

Centre for the Study of the Renaissance Approach to GenAI

This page explains the Centre for the Study of the Renaissance's approach to Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). It also offers guidance on appropriate and inappropriate uses of GenAI in your assignments.

AI is a disruptive technology which is already having an impact on ways of working, so it is important to learn to engage with it responsibly. The University's position is that 'as part of digital transformation we must embrace and engage with these tools at an early stage to understand the appropriate, suitable and ethical use of them for general administration, research and education'.¹

AI Tools

Non-generative AI tools, such as the spelling-checkers or basic grammar-checkers integrated into Microsoft Word, have been widely used for many years. Using these tools is unlikely to be considered inappropriate use of AI.

AI-based generative language tools are trained to produce a human-like response from pre-existing large data sets (e.g. websites, journals, textbooks, etc.). They are not trained to represent the world truthfully, but rather to produce a convincing answer.² Examples of generative AI tools include: ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, and Google Gemini. Note that Warwick data should only be used in systems and tools provided to staff and students, since these tools have enterprise agreements to protect the data used and the security of staff and students. Warwick's recommended GenAI tool is Microsoft Copilot; the green shield icon shows you that you are using the correct enterprise license.

GenAI and the Study of the Renaissance

The modules and degrees taught by the CSR not only introduce you to the history and culture of the European Renaissance; they also teach you a set of skills, including critical thinking, analysis, synthesis, information-gathering, research, and the development of your individual voice. On our courses, you will learn to critically assess a variety of sources (including textual, visual, and material), as well as developing a critical understanding of how the Renaissance has been interpreted by scholars in different fields. These skills cannot be replaced by GenAI.

While content produced by GenAI tools can look persuasive, it should not be accepted uncritically, since generative AI systems are liable to produce inaccuracies often called "hallucinations". Furthermore, since generative AI tools use a training dataset as a basis

¹ 'Institutional Approach to the use of Artificial Intelligence and Academic Integrity', p. 7, https://warwick.ac.uk/services/aro/dar/quality/az/acintegrity/framework/institutional_approach_to_the_use_of_artificial_intelligence_and_academic_integrity.pdf.

² Hicks, Humphries, and Slater 2024: 38; Flenady and Sparrow 2026: 166.

for their responses, any bias in the training dataset will be reflected in the generated content. There are also examples of the risks of relying on GenAI to find sources in the study of the pre-modern world.³

Appropriate and Inappropriate use of AI

The CSR's current position is that the generative AI must always be used in a responsible manner, and use of GenAI must be acknowledged in a statement at the start of your essay. You should keep a record of all interactions with any GenAI that you use for a submission, such as via screenshots or other recording techniques.

Most importantly, you must always be able to demonstrate intellectual ownership of your work. A good simple rule to follow is that you **MUST NOT** use generative AI tools (e.g. ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Copilot) to create content (i.e. text or concepts) that is presented as your own work.

You may use non-generative tools, such as a spelling-checker or basic grammar-checker.

Individual assignments may have specific instructions regarding the use of GenAI that differ from those in this guide. You should ensure that you follow these closely, and if you have any questions, contact your seminar tutor.

Appropriate use of GenAI:

- GenAI may be used to check your understanding of challenging terms or concepts, but be aware that it might hallucinate answers, so you should double-check with a reputable source.
- Since the CSR's modules are not language-specific, it may be appropriate to use generative AI to translate source material. You should always revise AI-generated translations yourself, as they can be inaccurate. *Note: see below on using GenAI to translate your own work.*

Inappropriate use of GenAI:

- You must not use GenAI to create content which is presented as your own work. This is academic misconduct.
- You must not use GenAI instead of your own thought processes. Intellectual ownership of your work includes critical reflection and analysis.
- You must not use generative AI to prepare or write your assignment, unless indicated otherwise on the assessment guidance in writing by the instructor. This includes using AI to generate a suggested structure for your assessment.

³ For example, [Artificial Intelligence and Slavery Research - Northeast Slavery Record Index](#).

- While translating source material is permitted, you must not use GenAI to rewrite or translate text that you have drafted, as this is prohibited by the [University's Proofreading Policy](#). Markers would much prefer to read imperfect English in your voice than perfect English written by someone (or something) else.

In short, you should not use GenAI for any part of your assessments that you would not ask another human to do for you.

Acknowledging use of GenAI

You should acknowledge any use of GenAI. In your disclosure statement, you should state

- what purpose GenAI was used for
- which GenAI tool was used
- what prompts were used
- how the outputs were interpreted.

You can find examples of GenAI disclosure statements on the Library's dedicated page: <https://warwick.libguides.com/artificialintelligence/Referencing>. All students must read this page before they embark on writing their assessment for the CSR.

When submitting your work, you will have to confirm in your declaration of originality that the work is yours and you have intellectual ownership of it.

AI use and your grades

Recent research has found that use of generative AI assignments does not generally result in better marks, even though it does seem to produce changes of style and tone.⁴

Appropriate use of GenAI will not result in any penalty, but your marker may comment on your use of it.

⁴ Mak and Walaszek 2025,
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2666920X2500147X#bib51>