

FEB guidelines on the use of genAI

Studying in the era of generative AI, is it still worthwhile? The answer is: YES!

Higher education is not something you pursue solely for the degree. Intellectual curiosity should be the main driving force. You come to the university to learn, to expand your knowledge and skillset, and above all to further develop yourself as a person. It is precisely in the learning process itself – by actively wrestling with difficult concepts, by formulating arguments in your own words, by making mistakes and learning from them – that you grow as a person and as a professional. Your university education offers you the opportunity to develop critical thinking, to independently analyse complex issues, and to devise creative solutions.

The **responsible use** of generative artificial intelligence (genAI) in the broader educational context is allowed, both for teachers and students. Although the use of genAI is permitted, it does not mean that everything is simply allowed. Below, we provide an overview of how and in what ways you can and may use genAI tools and when and how it is better not to use these genAI tools. **Article 78 of the Education and Examination code** sets out the consequences of irresponsible and unauthorised use.

As a student, you should also be aware that a study programme aims to teach you certain competencies that are assessed by means of an examination and/or assignment. At these moments, you as a student must be able to demonstrate that you have effectively mastered these competencies. **Teachers may therefore impose stricter rules in relation to the competencies to be acquired.**

Exemplary behaviour is expected from each UGent student, respecting the core pillars:

- *Responsibility and independent actions*: you are and remain responsible for your final product and therefore also for what you do with the tools;
- *Honesty and transparency*: you are honest and transparent about the usages of the tools;
- *Critical attitude*: you are critical of the output of the tools and you are aware of possible bias and check the sources;
- *Safe and confidential handling of information*: you do not upload confidential and private data;
- *Ethical and sustainable use*: you are aware of the broader ethical implications regarding copyright and intellectual property rights. Additionally, you critically question your own AI use. Are you using genAI in an efficient and sustainable way? Do you really need genAI to reach the objective?

We therefore expect that when you use genAI tools during your studies, you do so with a critical mindset, a sense of responsibility and in a (scientifically) correct and ethical way.

If you are not yet familiar with genAI, what it can do, and what the limitations, risks and ethical implications are, you can find more information on the following page: [Generative AI at Ghent University](#).

The information site 'Generative AI for Students: From Concepts to Creation' teaches you how to use genAI responsibly.

Within this text, we use several icons:

	Information block. Explains what is possible with the use of (gen)AI-tools. Note: just because something is possible does not mean it is allowed..
	This block states what is allowed and how genAI tools can be used correct and responsible.
	Caution! You can use genAI tools but be critical. The tools are not always transparent or flawless.
	This block states what is not allowed and how not to use genAI tools..

1. GenAI as Study Buddy



During your education, you learn many new (complex) concepts. Did you not fully understand a chapter of the course or topic? You can use genAI tools to get **additional explanations, tailored to your needs**. Additionally, you can create **additional (variations of) exercises** or a **step-by-step plan** for solving exercises so you can **master the skills even better**. You can also generate potential exam questions to test whether you master the course material in preparation for exam.



You can use genAI tools to obtain additional explanation on a topic or to work it out in a way that is more accessible for you.



It is very important that you **critically approach every result** from AI tools. The answer from an LLM model is **never 100% reliable**. The likelihood that the answer is correct is high, but it is not always correct. When the model is challenged with new, innovative concepts, there is a high chance that the model has not yet gathered sufficient knowledge about it. Therefore, check whether this corresponds with what you find in your course materials or in professional literature. Also, never expect the impossible; an LLM is a language

model, not a computational model.



Without permission from the author, it is forbidden to upload their work as background information to your prompt. It is therefore also forbidden to upload course materials from the professor without their permission.

2. GenAI as Idea Generator



Are you lacking inspiration for the subject of your new assignment or do you have no idea how to start get started on the given task? You can use genAI to **search together** for a possible topic or to draw up a plan of action. You can also check the structure or content of a report with a genAI tool. You can use genAI for a lot of **inspiration or direction**, however, use it wisely and not for everything.



You can use genAI tools **to brainstorm** in order to:

- gather ideas
- draw up an action plan or project plan
- act as a sparring partner to consider different strategies
- determine which issues are relevant to report
- ...

Always do this with the core pillars in mind and ask yourself the question: **do I really need genAI for this?**



The answer from an LLM can be very brief or very extensive. **Be critical** and make sure you still execute the assigned task and limit yourself to what is asked and is relevant for the task. Also be careful about applying techniques that you have not (yet) learned in the program.



Let genAI help you but **do not use genAI to complete an assignment in your place**. This is plagiarism and you will not learn anything from it towards the evaluation. Your own competencies remain important.

3. GenAI When Searching for (Scientific) Papers and Other (Scientific) Source Materials



A genAI tool can be used as a search engine (e.g., ChatGPT, Copilot, Claude, Gemini, Elicit, etc.) for finding (scientific) source materials. These therefore complement the tools that are already used for a longer time (e.g., Web of Science, Google Scholar, etc.).



You may search for relevant references and source materials, but you must always **consult the original reference or source yourself**. You always refer to the original source, which you have actually read yourself.



Be critical of the sources provided. Only use sources that are reliable and relevant. Preferably use scientifically substantiated literature. Summaries from a genAI tool are not always complete and correct and may lack nuance.



Be aware that genAI tools are **not trained on the latest information** and **cannot always access** the latest information. Some sources are only accessible after you log in or are behind a paywall. So you may miss important or relevant information.



You may **not refer to** (AI-generated) **non-existent sources**, this is a serious form of fraud.



You may **not simply copy the output** from a genAI tool and **present it as if it were your own work**. If you use AI-generated text, ideas, or analyses literally or almost literally without processing or citing sources, this is equivalent to **plagiarism**.

4. GenAI as Programmer and Excel Wizard



You can use genAI to help you program or to help you create efficient Excel formulas. However, do not do this in course components where learning to program or learning to work with Excel are the objectives/final competencies. Your own skills will be tested in a context where you will be evaluated without the use of genAI tools.



You can use genAI to **help generate code**, which you then critically evaluate before executing it in data processing software such as R, Python, or equivalents. Make sure you understand the code yourself, so you can also interpret the result.



You can use genAI to **help improve code** if it contains errors that you cannot resolve yourself. Make sure you know where your code was modified and why this modification solves your problem.



Do not simply copy the generated code and/or formulas. Make sure **you understand this code, so you can better interpret the final result**. You need to be able to write code or work with Excel yourself without aids if these are evaluated as final competencies.



You may **not enter confidential data** into AI tools (cf. data privacy, intellectual property). AI tools are not always transparent about what happens to the information and data entered by the user. You could generalize datasets in terms of variables, data types and formats, etc., to perform a test analysis with genAI, but this is still risky and unreliable.



You may **not use AI-generated data(sets) as real data**, this is a form of fraud.

5. GenAI as Designer



With AI tools, you can easily create content that strengthens your work. If you cannot immediately find a usable or suitable image online, AI can provide a solution. Questions for a survey or quiz, slides, posters, etc., are also among the possibilities. However, consider the cost of genAI before generating everything.



You can use genAI to generate **suitable content**.



Be critical. **Check** the created content for errors and inconsistencies. Do not get lost in creating the perfect image. These models are not perfect. The more realistic you want it, the more imperfections you will get. In the context of responsible and sustainable use, do not make endless attempts to create something.



Do not upload examples to a genAI model **if you do not have permission** from the parties involved. This is a violation of copyrights and/or portrait rights if you do this.

6. GenAI for Analysing and Visualising data



You must be able to assess for yourself which analyses and visualizations are most suitable for a particular dataset. Which visualisations suit the questions that need to be answered. A (genAI) tool can generate, analyse, and visualize data, but there are some important points of attention and restrictions.



You can use genAI to **brainstorm** about the best approach to work with your data.



You can use AI tools to generate consistent data visualisations.



You may use AI to **transcribe interviews**, but only **on the condition that the complete privacy of the participants is guaranteed**. Both the voice and what is said must be protected. On the UGent servers, you can use a local version of [Whisper](#) for this



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You may **not use AI-generated data(sets) as real data**, this is a form of fraud.

7. GenAI and Written Language Skills



You are expected to further expand your written (scientific) language skills throughout your education. Your own language proficiency remains important to write or correct texts yourself quickly, but genAI can offer assistance. You can generate texts, improve them linguistically, translate, summarize, paraphrase, etc.



You may **detect and correct language errors** (spelling, grammar) in the text you wrote yourself.



You may ask for inspiration to **rephrase sentences** you wrote yourself.



You may use genAI to help **translate** sentences you wrote yourself (e.g., from Dutch to English). Read critically.



AI-generated texts are not considered a reliable source and cannot be copied without **thorough critical reflection** of the content. You must therefore **critically check** the output of genAI to ensure that the content is truthful. Make sure that you fully understand the text yourself (e.g., word usage, sentence structure, etc.) and that you can fully support the text as it has been rewritten. As an author, you are responsible for the content of the text you submit.



You may **not simply submit AI-generated texts as your own text**, this is a form of plagiarism. Your own contribution to the text must be substantially large.



Do not use genAI for very simple things, trust your own skills. Exceptional word usage can lead to suspicion

8. GenAI and Oral Language Skills



GenAI can support you in preparing your oral presentations or project defences by offering tips and tricks for the pitch and defence. You can therefore see genAI as a sparring partner or virtual fellow student.



You can **generate tips and tricks** to inspire you in creating the pitch or presentation.



You can generate **powerful supporting material**, such as images, that really fit your story and strengthen your narrative



You can generate a list of **possible questions** to prepare yourself for a critical question and answer session with the instructor and/or fellow students.



You can help **explain difficult terms or concepts in a clear way** for a broader audience.



The quality of a summary or slides, generated by AI tools are often insufficient to use for a pitch or presentation. Besides, it is very difficult to present these convincingly if you did not create the presentation yourself. To be able to deliver your story with quality and spontaneity, it is better to work it out yourself.