

Guidelines for Students on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

(Effective from 2022/23 Summer Term; last updated in January 2026)

POLYU's stance

PolyU takes an open and forward-looking stance on the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools (such as ChatGPT) as a positive and creative force in education, and the incorporation of such use in innovative learning, teaching, and assessment practices. While embracing the use of new technology in education, PolyU upholds the principle that students must adhere to high standards of academic integrity in all forms of assessments. The Student Code of Conduct and the policy on academic integrity apply to the use of GenAI in student work.

Respect your own work and the work of others

In accordance with the above stance, the University emphasises that:

- students are accountable for their own work; and
- the use of GenAI (if permitted) in student work should be properly acknowledged.

The following guidelines apply to all subjects and levels of assessment:

1. The work that you submit for assessment must be **YOUR OWN WORK**. This means that the work must be *original* in the sense that it is your intellectual creation and its overall content is representative of your own expression of your own ideas, not a copy/version of other people's work or AI-generated material. Asking GenAI to do the assignment for you is like asking someone else to do the assignment for you, and copying AI-generated content is like copying other people's work. Both are cheating and are penalisable.
2. AI-generated material refers to any text, images, or translations created directly by an AI tool at prompt or otherwise (and not editorial suggestions, corrections and refinements made by AI on content that you have authored). Such material should be identified as AI-generated no matter how much you have edited it afterwards. If you use AI-generated materials in any part of your work, you must reference them in accordance with the accepted academic conventions (e.g. APA or MLA styles) like you would have referenced other people's work. Beware that AI-generated contents can sometimes contain material that breaches copyright, and you may infringe the copyright law unintentionally by incorporating such material in your work.
3. Some subjects and assessments may not allow or have restrictions on the use of GenAI tools. You may be required to declare the use of GenAI tools (e.g. by completing an honour declaration form) and identify the AI-generated content in your work. You should refer to the relevant subject and assessment documents for the specific restrictions and requirements. It should be noted that such declarations are not a substitute for proper referencing in the submitted work. If in doubt, check with your teachers.
4. For assessments where any use of AI-generated materials is not permitted, students who are found to have submitted AI-generated materials as their own work or part of their work constitute an act of academic dishonesty. Students who are found committing academic dishonesty will face disciplinary actions.

Reminders for using Generative AI

GenAI tools can be beneficial, but there are inherent risks too. You should be mindful of the following:

Using Generative AI critically

1. GenAI tools are language machines that predict the next plausible word or section of code based on patterns learned from large datasets. They are **not** knowledge databases, and may produce codes that have security flaws, bugs, or use illegal libraries.
2. The datasets that GenAI models learn from may be flawed, biased, or contain inaccuracies and limitations. The models are only as up-to-date as the data they were trained on, and may not reflect current events or trends.
3. GenAI generated text is not always factually correct and may contain fake citations and references. It may also include **offensive material** or **hidden plagiarism**, using words and ideas from human authors without proper referencing.

Using Generative AI ethically

1. You must acknowledge where GenAI tools have been used in an assessment according to accepted academic conventions. Follow the links for guidelines on how to reference Generative AI in various styles: [APA](#), [MLA](#), [IEEE](#), [Harvard](#), [Chicago](#), [Vancouver](#).
2. GenAI systems are amoral and do not know that generating offensive, inaccurate, or misleading content is wrong.
3. There are also risks of **copyright infringement** when using GenAI to generate images or other copyrighted materials.

Using Generative AI wisely

DO's

- ✓ Use GenAI for brainstorming
- ✓ Check for factual accuracy of AI-generated content
- ✓ Use AI-generated content in conjunction with other sources to ensure your work is reliable and well-informed
- ✓ Include any GenAI assistance in your reference list

DON'Ts

- ✗ Do NOT rely solely on AI-generated content as the source of information
- ✗ Do NOT ask GenAI software to write your essays
- ✗ Do NOT input any personal details or confidential information when using GenAI tools

References:

1. The University of Edinburgh. [Generative AI Guidance for Students October 2024](#).
2. Deakin University. [Student guide to using generative AI](#).