Using Your Turnitin Similarity Score to Improve Your Work

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Understanding Your Turnitin Similarity Score and Report and Using Them to Improve Your Work	
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What is Turnitin?	o Turnitin is a useful online tool that Trident provides to support its students in producing original work of the highest *academic integrity*.
What is "academic integrity" and why is it important?	o Academic Integrity means that each student must research, write, prepare, and submit his or her own assignments, and that those assignments must reflect the student's own understanding, ideas, and words. o In their academic work, students may refer to other authors' ideas or even quote their exact words as long as they give credit to those authors by citing and providing a reference for each source that they use. o Trident regards academic integrity as vital to the success of its students and to the reputation of the University as an institution of higher learning. Trident therefore expects students to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity in all their work.

What does Turnitin do?	o When you submit an assignment to a drop box in your course:
	
	   o Your file is added to and compared against Turnitin's global database of Internet sources, online publications, and students' submissions to Trident as well as to other schools.
	
	   o Turnitin creates a "Similarity Report" that highlights words in your work that are similar or identical to words found in other sources that were submitted or published before you.
	
	   o Turnitin calculates a "Similarity Score" that represents the percentage of the words in your work found to be similar or identical to words in sources that were submitted or published before yours.

When should I review my Turnitin Similarity Score and Report?	o The Similarity Score and Report become available to you within a few minutes after you first submit each case and SLP assignment, even before your professor grades your assignment. o You should always check your Similarity Score. If that score is higher than 15%, review the report to make sure you have given proper credit for each author and source that you used in your assignment.

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Where can I find the *Similarity Score* and *Report* for an assignment I submitted?	1. On the *Assessment* menu, select *Dropbox* 2. On the *Dropbox Folders* page, scroll down to the assignment you wish to review 3. Click on the link to that submission in the *Completion Status* column. That opens the *Submission History* page. 4. On the *Submission History* page, your *Similarity Score* appears as a % in the *Turnitin® Similarity* column. 5. To view your *Similarity Report*, click on that score or on the colored square to the right it, and your report will open in a new browser tab.	

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What does the information in the *Similarity Report* mean?	Words that are ==highlighted== are similar or identical to words that Turnitin found in another source, which means that they are not your own original words and/or ideas.	

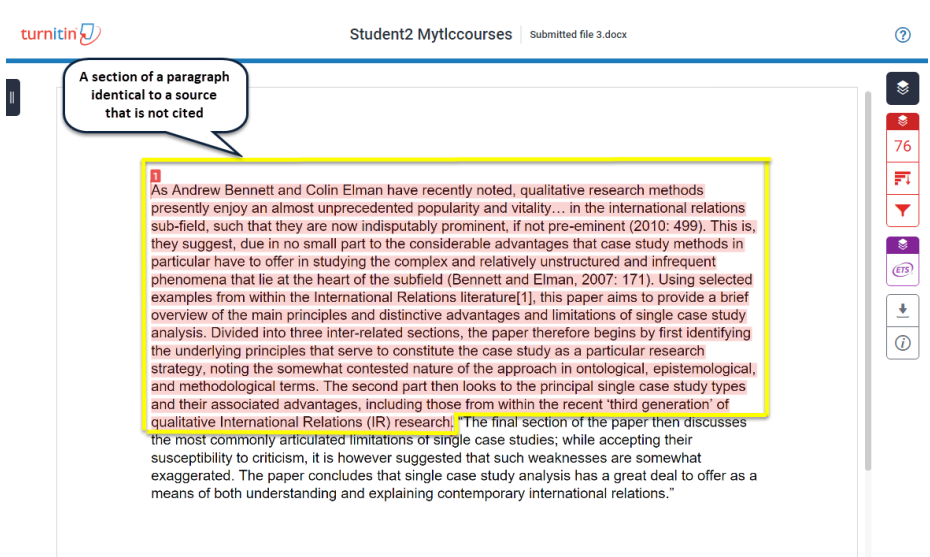| Understanding Your Turnitin Similarity Score and Report and Using Them to Improve Your Work		
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Is similarity the same as plagiarism?	No, not necessarily. For example, here are some types of similarity that are not plagiarism: o Assignment questions included in your paper. o Words that you copied into your paper from another source and that you put in quotation marks and cited the source for. o The title of a publication that you write out. o The names of famous people, places, organizations, etc. o Common phrases, metaphors, and cliché's that are in widespread use. o References to published works.	

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How do I identify text in the *Similarity Report* that might be viewed as plagiarized?	Start by ruling out any similar sections that are not plagiarized (e.g. assignment questions included in your paper). You don't need to do anything with those sections.
	
	Then look for highlighted section(s) where you did not clearly identify the source of that content. This makes it appear like you are trying to present someone else's words and ideas as your own. Follow these steps:
	
	1. Click on the colored square to open your report
	
	2. Click on the similarity score in the right column to see the percentage of your words that are similar or identical to each of the sources listed.
	
	3. To see exactly which sections of your paper match a source:
	
	  a. Click on the number next to the source in the list in the right hand column.
	
	  b. A small window opens in your report that shows the similar text in a different color font.
	
	  c. Use the left and right arrows at the top of that window to see any other sections of your paper that also match that source.	

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What are some examples?	1. An entire paper that matches the same student's previous submission in the same course in a previous session	
	2. All text in a paragraph identical to a source that is not cited	

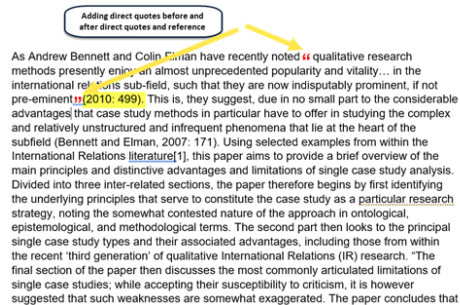| Understanding Your Turnitin Similarity Score and Report and Using Them to Improve Your Work		
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What are some examples?	3. A section of a paragraph identical to a source that is not cited

Ethical business behavior ~~is behavior~~describes actions that benefit~~s~~ everyone and hurts no one. Very few companies succeed with ~~achieve~~ this in practice or even try to. ~~Take f~~For example, consider the Anglo-American and Primark companies as~~. They are~~ good examples of this. It costs them a lot to behave unethically, ~~not follow ethical principles,~~ but the benefits are truly great. I have seen this myself in the Air Force ~~Army~~ over the years. Even though we have a lot of rules and regulations it is still possible to behave ~~implement them~~ unethically, ~~in my opinion,~~ and I've seen this done on far too many occasions. The worst part is it costs the |
| | 4. A section of a document that has a lot of phrases and words that match a source, mixed in with non-similar words and phrases, and the source of the matching content is not cited. This can reflect poor summarizing or paraphrasing, e.g. only changing some words in the source material and not citing and referencing it. In the example shown, "track comments" is displayed to show how the student tried to paraphrase the author by changing some words (the ones that are added or crossed out in red), but this is not how to paraphrase another author's ideas. | |
| | The sentence below the screenshot shows one way to correctly paraphrase this author. | According to Jeffries (2015), the majority of companies do not practice ethical business behavior, which he defines as actions "that benefit everyone and hurt no one" (p. 3). |

Q: What should I do when the Similarity Report shows highlighted text that appears to be plagiarized?

1. Remember that Turnitin is a *tool to help you improve your academic writing by making sure that you clearly show which words and ideas are your own, and which are those that you are using from other sources.*

2. Let your professor know that you reviewed your Similarity score and report and found some issues with your paper you would like to correct. Ask your professor for help if needed and for permission to revise and resubmit your assignment.

3. Open your paper and make edits to it such as:

   a. Add quotation marks before and after any direct quotes of less than 40 words, and add the correct citation and reference for the source of that quote.

   b. For any direct quotes of more than 40 words, you can either summarize that section in your own words, or indent that section 5 spaces without putting quotation marks around it. Whichever choice you make, be sure to add the correct citation and reference for the source of that summary or quote.

   c. If you have a few highlighted phrases from the same source within or across paragraphs, you can decide whether to rewrite each of those sections in your own words, or to put some of the phrases into quotation marks. Either way, be sure to add the correct citation and reference for that source.

   d. If your similarity score is very high, it may mean that you need to add more of your own words, even if you have quoted and cited all of your sources. Remember, you should only use direct quoting for wording you simply cannot paraphrase without changing the impact.

4. Save your revised paper, and then resubmit it to the same assignment drop box. Add a comment in the drop box to let your professor know you have revised it.

5. Please note that if your paper is similar to another student's submission, the professor may not allow you to revise and resubmit the assignment.

Q: Does a low Similarity score mean that my paper is original to me?

Not necessarily. It only means that Turnitin was not able to find text in your paper that was similar or identical to other sources.

If you write a paper entirely in your own words but your paper contains thoughts that are from other sources that you do not cite or reference, that is plagiarism, even though there aren't any similar text passages.

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Where can I get help on how to give credit to my sources?	1. Contact your Student Success Advisor or Course Instructor to address any other questions or concerns you have. We would be happy to support you in any way.
	
	2. Trident has also provided a self-help guide called *APA Basics*.
	
	   a. APA stands for the *American Psychological Association.*
	
	   b. Trident follows the APA's detailed guidelines for how to give credit to sources when writing academic papers.
	
	   c. On the TLC Portal home page, click on *My Resources,* and then click on *Trident APA Basics.*	