

What does my Turnitin™ Report Mean?

This checklist follows the thought processes of academics that evaluate Turnitin™ reports. Use it to evaluate your own report to decide whether you need to take any further action, and to get an understanding of what the report means. It is recommended that you do this at the 'draft' stage to give you a chance to alter your work in response to the report. Note: it does NOT matter what colour Turnitin™ assigns to your report – unfortunately this is meaningless!

Tick the following boxes as appropriate:

Step 1

The similarity index is: below 5% above 5%*

If your similarity index is below 5%, you need take no further action, your report is acceptable.

*If your similarity index is above 5%, then there may be issues with your work. Proceed to step 2 for more information.

Step 2

You have nothing to worry about if the coloured text in the report is mostly made up of the title of the work

Excluding the title should bring the similarity index to below 5%. If this doesn't explain your report, proceed to step 3.

Step 3

You probably have nothing to worry about if:

The coloured text in the report is mostly made up of any combination of the following:

references short sentences from a variety of sources

referenced quotes

However, if this is the case, you may need to ask your module leader for help with correct referencing practise/ paraphrasing. Remember that even if you have paraphrased you should still cite the original source!

You should be aware that direct quotes are not acceptable in some subjects. Although they help to avoid plagiarism when correctly referenced, they are not acceptable in scientific writing, for example.

Proceed to step 4 if steps 2/3 do not account for the majority of coloured text in your report.

Step 4

Your report is probably borderline if:

The majority of the coloured text is in paragraphs with a few words changed from the original

and

from a variety of sources

If you have ticked any of the boxes in this section it is likely you have trouble paraphrasing. Some module leaders, especially early in a programme, may view this as poor scholarship rather than plagiarism. It is vital that you seek help from Student Support or your module leader. Paraphrasing is an important academic skill that must be learnt before you can successfully graduate. However if the copying is extensive or you are known to have done this in the past, your work may be referred to the academic conduct officer. For further information on academic conduct, see here <http://staff.napier.ac.uk/NR/rdonlyres/2E79D72A-31AF-418D-AC72-ACD24DFEC347/6349/StudentDisciplinaryRegulations2008092.pdf>

If steps 2-4 do not account for your report, proceed to step 5.

Step 5

Your report shows that your work was probably plagiarised if any of the following apply:

The coloured text, excluding titles, referenced quotes and references, makes up a significant proportion of your work

There are more than three paragraphs in any one colour

The majority of the text in any one colour is unchanged

If you have ticked any of the boxes in this section it is likely that your work will be referred to the academic conduct officer (see above for details). You should speak to your module leader as soon as possible about what this means for you and how you can avoid it in the future.