Interpreting the similarity score

Originality Check does not check for plagiarism in a piece of work. Instead, it checks a user's work against its extensive database. If instances are found where a user's writing is similar to or matches against a source this will be flagged for your review in the match overview.

The database includes billions of web pages: both current and archived content from the Internet, a repository of works students have submitted to Turnitin in the past, and a collection of documents, which comprises thousands of periodicals, journals, and publications.

The color of the similarity score in My Files is based on the amount of matching text in a document.

What do the similarity score colors indicate?

The percentage range is 0% to 100% with the possible similarity indices being:

- **Light blue**: 0% matching text
- **Dark blue**: 1-24% matching text
- **Yellow**: 25-49% matching text
- **Orange**: 50-74% matching text
- **Red**: 75-100% matching text
A document’s quotes and bibliography can be discounted from the similarity score.

**Similarity scoring scenarios**

A high similarity score does not always suggest that a piece of writing has been plagiarized, just as a low similarity score does not always indicate that no plagiarism has occurred. Consider the following scenarios:

1. Submitting a document of considerable size could result in a 0% similarity score with a report that still contains matches. This is because the similarity score has been rounded to 0%, rather than being exactly 0%.

2. You may have submitted multiple drafts of the same paper to your institution’s private repository, meaning your final draft has resulted in a score of 100%. To avoid this issue, we advise that you only submit your final draft to the private repository.

3. An individual within your institution has managed to acquire a copy of your document. They submit this document to the institution’s private repository and receive a similarity score of 25%. You submit your original document a week later to the private repository but receive a 100% similarity score.