

# GCU guidance on appropriate use of generative AI by students for Education purposes, November 2023

## Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to provide guidance for students on appropriate and inappropriate use of artificial intelligence (AI) during their studies, in the context of the University's existing policies and procedures<sup>1</sup>.

## Principles

Glasgow Caledonian University has accepted and adopted the [Russell Group Principles on the use of generative AI tools in Education](#). These state that:

1. Universities will support students and staff to become AI-literate.
2. Staff should be equipped to support students to use generative AI tools effectively and appropriately in their learning experience.
3. Universities will adapt teaching and assessment to incorporate the ethical use of generative AI and support equal access.
4. Universities will ensure academic rigour and integrity is upheld.
5. Universities will work collaboratively to share best practice as the technology and its application in education evolves.

To contextualise these to our specific learning and teaching environment, we have also approved following principles:

- *Inappropriate use of AI is a breach of the Student Code of Conduct.*
- *Appropriate use of AI is likely to be contextual to programmes of study and specific modules.*
- *AI detection tools are unreliable and unlikely to be effective.*
- *AI is a sectoral / societal opportunity and challenge, with best practice emerging over time.*

This paper aims to provide guidance on what, in general, will be seen as appropriate and inappropriate use of AI by students – both in terms of general learning and teaching, and in terms of assessment. This is a non-exhaustive guide, rather than a stipulation, to help support students and staff navigate the effective and appropriate use of AI.

## AI in Learning & Teaching

Generative AI has transformative potential in learning and teaching. Students and staff are therefore encouraged to experiment with, and learn from, the use of these tools to support active and collaborative learning as identified in the Strategy for Learning. Students may wish to use AI for formative purposes, to enhance their understanding in conjunction with traditional learning practices. In general terms, it is legitimate for students to use AI in ways that are akin to existing support already provided by the University and use of existing tools such as web-based search engines etc. Examples of appropriate and inappropriate student use are provided below in Table 1.

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<sup>1</sup> [Policies and procedures | Glasgow Caledonian University | Scotland, UK \(gcu.ac.uk\)](#)

| Example                          | Appropriate Use  | Inappropriate Use   |
|----------------------------------|--|---|
| Lectures                         | Using AI as a formative tool to augment and develop understanding from lectures.   | Relying solely on AI for information. This is because AI may provide inaccurate and out of date information.  |
| Written work                     | <p>Generating ideas, such as a list of topics.</p> <p>Providing feedback on written work.</p> <p>Experimenting with different tones of voice.</p> <p>Providing examples of how to structure a piece of written work e.g. report.</p> | <p>Submitting AI generated content as own work.</p> <p>Trusting AI-generated lists of publications and other sources. Often these may be inaccurate or simply not exist. AI may provide useful pointers but should be used in conjunction with established literature search tools.</p> |
| Problem-based learning           | <p>Providing technical assistance, such as instructions on how to use R, Excel, PowerPoint, etc.</p> <p>Providing feedback on whether all aspects of data interpretation were explored.</p>  | <p>Accepting AI generated answers without verification.</p> <p>Copy and pasting AI questions and answers.</p>   |
| Quizzes and Exams                | Generating practice questions for self-assessment.   | Using AI to generate answers for submission.  |
| Seminars / Tutorials             | <p>Creating scenarios to help students contextualise or augment their understanding.</p> <p>Gaining insight into topics by using AI as a critical friend.</p>  | <p>Copying answers instead of students attempting problems themselves.</p> <p>AI replacing student active participation in discussions.</p>   |
| Practicals / Labs                | <p>Assisting in troubleshooting.</p> <p>Understanding protocols and experimental design</p>  | Using AI to answer questions without understanding or reflecting  |
| Planning and Self-directed study | <p>Using AI to assist in project planning and timings.</p> <p>Using an AI tool to restructure or change the format of existing learning resources to aid personal study. This can be beneficial for accessibility</p>                | <p>Relying uncritically on AI to structure planning.</p> <p>Using a generative AI tool to restructure or change the format of existing learning</p>   |

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|--|---|---|
|  | reasons and to suit personal preferences. | resources and sharing them with others without permission from the creator <sup>2</sup> . |
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Table 1: Summary of appropriate and inappropriate use of AI for students

## AI in Assessment

It is not appropriate for students to submit work which passes knowledge, argument, or content of another off as their own work. This is akin to the use of a ghost writer or an essay mill, as articulated within the Student Code of Conduct. Beyond this, the following guidance applies for students:

| Appropriate   | Not Appropriate   |
|---|---|
| Using AI as a resource, like a search engine, to explore a topic or question. | Trusting AI to provide factual content. Always cross check with other search tools to establish validity.<br><br>Including AI generated content without appropriate acknowledgement and contextualisation |
| Using AI as a critical friend to discuss ideas.                               | Not acknowledging the use of AI as a co-creator / collaborator  |
| Using AI to augment knowledge and information from class.                     | Using AI as the main source of information.   |

Table 2: Specific student guidance on AI and Assessment

## Data Protection

Students must comply with data protection legislation when using generative AI tools. The university provides comprehensive information on its [data protection web pages](#), including specific [student guidance on data protection and processing personal data](#). Students should not, for example, upload intellectual property to be used to train generative AI tools without appropriate consent from the creator or [exemption to copyright](#). It is important that students are aware that when subscribing to use generative AI tools, it will be necessary to provide personal data for account registration purposes and for more general use of the technology. Prior to sharing personal data, it is recommended that all students review the privacy notices and policies provided by generative AI tool providers to understand how personal data may be used and protected when shared with the provider.

## References

Hough, D. (2023) Examples of using AI to support student learning & assessment in 1st year Life Sciences. University of Glasgow. <https://sway.office.com/iNhP49DMrhOep2Uc>

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<sup>2</sup> Learning resources may only be used in accordance with the University's existing [Code of Student Conduct](#), [Copyright guidelines](#) and [guidance on recording lectures and other events](#).