

Quick Guide - MyAberdeen: SafeAssign (Staff)

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Introduction to SafeAssign

[SafeAssign](#), is an originality checking tool that is embedded within MyAberdeen assessments (other tools, such as the 3rd party integration tool, [Turnitin](#) is also available). SafeAssign is based on a unique text matching algorithm providing a means of comparing student's work with previously submitted papers and published articles from several databases, including the following:

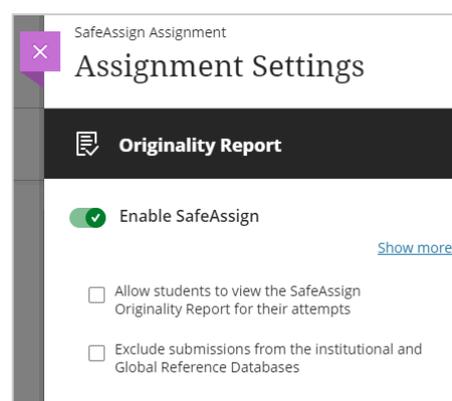
- Internet: SafeAssign searches across the broader internet for matching text using an internal search service.
- ProQuest ABI/Inform database: over 3000 publication titles and about 4.5 million articles
- Institutional document archives: papers submitted by our students at the University of Aberdeen. Papers are automatically added to this database upon submission and are only used when checking other assignments from the same institution.
- Global Reference Database: over 15 million papers voluntarily submitted by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism.

Once a paper is submitted in SafeAssign, a report is generated that indicates the percentage of the paper that matches existing sources. The overall score can be an indicator that you may need to review the paper more closely. The SafeAssign report also shows the suspected source for each section of the paper that returns a match.

Setting up SafeAssign in your Ultra Course View

You can use SafeAssign to check for potential plagiarism in student submissions for both assignments and tests in the Ultra Course View.

1. Open **Assignment Settings** or **Test Settings** in a new or existing assessment.
2. Under **Originality Report**, select **Enable SafeAssign**
3. The SafeAssign panel opens with the following options:
 - a. Allow students to view the SafeAssign Originality Report for their attempts (**Good practice**: select allow your students to view their originality reports to enable them to learn from this experience and to improve their academic writing skills, however please do check with your School as they may have their own policies regarding allowing the viewing of originality reports).
 - b. Exclude submissions from the institutional and Global Reference Databases (**Good practice**: do not tick this option as the more items in the database then the more opportunity to cross refer submissions for originality checking. However, if your



Quick Guide - MyAberdeen: SafeAssign (Staff)

assignment is only a draft submission and you expect your students to submit their final assignment elsewhere do feel free to select this option).

4. Click on **Save** to save your SafeAssign settings.

Suggestion: SafeAssign cannot be applied retrospectively to an assignment if submissions have already been made to the assignment area. You can opt to turn on or off the option for students to view their originality report.

When you enable the Originality Report, an **Originality** column is added to the **Submissions** page. Scan the list to quickly determine which submissions may include plagiarised material.

SafeAssign results are hidden while anonymous grading is enabled. After you post grades and names are shown, you can then view the SafeAssign results and the Originality Reports.

Multiple Submissions

The assignment tool allows you to select whether students have a single attempt, multiple attempts or unlimited attempts. Where multiple/unlimited attempts are permitted, SafeAssign will not check against any previous attempts from the same student to the same assignment

During Submission

When students access an Assignment that has SafeAssign, they will see on the right handside, Originality Report, SafeAssign enabled. Clicking on the SafeAssign enabled text, opens a panel that details the types of files which can be submitted. If, when enabling SafeAssign, you did NOT select the option 'exclude submissions from the institutional and Global Reference Databases', then students have the option to select the box to submit their work to the [Global Reference Database](#).

The [list of file types](#) that are allowed by SafeAssign are as follows: .doc, .docx, .ppt, .pptx, .odt, .txt, .rtf, .pdf, .htm and .html. Any other file types will not be checked. SafeAssign also accepts ZIP files and processes files that match any of the above file types.

Note: Maximum file size is 10MB

After Submission

Once a student has made a submission attempt, they will be taken to the Review Submission History screen where they will be able to see the file(s) they uploaded plus any previous submission attempts they made.

If your students are permitted to see the SafeAssign report, on the right hand side of the screen there will be a SafeAssign section. Until the report has completed, the status will show as Report in Progress. Students can return to this screen by opening the assignment from the relevant content area.

Quick Guide - MyAberdeen: SafeAssign (Staff)

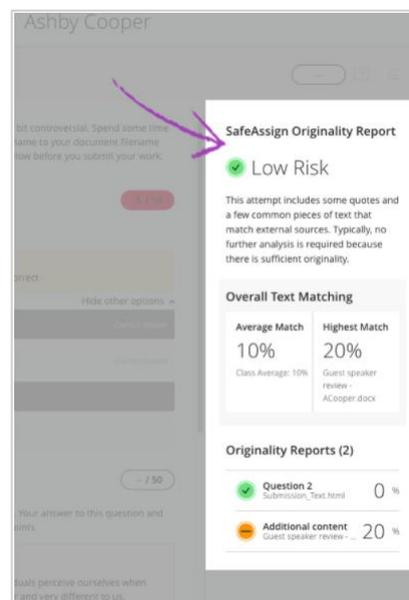
When the report has completed, the student will see a percentage match and can expand the SafeAssign section to view the report.

The SafeAssign Report

Shortly after processing a submission, a [SafeAssign report](#) is generated, this is accessed from the panel to the right of the submission so you can view the analysis in context. The report details the percentage of text in the submitted paper that matches existing sources and shows suspected sources for each section. You can opt to dismiss match from the report and then refresh the report, you can also opt to re-include the dismissed match.

There are three sections, Overall Risk, Overall Text Matching and Originality Reports.

- **Overall Risk:** shows whether the attempt is low, medium or high risk for plagiarism. The risk level is determined based on the average text matching range the attempts falls in.
- **Overall Text Matching:** shows the average and highest text match for the pieces of the attempt, including file attachments. To find out more, select any of the items in the Originality Report section to view the full report.
- **Originality Report:** shows the percent of potential matching text for each piece of your submission, this includes file submissions, text in the add content field for tests and assignments, as well as text typed into essay questions. Select any of the entries in the list to view the results in a new window.



As mentioned previously SafeAssign recognises multiple attempts by the same student for the same assignment but does not check the contents of the current attempt against content from previous submissions. If the student includes more than one attachment with an assignment they are listed in the report.

Interpreting the SafeAssign Report

Note that there are different ways of [interpreting the SafeAssign scores](#), depending upon the situation. The final decision rests with the academic as to whether the context and the degree of matching is acceptable and what could potentially be considered as plagiarism. The SafeAssign report should be used as a number of mechanisms to inform academic judgement as to whether there has been any academic misconduct.

Suggestion: tools such as SafeAssign and Turnitin cannot detect everything and the final decision rests with your own academic judgement regarding academic misconduct.

Sentence matching scores represent the percentage probability that two phrases have the same meaning. This number reflects the reciprocal to the probability that these two phrases are similar by chance. For example, a score of 90 percent means that this is a 90 percent probability that

Quick Guide - MyAberdeen: SafeAssign (Staff)

these two phrases are the same. There is a 10 percent probability that they are similar by chance and not because the submitted paper includes content from the existing source, whether appropriately referenced or not.

The overall SafeAssign score indicates the probability that the submitted paper contains matches to existing sources. This score is a warning indicator only. Review papers to see if the matches are properly referenced or not.

- **Low:** scores generally below 15 percent, these papers typically include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text that match other documents. Typically, these papers don't require further analysis as there is no evidence of plagiarism
- **Medium:** typically scores between 15 and 40 percent, these papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they include plagiarism. Review these papers to determine if the matching text is properly referenced
- **High:** usually over 40 percent, indicates a high probability that text in these papers was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess and need to be reviewed for plagiarism.

Quick Guide - MyAberdeen: SafeAssign (Staff)

Further Resources

- [Course Design Guidelines](#)
- [eLearning Webpages](#)
- [Toolkit: Staff tools for Blended Learning](#)
- [Quick Guide – MyAberdeen: Turnitin \(Staff\)](#)
- Blackboard: [SafeAssign](#)
- Blackboard: [SafeAssign in Your Ultra Course View](#)
- Blackboard: [File Types](#)
- Blackboard: [SafeAssign Report](#)
- Blackboard: [Interpreting the SafeAssign Scores](#)
- Blackboard: [Instructor Questions About SafeAssign](#)