Department of English, University of Bern
Guidelines on the use of generative AI

Background

Recent years have led to the development of "generative digital tools": computer programs based on artificial intelligence (AI) that produce text, images, videos, or code based on user input. The quality of these tools has improved significantly since 2022, as can be seen in, for example, OpenAI's ChatGPT 3.5 (text generation), Dall-E (image generation), and Midjourney (image generation). AI-supported generative technology, such as chatbots or image and multimedia generation programs, are now capable of producing academically relevant output.

Nonetheless, these tools have **notable weaknesses**: in particular, they frequently make **serious factual errors** and sometimes freely **invent facts**, including bibliographical references. Biases that exist in available online materials are often reinforced by these tools. Furthermore, your own original thoughts and ideas are not protected and may become accessible to others before you intend that to happen.

Is the use of AI-supported tools allowed during one's studies?

The University of Bern does not have a general prohibition on the use of AI-supported tools. It is vital, however, that students learn how to handle these tools sensibly, responsibly, and critically. This involves an awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of AI tools, of academic integrity, and of legal parameters. Academic writing skills will continue to be essential: comprehensive subject knowledge, along with familiarity with academic methods and style are needed to be able to critically evaluate and improve the output of AI tools.

Under what conditions is it permitted to use AI-supported tools in student work in the Department of English?

1. Students may **not** under any circumstances use generative AI tools in Core Curriculum Courses or in the courses of the Language Module, except for the authorized explorations that will take place **in class** to build and improve critical AI literacy.

2. Students in classes beyond the Core Curriculum Courses and the Language Module are permitted to use generative AI under the following conditions:

    a. Any submitted student work **must always be solely the work of the student**. For this reason, AI-supported tools may at most be used in a supporting role. In an academic context, taking full responsibility for one's own written work remains the requirement. The same applies to other AI generated products including images, diagrams, and bibliographies.
    b. AI tools must **always** be cited and referenced, just like other tools and sources – see below. **Student papers without complete attribution of sources and tools will be treated as cases of plagiarism.**
    c. The products of AI tools are **not** scientific sources. They should be treated like the result of a preliminary internet search. Even if the source is cited properly, it is still the responsibility of the student to ensure the relevance and accuracy of the AI output and to develop the ideas further.

3. **All submitted student work may be subject to oral examination to verify the authorship of the work. Plagiarism rules apply**.

How to cite the use of generative AI:

A detailed citation is **always** required when AI-generated elements are incorporated into a paper. This applies both to the use of products created by AI tools in their original form and to the use of these products for further editing. Any use of AI-based tools in the reflection and conception phases must also be disclosed.

You should:

1. "cite a generative AI tool whenever you paraphrase, quote, or incorporate into your own work any content (whether text, image, data, or other) that was created by it"
2. "acknowledge all functional uses of the tool (like editing your prose or translating words) in a note, your text, or another suitable location"
3. "take care to vet the secondary sources it cites" (as indicated above, AI tools often freely invent sources)
4. Digital tools that do not have a specific generative function, such as software to check spelling or grammar, online dictionaries, library catalogues, etc. do not have to be cited.

What must students do to properly document their use of AI tools:

If students use AI tools, they must submit the chat transcript of the AI tools they have used to help write their paper. During the research and writing process, they must create a log that keeps track of which tools are used for which sections and submit this log, along with the chat transcript, as an appendix to their written work. Here is an example of a log:

AI LOG			
AI-based tool	Type of use	Affected parts of your project	remarks
Whisper	Automatic transcription of audio	Entire audio	I used a modified Wellinghof script in Python
ChatGPT	Creation of text suggestions, marked in text or footnotes.	Chapter 1, page 3, third paragraph	
ChatGPT	I asked ChatGPT about the paper topic and compared its results with my own research	Chapter 2, pages 5-7, full chat transcript in Appendix II	
Dream (Wombo)	Creation of visualisations	Page 3, figure 2	Figure 2 on pages 3: idea borrowed from Dream, then heavily modified by myself

If students have not used AI tools at all in their piece of written work, they will still have to submit a log, noting that no AI tools were used.

ALL logs must be signed and dated by the student.

When citing AI-based tools, the following elements must be included in students' texts:

- Title: for text, image, and multimedia generation tools, the prompt (i.e., user input) serves as the title. For particularly long prompts, list only the beginning of the prompt.
- Name and version of the tool;
- Publisher (company, organization or person who provided or programmed the tool);
- Date of content generation;
- Location (address / URL of the tool).

Below, students can see how to cite the use of AI tools within their texts.

IN-TEXT CITATIONS	
Verbatim citation of the text	Geology can be defined as the science that "studies the upper layers of the earth" ("What is geology?", answer by ChatGPT, 23 March 2023).
Paraphrase of the text	As a geologist, Martina Musterfrau does not study all our planet's interior, but only its upper layers ("What is geology?", answer by ChatGPT, 23 March 2023).
Translation	"Comme je descendais des Fleuves impassibles (Rimbaud). "Downstream on impassive rivers suddenly (translation Samuel Beckett). "As I went down the impassive rivers" (translation Deepl, 5 April 2023).
Image or Figure	Image 1: "An ocean of books," image generated by Stable Diffusion, 28 March 2023.

Below, students can see how to add AI tools to their list of references.

WORKS CITED LIST
Tools

ChatGPT, version 3.5, OpenAI: openai.com/chat

- "What is geology?" answer to the author, 23 March 2023
- Help with creation of text structure

DeepL Translate, Deepl SE: https://www.deepl.com/translator

- Translation of text passages

Deepl Translate, Deepl SE: https://www.deepl.com/write

- Reformulation of text passages

Elicit – The AI Research Assistant, version March 2023, Ought: https://elicit.org

- Literature research, creation of summaries.

Stable Diffusion, Stability AI: https://stablediffusionweb.com

- "an ocean of books": image generated, 28 March 2023.

Literature

Beckett, Samuel (1976). *Drunken Boat. A translation of Arthur Rimbaud's Poem* "Le Bateau Ivre." Reading: Whiteknights Press, 1976.

Failure to correctly log, cite and reference each use of AI tools in written work will be deemed to constitute a case of plagiarism.

Questions

If you have any further questions relating to AI, please direct them to the instructor supervising the piece of writing in question.

Sources used for this handout

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Further sources:
- 2023_03_06_Didaktik_Recht_KI_Hochschulbildung.pdf
- https://zfhe.at/index.php/zfhe/article/view/1678
- https://guides.library.uq.edu.au/referencing/chatgpt-and-generative-ai-tools/overview
- https://style.mla.org/citing-generative-ai/