

Guidelines and Recommendations from the Institute of Linguistics on the Use of Generative AI in Teaching and Studies

Handout for Students

English Version of “Handreichung für Studierende“(V1, 19. February 2026)

Introductory Information

This guide aims to concretize and supplement, and in some cases clarify, the general recommendations for students provided by the Generative AI Team → [Use of generative AI in studies– recommendations for Students by Generative KI AG](#) (see the list of links).

Generative AI in teaching: Competence Acquisition

A wide range of competencies should be acquired throughout the course of a study programme. Depending on the respective competence, there are therefore adequate reasons for or against the use of generative AI.

As a general rule, one should not consider AI as an assistant that completely takes over unpleasant tasks, but rather as a tool that can facilitate and complement one's pre-existing learning and writing habits.

When working with AI, it is crucial to acquire AI-specific skills, such as the ability to **critically evaluate** AI-generated information. AI tools can be helpful for learning, writing and/or organising your studies. However, they may also provide fabricated or misleading information and offer poor advice. As it is often impossible to trace the origin of the information, any information generated is **fundamentally unscientific**.

If you want to use AI in your studies, you should approach it with scepticism. Nevertheless, examining the strengths and weaknesses of the tools makes sense in order to make informed decisions about their use. Additionally, the same principle that applies to most websites also applies to AI applications: if they are free, you are probably paying with your personal data. Therefore, you should carefully consider what information you wish to disclose. In particular, it is problematic to enter sensitive, personal or confidential data and copyrighted material (e.g. scientific texts belonging to a publisher) into AI tools. See also the general recommendations for using generative AI in study and teaching (list of links).

AI Tools in Examinations

If you plan to use AI tools when writing term papers or in other exam contexts, it is essential that you **discuss with your lecturers what is permitted and prohibited** within the scope of the course and exam regulations. If your lecturers have not yet provided clear guidance, check with them directly! **Otherwise, you must currently assume that the absence of explicit permission is equivalent to a prohibition.**

Legal aspects: What you need to know

AI, plagiarism, and deception

AI-generated texts are **not cases of plagiarism** according to the legal opinion of the RUB → Rechtsgutachten der RUB (see list of links). However, this is largely irrelevant in terms of examination law as the primary issue is the act of **deceit**. This occurs when someone claims a text that they did not write 'independently' or 'autonomously' as their own. Therefore, the decisive question in dealing with generative AI is to what extent its use is considered part of 'independent/autonomous academic work'. This is, however, cannot be assessed in general terms, but is determined by specific guidelines (e.g. those provided by the instructors).

It is not the text content or text form that is crucial; rather, it is the **use** of AI tools as aids in the work process.

- If an aid is permitted, it must be explicitly indicated in the appendices of the written work.
- An act of deception occurs when impermissible aids are used or the use of permissible aids is not indicated.

Furthermore, it is important to note that AI-generated text can also be considered as a case of plagiarism, if the necessary conditions for plagiarism are met. However, it is essential to emphasize that this must be checked completely independently of its status as an AI-generated product.

Proof of Deception

A recent ruling by the Munich Administrative Court → Urteil am VG München (see list of links) on the detection of AI use at TUM has strengthened the legal position of examiners. The court ruled that, “due to their role as examiners”, they possess the responsibility and expertise to identify deviations from expected standards in students’ texts (in this case an applicant’s). Provided that the evaluation work is carried out with due diligence, it would therefore not be the examiners who would have to prove the use of AI, but rather: “The applicant, according to the court, would have had to explain how he had been able to write the text. [Translation]”

On the other hand, it should be noted in this context that the Munich Administrative Court (VG München) bases its assessment on the professional competence of the examiners—and this presupposes that all instructors possess this professional competence in dealing with AI-generated texts. Therefore, if instructors are not expected to become “ChatGPT examination experts,” then referring to the legal position of instructors and institutions is not a sufficient strategy for dealing with AI in written assignments.

Data Protection

Entering third-party texts into an AI tool constitutes, in most cases, **a violation of copyright law!** See the information in the general recommendations for additional information on dealing with generative AI in teaching and learning (list of links).

When actively and deliberately using **AI tools**, it must be taken into account that these tools (predominantly from the United States) are generally **not compatible** with the data protection regulations of Goethe University.

For this reason, the HRZ has developed solutions to provide all (or as many as possible) instructors and students at Goethe University with access to the most important generative AI applications via “secure” access points. In effect, institutional accounts are created that can then be used by individual users (instructors and students) without disclosing personal data (see list of links).

Recommendation: AI is a tool

Since research in the humanities increasingly presupposes the mastery of AI tools as working instruments across ever more fields of work, teaching—where it also serves as scientific training—cannot afford to forego the advantages of AI as a tool. As guidance for such an appropriate use of AI, many instructors active in e-learning have for years relied on the famous Rules for Tools by the e-learning and AI expert Christian Spannagel (see list of links). The first rules are:

- 1. All Media and tools are allowed.*
- 2. You are responsible for your results.*
- 3. Indicate aids used.*

This does not necessarily mean that the use of AI must always and everywhere be permitted (or even should be), but it defines generative AI in its function as a tool as, in principle, **“not forbidden for the time being.”** Any restrictions on the use of AI must therefore be justified based on the respective work or examination context.

Recommendation: Texts must be accounted for

More precisely: Of course, not only texts but all contributions to scholarly discourse must be accounted for by their authors, regardless of their format and medium. This is both a matter of **scholarly attitude** and of **scholarly competence**. To place the process of acquiring one’s own scholarly competence at the center, beyond a work product that can sometimes be produced merely through reproduction, a shift in emphasis in teaching is needed: away from the presentation of mere results and toward the documentation of work processes. Such a focus on scholarly competence requires practicing an appropriate scholarly attitude. The principle of assuming **responsibility for one’s own text** should apply here. In doing so, students may also “appropriate” external or AI-generated components. However, what matters is that everything considered their own must be accounted for, which means:

- Students (as per custom) take responsibility for the text they produce by documenting both the external texts they use and the tools they employ according to the established rules.
- Students also take responsibility for their text beyond submission; that is, they are, if necessary, able to defend it in other formats (such as an oral examination).

Incidentally, such an approach offers decisive advantages not only for addressing AI but also the issue of plagiarism. Instructors must no longer attempt to prove that students may have done something impermissible (*for which instructors are not trained*) and that this action may have been intentional (*which can only be demonstrated with difficulty, indirectly, and ultimately only in legal terms*). Instead, they can focus more strongly than before on the evaluation of scholarly contributions to discourse (*which constitutes the core of their expertise*).

- Instructors examine (as usual) whether a scholarly contribution to discourse (e.g., a text) complies with the rules of good academic practice.
- In cases of doubt or suspicion, instructors examine (e.g., through an oral examination) whether the author of the contribution can fully and independently take responsibility for it.

Currently applicable legal framework

The provisions of the framework regulations serve as the basis for teaching and examination practice at Goethe University → *Rahmenordnung* (RO). In section 29 paragraph (1), it states that **attempts at deception** or the use of unauthorized aids in examinations or coursework will be graded as a “**fail**.” An attempt at deception also occurs if the student “has submitted a false declaration according to section 17 paragraph (8) and section 40 paragraph (16).” Paragraph (9) stipulates that failure to observe “discipline-specific citation rules” must be examined as a possible attempt at deception.

Further **sanctions** fall under the responsibility of the respective examination board (RO section 29 paragraph (8) → cf. the *Guidelines for teachers – dealing with generative AI in assessments*. In cases of “particularly serious deception” (besonders schwerer Täuschung), the board may decide on exclusion from repeat examinations up to the **loss of the right to be examined** in the study program. However, “particularly serious” already includes, “in particular,” deception accompanied by “a written declaration by the student that the work was completed independently without unauthorized aids”—that is, **the typical case of plagiarism or impermissible AI use**. In any case, **failure to name AI as a tool** shall be **regarded as deception**.

The responsible examination boards are:

- For teacher training programs: the Examination Board for Teacher Education Programs of the Academy for Educational Research and Teacher Education (ABL), via the Central Examination Office for Teacher Education Programs (ZPL).

- For bachelor's and master's degrees: the BA/MA examination board of the faculty. Clarity exists only up to this point; uncertainty begins with the necessary **proof of an attempt at deception**. A so-called full proof of the use of AI tools is almost impossible and will not be achievable by technical means in the future either. Any action against attempts at deception through plagiarism or impermissible AI use is therefore based on so-called **prima facie evidence**. See the compilation in the section "Procedures for suspected cheating" in the → [Recommendations for instructors by the Generative AI Team](#) (see list of links).

In this context, the judgment of the Munich Administrative Court mentioned above must also be considered → [Urteil am VG München](#) (see list of links). It strengthens the evaluative competence of examiners and assigns the burden of disproving the prima facie evidence to any examinees who might bring a legal complaint.

According to the → [Guidelines for teachers – dealing with generative AI in assessments](#) by the Generative AI Team, in cases of justified suspicion of unauthorized use of AI the students concerned must be confronted with the allegations. One possible approach is, for example, to call the student for a hearing in which the student is given the opportunity to refute the prima facie evidence. However, the most sensible procedure imaginable in this context is explicitly not permitted, which is why the recommendations emphasize in bold:

"However, a change in the form of examination specified in the study-program-specific regulations to a subsequent oral examination for the purpose of verifying independent work in the event of suspicion of deception is not permitted. [Translation]" (Section "Notes on dealing with...")

In other words: an oral examination may only be used to dispel suspicion of deception if the examination regulations already provide for the possibility of an oral examination.

New declaration of original work for written assignments (Eigenständigkeitserklärung)

To fulfill the requirement of taking responsibility for one's own text, differentiated documentation of the work process, particularly with regard to the use of tools, is necessary.

From an examination-law perspective, this is ensured through a new declaration of independent work issued by the Institute of Linguistics, which has been mandatory since 09 February 2026 for teacher education programs, all bachelor's programs, and the master's program. It addresses not only the general permissibility of certain tools but also the distinction between permissible and impermissible uses of these tools. It also covers figures and can naturally be adapted for different media types. If necessary, the declaration can also be used for coursework.

The following text is to be used in the future, and the specifications it contains must be provided: “I hereby affirm in lieu of an oath that this written work has been prepared in accordance with the rules of good scientific practice. I have authored the work independently and have cited all sources and aids used. All passages that are quoted verbatim, approximately verbatim, or paraphrased from publications or unpublished texts by others are clearly indicated as such. This includes the drawings, sketches, illustrations, and similar materials provided in the work. In writing this paper, I have used only permissible aids and have used them in an acceptable manner according to the guidelines provided to me. Generative AI (such as ChatGPT) was not used to create my own text. Any assistance from AI in the work process is disclosed in detail in the appendix of the paper. This work has not been used, even in part, for another course requirement or examination. I am aware that a violation of these rules may be considered deceit in the sense of the study and examination regulations and may be sanctioned accordingly.”

Documentation of the use of tools

The declaration of independent work is supplemented by templates for documenting the use of tools during the work process. With their help, instructors formulate guidelines specifying which uses of tools are excluded as impermissible. Students then document, for the permissible areas, whether and how the use of “notifiable” tools has occurred.

The form of documentation required is determined by the instructors. If your instructors have not yet provided clear instructions, seek a conversation with them!

Documentation of the use of tools in the work process, Variant A

Tool	Form of Use	Parts of the work affected	Remarks
...	...	...	...
...	...	...	
...	...	...	...

This is the simple tabular version of such documentation. It follows the → [*Guidelines for teachers – dealing with generative AI in assessments*](#), which in turn refers to the guidelines from the University of Basel → [*Guidelines of Uni Basel*](#) (Copyright notice, see the list of links). An example from this guide is as follows:

KI-basiertes Hilfsmittel	Einsatzform	Betroffene Teile der Arbeit	Bemerkungen
DeepL Translator	Übersetzung von Textpassagen	Ganze Arbeit	
ChatGPT (OpenAI) oder ähnliches	Erstellung von Textvorschlägen, im Text bzw. in Fussnoten gekennzeichnet ChatGPT wurde zum Thema der Arbeit befragt, die Ergebnisse mit eigener Recherche verglichen.	Kapitel 1, S. 3, Abschnitt 2 Kapitel 2, S. 5-7; kompletter Chat-Verlauf im Anhang	
Dream (Wombo)	Erstellung von Visualisierungen	Abb. 2, S. 7 Abb. 9, S. 15	Abb.2, S.7: stark überarbeitet, nur Visualisierungsidee von Dream
...	...	...	...

Dokumentations-Tabelle: Beispiel

Documentation of the use of tools in the work process, Variant B

	for inspiration	supplementary	supportive	generative
Topic selection, research question	...	...	...	...
Research of sources/ literature research	...	...	...	...
Research of content/ information	...	...	...	...
Development/ Improvement (e.g. translation)	...	...	...	...
Structuring, argumentation (outlining)	...	...	...	...
Writing draft/ Rough version	...	...	...	...
Revision, Correction	...	...	...	...

This matrix represents a draft developed after discussions with various disciplinary representatives based on a template from the Writing Center → [Vorlage des Schreibzentrums](#) (copyright notice, see list of links). In the respective disciplinary usage context, the various fields of the matrix would need to be supplemented with concrete explanations before being distributed to students, for example:

	for inspiration	supplementary	supportive	generative
Topic selection, research question	<i>have areas/fields suggested</i>	<i>have sub-aspects suggested</i>	<i>Improve the research question dialogically</i>	<i>Adopt the research question</i>
Research of sources/ literature research	<i>Have individual titles suggested</i>	<i>Research sub-areas/ several titles</i>	<i>Systematic research with the help of an AI tool (e.g. summarise)</i>	<i>Adopt a literature list</i>
Research of content/ information	<i>Selective research</i>	<i>Research of sub-areas</i>	<i>Systematic research with the help of an AI tool (e.g. summarise)</i>	<i>Adopt content on a large scale</i>
Development/ Improvement (e.g. translation)	<i>read translations, e.g. for stylistic decisions</i>	<i>translate individual passages or terms</i>	<i>compare/check translated passages</i>	<i>Adopt a translation</i>
Structuring, argumentation (outlining)	<i>have suggestions for structure generated</i>	<i>have sub-areas structured</i>	<i>compare one's own structure with suggestions</i>	<i>Adopt a structure</i>
Writing draft/ Rough version	<i>have individual passages written</i>	<i>have parts of the text written</i>	<i>accompanying writing assistance (e.g., for style)</i>	<i>Adopt a draft</i>
Revision, Correction	<i>have errors pointed out</i>	<i>specific correction task (e.g., sentence structure)</i>	<i>accompanying correction (e.g., spelling, grammar)</i>	<i>Adopt corrections</i>

Using this table makes it easy to visualize which uses are not prohibited and how extensively students may use AI tools. Here are two examples with different requirements for ...

...first-year-students:

	for inspiration	supplementary	supportive	generative
Topic selection, research question				Not permitted
Research of sources/ literature research				Not permitted
Research of content/ information		Use is discouraged		Not permitted
Development/ Improvement (e.g. translation)				Not permitted
Structuring, argumentation (outlining)				Use is discouraged
Writing draft/ Rough version			Use is discouraged	Only partly permitted, must then be indicated
Revision, Correction				

... for advanced students:

	for inspiration	supplementary	supportive	generative
Topic selection, research question				Not permitted
Research of sources/ literature research				Use is discouraged
Research of content/ information				Not permitted

Development/ Improvement (e.g. translation)				Not permitted
Structuring, argumentation (outlining)				Use is discouraged
Writing draft/ Rough version				Only partly permitted, must then be indicated
Revision, Correction				

List of Links and Resources

Introductory Information:

- Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a.M., Generative AI Team (2023), Use of generative AI in studies – recommendations for Students, <https://lehre-virtuell.uni-frankfurt.de/knowhow/einsatz-von-generativer-ki-im-studium-handlungsempfehlungen-fuer-studierende/>
- Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a.M., Generative AI Team (2023), Guidelines for teachers – dealing with generative AI in assessments, <https://lehre-virtuell.uni-frankfurt.de/knowhow/einsatz-von-generativer-ki-in-der-lehre-handlungsempfehlungen-fur-lehrende/>
- General recommendations for using generative AI in studies and teaching, <https://lehre-virtuell.uni-frankfurt.de/knowhow/allgemeine-empfehlungen-im-umgang-mit-generativer-ki-in-studium-und-lehre/#>
- AI ToolLab HRZ and Generative AI Team, <https://gki.studiumdigitale.uni-frankfurt.de/ai-toollab/>

Legal Aspects:

- Didaktische und rechtliche Perspektiven auf KI-gestütztes Schreiben in der Hochschulbildung, hg. v. Jonas LESCHKE / Peter SALDEN, Zentrum für Wissenschaftsdidaktik der Ruhr-Universität Bochum, März 2023, online: <https://hss-opus.ub.ruhr-uni-bochum.de/opus4/frontdoor/index/index/docId/9734>
- Jochen ZENTHÖFER (2024) Erstes Urteil zu ChatGPT an Hochschulen (faz.net 5.3.2024), <https://www.faz.net/aktuell/karriere-hochschule/student-nutzt-chatgpt-fuer-bewerbung-erstes-urteil-zu-ki-an-hochschulen-19564795.html>
- Maximilian AMOS (2024) Bewerber darf nicht zur Uni: So gut wird's nur mit ChatGPT (beck-aktuell, 4.3.2024),

<https://rsw.beck.de/aktuell/daily/meldung/detail/vg-muenchen-uni-bewerbung-ausschluss-chatgpt-kuenstliche-intelligenz>

- Christian SPANNAGEL (2023) Rules for Tools. Version 2.2 (1.10.2023), https://www.uni-bremen.de/fileadmin/user_upload/sites/qm/202310rulesfortools.pdf

Declaration of Authorship with Supporting Documentation:

- Universität Basel, Vizerektorat Lehre (2023): Leitfaden „Aus KI zitieren“. Umgang mit auf Künstlicher Intelligenz basierenden Tools, https://dsbg.unibas.ch/fileadmin/user_upload/dsbg/Regularien/Leitfaden-KI-zitieren_Apr-2023_publiziert.pdf ; vgl. AG Generative KI (2023), Einsatz von generativer KI... - Handlungsempfehlungen für Lehrende (s.o.), Abschnitt: Gute wissenschaftliche Praxis.
- Schreibzentrum Frankfurt am Main (2024): Lehrenden-Handreichung „Framework zur Entwicklung von Regeln bei KI-gestützten Schreibprozessen“, <https://tinygu.de/KI-Regel-Framework> (Stand: 15.04.2024) (Verwendung nach CC-BY-SA 4.0)

Examination Related Aspects:

- Goethe-Universität Frankfurt a.M. (2020) Rahmenordnung für gestufte und modularisierte Studiengänge der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main vom 30. April 2014 in der Fassung vom 15. Juli 2020 (22.12.2020), https://www.uni-frankfurt.de/95837297/2020_12_22_Novellierung_RO_mit_Anlagen_Seitenzahlen.pdf ; vgl. AG Generative KI (2023), Einsatz von generativer KI... - Handlungsempfehlungen für Lehrende (s.o.), Abschnitt: Hinweise zum Umgang mit Verdachtsfällen...
- Sibylle SCHWARZ (2023) #ChatGPT und Täuschung in Schule und Hochschule (beck-community, 2.2.2023)