

Guidance on the use of Generative AI systems (such as ChatGPT, Lumen and DALL-E)

1. Introduction.

The guidance below is offered as an attempt to provide some clarity for students about the use of Generative AI (or GenAI) systems. GenAI is a rapidly evolving area of innovation across the world so it can be expected that the advice below may change as GenAI mature further.

The University of Westminster recognises that Gen AI tools can legitimately support learning in a number of ways (see 2.1 below). However, there are risks in the use of such tools and we wish all students to be aware of these.

These risks can be divided into two main areas:

1.1 Academic integrity and academic misconduct.

The use of GenAI tools to directly produce a written or other form of output for an assessment is not acceptable and risks contravening the principles of academic integrity that can lead to accusations of academic misconduct (see 3.2 below).

The only circumstance where this could be permissible, is when students have clear instructions to use a GenAI tool from their tutors as an integral part of an overall assessment. For example, a tutor may wish students to generate a piece of writing or an image using a GenAI tool and then write their own original critique of that output.

1.2 The accuracy of GenAI outputs and failure to attribute.

GenAI tools, and especially those that produce written outputs, make mistakes. They can essentially lie. This is in part, (see 1.1 above) why some assessments of today request students to critically evaluate GenAI output. If a student uses a GenAI tool without instruction to do so from their tutors and then include outputs without proper attribution (see 3.1 below), they run the risk of not only contravening the principles of academic integrity but also of submitting the lies and made-up facts that a GenAI tools like ChatGPT can produce.

2. The use of AI to support learning and assessment.

2.1 When and how is AI permitted to be used?

- As stated above, in assessments that explicitly permit the use of Generative AI systems or software as an integral part of the assessment. This will be specified in the relevant assignment brief and instructions provided by your tutor.
- AI as a tool to support learning can be used legitimately for example to:
 - help with grammar and spelling
 - as a search tool to research assignment topics
 - to help plan and develop an outline structure for a written assessment
 - to generate ideas for graphics, images and visuals
 - to get explanations of concepts

- to debug code
- to help get over 'writer's block'

2.2 When and how is AI **not** permitted to be used?

Generative AI systems are not to be used to produce original content that is then passed off as being authored by you. This applies to all of your assignments or exams - they require reflection and critical analysis generated by your own thinking to be evidenced.

It is also not acceptable to submit a draft essay and ask an AI system to simply re-write it in good English or to re-structure it.

In addition, including outputs from GenAI systems (such as ChatGPT) in an assessment submission (for example passages of words, images) without reference to the source is not acceptable.

3. Key questions from students.

3.1 What if I use AI to help me write an assignment?

If you use Generative AI systems, such as ChatGPT to support your learning and to help in the development of an assignment that you intend to submit as your own work:

- When you include materials directly generated via a GenAI system, this must be properly cited and referenced in your work i.e. the AI should be treated in the same way as any other source, including using quotation marks for any text that derives directly from the AI. You should include a paragraph at the end of any assignment that used AI in compiling your submission, explaining what you used the AI for and how you used it to get the results/final submitted draft of your assignment. Failure to do so this is academic misconduct.
- Where GenAI is used in assessed work, it is important to be transparent about this use. Content generated from AI is non-recoverable. That means it cannot be retrieved or linked to in the same way that other sources can. Accordingly, current convention is to cite GenAI generated content as a "personal communication" (because it is based on asking a question or providing a prompt and receiving an answer).

A personal communication is normally cited for a written piece of work in-text only (i.e. in the body of the written work). In any in-text citation cite 'Personal Communication [*insert name of the GenAI tool used*].

In addition, if you use any GenAI tool (such as ChatGPT) to help you (for example, generate ideas or develop an outline plan), you should still acknowledge this, even if you do not include any GenAI generated content in your submitted work. You should state at the end of the submission which GenAI tool was used and describe how you used it.

- You must be accountable for the assignment submission content and how it was produced. You should reflect before submitting and satisfy yourself that if an interview was held with you to discuss your work, you would be able to explain and justify your work in developing and constructing the assignment.

You should be able to answer yes to the following questions:

- Can you be truthful about which ideas are your own and which are derived from other sources such as ChatGPT?
- Are you certain that you are not trying to gain an advantage by unfair means: for instance, by passing off content generated by a Generative AI such as ChatGPT as your own?
- Are you confident that you are responsible for the content of your assignment and how this content was derived?

3.2 What is academic misconduct?

The University of Westminster defines academic misconduct as:

'Academic misconduct is where a student gains, or seeks, attempts or intends to gain, advantage in relation to assessment, either for themselves or for another person, by unfair or improper means'.

The list of offences that can be considered as academic misconduct include:

Plagiarism, self-plagiarism, plagiarism commissioning and collusion (for more details please see this [our guidance](#)).

The University's definition of plagiarism includes instances where a student "*presents work for assessment which contains the unacknowledged published or unpublished words, thoughts, judgements, ideas, structures or images of some other person or persons. This includes material downloaded from electronic sources, and material sourced or contracted from a third party*".

The use of Generative AI systems when completing an assignment (e.g. ChatGPT or Bing AI) is considered to be academic misconduct if the use is not clearly cited and referenced in your work. Copying content generated by ChatGPT without citing and paraphrasing is like copying from anywhere else without referencing and paraphrasing.

AI tools that can be used to help improve your writing, such as Grammarly or Quillbot (for correcting grammar and punctuation), are acceptable. Indeed, it is possible to use ChatGPT to provide advice on grammar and punctuation. It is acceptable to use ChatGPT to provide ideas for how an assignment (essay, report etc) might best be structured. However, it is not acceptable to submit a poorly written (but original) essay to ChatGPT and request the AI to re-write it in good English.

Presenting the output of tools that write for you as your own work is academic misconduct and therefore defined as academic misconduct. The University of Westminster may impose a penalty on the assessments of those found in breach of academic integrity. Part 3 of [Section 10](#) of the University's academic regulations, sets out the procedures relating to academic misconduct and penalties relating to academic misconduct.

4. Warnings of issues when using AI

- AI, such as ChatGPT, has a tendency towards hallucination (i.e. deceptive outputs and data). For example, if it does not know a figure such as how many people are currently unemployed in the UK, it will insert a random number. Do not trust the figures/data provided by ChatGPT. It also hallucinates when producing references, creating citations to publications that do not exist.

- Low effort may produce low-quality output. If you use ChatGPT to help you to write, you will need to refine the content, provide references, and check data. This requires work.

5. Unsure what to do?

Refer to:

- Your Personal Tutor.
- The leader of the module for which you are completing a specific assignment.
- Support pages on the student hub that cover [Plagiarism](#) and [Referencing your work](#).
- [The Students' Union Advice Service](#)