



Springer Nature Guide

USING CROSSREF SIMILARITY CHECK – TIPS AND TRICKS

(Powered by iThenticate)

For journals, books and proceedings

Tips and tricks – how to interpret the results

This is a one-page document that may be used as a quick reference guide. For more detailed information please check the [Springer Nature Crossref Similarity Check guide](#) or the [training page of iThenticate](#).

Crossref Similarity Check is a tool for detecting text similarities. It does not detect plagiarism. Any similarities *may* be an indication of plagiarism. If the similarity report is showing matching text, the following points can assist you with interpreting the results.

- It is more important to look at the individual scores of the sources than the overall similarity index. This example is applicable to a document of **approximately 5,000 words**.

Percentages:	Action required?
Individual score 1-5%	In general no sign of potential plagiarism
Individual score >10%	Should be screened quickly
Individual score >20%	Should be checked carefully

- A **low similarity score** does not mean there is **no** plagiarism.
- A **high similarity score** does not mean there **is** plagiarism.
- When you find a very high similarity percentage (for example 80%) for an article that has already been published it is most likely that the match found is to the paper itself. If this happens, the source needs to be excluded from the matches.
- Please be alert to false positives. False positives could be methods & materials (e.g. standard text), the reference list, properly cited and/or quoted text or text for which permission has been received.
- The quality of the reused text can be more important than the amount of words. For example in the Results and/or Conclusions section of the paper.
- Some suggestions for handling similarities:
 - A large match in the results or conclusions is a reason for rejection.
 - If an author has cut and paste from various sources and it seems to be a minor issue, work with the authors to revise. This decision is dependent on the interest in the paper and the level of misconduct.
 - Patchwork plagiarism may be more difficult to evaluate. A decision could be to reject without review.
 - Self-plagiarism (text recycling) should be evaluated in a similar way as plagiarism.
- Please also note the following:
 - iThenticate cannot compare figures or tables.
 - iThenticate cannot compare different languages.
 - iThenticate cannot find **paraphrased** text.
 - Common phrases are not excluded.
 - Only publications by participating publishers and societies, libraries and affiliates are in the Crossref database. In addition, different internet sources including repositories and Wikis such as Wikipedia are indexed. And 'Crossref posted content' which is content that has been posted but not formally published such as pre-prints, working papers, and so forth.

General advice: Always look at the context of the match and keep the limitations of the tool in mind.

