

Student Guidance: Using Artificial Intelligence Tools in Your Studies

1. Introduction: Why This Guidance Matters

Artificial Intelligence is transforming how we work, create, and learn. As a Westminster student, you're entering a world where AI literacy isn't optional - it's essential for your academic success and future career.

This guidance will help you navigate the opportunities and responsibilities that come with using AI tools in your university studies. By the end of reading this document, you will understand better how to use AI ethically and effectively to enhance your learning while maintaining academic integrity.

2. What You'll Learn

By following this guidance, you will be able to:

- Identify when and how AI tools can appropriately support your academic work.
- Apply transparent practices when using AI in assessed assignments.
- Evaluate the risks and limitations of AI-generated content.
- Demonstrate academic integrity while leveraging AI for learning.
- Navigate discipline-specific expectations for AI use in your field.

3. Understanding Artificial Intelligence in an Academic Context

What We Mean by AI Tools

Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools generate new content, analysis, or solutions based on your prompts. In your academic work, you may encounter:

Text Generation

- ChatGPT, Claude, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot
- Writing assistants like Grammarly and QuillBot

Creative Tools

- Image generators (DALL-E, Midjourney, Adobe Firefly)
- Music and audio creation tools
- Video editing with AI features

Research and Analysis

- Translation tools (DeepL, Google Translate, YouDao)
- Data analysis and visualisation tools
- Citation and reference managers with AI features

Technical Applications

- Code generation and debugging tools (GitHub Copilot, CodeWhisperer)

- Mathematical problem solvers
- Design and modelling software with AI capabilities

At the University of Westminster, you have access to several AI-enabled tools including Adobe Creative Suite and Grammarly. Many others are freely available online.

4. Core Principles for Ethical AI Use

Your use of AI tools in academic work must be guided by three fundamental principles:

1. **Transparency and Honesty** – You must declare any use of AI tools in your academic work, no matter how minor.
2. **Academic Responsibility** – You remain fully accountable for the content, accuracy, and quality of your work.
3. **Discipline-Specific Integrity** – Different subjects have different expectations for AI use. Always check your guidance that may come from your tutors for specific modules.

5. Quick Reference – Do’s and Don’ts

DO	DON'T
Use AI for brainstorming and planning	Let AI write your entire assignment
Check AI-generated facts against credible sources	Present AI work as entirely your own
Declare all AI use in your assignments	Use AI in exams, tests, or lab practicals
Use AI for translation <i>and</i> provide the original-language version	Submit AI visuals without attribution
Use AI to generate search terms or topic-related questions	Rely on AI for your research findings, data, or conclusions
Create flashcards, mind maps, or summaries to support study	Submit AI-generated code or designs as original work

6. Using AI in Assessed Work

AI may support your work, but it must never replace your own thinking. You can use AI tools to support your work unless a specific assignment or module explicitly forbids it. Always check your assignment brief for restrictions.

Generative AI can be a valuable tool to support your learning. For example, it can help you generate ideas, explore different perspectives, or clarify complex concepts. When used transparently and appropriately, it can enhance your academic development.

However, using GenAI to create content that you then submit for assessment in place of your own work is a breach of academic integrity and constitutes academic misconduct. Such cases will be referred through the University's Academic Misconduct procedures (see Section 12).

6.1 The Decision Framework

When considering whether to use AI for an assessed assignment, apply this framework:

1. **Check Your Assignment Brief** – Some assignments may prohibit AI entirely.
2. **Consider Your Learning Objectives** – Ask yourself:
 - a. *“Will using AI help me demonstrate my understanding and skills, or will it prevent me from engaging with the learning process?”*
 - b. **“Would I still be able to independently provide comprehensive answers to all academic questions about my work?”**
3. **Evaluate the Appropriateness** – Does your intended use of AI support your learning or replace your own thinking?

6.2 Acceptable Uses in Assessed Work (Provided you declare them)

Generative AI can be used to support aspects of your academic work, but always in ways that reflect and reinforce your own learning. You must not submit unedited AI-generated text as your own. Any AI-assisted content should be carefully reviewed, adapted, and critically evaluated so that it demonstrates your own understanding.

- Planning and organisation (outlines, timelines)
- Research support (keyword generation, summaries)
- Writing enhancement (grammar checking, clarity improvements)
- Technical assistance (debugging code, test case generation)
- Creative inspiration (mood boards, brainstorming)

6.3 Unacceptable Uses That Constitute Academic Misconduct

You remain fully responsible for the originality, accuracy, and integrity of your work. Submitting unedited AI-generated text as if it were your own is not permitted and will be treated as academic misconduct. AI must not replace your own analysis, argumentation, or creative work.

- Using AI to write essays, reports, or code on your behalf (unless explicitly permitted by the assignment brief)
- Using AI to carry out your analysis or construct arguments
- Submitting AI-generated content without declaring it
- Using AI-generated visuals without acknowledging the tool used to create them

- Accessing or attempting to access AI tools during in-class tests, examinations, or practical assessments where their use is prohibited
- Using AI systems, AI browsers, or other automated tools to access university platforms (such as Blackboard) or to complete learning activities, assessments, quizzes, or submissions on your behalf. All academic work and participation must be completed through your own direct engagement

Be aware that staff can often recognise inconsistencies, overly generic phrasing, or a lack of original insight in AI-generated writing. Such signs may raise concerns about authenticity and could lead to referral under the Academic Misconduct procedures (see Section 12).

7. The AI Declaration Requirement

With every assessed submission where AI was used, you must include:

Artificial Intelligence Use Declaration

In preparing this assignment, I used the following AI tools:

- [Tool name] to [specific use]

I confirm that I have not used AI to generate content that I am presenting as my own work, and I remain fully responsible for the ideas, analysis, and conclusions in this submission.

You can be specific about how AI supported your work. For example:

- *I used ChatGPT to brainstorm essay topics.*
- *I used Grammarly to check grammar and spelling.*
- *I used Scribbr to check for signs of AI generation.*

Providing detail strengthens your declaration and shows critical use of AI.

8. Discipline-Specific Considerations

- In some creative, practice-based or technical disciplines (such as arts, design, media, music or computing), students may be encouraged or even required to use Generative AI as part of their learning, research or creative work.
- This may involve using GenAI to generate ideas, develop content or create parts of a creative work such as music, images, designs, code or other media. Where this is encouraged or required by the module or assignment brief, students may

include GenAI content if it is used transparently and with appropriate critical and ethical reflection.

- **Technical and Computing Subjects** – Expected to understand both use of AI and core technical skills.
- **Humanities and Social Sciences** – AI can assist research and organisation, but critical thinking must be yours.

9. Languages and Multilingual Support

If English is not your first language, AI translation and writing tools can support your academic development:

- Use translation tools to understand academic texts.
- Employ writing assistants to improve clarity.
- Practice academic writing with AI feedback.

However:

- If you use translation tools to produce assessed work, you must also keep a copy of the original-language version of your submission and be able to produce this if requested to do so. This enables staff to verify authorship where necessary.

10. AI for Learning and Study (Non-Assessed Work)

AI can help with:

- Concept exploration
- Practice questions and flashcards
- Research skills development
- Study organisation
- Critical thinking practice

11. Understanding AI Limitations and Risks

While AI tools can be useful, it is important to recognise their limitations and use them responsibly. The following risks should always be kept in mind:

- **Accuracy** – AI can be wrong. Always verify.
- **Bias** – AI can reflect cultural and social biases.
- **Privacy** – Know what data you share.
- **Over-Reliance** – AI should not replace independent thinking.

12. Academic Misconduct and Consequences

12.1 Examples of AI-Related Misconduct

- Submitting AI-generated content as your own.
- Failing to declare AI use.

- Using AI during in-class tests, examinations, or lab-based practicals.
- Misrepresenting the extent of AI assistance.

12.2 Potential Consequences

- Mark reduction.
- Resubmission.
- Failure of assignment or module.
- Academic probation or exclusion.

13. Examples Table - Acceptable and Unacceptable AI Use Cases

Proposed Use	Acceptable?	Explanation
Creating images or recreating a design/artwork from another source and presenting it as original	Unacceptable	Visual plagiarism if used without attribution.
Using translation tools to produce assessed work without providing the original-language version	Unacceptable	Must provide original-language version to verify authorship.
Accessing or attempting to access GenAI tools during prohibited assessments	Unacceptable	Serious breach of academic integrity and fairness.
Attempting to use University approved GenAI to access unauthorised sites or module folders.	Unacceptable	University approved GenAI use is constantly monitored and improper use can lead to disciplinary action.
Submitting mind maps or any images generated by GenAI without claiming GenAI use	Unacceptable	Such an act is considered cheating and violates the integrity of your work.
Using an AI tool or AI browser to log into University systems or complete coursework or activities on your behalf	Unacceptable	Academic work must be completed personally by the student.
Drafting an initial outline for an essay or report	Acceptable with conditions	Must reflect your own understanding and include a declaration of AI use.
Generating a list of relevant sources	Acceptable with conditions	Verify source credibility; do not copy AI-generated references without checking.
Summarising articles	Acceptable	Verify AI output for accuracy.
Generating topic-related questions	Acceptable	Critically evaluate suggestions before use.
Creating flashcards to support study	Acceptable	Supports active recall and learning.
Generating search terms for researching a topic	Acceptable	Can improve search efficiency.
Creating mind maps for visualising concepts	Acceptable	Aids organisation and understanding.

14. Final Note

Artificial Intelligence can be a powerful partner in your studies, helping you to learn, create, and solve problems more effectively. But with this power comes responsibility: to use AI ethically, transparently, and in a way that strengthens, rather than replaces, your own learning. At the University of Westminster, we expect you to engage critically with AI, declare its use honestly, and always uphold the principles of academic integrity.