

Student Guide to Interpreting Originality Reports in Turnitin

What is an Originality Report?

Turnitin checks your written work against billions of online documents, and databases of journals, publications and student papers. An originality report is a copy of your assignment with any matching text highlighted within the paper. The report is **not an indication of plagiarism**. It is simply a tool for you and your tutors to check that any matching text has been properly referenced or attributed. Tutors can then use the report as a guide to help them decide if a paper has been plagiarised.

Where will I find the report?

Follow the same route you took to submit the assignment and click on 'View/Complete'. You will see the title of the assignment, and a message saying that you have submitted your work. Click the 'Show details' link to access the report.

| | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---------------------|----------------------|----------------------|---|--------------|
| Literature Review March 2011 | | | | | Expand this |
| PAPER | 04-02-11 1:48 PM | 26-02-11 11:59 PM | 28-02-11 12:00 AM | Submission for this assignment is complete. | Show details |

Once the report is ready to be viewed you will see a small box with a coloured section and a percentage. These are determined by how much of the document has been matched to other sources.








If this area is greyed-out then it means the report is not ready.

The time it takes for a report to come through can vary depending on how busy the system is. Usually a report will take around 10 to 15 minutes to generate, although you should note that **re-submissions can take up to 24 hours to generate**. It is important that you allow for this when planning your time.

If you don't see this icon under the contents column, this means your tutor has not selected the option to let you view the report.

What do the different colours mean?

The colour and percentage of the Originality Report icon will depend on the overall similarity of the paper. This is not an indication of your grade.

| | |
|---|---|
|  | blue (no matching text) |
|  | green (1 word-24% matching text) |
|  | yellow (25-49% matching text) |
|  | orange (50-74% matching text) |
|  | red (75-100% matching text) |

There are a few reasons why it might appear higher than you expected:

- The report may include quoted text and bibliography material in the matches, until you exclude them (more on this on next page).
- It may be that you have not quoted or referenced a piece of text correctly, in which case you should modify this and re-submit your work, if your tutor has allowed you to do so.

- If you have submitted the same or a similar paper before, as a draft or in the UNPAC course for example, it will compare your latest submission to your previous submission and therefore come up with a high similarity percentage. Your tutor can exclude this match.

If your report comes back with a high similarity percentage, this does not mean that you will automatically be penalised, but you should speak to your tutor if you are concerned.

How do I view the report?

To view the report, simply click on the originality report icon and it will open in a new window. The report will appear in two columns; your essay on the left and the sources of any matching text on the right. Matching text within your paper is numbered and highlighted in a colour that corresponds to the sources on the right.

What are the different viewing modes?

There are two ways of viewing the list of matches, and you can toggle between these using the buttons in the sidebar:

Match Overview: This is the default mode. Only the highest or closest matches are shown; all underlying matches are visible on the 'all sources' mode.

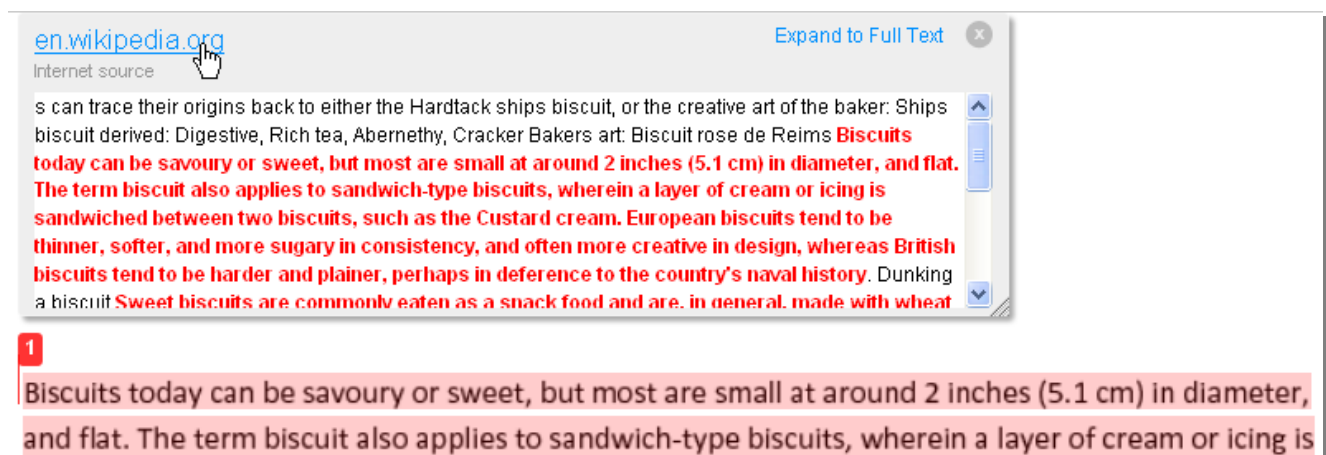
Match Overview

All sources: A full list of all the sources which match the text in the paper. Clicking on a source in the list will jump to that section of the paper, and if the source is publicly available (e.g. a website), it will open the text of the source in a pop-up window for comparison.

How do I compare my paper against matching text?

If you click on a block of highlighted text, the source of the matching text will appear in a pop-up window just above it.

If the source is a website, you can click the link to open the website in your browser.



The screenshot shows a pop-up window with a title bar that says "Expand to Full Text". Inside the window, the URL "en.wikipedia.org" is displayed at the top, followed by "Internet source". The main text of the pop-up is a paragraph about biscuits, with the word "Biscuits" in red. Below the text, there is a red box containing the number "1". At the bottom of the pop-up, there is a red box containing the text: "Biscuits today can be savoury or sweet, but most are small at around 2 inches (5.1 cm) in diameter, and flat. The term biscuit also applies to sandwich-type biscuits, wherein a layer of cream or icing is".

Note: if your work has matched to another student paper, you will not be able to view this. In this case you should ask your tutor for advice.

Can I exclude quoted text and my bibliography from the report?

Providing you have used the correct formatting, you can use the Filter settings to temporarily exclude quoted text and bibliographies. Click on the Filters and Settings button at the bottom of the sidebar to choose your options. You can also choose to exclude fragments by setting the minimum number (or %) of words to highlight as a match.



Note: The system used to filter the excluded material is only approximate. It will remove quoted text if it is indented, or inside quotation marks. Text after the following headings can also be automatically excluded: bibliography, works cited or references. This will only affect the way that *you* view the originality report; only your tutor can exclude material permanently.

Where can I get further help with Turnitin and referencing in general?

For a step by step guide to viewing your Originality Report, have a look at this [short video](#) on the Turnitin website (note that step 1 is not the same, as you will access your report through NILE).

There are a number of useful online resources which can help you with referencing and avoiding plagiarism:

- [Referencing guides](#) are available from the library pages on the University website. [Academic Library staff](#) can also help with queries about referencing, although you may need to make an appointment.
- Liberation, an interactive library tutorial on referencing, is also available at <http://library.northampton.ac.uk/liberation/ref>
- UNPAC (University of Northampton Plagiarism Avoidance Course)
A self-paced tutorial site on NILE, designed to help students learn about plagiarism and how to avoid it. The site is available to guests, but we recommend that you add it to your account on NILE, as this will allow you to submit a mock assignment into Turnitin to see how an Originality Report works. It can be accessed in the Sites Available to Guests area on the NILE login page, or by searching for it in the Modules tab.
- CFAP (Centre for Academic Practice) offer students free guidance and tuition on academic skills including referencing.
<http://www.northampton.ac.uk/cfap>