Using **Turnitin** to provide powerful formative feedback

ASKe (Assessment Standards Knowledge exchange) is a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) based in the Business School at Oxford Brookes University. It was set up in summer 2005 with a £4.5 million award from HEFCE in recognition of good practice based on pedagogic research into aspects of assessment.

The work of **ASK**e has been organised into three strands of activity

Strand 1: Replicating proven practice through

- A pre-assessment intervention which the **ASK**e team has shown to work. A simple intervention such as a marking workshop prior to undertaking an assessed task can significantly increase students' understanding of the assessment criteria and improve their performance of the task. **ASK**e has supported the development of this kind of intervention on all Business School programmes, as well as in three other Schools (Built Environment, Health and Social Care, and Westminster Institute of Education). This same support is available for the remaining four Schools plus five partner institutions.

- The Academic Conduct Officer (ACO) system which the **ASK**e team is further developing, in addition to researching effective ways of encouraging and promoting academic integrity.

- The Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) programme, long used by the Business School, which **ASK**e has extended across the School. Support is also offered to help at least three other Schools introduce PAL.

Strand 2: Pioneering evidence-based practice

Appropriate development projects will be funded, both within the Business School and across the whole University. Projects will seek out and support ways to develop and enhance assessment practices.

Strand 3: Cultivating a community of practice

The **ASK**e team has developed a new, £2 million building on Brookes' Wheatley Campus. This provides a physical environment to support student learning outside structured class time, in which staff and students can meet to develop a shared understanding of academic standards.

But it's more than just a building. The **ASK**e team argues that only a true community of practice will ensure shared understanding, so **ASK**e (in conjunction with other parties at Brookes) is also developing the social environment necessary to colonise this physical space.

To find out more about **ASK**e's work, please contact:
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Assessment Standards Knowledge exchange
The Centre for Excellence in Assessment at the Business School

ASKe

Do you want to reduce the risk of inadvertent plagiarism in your students' work?

Would you like to educate your students, before assessment, about the meaning of plagiarism and how to avoid it?

Can you see the value of using the latest tools and techniques to provide feedback for your students?

If so, why don't you try this three-step exercise?

It doesn't take up much time, and it works…

…here's how you do it:

This process assumes your students have been taught how to comply with academic writing requirements. It will not teach referencing, paraphrasing, or the importance of using a wide range of sources, but it can ensure your students pay attention to these important issues when producing assignments.

1
Ask your students to submit a draft of their assignment at least three weeks before the due date
- this should be an *electronic* version of the draft
- it is easiest for students to submit via the university virtual learning environment (VLE).

2
Submit your students' drafts to Turnitin (or similar text-matching software)
- ensure you set the parameters of the system so that the drafts are not saved on Turnitin's central database (this distorts the reading for subsequent submissions). If you don't know how to do this, use Turnitin's online helpdesk facility at www.submit.ac.uk
- ensure the reports come to you, as tutor, rather than to your students
- for assistance with Turnitin: you can either use Turnitin's online helpdesk facility (www.submit.ac.uk) or you can consult your university for advice.

3
Organise a 15-minute, face-to-face tutorial with each student
- show the student the online originality report; discuss with them what the report shows about their use of other authors' words, citation, paraphrasing, etc; use the direct comparison tool to demonstrate their use of sources; comment on good use of sources as well as areas that need work
- take time to give the tutorial as studies have shown that this interaction can produce a 'eureka' moment of understanding and is likely to save time in the long run
- one-to-one tutorials are most effective, but they can be replaced by small group tutorials if absolutely necessary.

Reference: Davis, M. (2007), 'The role of Turnitin within the formative process of academic writing: a tool for learning and unlearning', *Brookes eJournal of Learning and Teaching*, 2 (2).
Available at: http://bejlt.brookes.ac.uk/article/the_role_of_turnitin_within_the_formative_process_of_academic_writing/