

# Algoma University: Guidelines for the Responsible Use of Generative AI by Students

## Provisional Principles

- Algoma University values academic integrity and expects all students to engage in ethical and responsible learning practices.
- **Any use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including but not limited to ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, NotebookLM, Gemini, and Quillbot, is prohibited in all coursework at Algoma University unless explicitly permitted by the course instructor.**
- Instructors have the discretion to determine the scope of permitted Generative AI used in their courses. Students must consult the course outline and their instructor for specific guidelines on the acceptable use of AI in each course.
- Students may not in an circumstances submit work entirely produced by Generative AI, bypass a course's stated learning objectives through the use of AI, or misrepresent the authorship of work they submit.

## Understanding Generative AI

Generative AI refers to a category of artificial intelligence tools that can create completely new content, such as text, code, images, and music, based on input and training data. This creative capacity stems from its ability to learn patterns and structures from vast datasets, which it then uses to generate outputs. While these tools offer potential benefits for learning and research, they also present challenges for academic integrity and require careful consideration. In addition, improper use of generative AI can in some cases decrease a student's learning. It's important to understand that Generative AI tools are still under development. Their outputs are only as good as the data they are trained on, and they can sometimes produce inaccurate, biased, or nonsensical results.

## What counts as Generative AI?

The best-known generative AI programs include **ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, NotebookLM, Gemini** and **Quillbot**. There are many other generative AI programs that are being released every day, so this list is not exhaustive. As more technology companies incorporate generative AI into their software, students may also notice that the software they have previously used now offers them the choice to generate text, code or images. These include but are not limited to specific versions of **Grammarly, Microsoft Office, Google Suite** and **Adobe Acrobat**. When completing a graded assignment, any use of a program's features that automatically generates customized sentences of written language or images based on prompt is only permitted with the explicit permission of your instructor.

## Academic Integrity

The use of Generative AI without explicit permission from the instructor is considered a violation of [Algoma University's Academic Integrity Policy](#). Misrepresenting the authorship of work and claiming work generated by AI tools as one's own is a form of academic dishonesty and can result in serious academic consequences. These repercussions can include receiving a 0 in the assignment or a 0 in the course. Specific repercussions will depend on the situation and the determination of the instructor. Repercussions become more severe for repeat offenders, including suspension and/or expulsion from the university.

## Seeking permission to Use Generative AI

If you believe using a Generative AI tool would be helpful for your learning in a particular course, but you have not received explicit permission from your instructor, you must obtain written permissions from the instructor before using it for any assignment or assessment. Be prepared to explain how you plan to use the tool responsibly and ethically.

**Remember: When in doubt, ask your instructor for clarification.** It is always better to be cautious and ensure you are using Generative AI in a way that is consistent with Algoma University's commitment to academic integrity. You should proactively seek guidance from your instructor by obtaining an email of clarification from your instructor outlining AI use.

## Best Practices for Completing Student Work:

AI detection tools such as Copyleaks may be used by instructors to scan your work and assess the authorship of your work. These tools are not foolproof and are capable of producing false positives. To demonstrate the authentic authorship of your own work, it is advisable to compose your written assignments in a program that maintains a version history, such as Google Docs.

If your instructor permits the use of Generative AI in a course:

### Be Transparent and Cite Your Sources

You must acknowledge the use of any Generative AI tool in your work. Just like any other content you have not created yourself, you must provide citations and references for any AI-generated content, following the guidelines provided by your instructor. You can refer to the following Algoma University Library sources for more detailed information about citing generative AI sources in a specific citation:

- [American Psychological Association \(APA\)](#)
- [Modern Language Association \(MLA\)](#)
- [Chicago Manual of Style](#)

In the case of other citation styles that have not yet provided specific guidelines on how to cite generative AI, the best practice is to follow the rules in the style guide for personal communication, as personal communication is generally unrecoverable. Some instructors may, instead of requiring citation, require you to provide an authorship statement when submitting assignments, specifying whether you made use of AI.

### Evaluate Critically

It is crucial to critically evaluate the output of Generative AI tools. These tools regularly produce incomplete, inaccurate or biased information, so you should always verify information from reliable sources. The practice of consistent verification will also help you develop your critical thinking abilities and keep you from becoming dependent on

AI. The content produced by these tools should be treated as a starting point for your work, but you should check this output carefully and critically before using any of this information in your academic assignments. Generative AI tools are prone to "hallucinations," which means they can sometimes generate information that sounds reasonable but is factually incorrect. It is essential to verify any information obtained from these tools using reputable sources such as academic databases, scholarly articles, and books. Remember, that **you** are responsible for the accuracy of any information you share in a university assignment. In addition, the data used to train AI models can contain inherent biases, which may be reflected in the generated output. Be aware of these potential biases, especially when dealing with sensitive topics related to race, gender, religion or culture.

## Protect your Privacy

Be aware of the privacy policies and user agreements of any Generative AI tool you use. In many cases, by signing up for an account and consenting to the terms of services of a Generative AI product, and sharing your work within the interface of a Generative AI product, you give that company access to personal information and the right to reproduce your work and personal information as they see fit. Protect your personal information and carefully review the terms of service of any Generative AI product you use.

## Focus on Learning

Remember that the primary goal of using AI in your studies should be to enhance your learning and understanding. True learning occurs through active engagement with the course material. This includes reading, analyzing, synthesizing, and critically evaluation information from various sources. While Generative AI can assist in summarizing or generating content in certain situations, it should not replace your own intellectual effort and exploration of the subject matter, as AI will not help you develop an understanding or the ability to apply knowledge in different contexts. Assignments and assessments are designed to help you develop essential skills and such as critical thinking, problem-solving as well as research and writing. Using Generative AI to consistently complete these tasks for you has been shown by academic researchers to prevent you from developing these crucial skills, which are essential for success in your academic journey and future career (Zhai et al., 2024).

## Support and Resources

Algoma University provides various resources to support students in using technology responsibly and maintaining academic integrity:

### Academic Integrity Office:

The Academic Integrity Office offers workshops on academic integrity and avoiding plagiarism. You can also schedule an individual consultation with an Academic Integrity Officer to discuss any points regarding academic integrity that you find unclear or to discuss specific challenges you are facing. Possible topics that an Academic Integrity Officer can discuss with you include course policies, assignment instructions, and what to do when accused of plagiarism. You can book this consultation via email at [aio@algomau.ca](mailto:aio@algomau.ca)

### The Algoma University Library:

The Library offers workshops and resources on research skills, information literacy, and citing sources. You can schedule an individual consultation with a library staff member on their website at <https://library.algomau.ca/contact-us/>

### The Learning Centre:

The Learning Centre offers learning strategy support and peer tutoring services that can help you work through strategies to improve your "school skills" such as time management to avoid situations where you might feel pressure to use AI or other shortcuts. Students can book appointments with Raquel Lehto, the Learning Strategist, at <https://raquel-lehto.youcanbook.me/>

### The Writing Lab:

The Writing Lab is available for registered students completing coursework assignments in either the drafting or final stage of academic writing. Students can book appointments by filling in the [Appointment Request Form](#) or by emailing [writing@algomau.ca](mailto:writing@algomau.ca)

### Citations:

Zhai, C., Wibowo, S., & Li, L.D. (2024). The effects of over-reliance on AI dialogue systems on students' cognitive abilities: A systematic review. *Smart Learning Environments*, 11(28). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40561-024-00316-7>

