Understanding Turnitin Originality Reports

What is an Originality Report?
An Originality Report is a copy of your assignment with any matching text from online documents, including Turnitin.com’s database of student papers, highlighted within the paper.

Where is the Originality Report found?
You can access your report through the assignment in Blackboard (in the same folder and same “View/Complete” link that you originally used to submit your paper)

What do the different colors mean?
Based on how much matching text Turnitin.com has found within your paper, a color index is generated for the report.

The color and percentage of the Originality Report icon depend upon the overall similarity of the paper to other sources. For example:

- 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)

You should consult with your instructor about the appropriate level of matching text for each assignment. However, even if you meet this ideal, there are a few reasons why a report might appear higher than anticipated:

1. The report will often include cover page, quoted text, and reference citations in the matches generated.
2. It may be that you have not paraphrased or summarized content correctly. Both these acts require you to place source content into your own words (and to include in-text documentation for the original source).
3. If you have submitted a similar writing prior in a different class, Turnitin.com will compare your latest submission to that previous paper.
It is equally important to remember that the color indices do not reflect Turnitin.com’s assessment of whether a paper has or has not been plagiarized. Originality Reports are simply tools to help find sources that contain text similar to submitted papers. The decision to deem any work plagiarized is only made by your instructor or tutor after careful examination of both the submitted paper and the suspect sources.

**How do I view my Originality Report?**

If your instructor has allowed it, viewing your Originality Report is very simple: Just click on the colored percentage amount icon and it will open in a new window. Two columns will appear there; your essay will be on the left and the sources it matched will appear on the right. The matching text within your paper is numbered and highlighted in a color that corresponds to the sources on the right. For example:

![Originality Report Example](https://example.com/originality_report.png)

There is also an option to view the matching text within its web context if it is from an Internet-based source (this function is not available if the text matches another student’s paper). To do this, click on the source you wish to view on the right column and it will open in a new window for you to review.

The time it takes to generate an originality report varies, so you may need to be patient. Typically a report will be returned within 5-15 minutes; however, if your instructor has allowed multiple submissions before the due date, each report after the first originality report takes 24 hours from the time of submission. If your report icon remains grayed-out (no color index assigned), however, consult your instructor or Library staff (if submitted through the Library).
How can I exclude some types of matching text?
Turnitin.com will probably include quoted text, reference page citation entries, in-text citation entries, and cover page information in its initial matches; however, you can exclude most of these from your report. To do this, first ensure that you have used the correct quotation method for American Psychological Association Style (6th Edition); this should include attribution, integration, and documentation of the source’s content. Talk to your instructor or tutor for if you are unsure. If you’re confident that you’ve done this correctly, click on the ‘exclude quoted’ button.

Turnitin.com should render a revised report excluding all quoted content. It should also exclude reference citations, if you have laid that path out correctly and select the ‘exclude bibliography’ option. Remember, these options do not alter the actual percentage of matching text permanently; they are solely options that can help offer a clearer view of what changes to summary, paraphrasing, attribution and documentation strategies, etc. you may need to make during your revision process and visually demonstrate how much original writing (versus quoted or paraphrased material) is in your paper.