

Faculty of Classics – Policy on acceptable use of AI by undergraduate and graduate students

This document sets out the Faculty’s policy, and some practical guidance, for the usage of AI resources (including, but not restricted to, ChatGPT, Google Translate, GrammarlyGO and similar tools) by students reading for all degrees (undergraduate and postgraduate) in Classics and associated joint schools (C&E, CML, CAMES), CAAH and AMH at Oxford. If you have any uncertainties about the practical application of any of these principles to your own work, please consult your college tutor or supervisor in the first instance. This is a rapidly evolving field, and we anticipate that this policy and the guidance within it will be updated at regular intervals. This policy and guidance within it should be read in conjunction with the University materials linked below.

The faculty wishes to support students who choose to use AI in a responsible and transparent manner to complement their learning. We also wish to ensure that students are aware of the limitations and biases associated with AI which can result in misleading or incorrect information, as well as the risks of committing academic misconduct.

University-level study is very different from study at school, in particular in the emphasis that it places on critical thinking and independent research and judgement, and it may well be that some of the norms that govern AI usage in academic study at Oxford differ substantially from those you may be familiar with from school or outside university more generally.

It is imperative that all students understand that **submitting work for assessment that contains AI-generated content as their own work – whether in college tutorial essays, language work, thesis drafts, or formal assessments – constitutes a breach of academic integrity and may well be treated as a case of plagiarism**, a disciplinary offence: [Plagiarism | University of Oxford](#).

For all assessed elements of your degree, including both timed examinations and pre-submitted work, AI tools **must not be used** except where explicit and specific prior authorisation has been given, or in cases where technology that uses AI has been agreed as a reasonable adjustment for a student’s disability. See the [online exams webpage](#) for more information.

Definitions of AI for the purposes of this document

Basic AI – where an AI tool is simply automating tasks e.g., sorting data, generating graphs, or analysing trends, and the focus is on automation and analytics rather than creating new content. (Generative AI tools can be used for basic AI tasks.)

Generative AI – where an AI tool provides substantial intellectual contributions e.g., generating summaries, insights or interpretations, where the focus is on creating new content. Generative AI models such as ChatGPT work by predicting the next most likely word based on probabilities; they are no better than the material on which they have been trained, the reliability of which can be very variable. It should also be noted that the basis on which these predictions are reached is normally completely opaque, and any repetition of the analysis will generate a different result: in both respects, this constitutes seriously bad and non-robust methodology.

Using generative AI: overview

The faculty recognises the value of students using generative AI in some educational contexts, particularly for the purposes of gaining an initial overview of a text or topic, orientating oneself within a large modern scholarly bibliography, focussed revision, and some other non-assessed tasks.

There are two important general points to consider when using any information generated by AI. **Firstly**, the accuracy and integrity of the information generated (particularly the risk of “hallucinations” and the non-transparent manner in which the information is gathered and presented), and **secondly**, how that information is then used to inform your work. Generative AI tools must only ever be used to **support** learning rather than to replace independent thinking, primary reading of ancient texts and modern scholarship, or critical analysis. These tools may help enhance your understanding of your subject and improve the clarity of your writing, but are not adequate substitutes for independent critical engagement with texts both ancient and modern.

What constitutes **responsible AI usage** is a rapidly developing field. Generative AI applications may store or use the data users upload in order to improve their models, depending on the platform’s terms of service. Before using tools like ChatGPT or Claude, students are advised to review their privacy policies to understand how their data will be handled. (Note that the University has a licence for ChatGPT Edu, which offers a secure version of ChatGPT.) Students should always exercise caution when inputting sensitive or private information into AI tools and only collect the data necessary for the task, anonymising information wherever possible. Students should not share unpublished work by others on AI platforms without their explicit permission, as this could violate their intellectual property rights and privacy.

The faculty also wants to emphasise that increasing use of Generative AI has a considerable environmental impact, particularly in the exploitation of green-field land for the construction of data centres, and the huge levels of energy and water required to fuel and regulate the equipment. When thinking about whether or not to ask an AI program to perform a task that is not beyond the capacity or individual effort of the user, students are advised to remember the environmental cost of every such request.

I. Specific policies on acceptable use of Basic AI and Generative AI tools in formative assessments during your degree (tutorial work, class work, thesis drafts)

Note that these policies apply only to formative assessment (ongoing tutorial and class work, and thesis drafts through your degree), not to summative assessment (portfolio, essay, or thesis submissions and timed examinations); advice on the summative assessment are provided below (under § II).

1. The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT) to support your learning

Generative AI tools may be helpful in providing initial orientation and prioritization within a large and complex topic, as well as revising topics you may have studied some time ago. You may use generative AI tools to assist with **gaining a preliminary overview** of an unfamiliar topic, **orientating yourself** within a long reading list, and **generating brief summaries/abstracts** of the content of lengthy academic articles or book-chapters (if the author's own abstracts are not available) to decide where to focus your efforts. You may also use generative AI tools in the process of **refreshing or revising your knowledge** of specific topics when revising for collections or public examinations.

However, it is important to emphasize that in university-level study, AI-generated summaries or overviews are **no substitute** for your own critical reading and analysis of both primary and secondary sources. One of the main points of a Classics degree at Oxford is for you to develop **your own distinctive take** on the Classical world and its literature, history, material culture and thought. This can only be achieved through "slow reading", in which you learn to hear and appreciate the voices of ancient women and men on their own terms and in their own words, and then bring your own personal knowledge, passions, ethics, aesthetics and commitments to bear on the interpretation of these extraordinary texts and artefacts. The same principle of "slow reading" applies to your engagement with modern scholarship: we are trying to train you to respond courteously and in depth to critics' arguments, which requires reading and engaging with their own words, rather than relying on summaries which may well iron out important nuances. We also encourage engagement with scholarship in this way because the best way of learning how to argue and use your primary and secondary sources is by seeing how others do it, and have done it in the past. Coming to appreciate the ancient world involves engaging with the intellectual history of its interpretation in the modern world. Direct and unmediated engagement with this material is hence essential to your learning experience. Yet another of the major aims of any Classics degree is to help you develop your own personal writing voice, to learn to structure your arguments in your own style and with your own distinctive word-magic. None of these aims can be achieved if an AI tool is determining the form of that voice.

In light of these educational aims, you **may not** use generative AI tools in the process of gathering specific examples for your essays, assessing the arguments of modern scholars, brainstorming for ideas, organizing your thoughts, or refining your research direction. The ideas, analysis, and final work which you submit to your tutors must reflect your own critical

thinking, creativity, and writing style. AI can help support several aspects of this process, but should never replace your unique insights and learning.

You **may use AI tools** to summarise portions of text, e.g. to aid your comprehension of complex or lengthy secondary reading material, but not at the expense of reading the text in full. You should not use AI tools to produce plot summaries of primary texts, not least because these are liable to be inaccurate. You should be aware at all times of AI's tendency to produce 'hallucinated' elements, including false quotations and bibliographies.

2. The use of AI tools to support your language learning

Students are **under no circumstances** permitted to use AI translation tools for their own translations as part of ancient language learning, either from Latin/Greek into English or from English into Latin/Greek. You should not use spelling and grammar checkers or text predictors when writing in Latin or Greek, because making mistakes and learning to correct them is an essential part of the learning process.

You may find AI tools useful when consolidating your study of Latin and/or Greek and during revision, e.g. for generating flash-cards or supporting the learning of vocabulary during the vacation, or for producing vocabulary lists for supporting the reading of set texts. The faculty recognises that this latter task could also be done beneficially without the use of AI, since the process of manually constructing such a list compels you to engage with each word individually, adding another level of engagement with the ancient language.

The use of AI translation tools, e.g. Google Translate, is permitted for reference purposes such as translating modern books and articles (or understanding quotations in modern books and articles) in languages which you are not studying as part of your degree – e.g. books or articles in Polish or Turkish, quotations from French or German, or quotations from Greek or Latin **if you are not (yet) studying those languages as part of your degree**. You should be aware of the extremely variable accuracy of these tools, particularly with Greek and Latin, and especially where language is being used figuratively, idiomatically or creatively. All suggested translations should be cross-checked for accuracy wherever this is feasible. Any use of translation tools should be **explicitly acknowledged** in any submitted work ("translated with the aid of Google Translate" or similar).

3. The use of basic AI tools (such as spelling and grammar checkers) in written work, *excluding* translation into or out of Latin and Greek

Basic AI tools that focus on automation and analysis, rather than creating new content, may be used for **supporting tasks** e.g., to identify spelling and grammatical errors in the English of tutorial essays, commentaries etc. The use of such tools should always be explicitly **acknowledged** at the end of any submitted piece of work, e.g. by a "credit line" at the end of the bibliography (e.g. "Grammarly used to correct typos and grammar"), even if you have used the in-application tools within e.g. MSWord ("Co-pilot"). You do not need to

acknowledge usage of the standard auto-correct spellchecking functions in word-processing applications.

Although usage of basic AI to correct grammar and spelling (when properly acknowledged) is permitted by the Faculty, **we do not recommend it**. You will not have access to Basic AI tools of this kind when sitting summative examinations, and we consider it to be one of the key roles of tutors and supervisors to help their students identify weaknesses and areas for improvement in their writing (spelling, English grammar, etc) and support them in addressing these. If you become entirely dependent on the use of Grammarly or similar tools in all your formative written work, there is a serious danger that your tutors will be unable to provide you with support in developing your writing skills, and you may hence end up significantly underperforming in your summative assessments (where accurate grammar and spelling is often a formal assessment criterion).

Submitting work which has been **created**, in whole or in part, by writing assistants such as ChatGPT or GrammarlyGO is prohibited, because these tools go beyond simple grammar checks and can generate or rewrite sentences or full paragraphs.

You are responsible for maintaining the integrity of the phrasing, structure and content of your submitted work, which should always reflect your own independent reading, thinking and writing.

4. Citation of AI tools when used in written work

If you are using AI tools for any of the purposes outlined above, you ought always to cite them in any submitted work. If you are uncertain about whether or not you need to cite any particular kind of usage of AI tools, please err on the side of over-acknowledgement and consult your college tutor, who will be able to give you more specific guidance.

Example citation:

[Artificial Intelligence - Managing your references - Oxford LibGuides at Oxford University](#)

[Cite Them Right](#)

5. Who do I contact if I have any questions or concerns about using AI tools in my work?

Your college tutor (for undergraduate students) or your supervisor (for graduate students) should always be your first point of contact. They will be able to clarify what constitutes acceptable use of generative AI for a particular task, with reference to faculty and university guidelines. We encourage you to have open discussions with your tutor about your use of AI in your learning, in order to ensure that your tutor is aware of the kinds of uses you are making of these resources and can advise you on best practice.

Joint Schools undergraduate students may find that different Faculties have slightly different rules governing the conduct of AI, which are linked to the different demands and expectations of different degrees. In all work for Classics, these guidelines apply, but if there are any points of conflicting advice that you want to ask about, please do speak to your college tutor.

For further guidance from the university, see the following helpful links:

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/academic/guidance/skills/ai-study>

and

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/students/life/it/gen-ai>

and

<https://www.ox.ac.uk/gen-ai>

and

<https://oerc.ox.ac.uk/ai-centre/>

II. Faculty policy on the use of Basic AI and Generative AI tools in summative assessments during your degree

In keeping with the preceding guidelines on formative assessments, **this policy is binding upon all undergraduate and postgraduate students.**¹ **You must familiarize yourself with it, and follow it when producing and submitting your coursework and preparing for exams. Submitting material for assessment that presents AI-generated content as your own work constitutes a breach of academic integrity and may well be treated as a case of plagiarism, which is a disciplinary offence: [Plagiarism | University of Oxford](#).** This means that, when preparing work for assessment, all substantive thinking, analysis, argument, and writing must be your own.

The guiding principle is that GenAI tools are permitted to support your learning and to make preliminary inquiries in formative assessment (weekly essays for tutorials and class). **They may NOT be used for the direct production of text or the conception and structure of your arguments for summative assessments. You remain responsible for the accuracy and expression of your work, and the critical evaluation of any material you write about.**

This principle applies to **all summative assessment** in all the degrees offered by the Faculty of Classics, specifically (a) all in-person examinations; (b) presubmitted essays for the Mods subject *Paper 1: Portfolio in Greek and Latin Literature*; (c) extended essays for the Greats

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subjects *Historiography* (503), *Lyric Poetry* (504), *Comedy* (507), and *Reception of Classical Literature in Poetry in English since 1900* (519); (d) museum/site reports for CAAH; (e) all presubmitted essays for MSt and MPhil students; and (f) all theses at every level.

The Faculty recognises that there may be particular independent research projects, at either undergraduate or graduate level (items d, e, and f above; NOT undergraduate papers examined through presubmitted or extended essays), for which the use of GenAI may be helpful and appropriate (e.g. in collating, processing, or visualising large data-sets, or writing computer code to do so). If you wish to use generative AI tools as an integral part of your research in this manner, any such usage must be explicitly described and acknowledged in your submission. You must also in all cases seek express prior permission from the Standing Committee for your degree (the Standing Committees on Mods and Greats, AMH, CAAH, CML, C&E, CAMES for undergraduate degrees; the Graduate Studies Committee of the relevant sub-faculty for graduate degrees). This permission should normally be requested at the point when you submit your thesis/presubmitted/extended essay title/abstract for approval; **during the academic year 2025/6 ONLY**, permission must be sought by the end of 1st week of Hilary term 2026. Permission is requested by writing to the Chair of the relevant Standing Committee; for contact details write to undergraduate@classics.ox.ac.uk or graduate@classics.ox.ac.uk as suitable. **Please note that failure to request this permission may result in your thesis/extended essay being penalised.**

The following uses of AI are **permitted**:

- Limited mechanical assistance in the form of spelling and grammar checks, performed by Basic AI tools. This does *not* include using a GenAI tool to make stylistic suggestions about your writing.
- Support with preliminary research. This includes
 - gaining a preliminary overview of a subject or concept;
 - suggesting reading that you may deem relevant;
 - providing initial summaries that allow you to prioritise what to read.

The accuracy of any information you have gleaned from such searching or summarizing remains your responsibility.

- Using GenAI to format a bibliography or footnotes according to a particular style.
- Language assistance: you may use GenAI tools (e.g. Google Translate) for reference purposes, to check unfamiliar words or translate passages of text in articles or books from other modern languages (e.g. quotations from French or German), or from Greek or Latin **if you are not (yet) studying those languages as part of your degree**. All suggested translations should be cross-checked for accuracy, wherever this is feasible, and students should be aware of the limitations of such tools, especially when dealing with figurative language. The use of these tools should be acknowledged in your bibliography (e.g. 'Google Translate has been used for translations from French'). You should *not* use such tools for any of your *own* translation work for a paper which demands it. Where a published translation exists for a given text, and it is accessible to you, you should use the published translation, though you may choose to check it against a GenAI tool.

The following uses of AI are **prohibited**:

- Using GenAI to generate text which you subsequently submit for assessment, even if you have subsequently altered that text.
- Using GenAI to select evidence (i.e. quotations) for your argument.
- Citing scholarship, criticism, or primary material which you have not independently consulted (i.e. if you have used GenAI to suggest reading, or to summarize a lengthy book or article or other piece of writing, in order to prioritize where to place your attention, you **must** then yourself consult any such source which you go on to cite in your work).
- Using GenAI to draft your writing in form or content (including proposing introductions, argumentative structure, or conclusions).
- Using GenAI to suggest analyses of primary texts, interpretations, arguments, or assessments of a critic's position.
- Using GenAI to suggest rewriting or editing your own independently written text (i.e., beyond the spellcheck function in most word processing programs).
- Undisclosed translation of assessed work. The ability to write in English is a competency requirement of all degrees offered by the Faculty of Classics. Therefore, you must not write in another language and use AI to translate into English for submission.

When you submit coursework or a dissertation, you will be asked to sign a Declaration that the work you are submitting is your own work. This will also ask you to affirm that the work you are submitting complies with this Policy.