

ADMINISTRATIVE OPERATING PROCEDURE: Use of Text Matching Software

Procedure ID:	#OP 2-201A.2
Approved by Executive Leaders Team:	<i>Original:</i> November 13, 2018
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Next Review Date:	2026
Monitoring Responsibility:	Associate Dean
Linked to a College Policy:	#2-201 <i>Academic Integrity</i>

Purpose

Fleming College Toronto is committed to providing an environment that encourages all students to learn, create and share knowledge responsibly, with the highest level of academic integrity. Academic integrity requires that information derived from others be acknowledged and recognized and that credit is only taken for ideas and work that are your own. A breach of academic integrity is considered to be academic dishonesty, which is a serious offence and will be addressed with a series of sanctions related to the severity of the offence.

The College's primary focus in using text-matching software is to provide a means whereby students may enhance their knowledge and understanding of good academic practice in order to reference material correctly, thereby minimizing the risk of plagiarism.

Definitions/Acronyms

Academic Assessment: any course work that measures the learning outcomes a student has gained in a course. This may come in the form of online, written, or verbal assignments, quizzes, tests, projects, behavioural assessments, exams, and/or any other evaluation.

Academic Integrity refers to honouring an ethical and moral code regarding the honest creation of an individual's own work and the acknowledgement of contributions from others to that work.

Similarity Index/Originality Report is a report generated after an assignment has been submitted to Turnitin. The Similarity Report provides a Similarity Index based on a percentage of matched text a listing of all matched text, and the reference from where the materials originated.

Turnitin is an Internet-based text-matching software that scans submitted work to material in public websites, academic journals and assignments concurrently or previously submitted to Turnitin. After scanning, sections of a submission are outlined in colour in an originality report. Turnitin holds a database of all student papers previously submitted worldwide, current, and archived internet web sites, periodicals/journals, books and other publications.

Operating Procedure

1. Turnitin.com, the text-matching software, is available for faculty who elect to use it to support and promote academic honesty and to support students' development of scholarly writing. Program/course teams must adopt a consistent approach to the use of Turnitin across all sections of particular courses.
2. At the outset of the course, students must be informed that text-matching software is being used, advised of the opt-out provisions available to them and provided with the following information:

- a) The importance of academic integrity, Fleming College Toronto's policies and procedures regarding academic integrity and suspected plagiarism will be investigated and if found, sanctions applied.
 - b) What comprises appropriate referencing, citation, bibliographic footnotes for the course.
3. Fleming College's licensing agreement with Turnitin places the responsibility of informing students about how to use the software on the institution. If they choose to use the software, faculty must inform their students at the beginning of the course that Turnitin will be used for the assignments. For this reason, the course outline must include the following statement:

Students agree that by taking this course all required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to Turnitin.com in support of academic integrity. All submitted papers will be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of such papers. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the Usage Policy posted on the Turnitin.com site.

If students choose to opt out of using the software, they must inform their faculty member at the time of the assignment, of their refusal and meet with the faculty to discuss their options.

4. Turnitin is most effective when all students in a particular course use it; however, when a student objects to its use on principle, students have a right to opt out and have an alternative method for assessment of their work. In such cases, faculty who use text-matching software in a course are obligated to provide alternative methods for assessing authenticity of work such as:
 - a) submitting multiple drafts
 - b) submitting a detailed annotated bibliography
 - c) submitting electronic or paper copies of source documents
 - d) providing a written report concerning the process of completing the work
5. Normally, the faculty member grades academic assessments before reviewing the results of the "Similarity/Originality Report". If a faculty member has reasonable cause to suspect that a student has misrepresented work as their/they own, the faculty may use the output from the text-matching software to verify the integrity of the work.
6. Text matching Software, such as Turnitin, does not make decisions about whether plagiarism has occurred or not. It is only one piece of evidence about a student's writing ability. Deciding whether plagiarism has occurred relies on the professional judgement of the faculty.
7. Should a faculty member detect plagiarism or other breach of academic integrity, they are to follow the procedures set out in Procedure 2-201A.
8. Faculty are strongly encouraged to design assignments in which students view their Similarity Reports before submitting their final assignment. Faculty can create settings in the software to allow students to submit assignment drafts and view Similarity Reports as many times as they wish before the due date of the Academic Assessment. Note: students can only upload one draft assignment per day to Turnitin. If they wish to upload a new draft of their assignment, they have to wait 24 hours. Each new draft will overwrite the previous one.
9. In courses where Turnitin is used, students are to self-submit their work in digital form into the text-matching software.

10. Once an academic assessment has been submitted to Turnitin, it becomes part of the international database that subsequent works are checked against.

Related Documents

- Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA)
- College Policy #2-201, Academic Integrity
- Administrative Operating Procedure OP #2-201A

History of Amendment and Reviews

November 2018	New procedure approved
November 2023	Reviewed, updated and approved