What is an Originality Report?

An Originality Report is a report generated by Turnitin. Turnitin is a web-based text-matching service which compares every paper submitted with Turnitin's repository. This includes internet sources, online books and journals and other sources, as well as every paper previously submitted via Turnitin anywhere in the world.

- The **Originality Report** highlights the portions of the students' text that match or are highly similar to other sources in Turnitin's repository
- Every Originaltiy Report has a **Similarity Index** which reflects what percentage of the student's work has been found to match other sources.

How do I view the Originality Report?

Click on your assignment title in Moodle to view the list of students' submissions and the Similarity Index for each one. To view the Originality Report for any student, click on the student's Similarity Index (as shown in the image below).

What does an Originality Report look like?

The diagram below shows the essential features of the report. On top right is the total **Similarity Index** (in this case, extremely high). On the left-hand side of the screen, each different portion of text similar to a particular source is colour-coded for easy reference, starting with red for the highest percentage match. In the '**Match Overview**' on the right, the matching sources are listed in order of highest to lowest match (some matches may overlap). Click on an entry in the **'Match Overview'** or on the similarly coloured text to view that part of the students' writing in the context of the other source(s) that this passage has been matched with. This will also give you the option of viewing the whole of each original source.

Similarity Index – the percentage of text in the student's assignment that matches other sources in Turnitin's repository.

Highlighted text – the text portions are colour highlighted and numbered to correspond with the sources in the Match Overview column.

Match Overview – gives you a breakdown of the sources that are similar to the students' text and the percentages of each.

What is the significance of the Similarity Index?

As noted above, the Similarity Report simply reports the percentage of text matches with multiple other sources, ranging from 0% to 100%. These text matches may indicate plagiarism; or they may be incidental, for instance quotes correctly used by the student, the assessment question itself, common expressions, etc. Or they may be segments copied without citation or poorly paraphrased, constituting plagiarism. So the Similarity Index in itself does not identify the amount of plagiarism in the paper. It simply points the instructor to portions of the text that may need to be further checked out.
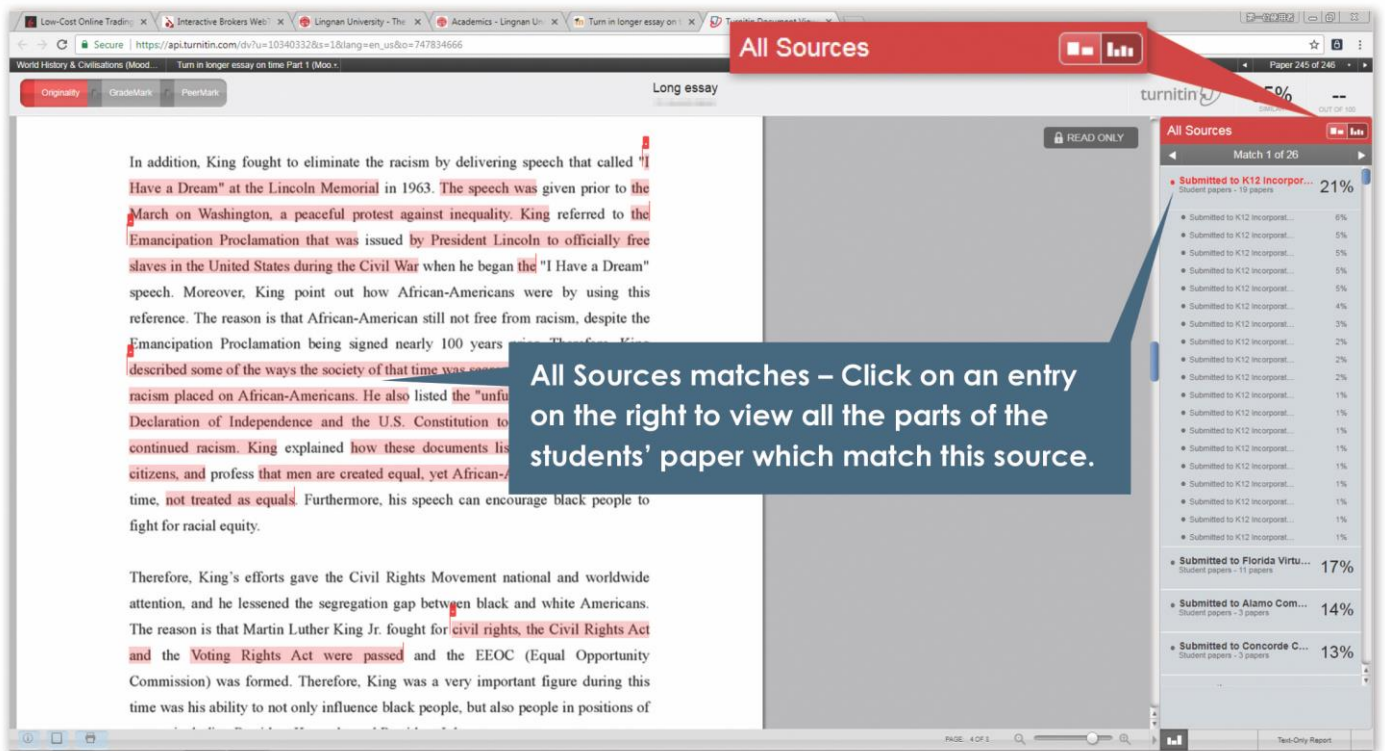
In contrast, it can be easy to assume that if the Similarity Index is low, there is no or little plagiarism in the paper. But this may not be the case either. As Turnitin can only match text, not ideas, if students plagiarize other writers' ideas either by copying or putting them in their own words, but don't cite them, Turnitin will not pick this up. It may be that there is much more plagiarized work in the assignment than the Similarity Index highlights.

This means the instructor needs to take a careful look at the whole of the students' paper, not just the portions that are highlighted by Turnitin but also the rest of the paper and the references.

How can I check out suspected plagiarism?

It cannot be overemphasized that instructors must check the Originality Report carefully, as well as going to any sources Turntin lists for comparison with those portions of the students' paper. The '**Match Overview**' setting is the default view, but for another perspective, click on the **'Match Overview/All Sources'** logos to toggle between the two views, as in the example below. The **'All Sources'** view enables the teacher to view all instances of text-matching with a particular source.

This sometimes gives a different picture of the student's possible plagiarizing habits. For instance, the example below is in fact the same students' essay as in the above screenshot, but viewed in the '**All Sources**' mode instead. What in the '**Match Overview**' window originally appeared to be matches from many sources, in fact turns out to be over 20% from one source. There are also significant matches with several other sources (which may be overlapping). Click on the other entries under '**All Sources**' to view the parts of the students' paper which match each source.

In addition, King fought to eliminate the racism by delivering speech that called "I Have a Dream" at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. The speech was given prior to the March on Washington, a peaceful protest against inequality. King referred to the Emancipation Proclamation that was issued by President Lincoln to officially free slaves in the United States during the Civil War when he began the "I Have a Dream" speech. Moreover, King point out how African-Americans were by using this reference. The reason is that African-American still not free from racism, despite the Emancipation Proclamation being signed nearly 100 years prior. Therefore, King described some of the ways the society of that time was racism placed on African-Americans. He also listed the "unful Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution to continued racism. King explained how these documents lis citizens, and profess that men are created equal, yet African-A time, not treated as equals. Furthermore, his speech can encourage black people to fight for racial equity.

Therefore, King's efforts gave the Civil Rights Movement national and worldwide attention, and he lessened the segregation gap between black and white Americans. The reason is that Martin Luther King Jr. fought for civil rights, the Civil Rights Act and the Voting Rights Act were passed and the EEOC (Equal Opportunity Commission) was formed. Therefore, King was a very important figure during this time was his ability to not only influence black people, but also people in positions of

All Sources matches – Click on an entry on the right to view all the parts of the students' paper which match this source.

Can I see some examples?

To check out the sources listed in the '**Match Overview'** in the right-hand column, hover the mouse over an item in the list, and an arrow will appear beside the percentage number, as in the example on the right. Click on that arrow to view the parts of the source text that match with the students' text. You will be able to see them one on top of the other to compare them.

The two screenshots on the following page were taken from the same students' paper. The Match Breakdown showed a 25% match with another paper also submitted to Lingnan University. The black bar below the 'Match Breakdown' (on the right) reveals that there are two portions of the students' assignment that match. On checking out these two portions, some interesting information emerges.

Match 1

Taking a look at the first of the two screenshots below, showing **Match 1 of 2**, we can see that the student has simply copied the assignment question. **This is not plagiarism**, even though it is adding to the Similarity Index figure.

Plagiarized? No!

Match 2

Looking at **Match 2 of 2,** however, reveals a different picture. In the screenshot below we can clearly see that a significant portion of the text has been copied from another Lingnan paper, with just a few synonyms sprinkled into the paragraph.

Plagiarized? Yes!

Summary of Key points to note

- Turnitin **does not find plagiarism; it simply finds text matches**, which it reports in the **Similarity Index** in the form of a percentage figure**.**

- These text matches **may or may not be significant**. For instance, they may be directly copied portions or indirect quotes not paraphrased well enough; or they may be quotes appropriately used but incorrectly punctuated, references or citations (correctly used or plagiarized), common expressions, discipline-related terms or titles, even the name of the course and the assessment question, etc.

- **A high Similarity Index does not necessarily mean plagiarism. The teacher must look more closely at the texts highlighted** in the Originality Report and compare the student's writing with the sources indicated to determine whether a student has plagiarized. Each portion of highlighted text may need to be checked separately.

- **On the other hand, if the Similarity Index is quite low,** i.e. very few text matches are found, **this does not necessarily mean that there is no plagiarism.** You need to rely on your professional judgment and experience. Investigate further if you notice suspicious in-text cues such as suspicious or unusual phrases, odd synonyms, formatting or references.

➔ For more details on how to use the features available in Originality Reports, go to chapter 2 of the Turnitin Instructor User Manual (Turnitin, 2011b), available at: https://turnitin.com/static/resources/documentation/turnitin/training/Instructor_Originality_Report_Chapter_2.pdf

➔ For more information on Turnitin, Originality Reports and plagiarism, go to the CAOBE's 'Hands-on Guide #1: Turnitin, Plagiarism and Assessment', available on the 'Resources' page at: https://tlc.ln.edu.hk/caobe/resources