

# ENGLink

## SPRING 2023

### ISSUE



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## Undergraduate ENGL Conference PolyU-CALLS 2023 a Resounding Success



A group photo of PolyU-CALLS 2023 participants.

The Department organised the first-ever PolyU Undergraduate Conference on Applied Linguistics and Language Studies (PolyU-CALLS) on Saturday, 4 March 2023. Over 100 students from PolyU and other universities throughout Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area participated in the conference, showcasing undergraduate student research in Applied Linguistics and Communication. The conference featured plenary speeches by the Department's faculty members, Professor Dennis Tay and Dr Anne Schluter, and research presentations by undergraduate students on various topics such as language and social media, linguistic landscape and urban spaces, next-generation workplaces, and language and European studies.

PolyU-CALLS reflects the Department's increasing focus on undergraduate student research. "We saw a need for an event that was tailored to students' research interests, especially those who are completing their Capstone or Final Year projects. We hope that the conference will inspire Applied Linguistics and Communication students in Hong Kong and the Greater Bay Area to get involved in language-based research more actively and spearhead their own original research studies," said our Department Head, Professor Eric Frigal.

After evaluating both abstract submissions and the presentations themselves, the following student presenters at PolyU-CALLS 2023 were recognised for their outstanding presentations:

- Best PolyU-CALLS presentation: Ashima Shukla from *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*
- Best ENGL presentation: Nok Lam Wong from *The Hong Kong Polytechnic University*
- Best non-ENGL presentation: Sum Wai Li from *Hong Kong Baptist University*

The level of student participation at PolyU-CALLS 2023 highlights an appetite for more student-oriented conferences in Applied Linguistics and Language Studies. Dr Max Diaz, the Department's Undergraduate Programme Leader, stated that "It's exciting to see students getting exposure to new research topics, receiving feedback on their studies, and experiencing an authentic academic conference. We're already planning next year's conference and hope to make it bigger and better."



The conference allows students to present their research to an audience of peers, instructors, and scholars.



Over a dozen of the Department's undergraduate students volunteer to support the conference.



Prof. Eric Frigal presents awards to the winners of Best ENGL presentation Nok Lam Wong (left) and Best non-ENGL presentation Sum Wai Li.



# DEPARTMENT UPDATES

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## Opinion Article in the South China Morning Post on ChatGPT and Education

Our Department Head, Professor Eric Frigal, wrote an opinion article in the South China Morning Post examining the potential implications of the artificial intelligence application ChatGPT for high school and university academic activities. According to Prof. Frigal, AI technologies such as ChatGPT may present some challenges but can also provide positive teaching and learning opportunities if incorporated into the classroom with careful consideration.

Prof. Frigal suggests that ChatGPT could be utilised by instructors to increase student engagement and prepare learners for an AI-driven future. He highlighted that PolyU took a proactive approach by holding webinars demonstrating ChatGPT's capabilities and limitations.

Despite concerns that AI tools will upend our traditions of education and learning, Prof. Frigal believes that ChatGPT and tools like it are transformative. They show the potential of AI's march from machine learning to machine consciousness, which can be leveraged and controlled by teachers and students in the writing classroom and beyond.

The full article is available on the SCMP website: <https://bit.ly/46ZBZ2Y>.



## Academic Staff Granted Funding for Research on Korean Coffee Culture



Dr Ming Curran has been awarded a grant for US\$13,320 (HK\$104,000) from the Academy of Korean Studies for his project titled *From foreign luxury to domestic necessity: Coffee culture in Korea today*. Dr Curran will use the grant to travel to South Korea to conduct research on the country's vibrant and rapidly expanding coffee scene.

Drawing on theories of globalisation and intercultural communication, Dr Curran will explore the multiple social functions that coffee and coffee shops play in contemporary Korean society. He will conduct interviews with customers to examine how coffee and the space of the coffee shop are differently understood and consumed by various demographic groups in South Korea. In addition, he will analyse how local city governments use coffee to promote domestic tourism.

Dr Curran's new project marks a continuation of his earlier research on coffee culture in South Korea, which he conducted in collaboration with South Korea's Hankuk University of Foreign Studies Associate Professor Michael Chesnut and which was published in 2022 in the *Journal of Consumer Culture* under Sage Publications.

## Networking with Local and Overseas High School Counsellors

PolyU and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology co-organised a Counsellor Fly-in Programme from 29 – 31 March to promote the two universities' undergraduate programmes to local and overseas high schools' counsellors. Our Department participated in a mini recruitment fair at PolyU on 30 March, with about 50 counsellors attending.

Programme Leader of our BA in English and Applied Linguistics (BAEAL) programme, Dr Max Diaz, met with the counsellors at the booth of the Faculty of Humanities to answer their questions and give them more in-depth information about the programme. The Department also had two BA student representatives present to share their study experiences with the counsellors.



Dr Max Diaz (middle) and our BA students Naomi (second from left) and Alua (second from right) promote our BAEAL programme to high school counsellors at the mini recruitment fair.

# EVENT HIGHLIGHTS

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## Generative AI Knowledge Transfer Activity – Workshop for Secondary School Teachers (30 March 2023)

Our Department organised an online workshop on Zoom for secondary school teachers, focusing on exploring the possibilities and challenges presented by AI tools in education. The workshop was delivered by our Dr Phoebe Lin, who has expertise in using innovative technologies in teaching and learning. During the workshop, Dr Lin discussed the benefits of AI tools for both teachers and learners and the ethical considerations and challenges associated with their implementation in secondary school education. She also demonstrated examples of using Notion AI to help teachers prepare teaching, learning, and administrative materials more efficiently. There were about 120 participants in the workshop, half of which were teachers.

As AI tools such as ChatGPT continue to be widely used by educators and students, this workshop aimed to provide teachers with insight and guidance on integrating AI tools in their classrooms.

A recording of this workshop is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/TFUNfujPHY8>.

What are AI tools?

- Artificial Intelligence (AI)
  - Perform tasks that require human-like intelligence.
  - Use machine learning algorithms trained on a large amount of data.
- Example of everyday uses
  - Facial Recognition
  - Airport Baggage Systems
  - Medical Imaging Analysis

## Departmental Online Seminars

### 1. Future research in linguistic impoliteness: A personal reflection (9 January 2023)

Future Research in Linguistic (Im)politeness: A Personal Reflection

Jonathan Culpeper  
Lancaster University

In this seminar on Zoom with 135 participants, Professor Jonathan Culpeper, from Lancaster University, United Kingdom, explored future research in linguistic impoliteness and discussed three ongoing projects. The first project focuses on the grammar of impoliteness, specifically examining "you + np" structures across English, Dutch, and Polish. The second project utilises corpus methods to analyse the distribution of politeness expressions in the *British National Corpus 2014* across different social and contextual categories. The third project investigates impoliteness online, exploring the notion of reciprocity and quantifying interactive features to highlight unique aspects of online impoliteness. The talk provided an overview of the aims, challenges, and preliminary findings of each research project.

### 2. Understanding and examining second language oral fluency (13 February 2023)

Fluency scales in EAP tests

IELTS Speaking Band Descriptors

TRINITY Speaking and Listening Rating Scale

PTE Academic Oral Fluency

Independent SPEAKING Rubrics

This seminar examined the construct of oral fluency in second language acquisition, highlighting its crucial role in successful communication. From a research perspective, fluency helps understand how L2 speech is produced and the factors influencing the speech production process. From a practical standpoint, fluency is considered the ultimate goal of language learning and a key aspect of communicative ability. Despite its significance, research findings on fluency are often not translated into practice. Professor Parvaneh Tavakoli, from the University of Reading, United Kingdom, presented to 160 participants on Zoom the findings of three recent studies, emphasising their contributions to the field and discussing how professional practice in applied linguistics can benefit from this research. Overall, fluency research offers ground-breaking implications for language teaching and learning.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/ySpoVgBycUQ>.



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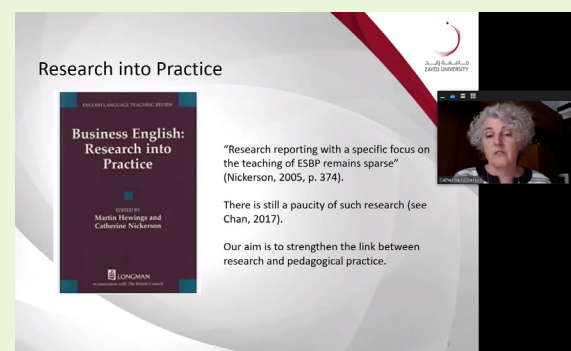
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## 3. A bunch of people or an organised gathering? Observing and resisting the omni relevant category “leader” in the Sarah Everard vigil (2 March 2023)



Professor Richard Fitzgerald, from the University of Macau, gave an analysis to over 60 participants on Zoom on the vigil held for Sarah Everard, who was abducted and killed by a police officer in the UK in March 2021. The vigil, organised by Reclaim These Streets (RTS), was declared unlawful by the police due to COVID-19 lockdown rules. However, despite the cancellation, over a thousand mourners gathered at the scheduled location, and speeches were delivered at the bandstand, leading to a stand-off with the police. The analysis examined how speakers positioned themselves as members of the crowd without speaking on behalf of the crowd, considering the participant categories of the crowd, police, and journalists. The participants aimed to resist or delay the categorisation of “leader” to maintain their autonomy. Prof. Fitzgerald extended the concept of omni-relevance and highlighted the participants' efforts to resist the categorisation as an “OR device” with potential relevance and priority.

## 4. Best practices in online teaching and the development of students' digital communication skills (6 March 2023)



In this seminar with about 110 participants on Zoom, Professor Catherine Nickerson, from Zayed University, United Arab Emirates, discussed how the effective online teaching of a business English course can also provide students who have little or no work experience with a means of developing the digital communication skills they will eventually need for the workplace. Prof. Nickerson discussed the different sets of digital skills that scholars have identified as crucial for professional businesspeople if they are to succeed as communicators. She also showed how developing these skills can be incorporated into an online business English course.

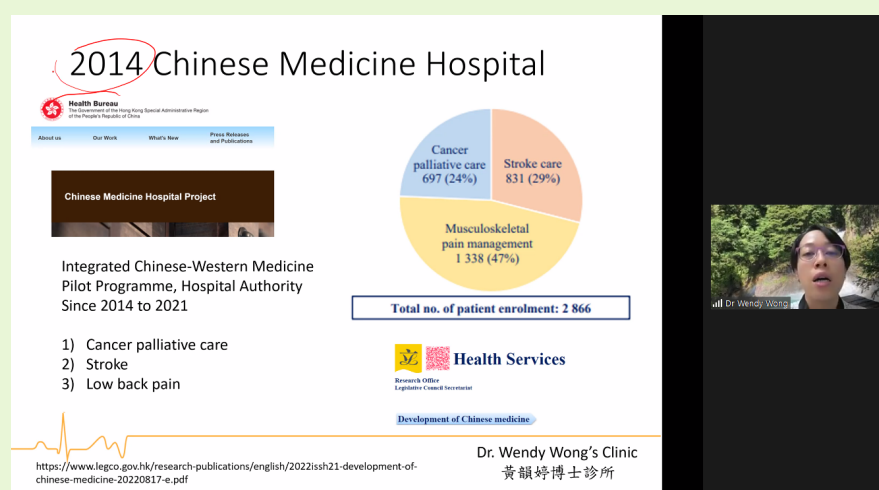
A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/Erk-8ZIM1TA>.

## Joint Online Seminars with Research Centres

### 1. Clinical co-governance of improving integrative cancer care in the private sector (13 January 2023)

Cancer is a leading cause of death worldwide, with Chinese Herbal Medicine (CHM) being a popular form of complementary and alternative medicine among patients in the United States, mainland China, and Taiwan. In this joint seminar with the International Research Centre for the Advancement of Health Communication, Dr Wendy Wong, Director of Dr Wendy Wong's Clinic, introduced to about 40 participants on Zoom a model of integrative medicine in cancer care, aiming to identify gaps in treatment and collaboration among cancer patients, caregivers, healthcare professionals, and Chinese Medicine Practitioners. The study conducted in Hong Kong investigates cancer care from both physician and patient perspectives, using a patient-centred approach to analyse priorities and outcomes. With the global trend of Integrative Medicine, this research contributes to improving inter-professional communication and enhancing the clinical management of cancer in the private sector.

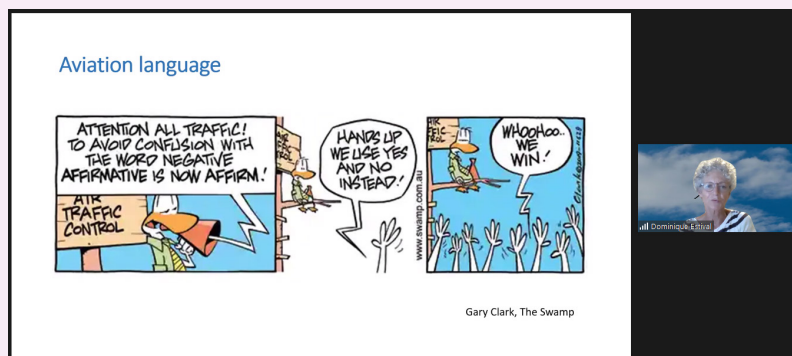
A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/eRNS8nbabsM>.



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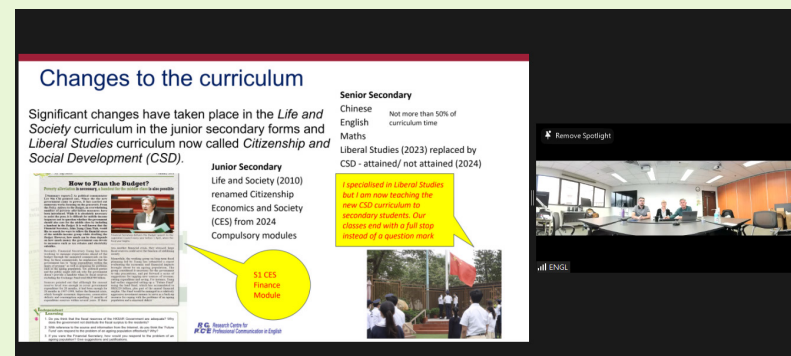
## 2. HK secondary teachers at the front line in 2022: An analysis of the key challenges for junior secondary schools using MOI English (13 March 2023)



This seminar with over 100 participants on Zoom was jointly organised with the Research Centre for Professional Communication in English, with Drs Jane Lockwood and Özgehan Uştuk from our Department and Mr Peter Woodhead, an educational consultant, as the speakers. Over the past four years, Hong Kong secondary schools have undergone significant changes due to social unrest, extended lockdowns during the COVID-19 pandemic, and the revision of the secondary school curriculum. The government school sector has also experienced a departure of over 7,000 teachers. The Education Bureau (EDB) has responded to these changes with professional development programmes targeting EMI (English as the Medium of Instruction) schools. This seminar offered insights into the key challenges in the secondary school sector, particularly regarding the delivery of Language Across the Curriculum (LAC) practices in MOI English classrooms. The Department has been awarded over 20 EDB projects in the last 8 years, and the project team (Dr Lockwood and Mr Woodhead) presented a candid account of the successes and on-going challenges of MOI English teaching in this sector and a picture of what it is like in 2023 for subject teachers at the front line.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/H5V5PX5yiyE>.

## 3. Politeness markers in aviation communication (20 March 2023)



This seminar was jointly organised with the Research Centre for Professional Communication in English. Dr Dominique Estival, from Western Sydney University, Australia, discussed the use of politeness markers in aviation communication with about 110 participants on Zoom. While international communication between pilots and air traffic control (ATC) is typically conducted using standard phraseology, some deviations from this are tolerated and even expected in certain situations. Politeness markers, like "good day" or "thank you," are considered useful in general conversations as they help create better relations between speakers. Dr Estival presented the results of an analysis of transmissions between pilots and ATC at four international airports. The study investigates correlations between the occurrence of politeness markers and communication errors, as well as factors known to affect communication success. The results confirm previous research and provide empirical data for aviation language training on using politeness markers.

A recording of this seminar is available on the Department's YouTube channel: <https://youtu.be/MKO3fP5vOOA>.

## 4. Develop an innovative learning module for interprofessional simulated clinical learning (27 March 2023)

This joint seminar with the International Research Centre for the Advancement of Health Communication invited Ms Ivy Wong from the School of Nursing (SN) at PolyU to discuss an innovative learning module developed by SN for interprofessional simulated clinical learning. This module aims to enhance communication and collaboration among different healthcare professionals in the real clinical setting. It includes online theoretical input and simulated laboratory sessions, allowing students from SN, the Department of Rehabilitation, and the Department of Applied Social Sciences to participate. Speaking to over 50 participants on Zoom, Ms Wong shared that the study found students benefited from this interprofessional simulated clinical learning, in addition to their theoretical understanding. The outcomes supported incorporating more interprofessional simulated learning modules with clinical placements for students in their future clinical practice.





## New Book by Academic Staff on Migrant Workers' Narratives of Return

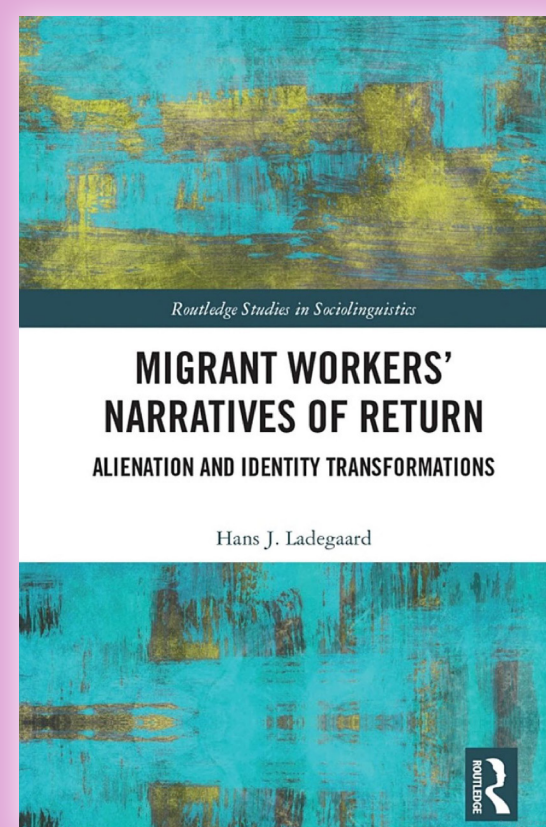
A new book titled *Migrant Workers' Narratives of Return: Alienation and Identity Transformations*, written by our Professor Hans Ladegaard, explores Indonesian and Filipina (domestic) migrant workers' experiences of homecoming after years of work abroad, separated from their loved ones.

Through 113 narratives, Prof. Ladegaard highlights the struggles faced by these workers in the diaspora, including abuse and exploitation leading to trauma. The book also delves into the challenges of coming home, with workers needing to reinvent themselves and navigate the difficulties of not "fitting in". Chapters reveal a major difference between the experiences of Filipina and Indonesian migrant workers, with Filipina returnees sharing mostly positive stories while Indonesian returnees uncover mostly negative stories.

The book is not just an exploration of personal experiences but also sheds light on how research on disenfranchised groups like migrant workers can be used for social and political action.



More information about the book:  
<http://bit.ly/3ldaijY>



## Recent Research Publications

Barlow, M., **Watson, B.**, Jones, E. Maccallum, F., & Morse, K. J. (2023). The influence of professional identity on how the receiver receives and responds to a speaking up message: a cross-sectional study. *BMC Nursing* 22, 26. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s12912-023-01178-z>

Ladegaard, H. J. (2023). Intercultural competence. In C. Chapelle (Ed.), *The Encyclopedia of Applied Linguistics* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Wiley-Blackwell.

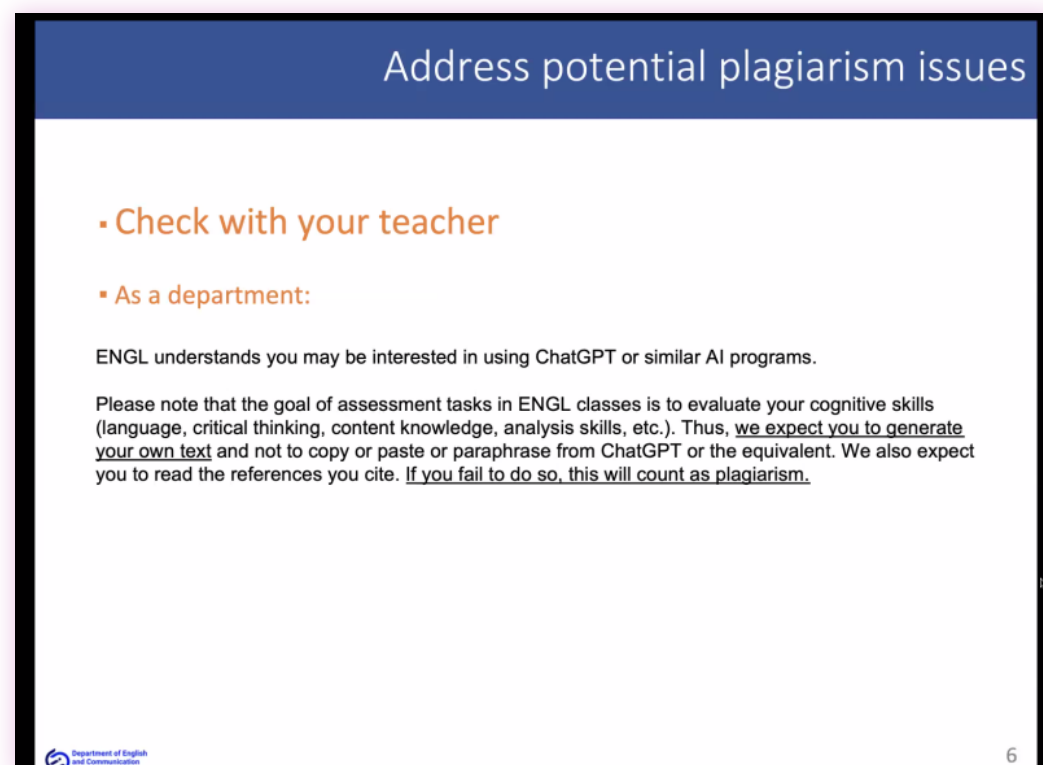
Gao, F., & **Tay, D.** (2023). Metaphor use in describing English public speaking anxiety by Chinese university EFL learners. *System*, 103091.

**Xu, S. B.**, Evans, N., **Hu, G.**, & Bouter, L. (2023). What do retraction notices reveal about institutional investigations into allegations underlying retractions? *Science and Engineering Ethics*, 29. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11948-023-00442-4>

Yang, R., **Hu, G.**, & Lei, J. (2023). Understanding Chinese English-major students' intertextual competence and contributing factors. *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education*, 48, 657-671. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02602938.2022.2102137>

Zhong, Y., **Ahrens, K.**, & Huang, C. R. (2023). Entity and eventivity in Chinese sensory nouns: An onto-cognitive account. *Humanities and Social Sciences Communications*, 10(1), 1-12.

## ChatGPT Workshop for BA and MA Students



As the use of AI technology becomes increasingly prevalent in our daily lives, it is essential to learn how to use it and how to consider the ethical implications of its applications. The Department organised its first ChatGPT workshop on 24 March for its BA and MA students to allow them to learn about the benefits and pitfalls of using this technology in their studies.

The workshop, titled "Exploring the Use of ChatGPT for ENGL students: Is it cheating?" was delivered by Drs Max Diaz and Renia Lopez of our Department. It aimed to educate students about the practical applications of ChatGPT in various learning contexts and scenarios. In addition, the workshop addressed the limitations and potential biases associated with using ChatGPT, as well as the ethical considerations of utilising AI technology in education, including issues of accuracy, bias, and data privacy. Participants also learnt best practices for effectively and responsibly using ChatGPT in their studies.

## PolyU's Stance of Using Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) and Related Resources

### (i) 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."

### (ii) Related Resources

PolyU's Guidelines for Students on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (Effective from 2022/23 Summer Term):

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/ar/docdrive/polyu-students/Student-guide-on-the-use-GenAI.pdf>

PolyU Library on Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) Tools:

[https://libguides.lb.polyu.edu.hk/online-tools-for-assignment/GenAI\\_tools](https://libguides.lb.polyu.edu.hk/online-tools-for-assignment/GenAI_tools)

PolyU EDC on Generative AI:

<https://www.polyu.edu.hk/en/edc/explore-a-topic/generative-ai/>

