shows that 64% of this paper came from a student paper submitted at another college. Curiously, Turnitin identified only 5% of the text as coming from Wikipedia, which is where I copied the text from. Either way, though, since most of the text is highlighted, the student in this case more than likely consciously copied large portions of this paper. You can click on the highlighted text in the essay to compare the selection from the source side-by-side, as in this example. Clicking on the link in the bubble that appears above the text will also allow you to go directly to the website in question, to view the copied text in question.

Plagiarism is the representation of another author's language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions as one's own original work.[1][2] In educational contexts, there are differing definitions of plagiarism depending on the institution.[3] Plagiarism is considered a violation of academic integrity and a breach of journalistic ethics. It is subject to sanctions such as penalties, suspension, expulsion from school[4] or work,[5] substantial fines[6][7] and even incarceration.[8][9] Recently, cases of "extreme plagiarism" have been identified in academia.[10] The modern concept of plagiarism as immoral and originality as an ideal emerged in Europe in the 18th century, particularly with the Romantic movement.

Generally, plagiarism is not in itself a crime, but like counterfeiting fraud can be punished in a court[11][12] for prejudices caused by copyright infringement,[13][14] violation of moral rights,[15] or torts. In academia and industry, it is a serious ethical offense.[16][17] Plagiarism and copyright infringement overlap to a considerable extent, but they are not equivalent concepts,[18] and many
6. If you select the option “All Sources,” represented by a descending graph chart icon on the right-hand sidebar, you can see all sources on the Internet that Turnitin found matches with for this document.

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7. The “Filters and Settings” menu, represented by a filter-shaped icon on the right-hand sidebar allows you to refine what Turnitin has included or excluded from its analysis, like quotes and bibliographies.

My Plagiarism Essay

Jane Student

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8. As noted above, it is important to keep in mind that Turnitin cannot make any determinations about academic dishonesty on its own. Since it really only works best at identifying whole text matches, it often misses cases of paraphrase without attribution. For instance, in the example below I simply re-worded the first paragraph of the Wikipedia article on “Plagiarism” to provide an example of inappropriate paraphrasing. Although the ideas expressed are identical to those of the Wikipedia article, Turnitin did not flag any portion of this document for similarity and it scored a 0% match.
9. This final example illustrates how Turnitin can sometimes raise false flags even for papers that are wholly original and appropriately cited. This is an example of a wholly original paper that correctly quotes and cites a magazine article in Chicago style. Turnitin incorrectly flagged the citation as coming from another student paper. This is a common issue, as oftentimes citations appear the same in many papers. This is one reason why instructors may consider excluding quotes and bibliographies from Turnitin Similarity Reporting in the settings reviewed above. It also demonstrates why instructors should exercise discretion and closely investigate the match links, rather than only looking at originality scores, when determining whether or not an assignment was plagiarized.
Submitted to Collin County Community College

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