Electronic Assessment Handling #216615

TurnItIn Vs. SafeAssign Comparison Analysis

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Last modified: 13 September 2013
Version   3.0

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1. Introduction

1.1. Purpose of this document

The purpose of this document is to assess the benefits and opportunities offered by TurnItIn (TII) as compared with SafeAssign (SA).

1.2. Project Background

This project was formed to address the immediate business requirements of:

- Providing an efficient online assessment system as directed by the *Griffith Online* initiative and the *Griffith 2020 IT Strategic Directions* paper endorsed by the University Executive Group in October 2012 which promotes "digital as the preferred method for information sharing – reducing the need to use and manage paper".
- Enhancing the student experience through digital management of assessment. Increasingly, students have expressed dissatisfaction with both the time taken to mark assessment items and dissemination of assessment results.
- Improving academic integrity processes through the removal of *dual submission.*
- Introducing the potential for faster turnaround times for assignment marking and feedback through an integrated electronic marking system that includes originality checking, electronic marking and return.
- Promoting sustainability by reducing the environmental impact of printing, handling, storage, transport and disposal of paper-based assignments.

The aim of this project is to deliver a solution that enhances the student experience through end-to-end digital management of assessment.

1.3. Summary of Key Differences

The following table provides a brief summary of the key differences between TurnItIn and SafeAssign.

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFEASSIGN
SOURCES USED FOR TEXT COMPARISON	300+ million student papers 24+ billion web pages 90,000 journals, periodicals & books	- Student volunteers to add to Global Reference Database - Actual numbers not publicly available 1,100 publication titles & 2.6 million articles
PEERMARK	Available NOTE: Not in our current version – plans to include in the future	Not available
ONLINE MARKING	GradeMark – allows paperless online marking of submissions	No online marking functionality
RUBRICS	3 rubric styles available	No rubrics available
PAPER ANNOTATION	GradeMark allows the instructor to add comments, add the grade & apply rubrics online	No paper annotation functionality
FILE SIZE LIMITS	20MB with a minimum of 20 words of text	10MB with maximum of 5,000 sentences

ALLOW SUBMISSION AFTER DUE DATE	▪ Yes, highlighted in red text	▪ Not available
DIGITAL RECEIPT	▪ Email notification that provides printable page with paper ID & page 1 of document	▪ No email notification available
MARK VISIBILITY	▪ TII is fully integrated with L@G MarkCentre ▪ Marks can be viewed in MarkCentre & in the TII inbox	▪ Marks need to be manually added to MarkCentre
MARKED PAPER DISTIBUTION	▪ Students can access their marked paper & can download as a PDF, with all marking & feedback visible on the document.	▪ No ability to distribute a marked paper as there is no online marking.

2. TurnItIn

TurnItIn improves the student writing cycle by preventing plagiarism and providing rich feedback to students. It comprises:

- *OriginalityCheck* – ensures original work by checking submitted papers against 24+ billion web pages, 300+ million student papers and leading library databases and publications.
- *GradeMark* – saves time and improves feedback through online grading where standard and customised marks appear directly on the student's paper.
- *PeerMark* – Engages students in the writing process by providing structured, anonymous feedback of other student's written work.

It's used by more than 10,000 institutions in 126 countries to manage the submission, tracking and evaluation of student papers online.

NOTE: Griffith University's current version of TurnItIn does not support *PeerMark*.

3. SafeAssign

SafeAssign is a tool used to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. It compares submitted assignments against a set of sources to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works and is effective as both a deterrent and an educational tool. It's based on a text-matching algorithm that analyses submission text against multiple data sources including:

- *Institutional document archives* – contains all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users in their respective institutions.
- *Global reference database* – contains over 15 million papers volunteered by students from BlackBoard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism.
- *ProQuest AB/Inform database* – more than 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly.
- *Internet* – searches across the broader internet for matching text using the Yahoo! BOSS search service as the underlying internet index provider.

4. TurnItIn Vs. SafeAssign

The following comparison tables have been generated from the University of Queensland's elearning website page: http://www.elearning.uq.edu.au/content/turnitn-vs-safeassign

NOTE: University of Queensland were considering the potential loss/gain of functionality moving from TurnItIn to SafeAssign and were using the basic version of TurnItIn. Griffith University is considering the potential loss/gain of functionality moving from SafeAssign to TurnItIn and is using the direct plugin version of TurnItIn. This differing focus has been reflected in the comparison tables below.

4.1. General Comparisons

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFE ASSIGN	COMMENTS
LICENCE FEE COST	Annual licence fee.	Included in Blackboard licence (no extra cost).	TurnItIn licence requires additional expenditure & is comparatively expensive to the overall cost of Blackboard.
STUDENT PAPERS CHECKS	Currently checks against 300+ million student papers (as at Aug 2013), Instructors select the repository that is used, or if no repository is used.	When a student submits a SafeAssignment, their file will be added to the institutional database unless the SafeAssignment is a 'draft' (The student also has the option of submitting the file to the Global Reference Database, but this is entirely voluntary).	Actual numbers not publicly provided for SA, but TII numbers have previously been much higher due to wider usage.
INTERNET CHECKS	Currently checks against 24+ billion web pages indexed (as at Aug 2013).	Internet - comprehensive index of documents available for public access on the Internet including Google Scholar.	Actual numbers not publicly provided for SA, but TII numbers have previously been much higher due to wider usage.
ONLINE JOURNALS, DATABASES CHECKS	Currently checks against 90,000+ journals, periodicals & books (as at Aug 2011).	ProQuest ABI/Inform database with over 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from '90s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access).	Possibly equivalent.
COPIES OF STUDENT PAPERS KEPT	Submission to the repository (or not) is configured by the instructor when the assignment submission point is set up.	Global Reference Database containing papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism.	TII enables instructors to select repository submission while SA is a student opt-in process.
PAPERS SUBMITTED TO GU	All assignments created in TII since it was introduced at GU have been added to the archives if configured that way by the instructor.	Institutional document archives containing all papers submitted to SA by users in their respective institutions.	As TII is reliant on instructor configuration, clear guidance (policy & process) will need to be provided to ensure consistency.

TIME FOR ORIGINALITY REPORT TO BE GENERATED	Produces Originality Report in a couple of minutes.	Between 30 seconds to a couple of minutes.	Equivalent functionality.
PEERMARK	PeerMark: allows Peer-marking function NOTE: Not currently available in our BlackBoard Direct Plugin version, however there are plans to include PeerMark in the future.	Not available.	Functionality gain if included in our future Direct Plugin version.
ONLINE MARKING	GradeMark – common comments and saveable comments in drag and drop style - allowing for paperless online marking of submissions.	No online marking functionality.	Most obvious gain of functionality that may assist in the effective roll-out of Griffith Online initiative.
RUBRICS	3 styles of rubrics (Standard, Custom & Qualitative) that can be saved, edited, shared and applied.	No rubrics or marking functionality.	Limitations with rubric functionality may affect widespread adoption. GBS maintains ALEC, a purpose-built rubric database, so TII may not address their specific requirements.
SUPPORT	Online support ticketing system. TII vendor support is generally less than optimal and slow to respond. Currently establishing service level agreement to address this & TII is looking at setting up an Australian-based support centre in 2014.	Online support ticketing system with Blackboard support.	Australian-based support centre would assist in rapid support response.
UPLOADING ON BEHALF OF STUDENTS	Instructors can upload on behalf of students, and can submit for unenrolled students.	Instructors may upload papers directly with the DirectSubmit feature, without student involvement.	Equivalent functionality.
INTEGRATION WITH MARKCENTRE	Integrated with BlackBoard MarkCentre.	Integrated with BlackBoard MarkCentre.	Equivalent functionality.
BLACKBOARD INTEGRATION	Assignments can be added to any content area in BlackBoard.	Assignments appear in courses as a new content type and can be added to any course content area.	Equivalent functionality.
FILE SIZE LIMITS	Overall file size allowed is 20MB. Must contain at least 20 words of text.	Overall file size allowed is 10MB. Maximum of 5000 sentences.	Increased file size with TII.
URL LINK	Originality Reports available in 4 formats	Direct URL to report that can be emailed to others.	

	within system (Match Overview, All Sources, Match Breakdown & Direct Source Comparison).		
STUDENTS VIEW REPORTS	Yes - determined by instructor settings	If instructors enable student viewing, each student can view the reports for their own submitted papers.	Comparable functionality.

4.2. Instructor Workflow Comparison

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFE ASSIGN	COMMENTS
CREATE A PAPER ASSIGNMENT	Use 'more' menu in content area, add TurnItIn assignment, no option to add a file to assignment while creating it (although this is a feature that will be available in a newer version of TurnItIn).	Use 'evaluation' menu in content area, has availability dates, select draft and 'urgent checking' (Sets papers to a high priority in the queue.), has "optional announcement" to auto-add a message to announcements. No option to add a file to assignment while creating it.	Neither option currently provides the option for instructor to add a file to the assignment, which would be very useful for cover sheets, examples etc. TII has announced that this feature will be added in the future.
INSTRUCTORS VIEW ASSIGNMENTS	Through TurnItIn tool in control panel – takes you to the TurnItIn inbox.	Through SafeAssign tool in control panel where you have two options either to view/ edit assignments in the course, or manage and upload papers to the service.	
ALLOW SUBMISSION AFTER DUE DATE	Yes – determined by instructor setting. If late submission is enabled, late submission will be highlighted in red.	Not available.	Potential policy considerations if late submission is enabled.
INSTRUCTORS ADD PAPERS	Through the content area where the students access, or through the control panel – inbox. Upload one file only per student Can add paper for enrolled or unenrolled student. Copy and paste option.	Through the control panel. One file only. Option to choose whether or not to add to institutional search database. Option to copy and paste assignment instead of upload. Does not appear to allow an instructor to upload on behalf of a student. Paper ID. No submission	

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFE ASSIGN	COMMENTS
	Provision of paper ID and submission receipts	receipt provided.	
ACCEPTABLE FILE FORMATS	MS Word, WordPerfect, PostScript, PDF, HTML, RTF and plain text.	.zip, .doc, .docx, .odt, .txt, .pdf, .rtf and .html	Neither system allows PowerPoint.
INBOX OPTIONS FOR INSTRUCTORS	Go to course tools, TurnItIn assignments – click view. Open file – either original or in document viewer Can export inbox as spreadsheet Can delete attempts & view report percentages of all submitted papers	Go to course tools, SafeAssign – click on the SafeAssignment link. Use drop down box to select view submissions. Can open or save files individually Can delete attempts & view report percentage of all submitted papers	TII provides more functionality.
DOWNLOAD PAPER - INSTRUCTORS	Download not available from MarkCentre column. Multiple options available from inbox (single or all).	Download not available from MarkCentre column. Download all papers in a batch (cannot select specific papers), or individual papers.	Can select specific papers to download in TII.
EXCLUDE REFERENCES & TEXT	An instructor has the option to exclude quoted and/or bibliography from the OriginalityReport when configuring the submission point or when viewing the OriginalityReport.	Can select/deselect sources and then re-run the report.	TII function to exclude references & text when viewing the OriginalityReport is simpler to use.

4.3. Student Workflow Comparison

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFE ASSIGN	COMMENTS
STUDENT SUBMIT PAPERS	Access through content area, click on link. Three step process, one is upload, two is confirm and submit, three is confirmation with digital receipt. Can attach one file only. Informs students of file types and file sizes.	Access through content area. Click on link, as with TurnItIn. Can attach file, tells student about file types. No info about file size or image size provided. Images must not exceed 2MB or the submission may fail.	While the TII process is three steps, it seems to provide students with more clarity about the process & includes the provision of a digital receipt.
AGREE TO SUBMIT	In submitting this work I confirm that this submission is my own work and I accept all responsibility for any	By submitting this paper, you agree: (1) to the Terms of Use at SafeAssign Terms of Use; (2) that your institution may use your	Comparable functionality.

	copyright infringement that may occur as a result of this submission.	paper in accordance with your institution's policies; and (3) that your use of SafeAssign will be without recourse against Blackboard Inc. and its affiliates.	
DIGITAL RECEIPT	"Your submission was successful" appears in green banner. Email notification also received that provides printable page, with paper ID, and page 1 of the document.	SafeAssignment successfully submitted for assignment "test safe assignment" appears in green banner like any other "success" notification in BlackBoard. No email notification provided.	TII provides more assurance to students of successful upload via provision of digital receipt.
ASSIGNMENT INFORMATION VIEWABLE BY STUDENT AFTER SUBMISSION	Students can view assignment information, including date & time submitted, can open & download submitted document, view matching report percentage/report (if that functionality set by instructor). Can also view grade if GradeMark is used and date set.	Student can click on the view/complete link in the content area, and see the assignment information, including date and time submitted, text of submitted doc, can download original doc, view matching report number/report (if that functionality set by instructor). Can also view any instructor comments, attached files and grade when graded via GradeCentre.	Comparable functionality.

4.4. Instructor Marking & Providing Feedback

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFEASSIGN	COMMENTS
'OPEN ATTEMPT' OPTION FROM WITHIN THE MARKCENTRE "VIEW GRADE DETAILS"	Doesn't display student name in this screen. Can clear attempt, open paper and originality report, add or change grade, add feedback to students, attach multiple files, and add instructor notes and attach multiple files.	Displays student name. Can add comments to students; attach file, change grade, open file and report, and see percentage matching result. Can clear attempt from that screen as well. No option to add grading notes.	Comparable functionality.
ONLINE MARKING	GradeMark using quick marks, add and save comments, use rubrics – marking guide. Full online marking capability and integration with MarkCentre.	No online marking facilities.	Most obvious gain of functionality that may assist in the effective roll-out of Griffith Online initiative.

MAKING ORIGINALITY REPORTS AVAILABLE TO STUDENTS	Originality reports are made available to students based on settings the instructor sets up when creating the assignment. Students can view and download papers from the content area in which the assignment is set up.	Originality reports are made available to students based on settings the instructor sets up when creating the assignment. Students can view and download papers from the content area in which the assignment is set up.	Comparable functionality.

4.5. Students Receiving Feedback

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFEASSIGN	COMMENTS
MARK VISIBILITY	Marks can be seen in my grades, and in the TurnItIn inbox. The post date will have an impact on when marks and feedback in TII are released to students. If academics don't want these visible immediately, there may be some confusion between *Reveal marks* & *Post dates* settings. E.g. they may hide the column in MarkCentre, but inadvertently make the mark visible to students within the TII inbox.	Mark is manually entered into MarkCentre.	Clear guidance to academics required to ensure accidental mark visibility does not occur.
PAPER ANNOTATION	The GradeMark functionality allows the instructor to add comments, add the grade, apply rubrics (marking guide) completely online	There is no paper annotation functionality in SA.	The online marking functionality of TII is superior.
MARKED PAPER DISTRIBUTION	Students can access their marked paper & can download as a PDF, with all marking and feedback visible on the document. They can also choose to download the originally submitted document, in its original format.	No ability to distribute a marked paper (because there is no online marking) instructors can attach a document to the GradeCentre feedback area, so a printed – marked and scanned document could be uploaded and added. Otherwise, instructors could download all submissions once they are all received, print, mark and distribute as normal.	The TII distribution process is superior.

Comparison Analysis

4.6. Reporting Capability

FEATURES	TURNITIN	SAFEASSIGN	COMMENTS
OVERALL CLASS PERFORMANCE	Data can be obtained from TurnItIn Web interface	Data can be extracted from Mark Centre	Comparable functionality.
SIMILARITY INDEX/ORIGINALITY REPORT STATISTICS	Data can be obtained from Turnitin Web interface or integration tool	To be determined (currently waiting on data from Learning@Griffith team to assess this).	To be determined.

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