LITERATURE REVIEW

Independently Published
Studies on Turnitin Services
INDEPENDENT VALIDATION OF EFFICACY

This in-depth literature review summarizes 35 publications that address the effectiveness of Turnitin services in education in reducing plagiarism and in improving the understanding and attention to academic integrity. The publications include 15 journal articles, 7 conference presentations, and 13 other independent reports. Highlights include:

- **Badge and Scott (2009)** reported that Turnitin was the only service that checked for student collusion and copying from the internet within the same service; that instructors save time using electronic detection services and use reports generated to educate students about writing from sources and citation rules; and, that, for effective deterrence, use of electronic services for detecting plagiarism should be coupled with educating students about plagiarism penalties and consequences.

- **Batane (2010)** reported a 4.3% decrease in the amount of plagiarism in assignments after students were informed that their work would be screened by Turnitin, and 65% of students surveyed liked the idea of having Turnitin.

- **Cheah and Bretag (2008)** show that using Turnitin as a teaching tool resulted in fewer cases of plagiarism and increased students’ understanding of academic integrity issues.

- **Davis and Carroll (2009)** reported that using Turnitin as a formative assessment tool helped students avoid plagiarism, decrease student tendencies to rely heavily from on sources, improve citation practices and improve paraphrasing skills.

- **Wright and Nigel (2008)** suggest: “Turnitin should be regarded only as a tool to assist in the detection of plagiarism. It is designed to be used in tandem with (rather than entirely replace) traditional measures for assessing academic integrity (such as identifying abrupt changes in written structure and style).”

- **Jones (2008)** emphasizes that Turnitin is not a plagiarism detection service but a text-matching system that still requires that the instructor determine whether the writing is, in fact, plagiarism.

- **Scaife (2007)** evaluated eleven online plagiarism detection services for Britain’s Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC). Turnitin scored the highest among all the services.

- **O’Hara, Carter and Manassee (2007)** illustrated that while “no single project or tool will provide a panacea to the on-going challenges… to academic writing,” using “Turnitin as a formative tool to support student’s progress can be effective, particularly in relation to building confidence and competencies.”

- **Williams (2007)** reported that nearly 50% of faculty said that their time searching for plagiarism decreased.

- **Dahl (2007)** showed that students preferred to get their feedback through the three Turnitin services (Originality Checking, Peer Review and GradeMark), and 88% wanted these services adopted across their complete program of study.

- **Jocoy and DiBiase (2006)** showed that Turnitin detected five times more instances of plagiarism than manual methods.

- **Sheridan and Brake (2005)** reported that 87% of students said that using Turnitin with their assignments was a good idea.

- **Heikes (2006)** found that among instructors at a state university those “instructors who used Turnitin were satisfied with the tool and would use it again in the future.”
Badge, J. & Scott, J. (2009). Dealing with plagiarism in the digital age. This review of literature analyzed the effectiveness, use and implementation of electronic plagiarism detection devices and identifies Turnitin as such. The study cites Bull (2000) that determined at the time of its test that Turnitin was the only service that checked for student collusion and the internet within the same service. In addition, the study of literature reveals that instructors save time using electronic detection services and use reports generated to educate students about writing from sources and citation rules. Lastly, the literature suggests that without educating students about plagiarism penalties and consequences, the possibility that student plagiarism could be detected using an electronic service does not deter students from plagiarizing. Retrieved 8-10-10 from http://evidencenet.pbworks.com/Dealing-with-plagiarism-in-the-digital-age

Baggaley, J. & Spencer, B. (2005). The mind of a plagiarist. Learning, Media and Technology, 30(1), 55-62. Baggaley & Spencer (2005) are professors in the Masters in Distance Education program at Canada’s Open University. Over the course of three years, they have submitted hundreds of student papers to Turnitin.com. This paper detailed the experiences the authors had with one particular student who plagiarized throughout the course, and how Turnitin aided the campus in identifying the repeated offenses. The authors acknowledged that Turnitin is only one kind of solution to the problem and, by citing Carroll and Appleton (2001), suggest that students still need to be taught with active and interactive means, such as discussion, practice and feedback. Retrieved 1-12-2009, from EBSCOhost database (www.ebscohost.com).

Barrett, R. & Malcolm, J. (2006). Embedding plagiarism education in the assessment process. International Journal for Educational Integrity, 2(1), 38-45. Study participants comprised 182 students in three masters programs — computer science, automotive engineering and electronics — at the University of Hertfordshire. Students began by taking a research methods course in which they wrote summary essays. Prior to submitting the essays, they attended lectures on how to summarize information from outside source material. The essays were submitted for originality checking to Turnitin and Ferret, another plagiarism detector. Essays used in the study were those with 15% or more text matching material on the Internet. This amounted to 26 of the 182 essays. When students were able to view their reports and submit essays a second time, only 3% of the essays came back with 15% or more unoriginal text. The authors concluded that electronic plagiarism detection can be used as a formative assessment for students. Retrieved 1-11-2009, from http://journal.aall.org.au

Batane, T. (2010). Turning to Turnitin to Fight Plagiarism among University Students. Educational Technology & Society, 13(2). This pilot study of Turnitin implemented at the University of Botswana concluded that instances of plagiarism among students occurred at 20.5% on the first round of assignments. Once students were warned that their second assignment would be submitted to Turnitin, there was a 4.3% decrease in the amount of plagiarism. Students were also surveyed about the use of Turnitin on campus. 65% of the students surveyed liked the idea of having Turnitin. Retrieved 8-10-10 from ifets.info/others/download_pdf.php?id=47&aid=1036

Cheah, S. & Bretag, T. (2008, June). Making technology work for academic integrity in Malaysia. Paper presented at the 3rd International Plagiarism Conference. The instructors used Turnitin as a teaching tool by allowing students to submit their essays a second time after receiving their initial originality reports. The second submissions had lower percentages of unoriginality with fewer cases of plagiarism. The instructors also conducted a survey of the student users, with 112 respondents. Students were asked questions about usability, how the program helped them avoid plagiarism and drawbacks of the program. In one case,
74.2% of students agreed that Turnitin enabled them to identify where they needed to edit their work to avoid plagiarism, and 70.5% agreed that they were “more aware of academic integrity and the importance of academic conventions.”


Culwin, F., Warwick, J. & Child, M. (2008, June). An empirical investigation of student behaviour when non-originality detection is made available before submission. Paper presented at the 3rd International Plagiarism Conference. This study was performed at the BIT and Computing programs at London South Bank University with those submitting final project papers in 2007. A total of 126 projects were submitted, with 98 using the multiple-submission option and 28 submitting only once. The study found that when students have the ability to check their own work through multiple submissions to Turnitin, they will take advantage of that option. The authors found that when originality checking determines that text is not original (“dirty”), students will appropriately “clean” that material; however, they often insert more unoriginal text in preparing the final drafts for submission. Thus, the authors claim, students are learning how to fix or clean the text but not how to integrate original material. The authors acknowledge that this suggests that perhaps students need more instruction on how to use their originality reports. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.plagiarismconference.org/pages/conference-2008/conference-proceedings.php.


This study looked at how master’s students in marketing and communications at a London business school perceive Turnitin. The students viewed their originality reports on weekly assignments, performed online peer reviews and accessed their grades and feedback from their written work through Turnitin. The student perceptions of Turnitin were that the program was easy and convenient to use. Students even preferred to turn their work in using Turnitin. Additionally, students commented that they preferred to get their feedback through Turnitin, with 78 % strongly agreeing to this statement. All students preferred to get their grades through Turnitin. Students wanting Turnitin adopted in their other programs accounted for 87.5% of respondents. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.alh.sagepub.com.


This study examined how using Turnitin as a formative assessment tool helped students avoid plagiarism, decrease student tendencies to rely heavily from on sources, improve citation practices and improve paraphrasing skills. Tutors uploaded the student papers to Turnitin and conducted a 15-minute, one-on-one tutorial about the students’ Originality Report. Over the course of the three-year study, student percentages of plagiarism decreased 45.5%. Students who participated in the study were also surveyed. 73% said that Turnitin did help them understand how to avoid plagiarism. The results were similar when the study evaluated their improvements in relying too heavily on sources. Again, 45.5% reduced the percentage of their highest matched source and 82% of students believed that Turnitin helped them to avoid over-reliance on sources. Higher-level citation errors were reduced 62% and in all three years, no errors occurred in the final drafts. 69% of students said that the report helped them to write improved citations. Retrieved 8-10-10 from http://www.ojs.unisa.edu.au/index.php/IJEI/article/view/614.


Massey University in 2004 had a total of 41,436 students in five colleges: Science, Business, Creative Arts, Education, and Humanities and Social Sciences. The University consists of three campuses and a virtual campus. All four campuses participated in the trial of Turnitin along with the International Business teaching team. The trial was voluntary with 30 participants teaching 800 full-time student-equivalents that year. Different instructors implemented Turnitin in different ways. The results reveal what Massey learned from the Turnitin trial. Massey learned that having students submit their own work was the most time-effective method for implementing Turnitin. Beyond that, the trial revealed Massey's need to discuss as a faculty how to teach about plagiarism. The study indicated that the faculty needs to dedicate more time to showing students how to document sources and why this is important in academic study. Furthermore, the faculty needs to determine which assessments decrease the likelihood of plagiarism and redesign current assessment methods.

This study reveals that while Turnitin was able to detect intentional plagiarism effectively, it also was an effective way to identify students who still had difficulty understanding referencing. A second phase of the project continued to use Turnitin to detect plagiarism, but in light of the findings from 2004, the new phase focused also on improving instruction. One-on-one tutoring was begun with students who were identified to have plagiarism issues in their writing. Through this improved instruction, using Turnitin as a formative assessment tool, plagiarism was reduced. Retrieved 1-11-2009, from http://www.jutlp.uow.edu.au.


Gauder looked at how effective plagiarism detection services performed in order to suggest how librarians can use them to increase the awareness of plagiarism on college campuses. Gauder analyzed 98 papers using two search engines and two commercial services, including Turnitin. The papers canvassed a variety of source types, including Internet sources, library databases, and Internet cheat sites. Like Satterwhite and Gerein (2003), Gauder found that Turnitin identified the most plagiarized material from the broadest range of sources. Retrieved 1-11-2009, from http://direct.bl.uk.


Haigh and Medding surveyed 55 students at the University Of Bradford on ways they used Turnitin and how their use affected knowledge of how to use outside source material in academic writing. The students were in the School of Health Studies, Division of Midwifery & Women's Health. The study presumed that students plagiarize because of a lack of understanding of how to cite and integrate source material. Acknowledging that they would use Turnitin again for personal use were 86.7% of level-1 students and 80% of those in level 2. Additionally, 73% of level-1 and 80% of level-2 students stated that students should use the program to check their own work prior to submitting a final draft. Haigh and Medding, fearing that students might use their reports to get away with using sources as their own, suggested that the first assignment should be submitted to Turnitin, with students having access to their Originality Report as a point of discussion to learn proper sourcing. Further assignments would also be submitted to Turnitin, but students would not have access to their Turnitin Originality Reports. The authors concluded that Originality Reports can cause some anxiety for students. The authors suggest holding discussion sessions so students can "appreciate what the tool can do" and learn what they can glean from their reports. Retrieved 4-10-2009, from http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk/documents/haighmeddings_casestudy.pdf.


Turnitin was introduced to The University of Texas at Austin in the spring semester of 2006. The Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment (DIAA) conducted a pilot study consisting of separate online surveys for students and instructors to assess the usability and ease of the program along with their overall impression of the software. The study
also evaluated the effectiveness of Turnitin training. The survey of instructors and students covered 17 courses and 696 students. The student response rate was 21%.

The conclusions of the study specific to Turnitin are shown below just as they are presented in the report:

- Overall, instructors who used Turnitin were satisfied with the tool and would use it again in the future.
- Most instructors and students found Turnitin easy to use.
- Most technical difficulties reported by instructors and students were minor. They were mostly tied to submitting drafts and papers. (Note this was integrated with Blackboard.)
- Both instructors and students felt Turnitin helped to reduce plagiarism in their classes (81% of instructors and 71% of students).
- The perceived complexity of and effort required to use Turnitin is a barrier to adoption for some instructors. DIIA suggested that this meant they needed to improve their training for campus-wide adoption.
- Students and instructors view the use of Turnitin differently. Thirty-three percent of instructors thought Turnitin helped students revise their work, but only 11% of students thought this same thing. The author states this may illustrate “that students either do not understand how to use Turnitin to revise papers and improve citation practices, they are not always given the opportunity to do so, or they are choosing not to use the tool in these ways.”
- Most students did not gain any instructional value from Turnitin. While students were able to revise based on their originality feedback, Turnitin was apparently not used in this way. The author states that instructors had little training on how to use the program as an instructional tool.
- Students were uncertain about whether Turnitin should be used in the future: 38% of students said yes, it should be used in the future; 51% said maybe; 12% said no. Fifty-two percent of the comments were positive toward Turnitin, but narrowly viewed Turnitin’s ability to detect plagiarism.

Retrieved 3-17-2009, from The University of Texas at Austin Division of Instructional Innovation and Assessment website: http://www.utexas.edu/academic/diia/turnitin/.

Henderson implemented a trial of GradeMark with 500 students and five academic staff members in order to “streamline” the grading process. The author, a professor of Australian history at the University of Newcastle, noted that the tools offered by GradeMark are similar to traditional grading by hand. Beyond that, GradeMark offers additional special features. While grading through GradeMark does require Internet connectivity, Henderson suggested it is faster than marking essays by hand. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://publications.epress.monash.edu.

This case study reviewed 429 assignments from students in five sections of a senior-level geography course at Penn State’s World Campus. The sections were comprised of part-time students who work full-time, with a median age of 41 years. The study searched for copy-and-paste plagiarism and compared plagiarism detection through Turnitin to manual methods. The study found that manual methods of plagiarism detection missed nearly 4 out of 5 instances, manual grading identified 12 out of the 429 papers (2.8%), and Turnitin identified 55 instances of plagiarism (12.8%). Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.irrodl.org.

This paper explains practical implications for instructors using Turnitin software, emphasizing that Turnitin is not a plagiarism detection service but a text-matching system and still requires the instructor to determine whether the writing is, in fact, plagiarism. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://ecet.ecs.ru.acad.bg.

This report discusses the results of a survey done by the Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching at Central Michigan University. The response rate was 27% of the faculty holding various academic ranks. Half of the respondents came from the College of Humanities and Social and Behavioral Sciences, with the other half from other CMU colleges. Using a rating scale from one to five, with five the best, the 48 respondents gave Turnitin an overall rating of 4.09. When respondents were asked how the program should be used, 13 said as a policing tool/deterrent, eight said a learning tool, and 18 said a combination of policing and learning. Only one said the program should not be used. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from the Central Michigan University Faculty Center for Innovative Teaching website: http://www.facit.cmich.edu/about/assessment-reports/default.html.


Martin sought to use an online plagiarism detection service, in this case Turnitin, to determine its effectiveness in reducing plagiarism in student writing and its function in the academy. Students in this study were aware that their essays would be checked via computer for plagiarism. Turnitin.com was used to analyze 129 graduate papers covering five years at “a medium-sized university in the southeastern United States.” The results show that nearly 50% of the 129 papers contained some amount of plagiarism, and each instance was researched further and confirmed.

The papers were compared semester to semester to determine if instances of plagiarism went down with the use of Turnitin. Instructors did warn students that papers with plagiarism were detected previously and those students’ grades were lowered. There was no substantial difference between semesters 1 and 2. The author suggests this could be a transitional phase. However, there was a substantial difference between semester 1 and semesters 3, 4, and 5. This suggests that when students recognize that plagiarism in their writing can be identified, they are not as likely to plagiarize. Martin concluded that this is an effective system in academics and notes that it did not take a significant amount of time to use. The time spent was two to four hours for a one-semester organizational behavior/business course. This time, the author noted, could be reduced if students uploaded their own papers to the service. Retrieved 1-11-2009, from EBSCOhost database (www.ebscohost.com).


This paper looks at textual plagiarism, discussing how various universities have responded with plagiarism policies, how plagiarism detection software works and what tools are available to detect plagiarism. It concludes that plagiarism detection does work well through Internet and electronic sources. Turnitin is evaluated in this paper, but no recommendations of any particular tools are provided. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.jusc.org.


This overview of plagiarism detection methods and their disadvantages lists their limitations of scope, technical restrictions, lack of product stability, administrative and financial costs, and ethical issues. McKeever argues, however, that given these disadvantages with some of the plagiarism detection methods, there still are some significant advantages to plagiarism detection. McKeever states, specifically, “despite its rather intimidating portrayal by some, online detection can, if handled judiciously, be employed as a beneficial educational tool rather than in solely punitive fashion.” McKeever further explains that tutors could use the report to assess the plagiarism and use this to prescribe lessons to meet students’ needs, opening up the conversation to issues of academic integrity. Enabling students to conduct self-assessments through these detection services and to rewrite according to their feedback is an educational feature of plagiarism detection. McKeever further advises that “if online detection is used in conjunction with the many valuable ‘anti-plagiarism’ resources available on the web… it really can become a learning aid, rather than a sinister threat.” Retrieved 1-11-2009, from http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu.

O’Conner presents the Plagiarism Detection Pilot Project of the Cooperative Action by Victorian Academic Libraries (CAVAL). The study examined 1,925 essays submitted to Turnitin in 2002 in 20 subject areas from six Australian universities. Fourteen percent of those essays had “unacceptable” levels of plagiarism from unattributed texts, although the author does not define what is meant by unacceptable. Overall, 70% of the essays had unattributed material with matches. Retrieved 4-10-2009, from http://www.caval.edu.au.


This project focused on a cohort of 100 second-year students (full and part-time) in early childhood studies. The study employed an educational approach to using Turnitin, shifting the focus from catching students to teaching students. Turnitin was used as a formative tool to aid students in learning academic skills by reducing plagiarism. The results suggest that “no single project or tool will provide a panacea to the on-going challenges . . . to academic writing.” However, it concludes that “Turnitin as a formative tool to support [a] student’s progress can be effective, particularly in relation to building confidence and competencies.” Retrieved 4-11-2009, from http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk/documents/ohara_casestudy.pdf.


Parkhurst and Moore present traditional methods of instructing beginning writers in the sciences in paraphrasing and also the ways students use Turnitin to do exercises in plagiarism. The students are from the Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Science (MCPHS) and the Barnard College/Columbia University Writing Center. While the author states that Turnitin is being used to deter plagiarism, she recognizes the value that both a peer-based writing center and Turnitin have in teaching students what plagiarism really is. The article further details how MCPHS specifically uses Turnitin to teach about plagiarism, using the Originality Report on sample paraphrases from a small source that the instructor uploads to the site, so gross instances of poor paraphrasing are revealed. The students’ paraphrases are then matched against the original sources. Students are able to view their own reports to see exactly whether they paraphrased the sources accurately. The author noted that out of 44 students, the first paraphrase assignment yielded 11 students with 20-50% similarity, but by the third exercise only three students had similarity of 5%. The authors acknowledged that as the texts’ levels of difficulty increase, the percent of originality remains insignificant. They further suggest that the feedback students receive on their paraphrasing is appropriate to each student’s ability, therefore teaching each student at the individual’s level of understanding. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.emwa.org.


This report discusses the outcomes of a one-year trial of Turnitin, along with four other plagiarism detection products, commencing the first semester of 2004. The study analyzed intellectual property, integration logistics and costs of the programs. Turnitin was used as an instructional tool, allowing students multiple submissions and the opportunity to revise their essays based on originality reports. Two unit coordinators noted that students were learning about plagiarism based on the changes from the first report and later reports from the same students. It was evident that the initial report contained instances of plagiarism, but the subsequent reports did not for the same assignments. The students extended positive feedback on the use of Turnitin, wishing that it could be expanded to other units. Across the campuses involved in the trial, a small number of problems with implementation showed the need for student and instructor training. Retrieved 3-16-2009, from http://www.tlc.murdoch.edu.au/project/TurnitinPilotReport2.pdf.
This pilot study ran from April 19 to June 18, 2004, with 13 lecturers and 1,020 assignments. The results of this study mirrored the results of O’Conner (2003) where students were not aware that their work was being submitted to Turnitin. One professor noticed that some students, upon viewing their originality reports, changed their writing to prevent matches. Whether this was done unethically or to improve paraphrasing is not mentioned in the report. The study’s observations in five key areas are as follows:

- **Workload:** 70% of respondents said that Turnitin’s account setup took less than five minutes. Staff did not have a significant increase in work time setting up student assignments, but analyzing matched texts could be time intensive if faculty attempted to do so.
- **Training:** Staff commented that Turnitin was easy to use, and no students required the help desk.
- **Technical support:** Both students and staff had only a few issues using Turnitin.
- **Administration:** Necessary administration was not significant.
- **Attitudes:** Students were positive about Turnitin’s use, and staff felt that it worked well as a plagiarism deterrent. Eighty percent of students said that it would be most beneficial to see their reports, and 70% said it would be best if they could make changes to their writing before submitting it to the instructor.


Satterwhite and Gerein analyzed essays that represented a variation of source types: essays with free downloadable material on the Internet, essays with material purchased from Internet cheat sites, essays representing a cut-and-paste method of plagiarism, and papers that combined some original material and some from various sources above, as well as from e-books and databases. The study evaluated Eve2, HowOriginal.com, paperbin, Turnitin, GLATT, and WordCheck. While the authors did not recommend plagiarism detection software overall, they did find that Turnitin was the most effective program in finding the most instances of plagiarism from the various sources, including the e-book. They were most impressed with Turnitin software. Retrieved 3-16-2007, from http://www.coloradocollege.edu/Library/Course/downloading_detectives_paper.htm.

Scaife evaluated eleven online plagiarism detection services, including Turnitin. An academic panel of six aided this study and commented on the evaluation criteria. In summary, Turnitin scored the highest in the study’s evaluation matrix compared to all other plagiarism detection services. Retrieved 4-12-2009, from http://www.jiscpas.ac.uk.

This report details the implementation recommendations of Turnitin at Britain’s Oxford Brookes University. The study suggests that all schools require students to submit to Turnitin at least one assignment in one required module in stage 1, and one assignment in a required module in stage 2. Among several other implementation recommendations, the study suggests that Turnitin be used with all dissertation modules or synoptic modules for programs of study. Retrieved 4-4-2009, from http://thesu.com.

Britain’s ifs School of Finance offers distance learning to financial professionals around the world. The school wished to engage students in issues of academic integrity. Upon introducing TurnitinUK, the school recognized the educational value of Turnitin in allowing students to rewrite their material based upon their Originality Report. In February 2006, the students submitted 829 writing assignments and found possible plagiarism in 5.31%, according to a specified
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However, in November 2006, after allowing students to submit their essays to Turnitin and make changes to the essay based upon that feedback, the investigation revealed 4.72% of plagiarism among those essays submitted. Over the course of the entire year, by coupling Turnitin with PLATO (Plagiarism Teaching On-line), both of which were used as educational tools, cases of potential plagiarism continued to drop from 5.31% to 3.95%. Shaw points out that the majority of the decreases came when students submitted their work themselves. In fact, the potential plagiarism within papers submitted for the students holds at 5 to 6% compared to 1.5 to 2% potential plagiarism in work students submit themselves. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.plagiarismconference.org/pages/conference-2008/conference-proceedings.php.


The School of Pharmacy at the University of Auckland surveyed all students in their third year (98 students) and fourth year (74 students) of work toward their Bachelor of Pharmacy degree. From the 172 total number of students, 110 responded (64%). Students were asked questions about awareness of university policies, purpose of Turnitin, use of Turnitin, feedback from tutors, feedback wanted from tutors, student views on Turnitin, and student views on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. The results specific to Turnitin are detailed below.

All participants in the study had submitted their work to Turnitin prior to the survey. From a five-point Likert scale, 41.6% of the responses suggested that Turnitin helped students to improve originality of their own essays and document outside sources correctly. Sixty-six percent of students said they would be more diligent in correctly citing work when submitting papers to Turnitin. Eighty-seven percent of the respondents said using Turnitin with their assignments was a good idea, with only 34% indicating that such use perhaps suggested the University didn’t trust students. Students did suggest that they wished to receive more feedback from tutors regarding their Turnitin submissions and results. Retrieved 1-12-2009, from EBSCOhost database (www.ebscohost.com).


This report was in response to a March 2004 request from the Eastern Kentucky University Ad Hoc Academic Integrity Committee to determine issues of academic honesty that were occurring at EKU. Surveys were given to faculty, first-year graduates, and continuing undergraduates. EKU purchased their assessment guide from The Center for Academic Integrity at Rutgers University. Dr. Don McCabe, founding president of The Center for Academic Integrity, administered the web-based assessment in the Fall of 2004. While the study detailed on how each group perceives cheating and types of cheating observed, it revealed a disconnect between what the faculty perceives as cheating versus what students perceive as cheating. Students saw some items as trivial while the faculty saw all items on the list as at least moderate forms of cheating, such as copying a few sentences of material and fabricating or falsifying a bibliography. One of the recommendations for EKU in response to this survey was to use software “such as Turnitin.” Retrieved 3-15-2009, from http://www.academicintegrity.eku.edu/survey_results/Acad_Integrity_Final_Report.pdf.

Student opinion for development of recommendations on the use of Turnitin in the academic year 2008/2009. (2009) Britain’s Oxford Brookes University asked students through the Student Union how Turnitin should be used. This approach yielded 75 responses. Most of the students (44%) preferred the use of Turnitin in all modules. Furthermore, 33% of the students would like to view their reports prior to submitting their final drafts. Fifty-seven percent believed that students should be told at the beginning of the semester that Turnitin is being used. Eighty-five percent of the students believed that Turnitin should be used as a learning tool. Retrieved 1-10-2009, from Oxford Brookes Student Union website: http://www.thesu.com.

This qualitative case study at South-Coast University involved a trial of Turnitin in 2004. Participants included 2,000 students and seven teachers. Staff members were interviewed three times: initially, before Turnitin training; medially, after software training; and finally, at implementation. Staff were observed using the software during the final interview. The initial interviews revealed that instructors felt the software would save them from the task of searching for plagiarism and would, in fact, identify plagiarism for them. Following training, instructors were worried that the work would be quite time consuming, requiring investigating each report. At the final interview, they recognized that Turnitin was able to detect issues of plagiarism in student writing. They did recognize also that Turnitin could be beneficial as an instructional tool to teach academic integrity through exercises devised for each subject. Staff did mention that students would need instruction on site navigation. Retrieved 1-11-2009, from http://ro.uow.edu/au/jutlp/vol2/iss3/10/.


Turnitin was tested at Curtin University of Technology in August to November 2007. The study investigated three aspects of Turnitin: its effectiveness in aiding faculty in identifying plagiarism, the necessary administrative needs to implement and use Turnitin, and the support from the faculty for Turnitin. The interviews conducted after the trial showed that almost 90% of those who participated said they would use Turnitin the following year. Eighty percent said that their increase in workload was two hours or less per week, but this could be decreased by having students upload their own assignments. However nearly 50% either agreed or strongly agreed that their time searching for plagiarism decreased. There were few technical issues with the software. Retrieved 1-10-2009, from Curtin University of Technology Academic Integrity at Curtin website: http://academicintegrity.curtin.edu.au/finalreport.html.


This paper was presented in response to Cranfield University's policy to prevent students from submitting their work multiple times to Turnitin. The authors voiced alarm about banning the type of formative assessment that multiple submissions provide, suggesting: “both students and teachers are trained to recognize that Turnitin should be regarded only as a tool to assist in the detection of plagiarism. It is designed to be used in tandem with (rather than entirely replace) traditional measures for assessing academic integrity (such as identifying abrupt changes in written structure and style).” The authors provide examples of ways to use Turnitin for intentional cheating; however, they recognize that students often plagiarize due to their lack of understanding regarding citing and integrating outside sources. Retrieved 3-17-2009, from http://www.plagiarismconference.org/pages/conference-2008/conference-proceedings.php.