Using Turnitin within ULearn to deter and detect plagiarism

Produced by the Centre for Educational and Academic Development (CEAD), University of Surrey.

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Appendix: Designing out plagiarism: a guide for busy academics
1. What is Turnitin?

At its simplest level, Turnitin’s OriginalityCheck tool takes a piece of written work and checks it against a range of other work looking for exact or near-matches of text.

Turnitin can compare work submitted against:

- billions of public web pages, including an increasing number of password protected sites
- an extensive and growing range of books and journal articles from major publishers
- student papers previously submitted to Turnitin within the UK

The reports that Turnitin produces highlight the matches that it finds from other sources, giving information as to the extent of the match and the source.

Turnitin can help to detect student plagiarism and can provide supporting evidence for cases when they do occur. However, Turnitin cannot detect all incidents of plagiarism and should not be relied upon to do so: it is only a tool and academic judgement is still crucial.

Turnitin can also play a valuable role in helping students learn about plagiarism and academic writing more widely. Its use within the University can also act as a deterrent to a student considering copying someone else’s work.

How can I use Turnitin?

The recommended way of using Turnitin is within an existing ULearn section for a module and this guide explains how to use it in this way. Alternatively Turnitin can be used directly without using ULearn, although the process of setting this up is more complicated. For information about using Turnitin without using ULearn contact Sarah Pendred in Registry.

Turnitin also allows access to a tool called Grademark. This enables lecturers to mark students’ work online, using features such as inserting comments within the students work and also optionally using rubrics or marking systems. This is not covered within this guide but please contact CEAD if you want to find out more about this feature: e-learning@surrey.ac.uk

For a video about e-feedback and discussion of a pilot project at Canterbury Christ Church University see: http://www.surrey.ac.uk/cead/events/events_archive/PN_2010_03_24.htm

For more information on Grademark see: http://www.nlearning.co.uk/ or for an overview see: http://submit.ac.uk/resources/documentation/turnitin/sales/GradeMark_Overview.pdf

Turnitin2

In September 2010 Turnitin was upgraded and re-launched as Turnitin2 with a number of changes and improvements. The three separate tools that were previously known as WriteCycle are now incorporated within one system. These are OriginalityCheck plagiarism prevention, PeerMark* peer reviewing and GradeMark paperless grading. The most significant visible difference to the user is that these tools are all accessible from tabs within the main document viewer and that they can be used in tandem and viewed as layers.

The other most significant improvement is that Turnitin now processes fully formatted papers and, in place of the former text only view, users now see documents with all formatting and visual elements such as images or charts intact, as the students submitted them. Users can choose to go back to a ‘text only’ view of any paper by clicking a button at the bottom right of the document viewer screen. This option will remain until at least July 2011. The interface has also changed, mainly in the main document viewer, and this guide includes these changes.

*Note: The PeerMark service will not be available to users until at least late October 2010.
2. Setting up a Turnitin assignment in ULearn

If you have an existing ULearn section for a module then you can add Turnitin assignments directly to this section in the same way as adding a ULearn assignment. The details of who is enrolled on this module as Instructors and as Students are then passed automatically to the Turnitin system, saving you the job of setting these up manually.

To set up a Turnitin assignment within ULearn:

- **Step 1:** Log in to ULearn, click on the ULearn section you will be using and make sure you are in the **Build** tab.

- **Step 2:** Click on ‘Add Content Link’, select ‘TurnitinUK Assignment’ and then click on the ‘Create TurnitinUK Assignment’ button.
➤ **Step 3:** Give your assignment a title (e.g. ‘Week 5 assignment’ or ‘Final group project’) and click on ‘Create Turnitin Assignment’.

➤ **Step 4:** This selects the type of assignment to be created and gives a short explanation of each. The standard type, which is dealt with in this guide is ‘Paper Assignment’.

➤ **Step 5:** You will then be taken to a page offering various options for your “settings”:
These options should usually be set as follows:

**Assignment title**
Enter a title for the assignment, usually the same one as you entered in the initial title box eg: 'Week 5 assignment'.

**Point value**
You only need to give a point value if you are using Grademark via Turnitin for storing marks and returning them to the students.

**Start date**
This is the first point in time at which students will be able to submit work for this assignment.

**Due date**
This is the deadline by which students should submit work.

**Post date**
If you are using Grademark to input marks and/or feedback, this sets when it will be available to students. If you are not using Grademark you can set any date after the due date.

**Please Note:** Currently by default, if you use Grademark the marks you enter into it will be accessible straight away to students via ULearn’s Grade Book – please contact CEAD for further advice about this issue and how to resolve it.

**Please note:** If you enable anonymous marking you will not be able to download submissions until after this date.

➤ **Step 6:** Select ‘more options’ to view the second set of options for this assignment:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Enter special instructions</th>
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<td></td>
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</table>

Would you like to select a QuickMark suit?

- [ ] no

Generate Originality Reports for submissions?

- [ ] yes
- [ ] no

Generate Originality Reports for student submissions

- [ ] immediately (can generate reports until due date)

Exclude bibliographic materials from Similarity Index for all papers in this assignment?

- [ ] yes
- [ ] no

Exclude quoted materials from Similarity Index for all papers in this assignment?

- [ ] yes
- [ ] no

Exclude small matches?

- [ ] yes
- [ ] no
Some guidance for these options:

**Enter special instructions**
This can be used if you want to remind students, just before they submit, about key points related to their submission.

**Would you like to select a QuickMark set?**
Select *no* unless you are using the additional Grademark tool (not covered in this guide) to mark these assignments.

**Generate Originality Reports for submission?**
In most cases, leave this set to *yes*, so that Turnitin will generate an Originality Report. If you did not want Turnitin to generate Originality Reports, for example if you were just using it as a collection mechanism and definitely did not want to check for originality/plagiarism, you could set this to *no*.

**Generate Originality Reports for student submissions**
This gives you three options:

- *‘immediately first report is final’* This will generate the Originality Report immediately as the student submits their work. They cannot take the work back.

- *‘immediately (can overwrite reports until the due date)’* This will generate an Originality Report immediately, but students can resubmit until the due date and the report will be updated each time. *Please note students will only be able to view their own originality reports if this is selected in the following set of options.*

- *‘on due date’* This will generate all the Originality Reports on the due date only

**Exclude Bibliographic materials from Similarity Index for all papers in this assignment?**
If you choose *yes* the system will attempt to exclude matches that come from the bibliography of the submission it is checking. Including and excluding these will still be possible when viewing individual Originality Reports later but this setting can not be changed at this overall level after the first assignment has been submitted.

**Exclude quoted materials from Similarity Index for all papers in this assignment?**
If you choose *yes* the system attempts to exclude material that is quoted directly in the text. Please note that quotations can only be excluded from comparisons if block-indentation or direct quotation marks (""") begin and end the quotation. Including and excluding these will still be possible when viewing individual Originality Reports later. This setting can not be changed at this overall level after the first assignment has been submitted.

**Exclude small matches?**
In a similar way to the two options above when selected this option will attempt to exclude small matches to other sources. If you select *yes* you will be able to choose either a word count or percentage match to be excluded. This option can be changed at an individual or group level at any time.
Scroll down to make further choices:

Allow students to see Originality Reports?
- yes
- no

Allow submissions after the due date?
- yes
- no

Enable anonymous marking?
- yes
- no

Submit papers to:
- standard paper repository

Search options:
- student paper repository
- institution paper repository
- current and archived internet
- periodicals, journals, & publications

Would you like to save these options as your defaults for future assignments?
- yes
- no

Guidance for these options:

Allow students to see Originality Reports?
The options are 'yes' or 'no'. If set to 'no', then you will see the Originality Report for each student’s work, but the students will not see them.

Allow submissions after the due date?
You may wish to set this to 'yes' to allow for mitigating circumstances and late submissions. Turnitin records the time that work is processed, shows the date that it is submitted and highlights submissions made after the due time.

Enable anonymous marking?
This facility is designed for online marking and should normally be set to 'no'. If you wish to use Turnitin for anonymous marking please contact the CEAD team for support and advice.
Submit papers to: This determines whether the students' pieces of work are stored in the Turnitin database to be checked against future work submitted. The options are:

- 'standard paper repository' will store the work in the database for future checks
- 'no repository' will not store the work in the database for future checks

The recommended option is 'standard paper repository' unless the pieces of work are likely to be of such a sensitive or confidential nature that there would be a reasonable objection to them being stored and used in this way.

Search options This specifies which sources Turnitin will use when checking for matches in the work that your students submit. In most cases, just leave all four of the boxes ticked.

Would you like to save these options as your defaults for future assignments? If you choose 'yes' then you will still be given the same set of choices when setting up future assignments but the options that you have just chosen should be shown as the default ones.

**Step 7**: Click 'submit'

You will be returned to your ULearn section to see the assignment that you have just created.

**Step 8**: Add a description by clicking the ActionLinks arrow. You should include a statement such as the following to inform students: “Your work will be submitted to the Turnitin plagiarism detection system. Tutors will be able to see the report produced.”
3. How do students submit work for this assignment?

Students click on the assignment link in ULearn and see their assignment inbox and portfolio:

After they click on the ‘submit’ button, circled above, they see the following screen:

The student’s name is automatically displayed.

They should give their submission a title and then browse for and select the correct file on their local computer or network drive and then click on ‘upload’.
They will then see a text-only preview of the work that they are submitting and be asked to confirm that it is the correct piece of work by clicking ‘submit’.

They will then see this screen (including a paper ID) confirming that their work has been successfully submitted to Turnitin. This digital receipt can be printed and kept for their records:

**Please note:** When briefing students about submitting work through Turnitin, especially for the first time, it is recommended that they are reminded about a number of useful resources. The ‘about this page’ section at the top of a page describes the process and functionality for each particular tool. The black ‘help’ button at the top right takes users to the Turnitin Help Centre where they can search for articles that address the problem they are experiencing. Clicking the small ‘helpdesk’ button at the bottom of the screen takes users to a Web-based form that can be used to send requests or questions to Turnitin. For example, if students are having trouble submitting an assignment, they should report it to Turnitin using this button.

Also the ULearn module ‘Plagiarism and Referencing – A guide for students’ is a very useful resource that all students are enrolled in – see Section 8 of this guide for more information.
4. Managing student submissions

As students begin to submit their assignments, you can view both the work the students are submitting, and the Originality Report for each submission. If you have chosen for the Originality Reports to be generated on the due date, they will be available from this point.

To do this, go to the Teach tab in Ulearn and click on the assignment you created. This opens the assignment inbox with the students’ submissions.

Here, four (out of five) students have submitted work. From left to right, we have the following columns:

- **Author** – is the name of the student who submitted the assignment.
- **Title** – is the name of the assignment given by the student when he/she submits it. Clicking on this link opens the piece of work within the document viewer, but with very limited functionality.
- **Report** - This column has a percentage and a colour bar. The percentage is the amount of the student's work that Turnitin has identified as matching other sources and is referred to as the Similarity Index. Clicking on this percentage opens the Originality Report for this piece of work. This is described in more detail in the next section. The bars are colour-coded: green for low-match values and red for high-match values.
- **GradeMark** – This is used for marking work online, and is not covered in this guide.
- **File** – By clicking on the icon, you can download the student’s originally submitted file as an MS Word document or a PDF file.
- **Paper ID** - is a unique reference number for this submission. It is useful should you ever need to contact the Turnitin UK helpdesk to report a problem with a submission.
- **Date** - shows the date the piece of work was submitted. When a paper is submitted late after the due time, this date appears in red.

There are some common tasks that you can perform on this screen:

- When a checkbox (to the left of the Author column) is clicked, a yellow bar appears at the top of the inbox with three different options: ‘delete’, ‘download’, ‘move to...’ To download all or a selection of the student’s work to your computer, click on the corresponding checkboxes and click ‘download’. This will usually create a zip file containing all of the selected work. You will normally be given the choice of downloading them in their original format or in PDF format.
- Clicking 'Roster Sync' will update the Turnitin database to include and display all the students currently enrolled in this ULearn section. (Note: all students enrolled in the ULearn section will be able to submit to the assignment even if this is not done.)

- To view or modify the settings for the assignment click 'Edit assignment settings'.

- You can display only new papers, viewed papers, marked papers, or all papers, by selecting an option from the drop-down menu: 'now viewing:'

- As a lecturer/tutor you have the option of submitting a student’s paper to Turnitin, by clicking on the ‘submit paper’ button.

- You can save the information from the assignment inbox as a report in MS Excel by clicking on the ‘export’ button. **Note:** Very usefully this report displays the specific time that the paper was processed by Turnitin as well as the date of submission.

### Viewing the reports that Turnitin produces

To view the **Originality Report** for a submission, click on the percentage shown in the Report column. The Originality Report will open in a new window called the document viewer. In the top right corner, Turnitin displays the Similarity Index for the paper. Above this it shows which paper you are viewing (Paper 3 of 4) as well as arrows to navigate from report to report. There is also a ‘Help’ link to a useful annotated tour of the new document viewer interface.

The document viewer window also has three tabs in the top left of the screen – ‘Originality’, ‘GradeMark’, and ‘PeerMark’ – the latter two functions / views are not covered in this guide.

Turnitin shows the student’s submitted work in its original format in the left panel, and the matches it finds to other sources in the right panel. The initial view shows the matches that Turnitin refers to as **primary sources**. These are the ones that have the closest match (most matching words without variation) to the document’s text.

The primary sources with the most matching text are listed first. They are colour-coded and numbered to show how they correspond to matches in the submitted work. Clicking on the number of the source in the right panel will bring up matching sections of the student’s work.

For matches to papers submitted by students in the past, Turnitin will show the institution that the work was submitted to and the date but not the matching text. You will then be given an opportunity to request that the work is released to you. If the matching source is a paper submitted to an assignment set up by you as an instructor you will be able to view the paper.
Another way to explore matching sources is to click on the colour-coded and annotated text in the students work. This will highlight the corresponding matching source in the right panel and display the matching text from the source in a pop-up window at the top of the left panel. This window can be resized or moved around to help with viewing.

Turnitin also gives you the option of viewing additional sources, sometimes referred to as overlapping sources. These are the other sources that overlap with the primary ones (i.e. when the same text appears in multiple sources). If you want to view the additional sources, let your mouse hover over the primary source, and click on the ‘view additional sources’ button that appears. This will display a list of additional sources below the primary one. To view the overlapping (additional) source, click on its name, and the matching text will display in its original context in the left panel, in a pop-up window at the top of the student’s submission.

To exclude an overlapping or additional source, click on the ‘exclude sources’ button in the right bottom corner of the list. This will display check boxes next to all the additional sources. To exclude a source, click on its corresponding check box. Once you have selected all the sources to exclude, click on the ‘exclude the # selected sources & recalculate’ button at the bottom of the list. If the sources that were excluded affect the overall similarity index, it will recalculate and display a new percentage of matching content.

Note: If you do not see a change in the similarity index after recalculating or refreshing the report, close the document viewer. You will be taken to your assignment inbox. Refresh your assignment inbox by clicking on the assignment inbox tab (in the menu at the top left). This will update the similarity index in the Report column. Now click on the updated similarity index (%) to view the Originality Report. It should open displaying the new updated similarity index and matches.
The bar at the bottom of the document viewer has handy buttons that act as shortcuts, and provide different views or information about the student’s work:

The information icon gives you details about the submitted document such as word count, number of submission attempts and originality statistics (breakdown between the internet, publications, and student papers).

These print/download buttons allow the user to print or download a copy of the paper as they are currently seeing it. Note: As of September 9th 2010 they are not working.

By sliding this zoom button from the left to the right, you can re-size the viewing area for the submitted document.

Clicking on the ‘view primary sources’ button, will display the Primary Source View in the right panel.

Click on the ‘view all sources’ button to view all sources including primary, additional and overlapping sources.

Clicking on the ‘view/edit filters and settings’ button enables you to view or modify the settings for exclusions of quotes, bibliographical references, and small matches.

- The Exclude Quotes and Exclude Bibliography options when checked will remove quoted pieces of text or bibliographic references from Turnitin’s checking process. This usually works well, but can fail to be accurate if a student uses a form of quotation or referencing that Turnitin does not recognise, such as single quotation marks (‘ ’).

- The Exclude matches that are less than... option will allow you to set a percentage or word count limit to exclude from the search.

Remember to click the Refresh Report button at the bottom right of this section for the changes to take effect and generate a fresh report. Refreshing the report will create a completely new report by checking against Turnitin’s current database. The report will be unavailable while it is being refreshed.

Clicking on the ‘view/edit excluded sources’ button, will display the Exclusion List which comprises the sources you have chosen to exclude. To restore a source, click on its corresponding check box. For the changes to take effect, you need to click on the ‘restore the selected _ sources and recalculate’ button.

Note: If you do not see a change in the similarity index after recalculating or refreshing the report please see the note on page 14 above.

Clicking on the ‘text-only report’ button will take you to a view of the originality report for the current paper as it would have looked before the launch of Turnitin2. This will be in place until at least July 2011. You can return to the new document viewer using the blue ‘Document Viewer’ button at the top left of the text only view:
5. Interpreting the reports that Turnitin produces

In the previous section we referred to the **Originality Report**, which includes the Similarity Index (the percentage of a document which Turnitin has identified as matching other sources).

Of course, it is natural to be more concerned if the Similarity Index for a submission is high. However, it is important to note the following points:

- Plagiarism is a matter for academic judgement, and Turnitin makes no attempt to judge whether it has occurred. A high Similarity Index value does not necessarily mean that plagiarism has occurred; nor does a low Similarity Index value mean that it has not.

- Students should be advised that there is no score to aim for and that the important consideration is that suitable referencing of sources is used, rather than aiming for a particular score. Over time, you may come to a working judgement of a level for the Similarity Index value below which you wouldn't check a particular piece of work – such a level is likely to depend on the discipline and nature of the assignment being set.

- Substantial quotes used in a document may increase its Similarity Index value, even if these quotes are properly referenced. You may judge that a piece of writing that relies too heavily on quotes and has a high Similarity Index value, may be a poor example of academic writing, but does not represent plagiarism, if quotes are correctly referenced.

- Turnitin makes no claims to match against every possible source. Although its database is large, there will inevitably be some cases of plagiarism which it fails to match. A very low Similarity Index value, even of 0% does not prove that plagiarism did not occur.

- Turnitin cannot identify cheating if an original and genuine piece of work is written, but is not written by the student who has submitted it. This might include students asking friends or family to write for them, or buying a bespoke essay from a writing service.

- Note that for text that appears in many sources in books or journals or across websites, Turnitin may identify that the text matches another source, but cannot be exactly accurate in identifying which source the student has used. So you may see a piece of text that is properly referenced, but the Turnitin match gives a different original location to the one that the student has used in their reference. Viewing additional and overlapping sources and excluding some where necessary allows you to deal with this.
6. Frequently asked questions

What percentage Similarity Index value is sufficient to indicate plagiarism?

There cannot be a definitive answer to this question and academic judgement is crucial, taking into account considerations such as the nature of the discipline and the assignment set. The Similarity Index value indicates text matches with other documents, including for example quotations that are used. We advise students that there is no score or value that they should aim for as a target. The important thing is to ensure that ideas and quotations used are properly referenced in an appropriate academic style, not to aim for a particular percentage.

A piece of work has a Similarity Index value of 0%. Does this mean it is not plagiarised?

No, a Similarity Index value of 0% does not guarantee the work is not plagiarised. Turnitin has a large database of web sites, books, journal papers and other sources, but cannot include everything ever written. It is also not possible to detect if a student has submitted an original piece of work but has not written it themselves (i.e. it has been produced by a ghost-writer).

If students submit an assignment in the ‘Plagiarism and Referencing – A guide for students’ area to view their own reports, and then subsequently submit it for my assignment area, won’t it show as a 100% match?

No, work submitted within the ‘Plagiarism and Referencing – A guide for students’ area is not stored in the Turnitin database and thus will not match against work submitted in the future.

My department has a policy of not letting students submit to Turnitin to view their own reports, yet the central ULearn module allows this. How can we stop our students using it?

The University has a policy of allowing all students to submit their own work to Turnitin confidentially. Removing this facility for some groups of students is not technically possible and would raise issues of equity and fairness. If you wish to comment on this policy, please do so through your Faculty representative on the Academic Misconduct Steering Group.

What file formats will Turnitin accept?

Most common word-processing formats are accepted. Turnitin will accept documents in Microsoft Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, PDF, HTML, RTF, and plain text. Microsoft PowerPoint, Excel documents, and most formats for computer programming languages are not accepted. Documents with many illustrations or diagrams and with variations in formatting were previously sometimes not fully processed by the system - this has been resolved in Turnitin2.

What is the maximum file size that can be submitted to Turnitin?

The maximum file size is currently 20MB. If a student’s work is over this file size it is likely that they have included high resolution images. Ordinarily images can be compressed to a great extent whilst still maintaining acceptable quality. A simple method is to convert the document to a PDF (Portable Document Format) and the images will be compressed in the process.

Why does student work from Surrey students show up as being from ‘Roehampton University and the University of Surrey’?

It’s a long story, but in short our VLE and our Turnitin service is shared between the two universities. Hence Turnitin considers us to be a single institution.
I don’t want my students to submit work to Turnitin, but I do want to check the occasional piece of work if I suspect a case of plagiarism. Can I do this?

Yes you can. You could use the ‘Plagiarism and Referencing – a guide for students’ ULearn module for this purpose – but you can only submit one piece of work at a time, and there is an enforced 24 hour delay between submissions. However you can set up a Turnitin assignment in your own ULearn section and make it hidden from all students. You can then use it to submit pieces of work individually or in batches (or in zip files containing numerous assignments) by going into the Teach tab, viewing the assignment inbox and clicking Submit. Please note - at busy times there can be a considerable delay before Originality Reports become accessible.

If I reuse a ULearn section for a new cohort of students, what happens to my Turnitin assignments?

Reusing a section is a useful feature of ULearn. Unfortunately if you reuse a section that contains Turnitin assignments, the Turnitin assignments will not be correctly cleared and made available for a new cohort. We recommend that once you have created a new section you make new Turnitin assignments with the appropriate new dates and details for the new cohort.

Does Turnitin support anonymous marking?

Yes but this option only works fully if you use using Grademark to mark work online. Please note - if selected you will not be able to download the original student submissions until after the ‘post date’ that you have set, at which point their identities become visible in the system. If you wish to use this feature, we suggest you contact the CEAD team for support and advice. This setting can’t be changed at the assignment level after the first submission but the post date can be changed.

What should I do if I suspect plagiarism has occurred?

First, you should gather the evidence to support your suspicions. This may involve printing internet sources and matching text with the student’s work, indicating similarities between two students’ works, etc. If you are satisfied that there may be an offence beyond bad academic practice, or if you are not sure, you should present the evidence to your local Academic Misconduct Officer (AMO). The AMO will deal with the case, as appropriate, thereafter. If you are not sure who your AMO is you should contact your Faculty Registrar or local administrator.

What should I do if I get an e-mail with the subject ‘TurnitinUK Paper Request’ forwarded to me from TurnitinUK requesting permission to view a particular paper?

Check if there is anything in the paper requested that is too confidential to be viewed by another party. The text of the paper will be in the e-mail that you receive. If there is anything confidential you can remove it (if this isn’t feasible you don’t have to comply with the request). To comply just follow the instructions in the e-mail by copying the whole e-mail and sending it to the address given but first remove the name of the person who submitted the paper.

What happened to papers that were submitted in the old version of the service before Turnitin2 was launched on September 4, 2010?

Papers submitted after July 30, 2010 (when Turnitin implemented their new document imaging method) will be displayed automatically in the Turnitin2 document viewer. Papers submitted before this date will be available through the old versions of Originality Checking. Also there is a button next to the paper title to choose to reprocess the paper using the new method.

Note: If the paper opens in a text-only report format you can click on the document viewer button (highlighted in blue) at the top of the window. This will launch the Originality Report in the document viewer.
Further help and information primarily for staff

Plagiarismadvice.org is a national service which offers support and guidance on using Turnitin as well as on plagiarism related issues and topics more widely. A range of resources including videos, fact sheets, papers and case studies can be found at: http://www.plagiarismadvice.org/

A range of Quickstart Guides, User Manuals and videos about Turnitin are available from: http://www.submit.ac.uk/static_jisc/ac_uk_training.html

These can also be found at
http://turnitin.com/static/support/guides_manuals.html
http://turnitin.com/static/support_video_gallery.html

For issues or problems related directly to using Turnitin there is a useful helpdesk accessible from within the system: http://www.submit.ac.uk/help/helpdesk.asp

You can get help and advice on using Turnitin within ULearn from the Centre for Educational and Academic Development (CEAD), by e-mailing: e-learning@surrey.ac.uk

CEAD also offers a course covering this area - 'EL09: Detecting and deterring plagiarism with Turnitin and ULearn’, please see http://www.surrey.ac.uk/cead/opportunities/tech/

For information about using Turnitin directly, without using ULearn, please consult the Assessment and Awards Office web site or contact Sarah Pendred in Registry.

For help on designing assessment to reduce incidents of plagiarism or other forms of cheating, please contact CEAD. A useful quick guide is attached to this document. There is further information and guidance on this subject at plagiarismadvice.org.

For information about University of Surrey policies and procedures, please contact your Academic Misconduct Officer, or Dr David Faux, Chair of the Academic Misconduct Steering Group.

Further help and information primarily for students

Information about plagiarism and academic writing can be found in the ULearn module ‘Plagiarism and Referencing – A guide for students’. All students (including taught and research postgraduates) at the University, and staff who have access to ULearn are enrolled on this module, which provides:

- Definitions of plagiarism, how it can occur and strategies for avoiding plagiarism
- Guides to good referencing (including the OSCOLA system used for legal documents)
- A Turnitin submission area which students can use confidentially to submit work to Turnitin and view their report. (Students can only submit one piece of work at a time and there is an enforced 24 hour time delay between submissions.)
- Details of further help and guidance including the SPLASH drop-in service on academic writing

This module is maintained by CEAD, in collaboration with the Academic Misconduct Steering Group, SPLASH, the University Library and the Students’ Union.

SPLASH (the Surrey Personal Learning and Study Hub) can provide support for students in developing their academic writing style and appropriate referencing. They can be contacted at splash@surrey.ac.uk
Involving students in the academic process, and encouraging them in deep (rather than surface) learning is the key to avoiding alienation and averting plagiarism. There are situations which inadvertently encourage plagiarism and this handout is designed to identify and suggest remedies for some of these. Designing out plagiarism is a continuous process which needs to involve the whole course team.

### Anticipating causes of plagiarism

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<th>Possible remedies</th>
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<td>1. Do students understand what plagiarism is? Firstly, all undergraduates will be enrolled on a ULearn resource called 'Plagiarism and referencing – a guide for students'. (If you are a registered ULearn user, then you will automatically have access to this resource when you log on, if not contact <a href="mailto:e-learning@surrey.ac.uk">e-learning@surrey.ac.uk</a> for further details). Academics need to encourage students to use this resource, and the messages in it then need building upon.</td>
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<td>2. Does the assessment design encourage collusion? For example: will students work in pairs or small groups? Ensure the assignment seeks an individualised response demonstrating the student's own understanding (avoid using words such as &quot;Explain&quot;, &quot;Describe&quot; – see below). Give clear guidelines in advance. In a group project ask the group to clearly identify who did what work and who wrote what.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. How can I help students who over-use sources on the web? Teaching a subject involves teaching the language of the discipline. However there are additional sources of help for specific difficulties: If language or writing is a problem, refer to the Department of Languages and Translation Studies for general and discipline-specific classes within the English Language Support Programme. For individual and small group study skills advice, refer students to SPLASH. If you suspect other specific learning needs (e.g. dyslexia) refer to Additional Learning Support.</td>
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<td>4. How can I encourage students to submit original essays/assignments rather than those that could have been purchased, ghost written or downloaded from the web? • Design assignments that require an individualised approach either because they ask the student to relate the work to personal experience or current events (see examples overleaf) • Ask for drafts, lists of sources etc in advance • Allocate time for students to write something in class, collect it in for formative feedback, then you can see what level of writing they can achieve on their own • Organise oral exams • Include the opportunity for students to give presentations • Check that students are aware of the severe penalties for this form of plagiarism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Could students fabricate research results? • Encourage and develop teams of researchers, where students check each others’ results • Introduce an ethical protocol where results have to be checked by an independent researcher • Ensure sufficient time is allocated for research supervision • Introduce articles/discussion about the consequences of fabricating results into teaching/supervision sessions • Ensure students are aware of the length of time that they need to keep their original data available for inspection if required.</td>
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</table>

### When setting assessment, in general:

- Give each student unique data on which to base their assignment.
- Ask students to identify their own original material (journal articles, case studies, experiments etc) to provide basic data to analyse or interpret.
- Let students know that a percentage of vivas or oral exams will be conducted.
- Ensure that students are clear about the assessment criteria (see ASKe leaflets 1,2,3).
- Create ‘fictional cases’ by ensuring each student has a different scenario eg different ‘patients’ or projects, perhaps created randomly.
- Ask students to illustrate theories with their own recent examples or recent data collections.
- Discuss individual or group assignments so that they become personalised.
Sample assignments

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Questions more likely to receive plagiarised answers</th>
<th>Questions less likely to receive plagiarised answers</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write an essay on the effects of obesity on public health</td>
<td>Find three obesity information web sites and create the criteria to judge which will best improve public health</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Identify a recent piece of publicity on obesity and use it as a basis for drafting recommendations to government.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write an essay on the advantages and disadvantages of x over y</td>
<td>Create a debate: form two teams. Each team has to argue for their case and anticipate the objections the other team will make. Rest of the class votes and writes up their personal justification of their vote. Students bring the computer program that they have written on x into the lab. In the lab ask students to make one of a series of modifications. (Altering coursework under exam conditions means that only those who have created their own codes will be able to adapt them).</td>
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<td>Write a computer program for x</td>
<td>‘Using the parliamentary elections in two European Union countries in the last two years, compare the methods used to decide who won. Which method delivered a more effective representative body?’</td>
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<td>‘Identify any country in the world that is using a different voting system from the one used in the country where you yourself are eligible to vote. Make a case for the selected country changing ‘your’ voting system. Make sure your arguments cover the reasons for changing and the reasons against, using specific examples from the most recent voting records of both countries.’</td>
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<tr>
<td>Write a report on x</td>
<td>Present a hypothetical scenario (linked to reality) and then ask students to plan actions, write a report etc. For example give the properties of a virus and ask: “Design a therapy or control strategy for”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a) a mystery virus outbreak in racing stables;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) a new virus discovered on Mars”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources of further help

Carroll J (2002)  
A handbook for deterring plagiarism in Higher Education Oxford Centre for Staff and Learning Development. Oxford Brookes

Comrie A (2006)  
A Guide to Good Practice in Learning and Teaching. Guildford, University of Surrey (copies available from the Centre for Educational and Academic Development)


Academic Integrity and Plagiarism. University of Illinois web site http://www.library.uiuc.edu/learn/research/academicintegrity.html

Higher Education Academy pages on plagiarism http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/learning/assessment/plagiarism

ASKe leaflets 123 on plagiarism and assessment, Oxford Brookes http://www.brookes.ac.uk/asker/resources.html

University Calendar. University of Surrey. Guidelines for Communications with Students Undergraduate and Postgraduate Taught Programmes is at http://portal.surrey.ac.uk/calendar/acstan/scv/index-05.jsp#P1708_77661

Procedure for the Consideration of Allegations of Academic Misconduct and Related Penalties http://portal.surrey.ac.uk/calendar/acstan/scv/index-06.jsp#P2150_84909

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