

The misuse of AI is classed as malpractice...

Chatbots and Artificial Intelligence (AI) may pose significant risks if used by students completing assessments. They can often produce incorrect answers, biased information or fake references. Students who misuse AI – where the work is not their own – will have committed malpractice and may attract the appropriate sanctions. Any use of AI which means students have not independently demonstrated their own attainment is likely to be considered malpractice. Sanctions for ‘making a false declaration of authenticity’ and/or ‘plagiarism’ include disqualification and being barred from taking qualifications.

Staff should communicate the importance of independent work to students.

AI tools can be used to support learning

AI tools must only be used when the conditions of the assessment permit the use of the internet and where students are able to demonstrate the final submission is their ‘own independent work and independent thinking’. Students must appropriately reference where they have used AI. For instance, if they use AI to find sources of content, the sources must be verified by students and referenced. So teachers can check whether AI use was appropriate, students must ‘acknowledge its use and show clearly how they have used it’. Students must keep a copy of the questions and AI answers for reference and authentication purposes. This must be a non-editable copy e.g. such as a screenshot, and provide a brief explanation of how it was used and submitted with the work.

How AI can be used to support learning

Actions to prevent may include (where appropriate):

- considering whether students should sign a declaration on understanding what AI misuse is.
- consider restricting access to online AI tools on their devices and networks, including those used in exams.
- allocating time for sufficient portions of work to be done in class under direct supervision to allow the teacher to authenticate each student’s whole work with confidence”.
- consider whether it is ‘appropriate and helpful’ to have a ‘short verbal discussion’ with students about their work to confirm ‘they understand it and that it reflect their own independent work’.
- Teachers should examine intermediate stages in the production of work to make sure their final submission represents a natural continuation of earlier stages.

How to identify the use of AI in student work

Identifying AI misuse requires the same skills and observation techniques teachers already use to check students' work is their own. For instance:

- comparing it against their previous work to check for unusual changes.
- Potential indicators of AI include default use of American spellings as well as vocabulary which might not be appropriate for the qualification level.
- where a student has handed in work in a typed format, when their usual output is handwritten.
- overly verbose or hyperbolic language that may not be in keeping with a student's usual style.

Services such as GPTZero and OpenAI Classifier can be used to determine the likelihood text was produced by AI.

'Detected or suspected' misuse should be reported

If a teacher's suspicions are confirmed and the students have not signed the declaration of authentication, a school does not need to report malpractice to the exam board. The matter can be resolved prior to any declaration signing.

If the declaration of authentication has been signed and AI misuse is "detected or suspected" by the school, the case must be reported to the relevant exam board.

If misuse is suspected by an exam board marker, or it has been reported, full details will usually be relayed to the school. The board will then consider the case and if necessary impose a sanction.

Staff should not accept – without further investigation – work they suspect has been taken from AI tools as this could encourage the spread of the practice. It could also constitute sanctions under staff malpractice.