

CASE STUDY 2: Norma Smurfit Academic Integrity - Library Turnitin Developments

Academic year 2021-22

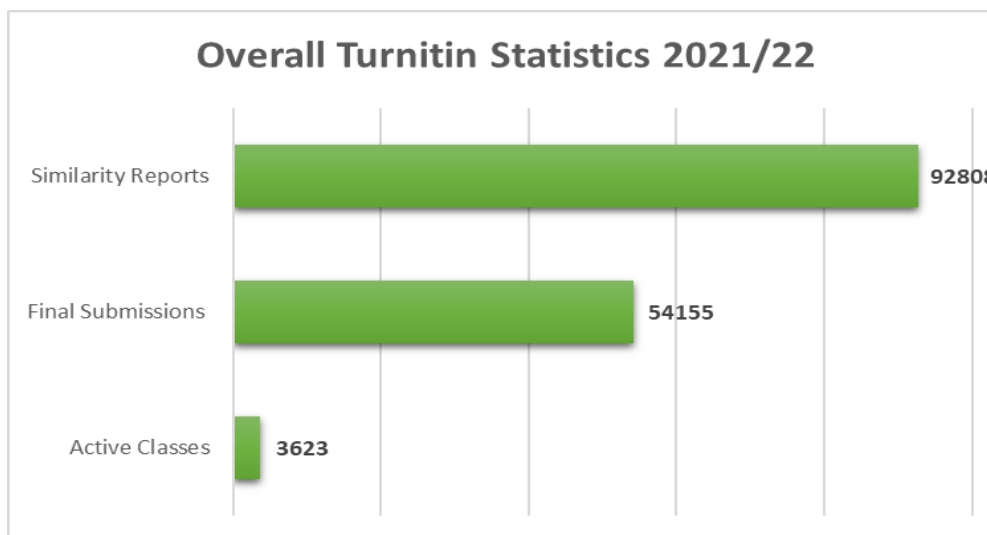


Fig.1. Overall Turnitin account statistics for the academic year 2021/22

Introduction and Context:

For the academic year 2021-22 the Library's main aim, in terms of Turnitin, was to continue to educate students and staff on how best to understand and utilise Turnitin. This work first began when the library was part of an inter-departmental working group, originally set up in February 2018, to examine the use of Turnitin within the college. One takeaway from this working group was the need to provide additional training to staff, primarily lecturers, on how to make the most of Turnitin in terms of grading papers and providing feedback to students, as well as identifying possible cases of plagiarism and how to deal with them. The other main concern was how to change students' attitudes to Turnitin, in terms of viewing it as a possible aid to better academic writing instead of something to be feared. Below are some of the initiatives the library undertook, in the past academic year, in order to contribute to the above aims of changing staff and students' relationship and attitude towards Turnitin.

Summary of Initiatives Undertaken in 2021-22:

Turnitin Guide and FAQs

One of the main methods the library uses to provide instruction to users is through LibGuides which are online guides that cover different subjects, such as Cloud Computing and Psychology but also things like Library Essentials and Referencing. The library's Turnitin LibGuide includes links to Turnitin's instructional videos as well as similarity report tips and Turnitin misconceptions. The guide has become more popular over time and was viewed 4,295 times in 2021/22. It is particularly well used during the busy assignment submission periods, such as November each year when it averages around 1,000 views for the month.

The guide also includes a Turnitin **FAQs** section where students and staff can search for questions or submit one if they do not find an answer. These Turnitin FAQs have high public views particularly those in relation to similarity scores or reports such as, "What does the colour on my Similarity Report mean?", which had 3772 views in 2021/22. This highlights one of the main concerns that we wanted to address with our guide and FAQs, the fixation students seemed to have with the similarity

score or percentage and their misunderstanding of what it meant. To address this, we try to include several FAQs and information boxes emphasizing the fact that having similarities does not equate to plagiarizing and that Turnitin simply finds similarities and does not determine whether a student has quoted or cited correctly.

The Turnitin guide also includes a staff tab which provides links for staff to complete Turnitin training as well as instructions for setting up assignments and detecting plagiarism and there are also staff specific FAQs available. The decision was made to have both the staff and student resources available to all, in one place, it was felt that this would further help to demystify the whole process behind Turnitin for students as they could see how and for what their lecturers used it.

Draft Coach

Since 2018 students have been allowed to make multiple draft submissions to their Moodle submission point, and although this was a welcome and necessary step it still caused a certain amount of doubt and apprehension for students. Students were hesitant about submitting drafts to their module submission points on Moodle and there are also certain restrictions in place for this system in terms of how many drafts one can submit within a certain timeframe. For these reasons Turnitin's Draft Coach feature is a very welcome development and one the college will be adopting for the coming academic year, 2022-23. This new feature will allow students to run similarity, citation, and grammar checks on their work prior to submitting it to Moodle. It can be done through Word Online or Google Docs, and the library has an additional guide and FAQs prepared relating to the use of Draft Coach. The average number of draft submissions being made per student per assignment through Turnitin (Moodle plugin) for the 2021/22 academic year was less than 1 draft so it is hoped that by introducing Draft Coach it will increase students' use of editing and redrafting to improve their academic writing.

Library Help Centre

The Library Help Centre is a very important service within the library in terms of helping students with all areas of academic writing and study. The Help Centre is also a very important resource for students who want to better understand their similarity reports and then, if necessary, improve their referencing. With the changes to the draft submissions policy students can now go to the Library Help Centre and seek advice on their similarity report before making their final submission and the introduction of Draft Coach has made it even easier for the Help Centre to evaluate students' similarity reports at an earlier stage.

Conclusion and Future Plans:

The Library, during the 2021/22 academic year, has been part of a wider effort to improve student and staff understanding of Turnitin and to dispel many of the misconceptions around it. There is an effort to bring it out into the open as opposed to it being a software working in the background and something to be feared. We have attempted to highlight as much as possible that **similarity does not equal plagiarism** and that students should see Turnitin as a tool to help improve referencing, paraphrasing, and academic writing in general. The Library must continue to update its guides and FAQs in order to ensure students are getting accurate information. The FAQs, in particular, is an area where more might be done, we currently have 42 Turnitin specific questions but there is scope there to increase this number. Promotion and awareness are also vital elements. In 2021 the library added a link to the Turnitin guide to all other guides and this led to an increase in public views. The library also participated in Academic Integrity Week 2021 and 2022 and this is a good annual opportunity to promote some of the library resources in this area. Draft Coach will be rolled out in the coming academic year, and this will need to be continually promoted and supported. Another recent development is in the area of AI generated text and we will need to monitor how Turnitin plans to deal with this issue and how quickly they can implement new technologies into their

finished product using Turnitin's Artificial Intelligence detection interface, which is due to be launched later in 2023.