



Bratislava International School of Liberal Arts

Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in Research and Writing

Preamble

Artificial intelligence (AI) is progressively becoming embedded in our daily lives and societies. It has the potential to make our lives easier, but it comes with several hurdles and as yet untackled challenges. At BISLA, we encourage and assist students and faculty to keep abreast of the latest developments in AI, to become familiar with various tools that are available for enhancing academic research, but also to keep in mind the ethical and educational concerns associated with the use of AI in academia. The policy outlined below considers ways in which AI can be useful to the education process while adhering to undergraduate learning standards pertaining to workload and development of academic skills.

1. Introductory Provisions

- a. Artificial intelligence (further just AI) use at BISLA, like any aspect of education, is subject to its mission and vision, which emphasizes:
 - i. Education toward responsible and thoughtful citizenship
 - ii. Equipping students with applicable and competitive professional skills
 - iii. Equipping students with the ability to succeed in a diverse world
 - iv. Ability to draw from the diversity of arts, cultures, and civilization
 - v. Students' awareness of moral values and ethical standards
- b. The use of AI must not impede the fulfillment of academic principles of liberal arts education, such as:
 - i. Education of students toward independent, creative, and critical thinking
 - ii. Equipping the students with the ability to engage meaningfully in culturally and politically diverse world
 - iii. Broad, interdisciplinary approach to knowledge
 - iv. Development of analytical and communication skills through participatory education methods

- c. Special consideration ought to be given to independent creative writing skills and critical thinking.
 - i. The use of AI needs to account for the goal of honing associated skills, such as reading comprehension or a comprehensive understanding of methodological approaches to research.
- d. AI is not an academic necessity, but a tool individuals choose to utilize.
 - i. Although students are encouraged to use AI to meaningfully benefit their studies, it remains that it is not necessary for them to succeed academically.
 - ii. Moreover, students and faculty alike ought to consider the value that educational challenges may add by promoting resilience and a deeper understanding of complex topics.
 - iii. Lastly, it should be also taken into consideration that the time that needs to be devoted to the studies is given by the ECTS credit system determining the hours of work for particular courses.
- e. AI as such should be neither prohibited nor taken as infallible. Students and faculty who want to use AI to supplement their studies should be transparent about their use and seek to understand the extent of its capabilities.
- f. BISLA should provide room for open dialogue and research into AI and how it can improve educational outcomes. Moreover, it should also progressively work on providing the students with basic AI literacy through pop-up courses, workshops, AI reader/handbook, etc.
- g. As an additional action, BISLA shall train the writing tutors more actively in the use of AI and work to make them and additional academic resources more available.
- h. The regulations and provisions outlined in this policy are subject to change and should reflect contemporary developments in technological capabilities and pedagogical methods. Future changes to this policy should reflect the democratic, participatory process through which it was originally produced, and approved by relevant BISLA governing bodies.

- i. This policy constitutes an **institution-wide, minimum standard** for approaching AI at BISLA, and may be adapted to suit the preferences of individual lecturers if required for the meeting of learning objectives.

2. Ethical use of AI:

2.1. There are five main principles that should guide all academic work, including while working with AI tools and AI-integrated software:

Accountability and responsibility

AI is not an author or a co-author of texts produced in academia. The responsibility for the text, its factual correctness, the use of academic sources, and their referencing lies solely with the author of the text. Students and faculty are not permitted to present AI-generated content as their own. Students are expected to complete their tasks based on their own knowledge and skills obtained throughout their education.

Human agency and oversight

AI detection tools are not transparent in relation to privacy, and can be unreliable. AI-detection software should always be subject to human oversight. Authenticity Review has to include a possibility of consultation or review process via the Disciplinary Committee.

Transparency and Clarity

Before using AI to supplement one's research and writing, it is crucial to understand the ethical considerations related to artificial intelligence. BISLA will provide opportunities for students and faculty to learn about AI and its ethical challenges. The clarity on the use of AI means that students and faculty can understand and appreciate BISLA's approach.

Inclusiveness and diversity

Affected stakeholders should have a stake in the creation of the AI policy; The use of AI tools in learning and teaching must not amplify present marginalizations

or create new inequalities caused by unequal social background, lack of digital literacy, built-in biases, etc.

Bottom-up Approach

For all of the reasons above, the approach to the implementation of AI in academic work should be bottom-up. Besides the main guidelines laid out in this document, the teacher should determine the scope and use of AI within their courses. The policy creation and amendments are to be deliberative, involving students, faculty, and staff, open to the whole BISLA community.

2.2.

- a) **Built-in Bias:** AI systems can inherit biases from their training data. Therefore, it often reproduces bias, racial, ethnic, gender, and other cultural stereotypes. Be mindful of this when using AI tools, and critically evaluate the results to ensure they are objective and unbiased.
- b) **Fabulation**
Text generated by artificial intelligence relies on data collected from the internet. Be aware that if it does not find the answer to your query, it will invent a plausible answer—which may seem correct, but is in fact entirely fictitious. Platforms like ChatGPT are also known to make up references leading to non-existing academic sources. Therefore, never rely on AI alone to provide content for your assignments or research.
- c) **Data Privacy:** When using AI tools that require one's own data input, users should be cautious about sharing sensitive information, either their own or belonging to others. Necessary permissions for the use of any data must be obtained prior, and comply with data protection regulations.
- d) **Intellectual Ownership:** While AI platforms are not living authors, and content created there does not fall under intellectual property

laws, it is still necessary to acknowledge the authorship which is not one's own—just as with a printed text or interview with someone.

2.5. Environmental Toll: AI software requires vast amounts of energy to power its processes and functions, constituting a heavy burden not just on the power grid, but the associated environmental costs related to developing and maintaining sufficient energy infrastructure, from land development to exertion of water sources for cooling of data centers.

3. Provisions Pertaining to the Use of AI

3.1. Use of AI in the classroom

- a. AI may be used in ways agreed upon by the students and faculty, in accordance with the principles of this policy. This policy holds true that certain AI tools can productively contribute to the education process by enhancing academic skills.
 - i. Research and data
 1. AI might be useful in terms of preparing or conducting research. One possible way is to use AI-powered research software to organize and work with essential sources. Additionally, AI might be allowed in regard to organization and analysis of gathered data, upon professors' approval.
 - ii. Grammar assistance
 1. While authors, especially students, strive to produce prose in perfect English language, from a pedagogical point of view, it is far preferable to receive an imperfect student-produced text that can be improved over time.
 2. Grammar software can therefore be used for mechanical grammar checks, however, a complete reformulation of sentences or a change of tone of the writing is not

considered adequate. We remind students that this can only create an artificial language, which is not desirable in any piece of writing at BISLA.

3. AI may not be used to create texts, outlines, and especially thesis statements. All work submitted for evaluation must come from the student.
- iii. Study assistance
 1. Students may use AI to help them better understand their work and course materials.
 2. The use of AI for a better understanding of texts or concepts should not be the first step of the study process.
 - b. The main implication for the faculty is to adapt the teaching style in regard to the widespread use of AI by students.
 - i. Faculty are advised to reconsider the structure of assignments given to the students. It is suggested that assignments be constructive and meaningful, and refrain from assigning mechanical non-engaging work
 1. In case of doubt of the students fulfilling an assignment, faculty are kindly asked to explain the relevance of assignments to learning targets if needed.
 - ii. Faculty are also asked to balance in-class and at-home assignments if necessary.

3.2. Requirements

- a. The use of AI tools may only be permissible as supplementing already developed skills to ensure that users are able to adequately assess the accuracy of outputs and results. The use of AI tools may not replace learning and honing relevant academic skills.
 - i. Students should be introduced to useful AI tools at BISLA, to be used responsibly.

- ii. Syllabi of relevant courses, such as *Academic Writing* and *Introduction to Social Science Research Methods*, and wherever else necessary, should primarily focus on developing students' academic skills.
 - iii. AI tools may only be introduced after students have displayed sufficient proficiency in relevant areas, i.e., research and evaluation of sources, ability to read and comprehend academic papers, interpretation of graphs, etc.
- b. Transparency and disclosure are essential for fostering trust between faculty and students and for the improvement of classroom policies and educational approaches.
- i. Students shall not be penalized for the disclosure of the use of AI in areas where it is permitted to do so. On the contrary, honesty about the use of AI should be valued in order to create a safe and trust-based environment.
 - ii. Students, faculty, and staff alike are obligated to disclose AI use in order to prevent miscommunication and critically assess their work.
 - iii. When disclosing the use of AI, clearly state which AI tools you used, how they were employed, and the limitations of AI in your study. Rely on the guidance for referencing recommended by the American Psychological Association:
<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>
- c. Disciplinary proceedings related to plagiarism charges on the basis of excessive AI use or the suspicion of a student submitting work generated by AI should not be needlessly punitive.
- i. Students may not be automatically failed on an assignment based on suspicion of it being generated by AI or based on a result from an AI detection software. The presumption of innocence should always apply.

1. AI detection software can be unreliable and is not a sufficient control mechanism. Faculty members are not obliged to use this software.
- ii. Students whose work is suspected to have been largely written by generative AI should have the option to:
 1. Undergo an oral examination to defend a contested assignment
 2. Have a personal consultation with their lecturer regarding the assignment.
- d. If a student fails on an assignment on the basis of an oral examination or admission of using generative AI to write an assignment:
 1. Students should have the option to redo and resubmit the assignment for partial credit.
 2. Their academic advisor is notified..
- e. If a student is repeatedly reported to have used AI to write their assignments, either by a single or multiple faculty members, further disciplinary action may commence in cooperation with a student's academic advisor and the disciplinary committee.
 - i. Correction measures should focus on eliminating the cause of excessive AI use.
- f. The use of generative AI for writing or rewriting of any kind is absolutely forbidden. Students are not allowed to create their assignments, essays, bachelor's thesis, or other pieces of writing in full with the help of generative AI, as it constitutes plagiarism.
 - i. Students are also strongly discouraged from coming up with ideas and structures for their writing with the help of Large Language Models (e. g. ChatGPT). It is crucial to consider that AI is limited to the reproduction of already formulated ideas, which is not desired in written works at BISLA. Additionally, structuring your writing with the help of AI can make texts appear artificial and uninteresting.

- g. Another strictly forbidden action is sharing sensitive data about fellow students, faculty, or BISLA as an institution with any AI tool.
 - i. The security of data shared with AI is very uncertain. You should therefore make sure that you do not include any personal data about yourself or other people that could potentially be misused. The general rule is not to share anything that falls under GDPR.
 - ii. Moreover, sharing sensitive documents, such as contracts, with an AI tool is prohibited.
- h. Grading or evaluating students' work with the help of AI is also considered a transgression.
 - i. Professors should not use AI in any way to evaluate or grade students' work. This could lead to potential biases, ethical conflicts, and unfair gradings, which must be avoided. If the faculty has a specific reason for using AI to evaluate or give feedback to students' work, the reason should be explained, and the tool disclosed.
 - ii. Moreover, faculty are also discouraged from structuring lessons and assignments with AI. This could lead to artificial and uninteresting classes and assignments, which would eventually be reacted to accordingly by the students. It is believed that this is in direct opposition to the aims of liberal arts education, as outlined above, as well as to pedagogical principles.

4. Additional Remarks

- a. This policy is in no way final and may be amended at the institutional level or adjusted by individual faculty members to suit their educational preferences.
 - i. All course syllabi have to include information pertaining to the AI policy - either referring to the BISLA-wide guidelines or further specify differences

- b. Changes to the final policy will be clearly communicated to all students, faculty, and staff.
- c. The full policy should be easily accessible on the BISLA website and referred to in the Student Handbook.
- d. *A Handbook on the Use of AI in Academic Writing* will be created and distributed among students, faculty, and staff. It will contain:
 - i. An overview to ethical and academic considerations related to the use of AI.
 - ii. A list of recommended uses of AI with examples of particular tools.
 - iii. The handbook is to be updated to reflect technological advancements and changes of the policy.
- e. AI has the potential to valuably enhance education, but human judgement is essential to the process and thus, AI is not to be excessively relied upon.
- f. Gaps in this policy may be consulted among faculty and students and amended as agreed.
 - i. It is recommended that amendments to this policy be developed in conversation at the institutional level, in the spirit of its initial development.