



**Q: What is Turnitin?**

Turnitin is the leading originality checking and plagiarism prevention service in the world. In 1996, four colleagues from U.C. Berkeley created Turnitin to establish a new model for protecting written work from misappropriation on the Internet. All four founders are still involved with iParadigms, the company they began to deliver this service to the market.

**Q: How does it work?**

iParadigms technology creates unique digital “fingerprints,” or patterns, from text documents submitted for originality checking. Those patterns are then compared with the patterns of other information in iParadigms’ massive databases, derived from the web as well as thousands of other sources likely to be used for plagiarism, such as: books; encyclopedias; subscription-based publications and databases; newspapers and periodicals. Search results are then compiled into an Originality Report, which can be reviewed just seconds after a student’s work is submitted. These reports help ensure that, once submitted, a student paper can never be sold, recycled, or traded among students from different years, in other classes, or at other institutions, without being detected as unoriginal work by Turnitin.

**Q: Who uses Turnitin?**

Turnitin is the worldwide standard in more than 6,500 educational institutions, across 106 countries.

**Q: How many languages does Turnitin support?**

Turnitin supports Originality Reports and content searches in 30 languages, including Chinese (simplified and traditional), Arabic, and Japanese (starting Aug. 1, 2008).

**Q: Have we seen the last of the legal cases against Turnitin?**

Judge Claude Hilton dismissed a lawsuit that was filed against Turnitin by students on Summary Judgment in March, 2008. Judge Hilton stated in his judgment that Turnitin does not violate the copyrights of students whose papers are stored in the Turnitin database. Judge Hilton upheld a school’s “right to decide how to monitor and address plagiarism in their schools,” and their right to, “employ companies like iParadigms to help do so.” The judge further stated that, “iParadigms’ use protects the creativity and originality of student works by detecting any effort at plagiarism by other students,” and that the service, “provides a substantial public benefit through the network of educational institutions using Turnitin.”

While no company can guarantee that it will never be sued again, the outcome of this lawsuit does discourage future lawsuits, provides legal precedence to be used in determining the outcome of any future cases, and settles the question regarding

Turnitin's "fair use" of student work in the minds of many people.

**Q: Does Turnitin also function as a Course Management System (CMS)?**

While Turnitin functions in an environment that includes many features of a CMS (such as a calendar, discussion boards, and a grade book), Turnitin's true focus is to streamline the workflow of student writing, feedback and assessment. As a result, we make sure Turnitin can be used in conjunction with all of the leading course management systems in common usage: Blackboard, WebCT, Moodle, Sakai, and others. Turnitin will continue to make new/updated CMS integrations available, and work to increase the depth of our integrations. Turnitin aims to be "agnostic" with respect to course management systems, allowing customers the flexibility to change and grow over time.

**Q: Has Turnitin reduced plagiarism significantly?**

It has. Anecdotal evidence – and our own statistical usage analyses – indicates that the implementation of Turnitin by educational institutions both improves academic integrity of written work, and reduces submissions of unoriginal work at those institutions by 82 percent after several years.

**Q: Can Turnitin eliminate the problem of plagiarism?**

We can reduce plagiarism significantly by increasing awareness of best practices related to teaching students the appropriate use of other people's textual content. This includes helping students learn proper research and citation methods, building student confidence in those skills, and doing this early and often in the schooling process. Ultimately, such practices can change attitudes about plagiarism, encourage original thought and better writing, and drive good digital citizenship and accountability in the use of information and technology.