Guidance framework for students on the use of generative AI in academic work and examinations

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Objectives

This guidance framework provides students at SRH University of Applied Sciences with advice on the reflective and responsible use of generative AI tools in their studies. It is intended to help them make constructive use of the potential offered by these tools while at the same time meeting the requirements of academic integrity, transparency and personal responsibility in their studies and examinations.

Classification

SRH University of Applied Sciences welcomes the reflective use of generative AI in studies. The use of such tools can support learning processes, stimulate ideas, help structure and revise one's own texts, and thus contribute to the development of academic skills.

At the same time, as students, you are obliged to uphold the principles of academic integrity. The use of AI tools must be disclosed transparently, critically reflected upon and carried out responsibly. Attempts at deception and unmarked external contributions, including those made by AI, constitute violations of the rules of good academic practice.

The misuse of AI tools is prohibited, as is any misuse of techniques, tools or practices.

Notes on the use of AI tools

- The use of AI is generally permitted, unless it is restricted or prohibited in the context of specific examinations or courses. The guidelines communicated by the lecturers are decisive.
- As with the use of other tools and practices, the use of AI tools must always comply with applicable legal provisions, in particular with regard to data protection, copyright and examination regulations.
- Students remain fully responsible for all results of their study and examination performance, regardless of whether AI tools were used.

- Transparency obligation:
  - AI tools used must be named
  - AI-generated content (texts, ideas, outline suggestions, etc.) must be clearly identified as such.
  - The use and creation process of AI-generated content should be clearly and comprehensibly documented in a suitable place (e.g. in a separate methodology section, or in the research design, in footnotes or in a separate appendix attached to the thesis (e.g. as part of the declaration of originality), etc.).
  - Complete documentation of each individual prompt is not required. Instead, the context of use should be described in a concise and comprehensible manner so that the author's own contribution remains recognisable.

- Failure to comply with these disclosure requirements will be considered a violation of the principles of academic work.
- Students remain solely responsible for checking sources, argumentation and linguistic formulation. Uncritical adoption of AI output can result in factually incorrect or distorted content.
- This is because academic integrity also means actively engaging with the origin and context of one's own texts. Plagiarism, including from AI outputs, is not permitted.
- The respective users of AI tools are also responsible for how and for what purpose the (input) data provided to the AI tools for their work is further processed by AI systems.

Opportunities and challenges

The reflective use of AI tools opens up new ways of accessing academic content, developing ideas and deepening specialist skills. At the same time, there are challenges, e.g.:

- Possible misinformation or distorted representations due to faulty training data.
  - Texts (and other media products) generated with the help of AI tools may contain incorrect, misleading, discriminatory and deceptive results.
  - Due to "bias" (i.e. "distortions" and undesirable "patterns" in the data) already contained in the training data, this can be unintentionally reproduced in the results.

    - Consciously or unconsciously, social, scientific and cultural assumptions can be reproduced in the software systems used and, as a result, in the results.
    - The results of AI tools can be deliberately or unintentionally manipulated by developers.
- Risk of impairing one's own learning development if AI tools are used uncritically or exclusively.
- Ethical and ecological issues arise when using large language models.
- The training and individual use of so-called language models, which underlie the use of generative AI, require considerable amounts of energy and natural resources, which has a significant ecological impact when used on a massive scale.

As students, you should be aware of these implications and actively contribute to the responsible use of technology.

Recommendations for study practice

- Use AI tools purposefully and consciously as a support, not as a substitute for your own thinking.
- Reflect critically on where and how AI is helpful and where it tends to inhibit your own development.
- Discuss your experiences with AI in your studies with fellow students and lecturers.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to develop skills in dealing with AI during your studies, both technically and ethically.
- Take note of and implement the instructions and guidelines provided by your teachers on the use of AI.

Guiding questions for the use of AI in coursework and examinations

If you use AI tools in your coursework and examinations, consider the following questions:

- **What** was done with the help of AI? (e.g. idea generation, outline suggestion, rephrasing)
- **How** was the AI content further processed? (e.g. critically reviewed, adapted, reworded)
- **Where** can this be disclosed in the work? (e.g. in the methods section, in a footnote, in the appendix)

Please note: Responsibility always lies with the human being. You have the role of "manager of AI as an assistance system" (*Buck*, Scientific Writing with AI, 2025).

Formulation aids for making the use of AI in written work transparent

Below are two examples of how the use of generative AI can be documented in scientific papers:

- **Example 1 – Methods section**
  "The AI tool xyz was used as part of the preliminary work on the outline and as inspiration for formulating lines of argumentation. The generated suggestions were critically reviewed, adapted in terms of content and integrated into the author's own presentation. The final text was written independently. AI-generated text modules were not adopted in their entirety."
- **Example 2 – Footnote:**
  "The AI tool xyz was used to develop ideas and structure the text. The content was edited and integrated into the body text in my own words. A comprehensive personal contribution remains intact."

At a glance

What is permitted?

- The use of AI tools is generally permitted provided that there are no explicit restrictions for examinations or assignments by teachers.
- AI may be used for idea generation, structuring, style revision, etc.

What is mandatory?

- Transparency: Disclosure of all AI tools used.
- Labelling: Disclosure if content (e.g. texts, ideas, arguments) was created with AI support.
- Documentation: Description of how AI was used, e.g. in the methods section, in footnotes or in a note; see examples of wording for this.

What is not permitted?

- Unlabelled use of AI-generated content = violation of academic integrity
- Attempts at deception by adopting third-party content (including AI-generated content) without critical examination
- Plagiarism, including from AI results, is not permitted

Conclusion

AI can provide support, but academic work remains your personal achievement.

Recommended reading:

Buck, Isabella (2025), Scientific Writing with AI, Publisher: UVK. Series: Studying, but doing it right, ISBN: 9783825263652, eISBN: 9783838563657, DOI: 10.36198/9783838563657