

# Blackboard SafeAssign Instructor Manual



Instructional Systems and Design  
3/16/2009

## Table of Contents

What is SafeAssign? .....	3
How SafeAssignments Work .....	3
What is the Global Reference Database? .....	3
Originality Reports.....	3
Supported File Types.....	4
What is Direct Submit?.....	4
SafeAssign.....	5
Add SafeAssign Content Link and Tool.....	5
Create SafeAssignments.....	6
Add SafeAssignment Properties .....	6
Drafts .....	7
DirectSubmit .....	8
Add Direct Submit Content Link and Tool.....	8
Submit Papers Using Direct Submit.....	9
Direct Submit Supported File Types.....	10
SafeAssign Reports .....	11
Direct Submit Reports .....	12
Interpreting Scores.....	13

## What is SafeAssign?

SafeAssign™ is a plagiarism prevention service hosted by Blackboard. This service helps instructors prevent plagiarism by detecting unoriginal content in student papers.

Instructors can set up SafeAssignments in their Blackboard sections and let students submit papers to these assignments. As students submit papers, they are checked against SafeAssign's databases of source material.

SafeAssignments appear in sections as a new content link and can be added to any course content area. SafeAssignments function like the existing Assignment tool with the added layer of a plagiarism detection check once papers are submitted. It is not possible to make an existing Assignment a SafeAssignment without starting from the beginning. Like regular Assignments, however, SafeAssignments are integrated with the Gradebook.

## 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** with over 1,100 publication titles and about 2.6 million articles from 1990s to present time, updated weekly (exclusive access);
- **Institutional document archives** containing all papers submitted to SafeAssign by users in their respective institutions;
- **Global Reference Database** containing papers that were volunteered by students from Blackboard client institutions to help prevent cross-institutional plagiarism.

## What is the Global Reference Database?

Blackboard's Global Reference Database is a separate database where students voluntarily donate copies of their papers to help prevent plagiarism.

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.

## Originality Reports

Once a paper has been processed, a report is available that details the percentage of 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.

### Supported File Types

The following file types can be submitted to SafeAssign-

- Microsoft Word document: .doc or .docx
- Rich Text Format: .rtf
- HTML: .htm or .html
- Text: .txt
- Zip compressed: .ZIP used to upload multiple files
- OpenOffice document: .odt

### What is Direct Submit?

Direct Submit generates SafeAssign reports on papers submitted outside of a SafeAssignment by the instructor, without student involvement.

## SafeAssign

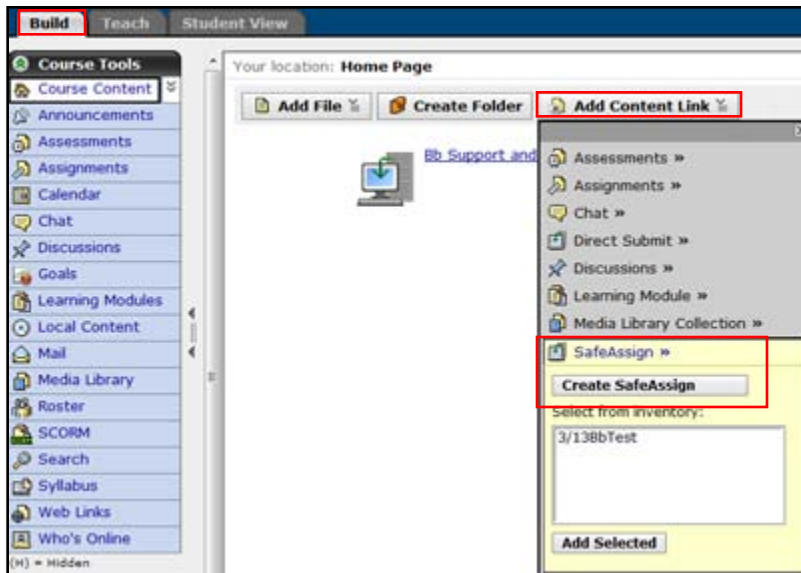
Before SafeAssign can be used in a section, a Content Link must be created to add the tool to the section. You will only need to do this once.

After the content link is added you can create as many SafeAssignments as you want for your section.

### Add SafeAssign Content Link and Tool

Follow the steps below to create section content link and add the SafeAssign tool. You will only need to do this once for your section.

1. Log in to Blackboard and click on the section that you want to add SafeAssign to.
2. On the **Build** tab click **Add Content Link**, then choose **SafeAssign**, and click the **Create SafeAssign** button.



3. Give the SafeAssign tool a **title** (ex. "SafeAssign Drop Box") and click the **Configure!** button.

A screenshot of the 'Create SafeAssign' configuration dialog box. The title is 'Create SafeAssign'. There is a text input field for 'Title' containing 'SafeAssign Drop Box', which is highlighted with a red box. Below it is a checkbox for 'Open in a new browser window' which is unchecked. At the bottom, there are two buttons: 'Configure!' and 'Cancel', both highlighted with red boxes. A red asterisk and the text '\* Required field' are located at the bottom left of the dialog.

4. You will now see an icon for the SafeAssign tool on your Course Content page.

## Create SafeAssignments

Once the SafeAssignment Content Link has been added, follow these steps to add SafeAssignments-

1. On the **Teach tab**, click the **SafeAssign icon** that you added previously.
2. Click the **Create SafeAssignment** button.



3. Fill out the assignment properties and click "Submit" when finished.

## Add SafeAssignment Properties

When you add a SafeAssignment, you need to set the assignments properties.

Option	Description
Title	Enter a title for the SafeAssignment.
Text	Enter instructions for completing the SafeAssignment.*
Due Date	Date and time that you will begin accepting submissions. (There is currently no expiration date for submissions)
Drafts	Allows Students to validate their paper without submitting it to the institutional database. Useful as an instructive tool to help Students learn how to attribute papers properly.
Students Viewable	Determines whether or not Students can see the report generated when their papers are submitted.
Urgent Checking	Sets papers to a high priority in the queue.
Grading	Sets type of grade for Gradebook column creation. You can choose Numeric (percentage calculated out of a total) or Alphanumeric (A-F or 0-10)

**\*PLEASE NOTE** - if students are submitting papers to the SafeAssignment that include images, please inform them that the images must not exceed 2MB or the submission may fail.

## Drafts

Instructors can choose to set up SafeAssignments as drafts, which allows students to submit papers without storing them (*otherwise, if they submitted the paper again, it would have a 100% match against itself!*)

To set up a Draft Assignment - go through the regular SafeAssignment set up and click the Draft option to "Yes". This specific draft SafeAssignment will allow each student to submit once and will check their paper and generate a SafeAssign Report but will not store it in the Institutional Database.

**Please Note** - You also need to create another SafeAssignment that will be your Final Version. This Final version should have the "Draft" feature set to "No" so that when the students submit, their paper is not only checked for plagiarism, but also stored in the database.

To allow for drafts of a SafeAssignment, complete the following steps:

1. **Create a SafeAssignment and set the "Draft" option to "Yes"** - this will be the SafeAssignment students submit to first. Please remember to inform your students of this in your instructions.
2. You can repeat these steps for as many draft versions as you want to allow.
3. **Create another SafeAssignment for your Final Version** and make sure the "Draft" option is set to "No". Please inform your students about the final version through the title and instructions.

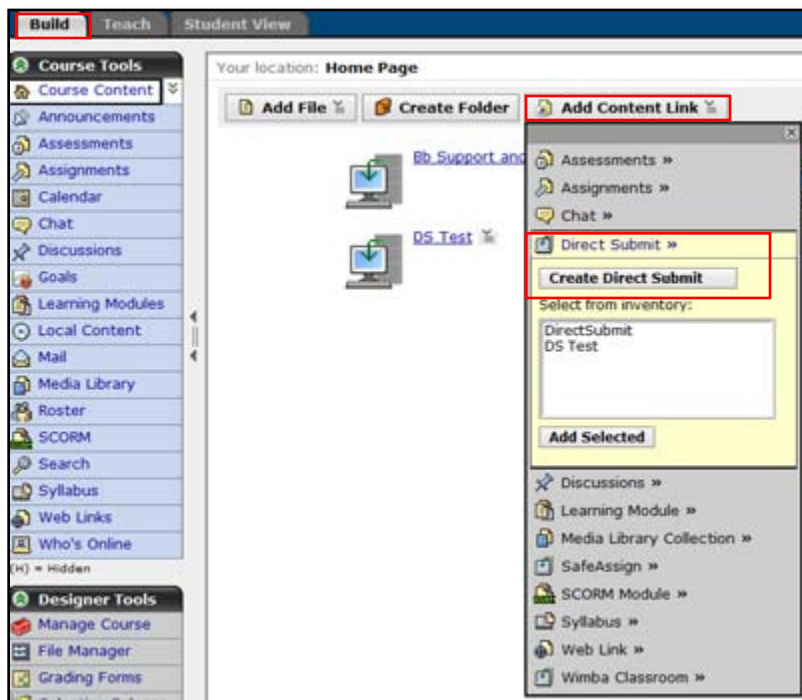
## DirectSubmit

Direct Submit generates SafeAssign reports on papers submitted outside of a SafeAssignment.

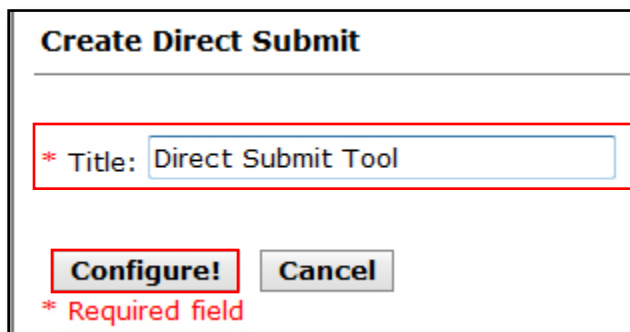
Papers uploaded through Direct Submit are only added to the Institutional Database - there is no option to add them to the Global Reference Database since students have to opt-in on a paper-by-paper basis. Additionally, there is **no Gradebook integration** with papers submitted through Direct Submit.

### Add Direct Submit Content Link and Tool

1. On the **Build** tab click **Add Content Link**, then choose **Direct Submit**, and click the **Create Direct Submit** button.

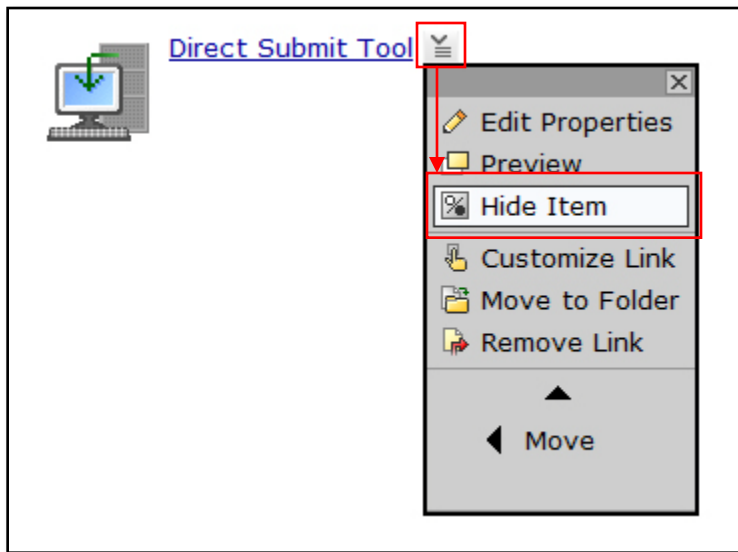


2. Give the **Direct Submit** tool a title (ex. "Direct Submit Tool").

A screenshot of a configuration dialog box titled 'Create Direct Submit'. The dialog has a title bar and a main area. In the main area, there is a text input field labeled '\* Title:' with the text 'Direct Submit Tool' entered. The input field is highlighted with a red box. Below the input field, there are two buttons: 'Configure!' and 'Cancel'. The 'Configure!' button is also highlighted with a red box. At the bottom left, there is a red asterisk followed by the text '\* Required field'.

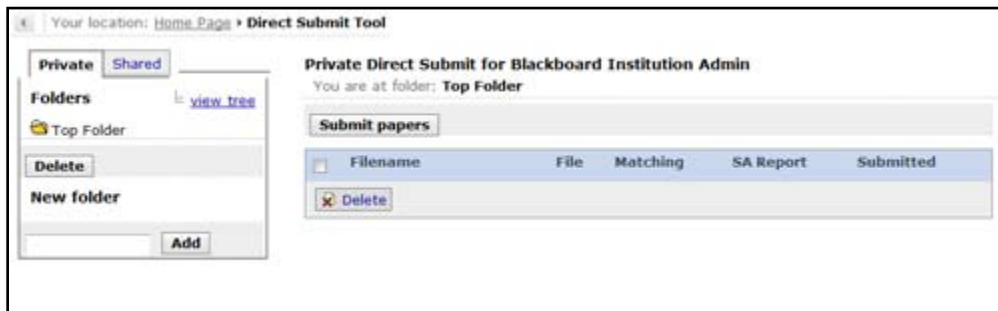
3. You will now see an icon for the DirectSubmit tool on your Course Content page.

4. Click on the ActionLink (gray arrow button) next to the name of the tool and choose Hide Item to hide the tool from the students.



## Submit Papers Using Direct Submit

1. From the **Teach** tab, click on the **Direct Submit** icon you added previously. This brings you to your Direct Submit drop box or console.



2. If you have already uploaded papers, a list of folders and papers will appear. This list includes papers already uploaded through Direct Submit. It is not recommended that files be deleted from Direct Submit, as this will remove them from the institutional database of existing materials.
3. Navigate to a folder or create a new folder where the paper or papers will be uploaded. Papers added to folders in the Private tab are only viewable to the instructor. Papers added to folders in the Shared tab are only viewable by anyone with the instructor role.
4. Click the Submit Papers button.
5. Select Upload File and browse for the file. Individual papers as well as papers that are grouped in a .ZIP package are accepted. Alternatively, select Copy/Paste Document and add the document text in the field.
6. Select the upload options:
  - a. **Submit as Draft:** A SafeAssign report will be generated however the paper will not be added to the institutional database and will not be used to check other papers.

- b. **Skip Plagiarism Checking:** Adds the papers to the institutional database without checking for content copied from other sources. This is useful if an Instructor wants to upload papers from an earlier course to ensure that current students are not reusing work.

#### Direct Submit Supported File Types

- Microsoft Word document: .doc or .docx
- Rich Text Format: .rtf
- HTML: .htm or .html
- Text: .txt
- Zip compressed: .ZIP used to upload multiple files
- OpenOffice document: .odt

## SafeAssign Reports

To view papers that students have submitted and the associated SafeAssign Originality Reports please follow these steps:

1. From the Teach tab, click on the SafeAssignment content link and tool.
2. You are now in your SafeAssignment Management view and you should see all the SafeAssignments listed that you have created for this section.
3. Click the SafeAssignment you are interested in.
4. You now see a list of all students enrolled in the course. If they have submitted a paper - you will see the remaining fields populated with the following:

Field	Description
<b>Text</b>	Click the icon to see an online, formatted version of the paper text.
<b>File</b>	Click the icon to download the actual file the student submitted
<b>Matching</b>	Percentage of the paper that matched with source documents
<b>SA Report</b>	<i>SafeAssign Originality Report</i> - click the icon to view the interactive report detailing the results of the matching process.
<b>Submitted</b>	The date and time the student submitted the paper

Note - if you check the box by a submission and click "Delete", you will not only delete the submission record from the SafeAssignment, but also delete the paper from the Institutional Database, as well as the Global Reference Database if the student had opted in with the submission.

## Direct Submit Reports

To view the Reports for the papers you have submitted directly with the Direct Submit feature, use the following steps:

1. From the Teach tab, click on the Direct Submit content link and tool.
2. Once you are in your Direct Submit management console, you should see a list of every paper you directly submitted.
3. Click on the "SA Report" icon to launch the Originality Report for each

You can store and organize the papers you have directly submitted through the Direct Submit feature the file folders to the left of the Direct Submit management console.

**Private Folders** - only you can see the papers and associated reports stored in the Private Folders

**Shared Folders** - anyone with access to the Control Panel>Direct Submit in the course can see the papers and associated reports that you store in the Shared Folders

## Interpreting Scores

Sentence matching scores are 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.