

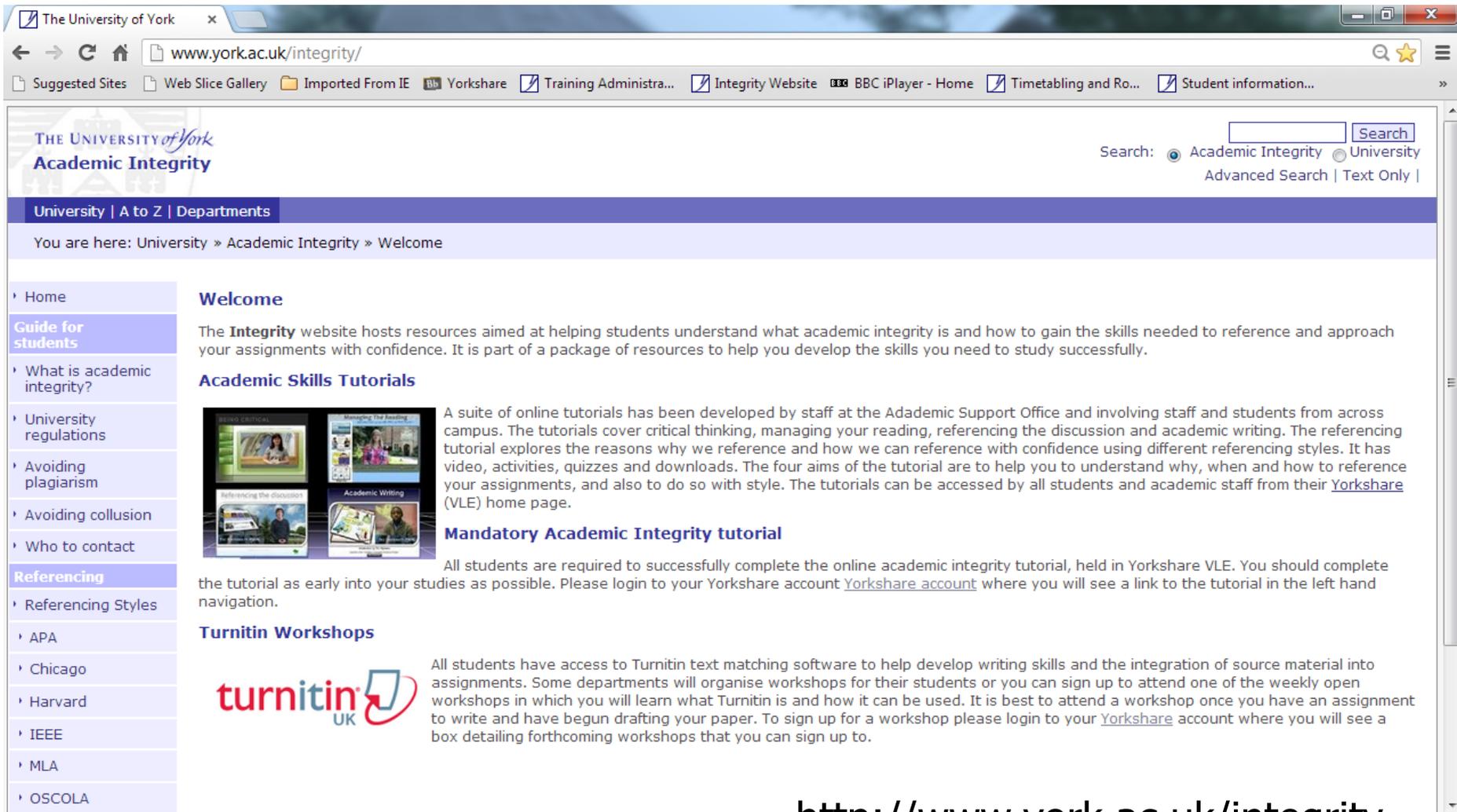


Assessing the value of a holistic use of Turnitin to promote academic integrity

Adrian Lee and Antony Edwards

Learning Enhancement Team, University of York, UK





The screenshot shows a web browser window with the URL www.york.ac.uk/integrity/. The page header includes the University of York logo and the text "Academic Integrity". A search bar is located in the top right corner. Below the header, there is a navigation menu with "University | A to Z | Departments" and a breadcrumb trail: "You are here: University » Academic Integrity » Welcome".

The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Welcome:** The **Integrity** website hosts resources aimed at helping students understand what academic integrity is and how to gain the skills needed to reference and approach your assignments with confidence. It is part of a package of resources to help you develop the skills you need to study successfully.
- Academic Skills Tutorials:** A suite of online tutorials has been developed by staff at the Academic Support Office and involving staff and students from across campus. The tutorials cover critical thinking, managing your reading, referencing the discussion and academic writing. The referencing tutorial explores the reasons why we reference and how we can reference with confidence using different referencing styles. It has video, activities, quizzes and downloads. The four aims of the tutorial are to help you to understand why, when and how to reference your assignments, and also to do so with style. The tutorials can be accessed by all students and academic staff from their [Yorkshare](#) (VLE) home page.
- Mandatory Academic Integrity tutorial:** All students are required to successfully complete the online academic integrity tutorial, held in Yorkshare VLE. You should complete the tutorial as early into your studies as possible. Please login to your Yorkshare account [Yorkshare account](#) where you will see a link to the tutorial in the left hand navigation.
- Turnitin Workshops:** All students have access to Turnitin text matching software to help develop writing skills and the integration of source material into assignments. Some departments will organise workshops for their students or you can sign up to attend one of the weekly open workshops in which you will learn what Turnitin is and how it can be used. It is best to attend a workshop once you have an assignment to write and have begun drafting your paper. To sign up for a workshop please login to your [Yorkshare](#) account where you will see a box detailing forthcoming workshops that you can sign up to.

The left-hand navigation menu includes the following items:

- Home
- Guide for students
- What is academic integrity?
- University regulations
- Avoiding plagiarism
- Avoiding collusion
- Who to contact
- Referencing
 - Referencing Styles
 - APA
 - Chicago
 - Harvard
 - IEEE
 - MLA
 - OSCOLA

<http://www.york.ac.uk/integrity>

Methods and Participants

Staff survey (using Google forms):

- 90 academic
- 22 admin/ support
- 18 postgrad tutors.



Semi-structured interviews:

- 17 academics
- 2 admin/ support.

Student survey (345):

- 43% Undergraduate
- 42% PG taught
- 14% PG research.



Semi-structured interviews:

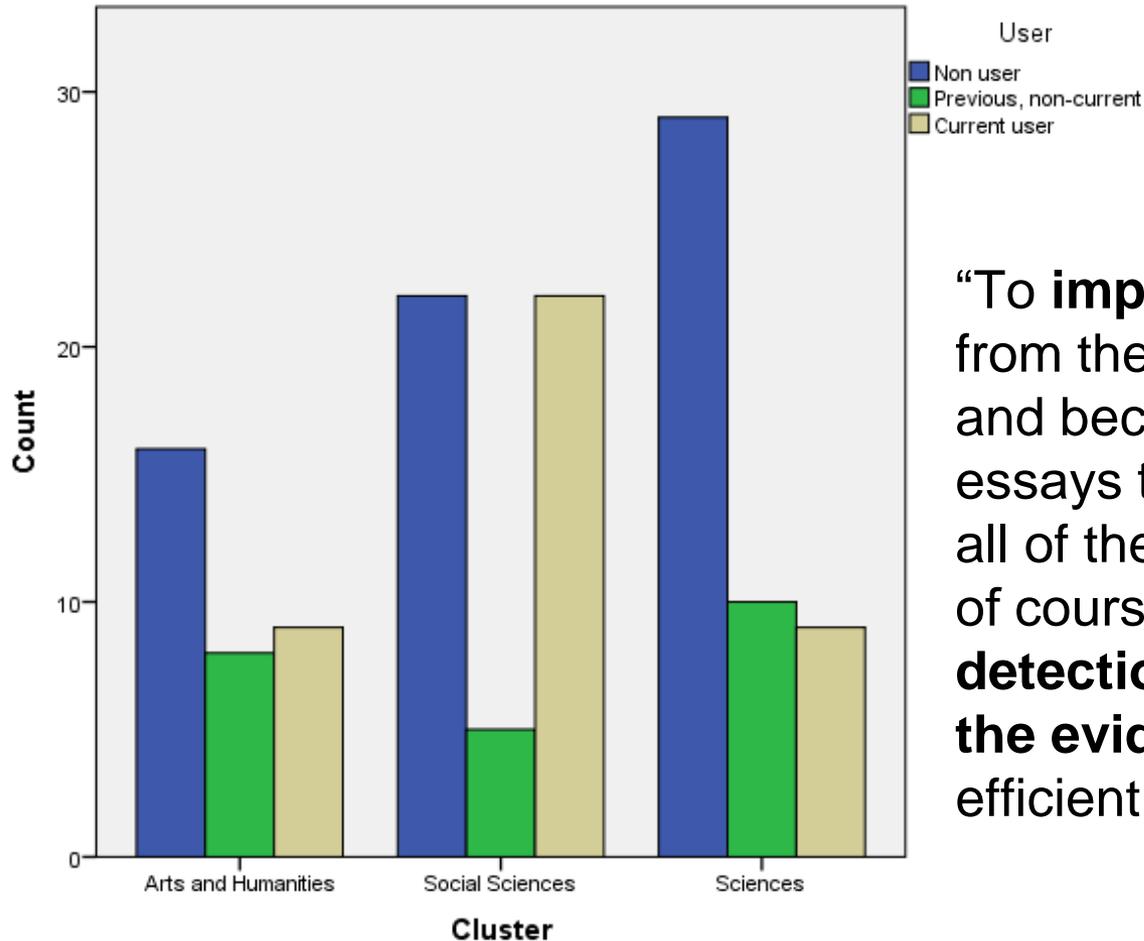
- 11 undergraduate
- 5 PG taught.



Turnitin use analysis and reports assessment.



Who, why and how?



“To **improve academic writing** right from the start, as early as possible, and because these first [Masters] essays they’re pretty hard to read. Not all of them, but usually they are... And of course it’s just **simple plagiarism detection**. And possibly **compiling the evidence** in a very effective efficient way” (Participant 7, Science).



Why not use Turnitin?

Table 3. Reasons why participants did not currently use Turnitin

	Arts and Humanities <i>n</i> =24	Social Sciences <i>n</i> =27	Sciences <i>n</i> =39	Total <i>n</i> =90
A Assessments in my modules do not necessitate using Turnitin	38%	22%	41%	34%
B I do not know enough about how Turnitin can be used to assess originality	13%	30%	31%	26%
I am happy with the existing strategies and tools I use to identify plagiarism (eg. Google searches, SafeAssign, changes in writing style)	8%	15%	18%	14%
Other reasons	13%	15%	5%	10%
It is not part of my role	13%	7%	5%	8%
C I lack awareness about Turnitin overall	4%	4%	10%	7%
My department has agreed not to use Turnitin	4%	0%	8%	4%
I do not have electronic copies of assignments	0%	4%	5%	3%
I view Turnitin as ineffective in detecting misconduct	0%	4%	5%	3%



- The main perceived reasons for student workshops were:
 - To raise awareness about plagiarism 84%
 - To develop academic writing skills 65%
 - To allow formative checking before marking 57%
 - To develop referencing skills 55%



The Value and Impact of Turnitin

- **Speculative:** “The conversations you have with students when you’re in the workshop with them... where they see actually, **although they might have got A’s in their A level results** and their A level work, and **they put that through Turnitin** and they realise ‘oh actually, hang on a minute, there’s a problem here. **Now we’re on a different level**’. **That light bulb moment is the impact I see**” (Participant 3, Social Science).
- **Qualified:** “We had tutorials [workshops]... for this Masters module, where students were shown how Turnitin works... And **I could see the difference in the submitted coursework, just by reading it...** I looked through the material without using Turnitin, marked it, and I could already see that **this was much smoother at least**” (Participant 7, Science).

Key Emerging Messages

Awareness:

- A need to address a lack of information/ mis-information

Perceptions:

- Can positively influence student awareness/ improve their work
- Opinions differ about the value detecting/ investigating misconduct
- Of limited value to checking non-traditional essay type assignments

Use:

- Cluster and department variation
- Some willingness to use Turnitin – with caveats
- Build on the staff training if it affects take-up and confidence

Feedback:

- Get the message to students right
- Consider broader contexts of (online) marking and feedback...
- ...Linked to the desirability (or not) of University-wide Turnitin policy...
- ...And robust, balanced misconduct policies and procedures.