

TURNITIN - UNDERSTANDING THE SIMILARITY REPORT



Teaching and Learning Support Service (TLSS), uOttawa

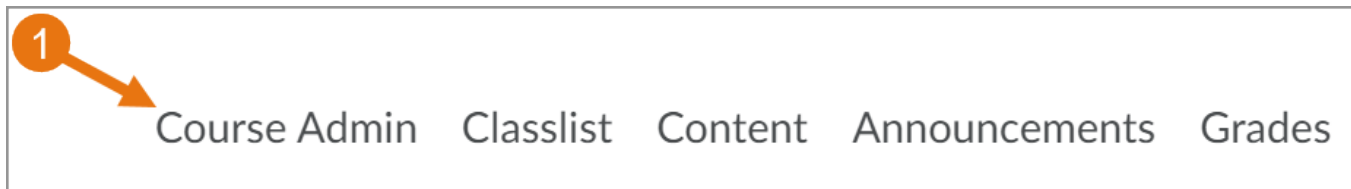
CONTEXT

Turnitin, integrated into the uOttawa **Brightspace Assignment** tool, helps promote originality and integrity in students' work by comparing a student's **Assignment** submission with a vast database of academic content, including journals and publications, internet sources, and previously submitted documents. **Turnitin** then generates a **Similarity Report** for any submission that is more than 20 words, showing the percentage of text that matches other sources. This report helps students better understand citation practices and the importance of originality in their work, as well as aids professors in identifying unoriginal content.

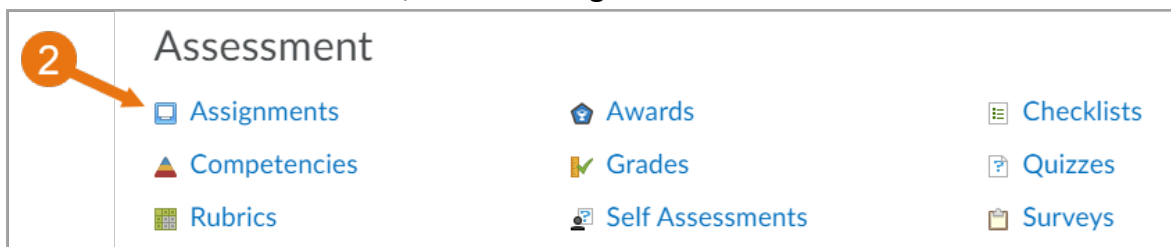
Turnitin does not check for plagiarism in writing, rather it flags when something is similar to one of the thousands of sources that it is compared against. Keep in mind that it is normal for there to be some matches found, since even quoted text, citations and appendices will show as a match. Turnitin will also not pick up matches for images, drawings, diagrams, items that are in print (e.g. books, journals, etc.), translated items, and password protected content on websites. Accordingly, it is important to use the **Similarity Report** as a tool within your review process to make your own determination if any academic misconduct is present. This guide covers how to access and understand the **Similarity Reports** generated for student submissions.

I. ACCESS THE BRIGHTSPACE ASSIGNMENT & LOCATE THE SIMILARITY REPORTS

1. Log into **Brightspace** and access the course where you want to view the **Turnitin Similarity Reports** that have been generated. Via the Navbar in the course, click on "**Course Admin**".



2. Under the **Assessment** section, click on "**Assignments**".



3. click the title of the **Assignment** to access the submissions.

<input type="checkbox"/>	Assignment	New	Completed	Evaluated	Feedback Published
<input type="checkbox"/>	No Category				
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assignment 1 ▼ 🔑		16/23	16/23	16/23
<input type="checkbox"/>	Assignment 2 ▼ 🔑		15/23	15/23	15/23

4. When a **Similarity Report** is available for viewing, a similarity score percentage will display under the **Turnitin Similarity Report** column for the submission (See [Section II.A](#)). To access the full **Similarity Report** for a particular submission, click on the “**Similarity Report Score**” and proceed to [Section II.B](#).

II. THE SIMILARITY REPORT

In this section we will review the key aspects of the **Similarity Report**.

A. SIMILARITY PERCENTAGE SCORE – BRIGHTSPACE ASSIGNMENT SUBMISSION TABLE

The **Similarity Percentage Score** that is displayed on the **Assignment’s** main submission page under **Turnitin Similarity Report** column has a color indicator, which specifies the amount of matching text found. This percentage is calculated by dividing the number of matching words by the total number of words in the document. The percentage range is 0% to 100%

TITLE	SIMILARITY
Submission	0% ■
Submission	6% ■
Submission	43% ■
Submission	58% ■
Submission	80% ■

The colors for similarity ranges are:

- **Blue:** No matching text
- **Green:** 1% -24% matching text
- **Yellow:** 25-49% matching text
- **Orange:** 50-74% matching text
- **Red:** 75-100% matching text

LOW VALUE SCORES

Depending on the **Turnitin** setting selections made during setup could indicate that:

- The work has no references or little to no direct quotes.
- Turnitin cannot recognize the text.

HIGH VALUE SCORES

Depending on the **Turnitin** setting selections made during setup could indicate that:

- An over reliance on quoting.
- Piecemeal work – cutting and pasting form other sources.

100% SCORE

Depending on the **Turnitin** setting selections made during setup could indicate that:

- No original work has been presented.
- The paper was previously submitted. Perhaps the student is making a re-submission.
- User error. The student submitted the assignment to another course or another assignment folder by mistake prior to making the submission to the correct course/folder.
- Collusion or copying from another student, either in the same course, from a previous course or other institution.

B. SIMILARITY REPORT INTERFACE

After clicking on the “**Similarity Report Score**” located under the **Turnitin Similarity Report** column on the **Assignment Users’** submission page (see [Section I, Step 4](#)), the main page of the **Similarity Report** Interface will display. The submission will appear on the left-hand side of the page, while on the right-hand side of the screen, an **Overall Similarity** panel with two tabs “**Match Groups**” and “**Sources**” provides access to the analysis. **Important note: Match Groups** will only be displayed for submissions made in English. For all other submissions, only the **Sources** panel will be displayed.

The image displays two screenshots of the Turnitin Similarity Report interface. Both screenshots show a 39% Overall Similarity score and a 'Filters' button.

Left Screenshot (Match Groups):

- Match Groups: Sources
- 17 matches found with Turnitin's database (Show Help)
- 12 Not Cited or Quoted (29%)
- 1 Missing Quotation (3%)
- 2 Missing Citation (3%)
- 2 Cited and Quoted (4%)

Right Screenshot (Sources):




- Match Groups: Sources
- Show overlapping sources (toggle)
- 1 Internet: academic.oup.com (15%)
4 text blocks, 243 matched words
- 2 Internet: royalsocietypublishing.org (7%)
4 text blocks, 110 matched words

MATCH GROUPS

The **Match Groups** view divides the **overall similarity** into the following four categories using color:



Not Cited or Quoted - The number of text matches that are not written as a quotation or that have no citation.

-  **Missing Quotations** – The number of text matches that are cited, but so similar to a match that quotation marks may be required.
-  **Missing Citation** – The number of text matches that are written as a quote, but lack citation.
-  **Cited and Quoted** – The number of text matches that are written as a quotation and are cited.

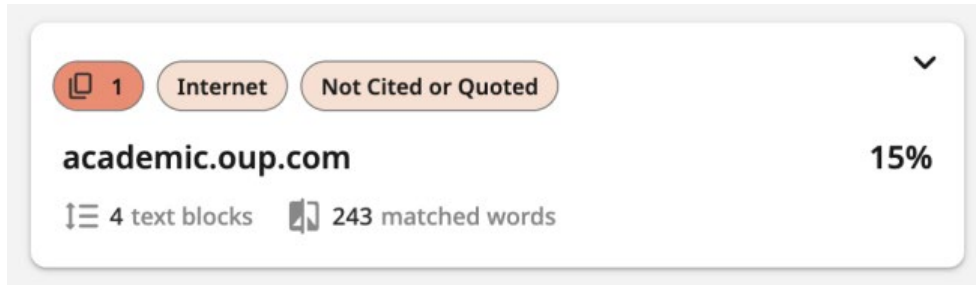
To review the matches by **Category**, click on one of the four categories presented in the panel to review the matches associated with that criteria.

SOURCES

Each highlight in the document corresponds in color to one of the four **Match Group** categories and has a source number appended to it. The number allows you to identify the detailed match information pertaining to that particular text. This detailed information is presented in the right-hand side panel under the “**Sources**” tab, and can be accessed by either:

1. Clicking on the “**Sources**” tab and selecting each of the items to view; or by
2. Clicking on the highlighted text in the document to open its corresponding **source card** in the right-side panel.

SOURCE CARDS



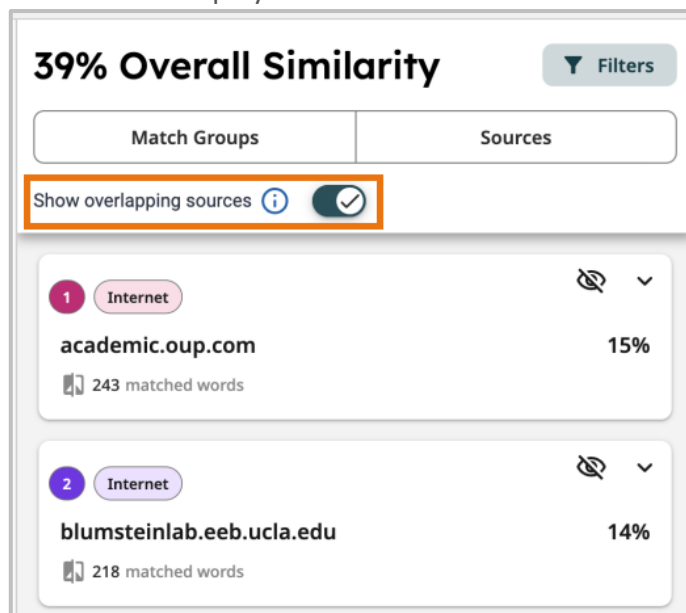
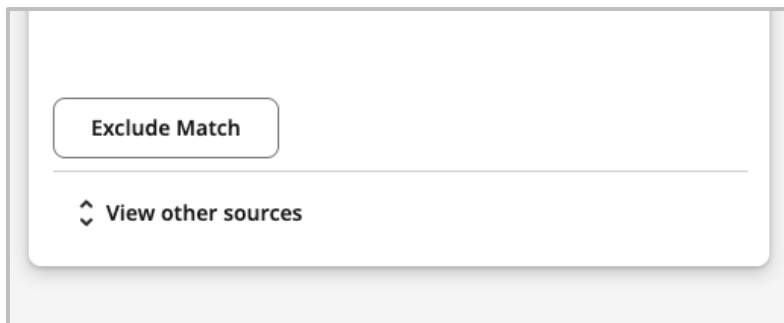
- The top row on the **source card** indicates the number associated with the highlighted text, the database type of source match (e.g. internet, publication, submitted works), and the **Match Group** category.
- The second row on the **source card** indicates the name of the top matching source (in the example provided it is a website – internet source), and the percentage that matched to that source.
- The third row on the **source card** indicates the number of matching text blocks to the source and match group, as well as the total number of words matching the source.

Click on the downward pointing arrow that is located in the top-right hand corner of the card to expand the details. Here you will see:

1. The source’s full URL if applicable
2. The text that matches
3. A link to access the full text (if available)
4. A button to Exclude the match

OVERLAPPING SOURCES

When text is similar to more than one source, all sources will be shown and a “**View other sources**” (A) option will be presented at the bottom of the **source card**, unless you have toggled off the “**Show overlapping sources**” (B) in the **Overall Similarity panel**. The source that has the most matched words will display first.



The entire overlapping source list will display. Here, you can select any source listed to view additional details.

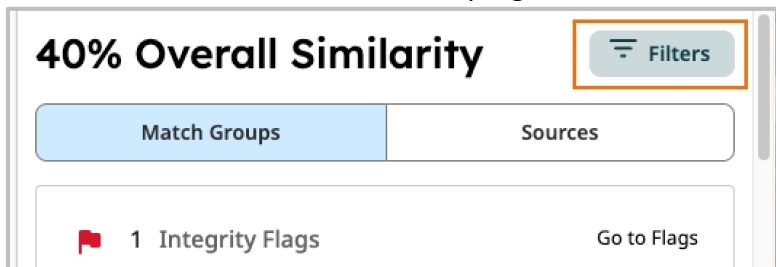
To close the list, click on “**Hide other sources**”.

FILTERS & EXCLUSIONS

You can use the filters and exclusion options to customize the **Similarity Report**. For example, excluding bibliography, quotations and small matches (i.e. common phrases or subject terminology) may remove some matches that are irrelevant and display matches that require further attention.

FILTERS

The filter button is located in the top right-hand corner of the **Overall Similarity** panel.



The following **Compare submission against** filters can be applied:

1. **Student database** – The text will be compared with student submissions from all the institutions in the database.
2. **Internet content**
3. **Periodicals, journals and publications**

The following **Exclusion filters** can be applied:

1. **Exclude Bibliography**

- Select this option to exclude text that appears in the bibliography, works cited, or referenced sections of student papers from being checked for matches when generating **Similarity Reports**.

2. **Exclude quoted text**

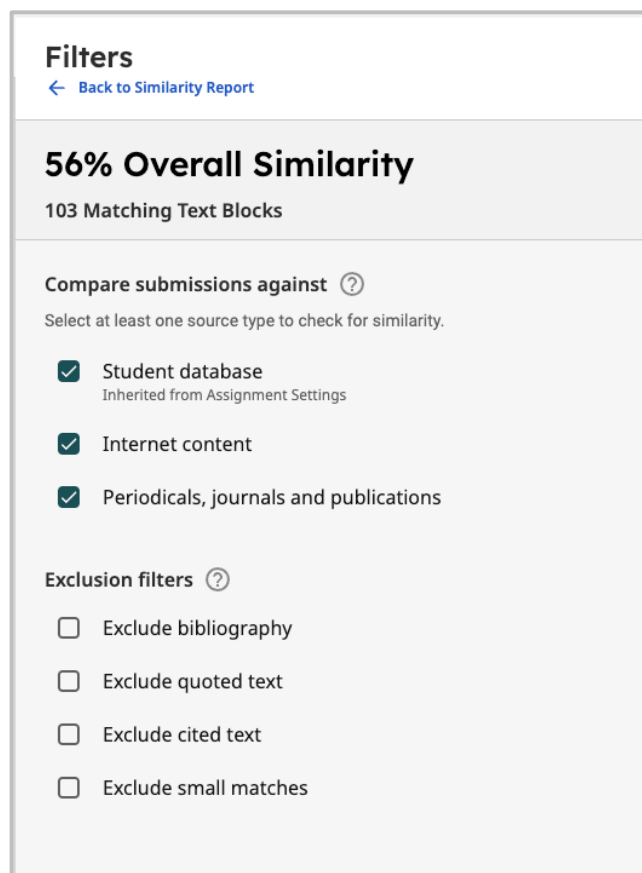
- Select this option to exclude quotations from being checked for matches when generating **Similarity Reports**.

3. **Exclude cited text**

- Select this option to exclude cited material. **Note:** The quoted part of citation material will still be included unless the **“Exclude quoted text”** option is also selected.

4. **Exclude small matches**

- Select this option to exclude matches that are not of sufficient length (indicated by you) from being considered when generating **Similarity Reports**. After selecting this option, a box will appear where you can exclude matches by word count or by percentage.



The screenshot shows a 'Filters' panel with a 'Back to Similarity Report' link. It displays '56% Overall Similarity' and '103 Matching Text Blocks'. Under 'Compare submissions against', three source types are checked: 'Student database', 'Internet content', and 'Periodicals, journals and publications'. Under 'Exclusion filters', four options are listed, all of which are unchecked: 'Exclude bibliography', 'Exclude quoted text', 'Exclude cited text', and 'Exclude small matches'.

Select **“Back to Similarity Report”** to view the overall similarity panel with the applied filters.

EXCLUSIONS

You can Exclude Sources or Matches to remove them from the report:

1. To exclude a **Match**, click on the **“Match Groups”** tab, select a highlighted match in the submission or a source **card** from the list. Then, click on the **“Exclude Match Group”** on the **source card**.

- To exclude a **Source**, click on the “**Sources**” tab, select a highlighted match in the submission or a source card from the list. Then, click on the “**Exclude source**” icon in the top-right corner of the **source card** for the item.

38% Overall Similarity Filters

1 Exclusion →

Match Groups Sources

Show overlapping sources

Exclude Source

1 Internet

www.historytoday.com 5%

7 text blocks 2326 matched words

2 Internet

www.dailydot.com 3%

3 text blocks 1323 matched words

VIEW OR MODIFY EXCLUSIONS

If any exclusions have been applied, the number of exclusions will appear directly beneath the **Overall similarity**.

38% Overall Similarity Filters

1 Exclusion →

Match Groups Sources

Click on that “**Exclusion**” notice to access the list of existing exclusions.

Exclusions

← Back to Similarity Report

Source Exclusions Inc Include Source

Internet

www.historytoday.com

You can restore a match or source by clicking on the “**Include**” icon next to that match/source.

You can restore an entire category of exclusions by choosing the “**Include All**” icon for that category.

- Consult the TLSS Turnitin info page and TLSS Turnitin guides.
- Consult the Turnitin [User Guides](#) or contact the [Turnitin Help Team](#) for assistance.
- Contact the TLSS:
 - Submit a request via the [self-service portal](#). Make sure to select "Teaching and Learning" and then "Send us your request – TLSS"; or
 - Visit the walk-in lab located in VNR1020, Monday-Friday 10 a.m.-12 p.m. or 1-3 p.m.; or
 - [Book an online 30-minute consultation](#) with a ped-tech specialist.