

Blackboardlearn⁺

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SafeAssign Student Guide



Blackboard

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About SafeAssign

SafeAssign compares submitted assignments against a set of academic papers to identify areas of overlap between the submitted assignment and existing works. Safe Assign can be used to prevent plagiarism and to create opportunities to help students identify how to properly attribute sources rather than paraphrase. SafeAssign is effective as both a deterrent and an educational tool.

How SafeAssignments Work

SafeAssign is based on a unique text matching algorithm capable of detecting exact and inexact matching between a paper and source material. SafeAssignments are compared against several different databases, including:

- **Internet** – comprehensive index of documents available for public access on the Internet
- **ProQuest ABI/Inform database** – more than 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access)
- **Institutional document archives** – contains all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users in their respective institutions
- **Global Reference Database** – contains papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism

Global Reference Database

Blackboard's Global Reference Database is a separate database where students voluntarily donate copies of their papers to help prevent plagiarism. It is separated from each institution's internal database, where all papers are stored by each corresponding institution, and students are free to select the option to check their papers without submitting them to the Global Reference Database. Students submit their papers to the database voluntarily and agree not to remove papers in the future. Submissions to the Global Reference Database are extra copies that are given voluntarily for the purpose of helping with plagiarism prevention. Blackboard does not claim ownership of submitted papers.

SafeAssign Originality Reports

After a paper has been processed, a report will be available detailing the percentage of text in the submitted paper that matches existing sources. It also shows the suspected sources of each section of the submitted paper that returns a match. Instructors can remove matching sources from the report and process it again. This may be useful if the paper is a continuation of a previously submitted work by the same student.

Because SafeAssign identifies all matching blocks of text, it is important to read the report carefully and investigate whether or not the block of text is properly attributed.

Interpreting SafeAssign Scores

Sentence matching scores represent the percentage probability that two phrases have the same meaning. This number can also be interpreted as the reciprocal to the probability that these two phrases are similar by chance. For example, a score of 90 percent means that there is a 90 percent probability that these two phrases are the same and a 10 percent probability that they are similar by chance and not because the submitted paper includes content from the existing source (whether or not it is appropriately attributed).

Overall score is an indicator of what percentage of the submitted paper matches existing sources. This score is a warning indicator only and papers should be reviewed to see if the matches are properly attributed.

- **Scores below 15 percent:** These papers typical include some quotes and few common phrases or blocks of text that match other documents. These papers typically do not require further analysis, as there is no evidence of the possibility of plagiarism in these papers.
- **Scores between 15 percent and 40 percent:** These papers include extensive quoted or paraphrased material or they may include plagiarism. These papers should be reviewed to determine if the matching content is properly attributed.
- **Scores over 40 percent:** There is a very high probability that text in this paper was copied from other sources. These papers include quoted or paraphrased text in excess and should be reviewed for plagiarism.

Submit a SafeAssignment

SafeAssignments appear in content areas throughout courses.

Submit a SafeAssignment

Follow these steps to submit to a SafeAssignment.

1. From a content area within a course, select the SafeAssignment and click **View/Complete**.
2. The Upload SafeAssignment page will appear.
3. Complete the page using the table below as a guide.
4. Click **Submit**.

Upload Safe Assignment Fields

The Add SafeAssignment page includes the following fields.

FIELD	DESCRIPTION
Name	Displays the title of the SafeAssignment.
Instructions	Displays the instructions for the SafeAssignment.
Comments	Enter any comments for the Instructor in this field.
File to Attach	Click Browse to locate a file to upload as a SafeAssignment.
Global Reference Database	Select this option to upload your paper to the Global Reference Database. It will be used to check papers from other schools for plagiarism. The paper will only be used to check for plagiarism.

View Submissions

Student submissions and the SafeAssign reports associated with submissions are viewable by accessing the SafeAssignment using the View/Complete link after submitting the paper. This option is only available if allowed by the Instructor.

View Submissions

Follow these steps to view a Student submission.

1. Open the SafeAssignment by clicking **View/Complete**.
2. The submission will appear.
3. The following columns appear for each SafeAssignment:

Text: Select this option to view the Student's paper and any comments from the Student.

File: Select this option to download the Student Submission.

Matching: The percentage listed is the percentage of the paper that matches other sources. Please read the full report to determine if the matching is properly attributed.

SA Report: Select this option to view the full SafeAssign report.

SafeAssign Originality Reports

SafeAssign Originality Reports provide detailed information about the matches found between a submitted paper and existing sources. The SafeAssign report identifies all matching blocks of text. It is the responsibility of the instructor and student to investigate whether the matching text is properly referenced or not. Detailing every match prevents detection errors due to differences in citing standards.

Report layout

SafeAssign reports are divided into three sections:

- **Report Information:** This section lists data about the paper, such as the author, percent Matching, and when it was submitted. This section also includes options for downloading the report, emailing the report, or viewing a printable version. Note that the printable version may be the most effective view of the report for those users that rely on assistive technologies to access Blackboard Learn Course Delivery.
- **Suspected Sources:** This section lists the sources that have text that matches the text of the submitted paper. Users may select sources, exclude them from the review, and process the paper again. This is useful if a source is a previous work from the same student for the same assignment, or if there is some reason that lengthy sections of a particular source appear in the paper. Processing the paper again will generate a new value for the percent matching without using the excluded sources.
- **Manuscript Text:** This section shows the submitted paper. All matching blocks of text are identified. Clicking a matching block of text will display information about the original source and the probability that the block or sentence was copied from the source.