Oak Hill College AI Policy

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Oak Hill College AI Policy

Introduction

This Oak Hill College policy document draws on two primary sources:

a) A thought paper prepared by the Oak Hill AI Working Group (February–June 2025),
b) The Common Awards Policy and Guidance on Generative AI [link].

Consequently, this policy remains faithful to, and consistent with, the Common Awards framework, incorporating its precise wording in several places. At the same time, it has been substantively contextualised to the needs, values, and distinctives of Oak Hill College. **Appendix 1** outlines some of Oak Hill's theological postures that have shaped this policy.

This policy is structured in three parts.

- **Part 1: The institutional level** (Sections 1-3) sets out the formal AI policy, defining which uses of AI are, and are not, regarded as academic misconduct.
- **Part 2: The instructor level** (Section 4) explains how individual module tutors may, for particular assignments, impose further restrictions on AI usage beyond the institutional policy.
- **Part 3: The individual level** (Section 5 and 6) highlights factors that students may wish to consider as they decide how to use AI in their studies, and outlines how Oak Hill College will accommodate any student who elects to adopt more restrictive limits on their AI usage than those required at either the institutional or instructor level.

For the purposes of this policy, the following definitions are employed:

- **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**. Any technology that performs tasks that we normally think of as involving human intelligence – or that can simulate such performance – can be called 'artificially intelligent'. That might include a computer programme that can identify cancer cells on a mammogram, a device in a car that can help you manoeuvre into parking spaces, or a chatbot on a shopping website that can answer questions about your purchase. Whether a particular system gets called 'AI' or not is often a matter of marketing more than of precise definition.
- **Generative AI**. An AI technology that 'learns' from a huge number of examples of works of a particular kind, and can then generate works of that kind, is called generative AI. Some generative AIs, for instance, have scanned a vast quantity of text created by humans, and can produce text of their own. In doing so, they simulate or mimic something of the creativity and intelligence involved in human writing. Other generative AIs work in similar ways on pictures, videos, or even songs.

Part 1: The Institutional Level

Section 1: Core Policy

1.1 Purpose of the Core Policy

The Core Policy of Oak Hill College outlined in this section has a narrow purpose: **to define academic misconduct as it relates to the use of generative AI summative assessments on Common Awards modules**. Its purpose is to define which uses of generative AI count as academic misconduct in that context.

Students who break the rules set out in this policy can expect to face an **Academic Misconduct Panel**, and to receive an academic penalty. Penalties may include resubmitting work, losing marks, failing a module, or other consequences. For more details of this process, see the *Oak Hill Academic Integrity Policy*.

There are various uses of AI that don't count as academic misconduct, according to this policy, but that does not mean that they are necessarily wise and/or ethical. For more information on these considerations as they apply on an instructor and individual level, see Part 2 and Part 3.

1.2 Academic Misconduct

You are guilty of academic misconduct if:

1. **You use generative AI to create substantive content for your assessed work that you then present as if it were your own creation.** Note that this rule covers both AI-generated material that you include directly in your work, and material that you include after modification or editing. The detailed guidance in Section 2 of this policy clarifies what is meant by 'create substantive content'.
2. **You provide a generative AI with any text or material produced by others**,[1] unless:
    a. that material is in the public domain[2] , or
    b. you have explicit permission to do so, or
    c. you have confirmation that the content will not be used to train the AI
3. **You provide a generative AI with any confidential information.** This includes any personal information about identifiable individuals.

[1] Note that this rule includes materials produced by your teachers, such as handouts and presentation slides. This rule covers both uploading material to an AI and providing the AI with a link to it online.

[2] Note that 'in the public domain' does not simply mean 'publicly available'. You should presume that any material available to you is covered by its creators' copyright, unless you can find explicit indication that the creators have designated it as public domain, or released it on a license that allows you to provide it to an AI.

1.3 Avoiding Academic Misconduct

In general, other limited uses of generative AI to facilitate your work do not count as academic misconduct, provided that they meet all three of these criteria:

1. **The resulting work still reflects your own engagement** with your sources, your own understanding, and your own reasoning and judgments (*See Section 2: Detailed Guidance*)
2. **You demonstrate appropriate caution** about the limitations of the tools you use (*See Section 2: Detailed Guidance*)
3. **You clearly acknowledge any use of AI** that has substantially informed the content or presentation of your work (*See Section 3: Appropriate Acknowledgment*).

1.4 Clarifications and Applications

1. **Marking Implications:** Certain uses of generative AI that are permitted under this policy may in some circumstances hinder a student's own learning or impair their ability to demonstrate that learning, which in turn could result in lower marks when assessed against normal Common Awards marking criteria. Conversely, certain uses of generative AI that are permitted under this policy may in some circumstances assist a student in meeting particular criteria and thus improve their mark.
2. **Reasonable adjustments**: For students with specific learning differences, disabilities, or other particular needs, reasonable adjustments to the instructor-applied restrictions may be made. Please see Section 4 for further details..
3. **Specific assessment types**: The Core Policy may be overridden for certain forms of summative assessment, including online assessments, examinations, and assessed conversations. You should assume for those particular assessment types that no deliberate use of AI is permitted unless you are given clear instructions to the contrary.
4. **Formative assessments**: The Core Policy is an academic misconduct policy that applies to summative assessments. For formative assessments, you should assume that the same basic principles apply unless your module tutor specifies otherwise. Any concerns raised by a module tutor regarding AI use in formative assessments cannot be treated as academic misconduct but may instead be addressed informally and pastorally.
5. **Personal Responsibility**: If you do use generative AI for an assignment, you remain responsible for the work that you submit. If, for instance, the material that you submit transgresses the Core Policy you will be held responsible. It is not a reasonable defence to say that 'the AI did it', and that you failed to notice.

Section 2: Detailed Guidance

2.1 Introduction to the Detailed Guidance

This section outlines 19 possible uses of AI, describing each one, indicating whether it constitutes academic misconduct, and noting appropriate cautions.

Note that, in some areas, the line between usages is blurred. For instance, there is no hard line where 'stylistic improvements' (usage 8) tips over into 'generating substantive text' (usage 1). If in doubt, students should consult their module tutors or the learning skills coordinator for advice, who in turn will use their judgment.

These 19 possible uses are divided into three categories:

1. Category 1 (usages 1-3): AI Usages that are **always academic misconduct**

2. Category 2 (usages 4-11): AI Usages that are **not academic misconduct as long as they are appropriately acknowledged** by a) citation and/or b) declaration (*See Section 3 on Appropriate Acknowledgement*)

3. Category 3 (usages 12-19): AI usages that are **not academic misconduct and do not require appropriate acknowledgment** (although limitations and cautions still apply)

2.2 Category 1: AI Usages that are always academic misconduct

	Usage	Description	Academic Misconduct	Appropriate Cautions
1.	Generating substantive text (subsection or more)	Producing subsections, or whole assignments, for you to include in your assignment. This includes using generative AI to generate subsections or whole assignments that you then edit, paraphrase, or otherwise rework before you include them in your assignment. *Examples: prompting ChatGPT to write text for you.*	Producing whole assignments or subsections of assignments is always academic misconduct.	N/A
2.	Expanding	Increasing the length of a text up to a specified word count. *Examples: ChatGPT; Jasper AI.*	This is equivalent to generation substantive text (see above) and is always academic misconduct.	N/A
3.	Translating for a Translation Exercise	Translating a text you have been set as a translation exercise. *Examples: Google Translate.*	You must *not* use an AI translation if you have been set a translation exercise. It is always academic misconduct.	N/A

2.3 Category 2: AI Usages that are not academic misconduct as long as they are appropriately acknowledged by a) citation and/or b) declaration

	Usage	Description	Academic Misconduct	Appropriate Cautions
4.	Generating substantive text (paragraph or less)	Producing sentences or paragraphs for you to include in your assignment. This includes using generative AI to generate sentences or paragraphs that you then edit, paraphrase, or otherwise rework before you include them in your assignment. *Examples: prompting ChatGPT to write text for you.*	Not normally academic misconduct if you treat the generated text as you would other written sources: *either* quoting the generated material directly (putting the material in quotation marks *or* setting it out as a quotation in its own paragraph) or paraphrasing it. In either case you *must* acknowledge this through appropriate citation explicitly at the point where it occurs. You must also tick Box 2 on the Declaration.	Be aware that content generated by an AI may not be very good. Do not treat it as an authoritative source. Do not rely on it as your only source for factual claims.
5.	Image or diagram generation	Generating visual or audiovisual material in response to your input. *Examples: DALL-E; Midjourney; Stable Diffusion.*	This is not normally academic misconduct, though you *must* acknowledge this use of AI at the point where it occurs through citation. If, however, the creation of the image is itself a distinct activity set for you by your tutors, you should check with them as to whether AI use is acceptable.	

			If the generation of the image or diagram involves the generation of text, see Usage #1 and #4 '*Generating substantive text*' above.	
6.	Translating a text *not* for a translation exercise	Translating a text you want to use into a language you can read, so that you can learn from it or cite it. *Examples: Google Translate.*	Not academic misconduct though you *must* acknowledge the use of AI if you quote or paraphrase the translation in your work, at the point where it occurs through citation. If translating individual words or short phrases (not normally more than five words in the original language). In these cases, there is no need for acknowledgment. If the translation is simply used as a tool for your own learning, however, and if you do not incorporate the translation into your work, either directly or in a paraphrased form, there is no need for acknowledgment. Note carefully point 2 under 'Academic Misconduct' in the core policy on providing a generative AI with any text or other material produced by others.	Be cautious about the accuracy of any AI translation: don't rely on it as your only source for a claim about what the text says or how it should be understood.

7.	Stylistic improvements to existing text	Suggesting stylistic revisions to a paragraph, section, or whole text that you have already created, often with a view to clarifying the writing, or making it suitable for a specific audience. This *only* refers to changes to the expression of ideas, claims and arguments you have already included. It does *not* include suggesting new or improved ideas, claims or arguments – for which, see Usage 1 'Generating substantive text' above. Note that stylistic improvements can slightly lengthen a text. If, however, widespread stylistic improvements lengthen the overall text of an assignment by more than 2% – e.g., taking a 1,000-word piece over 1,020 words – you should see Usage 1 'Generating substantive text' above. *Examples: Microsoft Word rewrite (Copilot).*	Not academic misconduct though you *must* acknowledge this use of AI by ticking Box 3 in the Declaration accompanying your work.	Check to make sure that your meaning has not been changed. Be aware that, by altering your normal style, this may trigger suspicions that your work has been generated by AI. Note that what AI considers an 'improvement' may not be considered such by the tutor marking the work.
8.	Shortening	Bringing an overlong text down to your specified word count. *Examples: ChatGPT, QuillBot.*	Not academic misconduct though you *must* acknowledge this use of AI by ticking Box 4 in the Declaration accompanying your work.	Check to see what has been omitted. Check to see whether the writing still flows.

				Check to see that your meaning has not been altered. **Check that the resulting word count is right.**
9.	**Giving feedback on your draft**	**(a) Identifying stylistic problems.** ***Examples: Grammarly; ChatGPT.*** **(b) Identifying problems with your argument (without suggesting new text that avoids those problems).** ***Examples: ChatGPT.***	**Not academic misconduct though you *must* acknowledge this use of AI by ticking Box 5 in the Declaration accompanying your work.** **If the feedback amounts to suggesting substantive new text, see Usage #1 and #4 '*Generating substantive text*' above.**	**Be aware that the suggestions provided by the AI might not be good ones. Always use your own judgment when choosing which problems to tackle, and how.**
10.	**Suggesting an outline for an essay**	**Producing a list of topics, headings, or bullet points that you use to guide your writing (but that you do not quote directly).** ***Examples: ChatGPT.***	**Not academic misconduct though you *must* acknowledge this use of AI by ticking Box 6 in the Declaration accompanying your work.** **If you use or quote from a structure that AI suggests, see Usage #1 and #4 '*Generating substantive text*' above.**	**Be aware that the structure suggested might not be a good one. Be aware that it also might not match the instructions you were given for your assignment.** **If you do this, it is good practice to ask for**

				several structures so that you need to exercise judgement about which to use.
11.	**Suggesting avenues for research**	**Identifying key ideas, arguments, or lines of approach in response to your input.** ***Examples: Google search summary; Elicit; Consensus; ChatGPT Deep Research.***	**Not academic misconduct though you *must* acknowledge this use of AI by ticking Box 7 in the Declaration accompanying your work.**	**Do not rely on AI to identify the only or the best avenues for research. Remember in particular that generative AI reproduces the biases of the material on which it was trained.**

2.4 Category 3: AI usages that are not academic misconduct and do not require appropriate acknowledgement

	Usage	Description	Academic Misconduct	Appropriate Cautions
12.	Minor corrections	*Identifying and correcting errors of punctuation, spelling and grammar.*	Not academic misconduct. No need to give any acknowledgement by citation or declaration.	Remember that sometimes even the most advanced proofing tools will give bad advice.
13.	Consistency checking	*Checking the formatting of headings, the numbering of sections, capitalisation, hyphenation, and similar.* *Examples: PerfectIt; Grammarly*	Not academic misconduct. No need to give any acknowledgement by citation or declaration.	Don't simply accept all proposed changes without checking.
14.	Suggesting wording/phrasing	*(a) Providing alternative phrasing for a sentence you have already written, without changing the overall meaning.* *Examples: Microsoft Word's 'clarify' function, used on individual phrases; Grammarly's clarity function.* *(b) Suggesting ways of continuing a sentence you have begun to type, without adding substantive content or starting a new sentence.*	Not academic misconduct. No need to give any acknowledgement by citation or declaration.	Check to see that your overall meaning has not been altered.

		(If this leads to adding more than five words, see Usage #1 and #4 'Generating substantive text' above.) ***Examples: Autocorrect; Google Docs smart compose; ChatGPT***		
15.	**Changing the format of references**	**Changing the way you cite your sources – e.g., putting your bibliography entries into a recognised format, or changing from a system of footnotes giving full bibliographic details to a system of brief inline citations.** ***Examples: EndNote; Zotero.***	**Not academic misconduct.** **No need to give any acknowledgement by citation or declaration.**	**If using any software that is not a dedicated reference manager like EndNote or Zotero, make sure you check that the AI tool has not mangled your references.**
16.	**Summarising a source or sources**	**Providing a paragraph, set of bullet points or longer text summarising some source – either one that you provide to the AI, or one that the AI already 'knows' about.** ***Examples: ChatGPT; QuillBot.***	**This is not academic misconduct if this is simply a tool for your own learning. There is no need to acknowledge this if you do not quote, paraphrase, use one or more ideas from, or otherwise include material from the summary in your work.** **If, however, you do quote, paraphrase, use one or more ideas from, or otherwise include material from the summary in your assignment, or base your assignment on it in some way, see Usage #1 and #4 '*Generating substantive text*' above.**	**Be aware that an AI summary may be inaccurate or otherwise misleading, and that might have an impact on your learning and on your marks. It should never be the sole way in which you engage with a source.**

			Note carefully point 2 under 'Academic Misconduct' in the core policy on providing a generative AI with any text or other material produced by others.	
17.	Providing a discussion of a source	Generate text, audio, or other output that mimics the kind of discussion of a source that a human commentator might produce. *Examples: Google NotebookLM 'Audio overview'; Perplexity.*	This is not academic misconduct if this is simply a tool for your own learning. There is no need to acknowledge this if you do not quote, paraphrase, use one or more ideas from, or otherwise include material from the discussion in your work. If, however, you do quote, paraphrase, use one or more ideas from, or otherwise include material from the discussion in your assignment, or base your assignment on it in some way, see Usage #1 and #4 '*Generating substantive text*' above. Note carefully point 2 under 'Academic Misconduct' in the core policy on providing a generative AI with any text or other material produced by others.	Be aware that an AI discussion may be inaccurate or otherwise misleading. It should never be the sole way in which you engage with a source.
18.	Extracting key information from a source	Extract summary information such as a timeline of the events mentioned, or a list of the main people mentioned.	This is not academic misconduct if this is simply a tool for your own learning. There is no need to acknowledge this if you do not quote, paraphrase, use one or more	Be aware that the 'information' an AI extracts may be inaccurate or otherwise

		Examples: Google NotebookLM 'Timeline'; ChatGPT.	ideas from, or otherwise include material from the information in your work. If, however, you do quote, paraphrase, use one or more ideas from, or otherwise include material from the information in your assignment, or base your assignment on it in some way, see Usage #1 and #4 '*Generating substantive text*' above. Note carefully point 2 under 'Academic Misconduct' in the core policy on providing a generative AI with any text or other material produced by others.	misleading. You should always check the accuracy of any information you rely upon in your assignment.
19.	Creating a revision aid	Generating a quiz, or sample questions for you to practice on, or flashcards to memorise, or similar. *Examples: Quizlet (AI).*	Not academic misconduct. No need to give any acknowledgement by citation or declaration. Note carefully point 2 under 'Academic Misconduct' in the core policy on providing a generative AI with any text or other material produced by others.	Where this material ends up including claims or references, check them to make sure you're revising accurate material.

Section 3: Appropriate Acknowledgement of Category 2 AI Usage

3.1 Introduction to Appropriate Acknowledgment

The Core Policy (Section 1) requires that you *'clearly acknowledge any use of AI that has substantially affected the content or presentation of your work'*. It is important to be honest about the sources of your work.

Any usage of AI that falls within Category 2 of possible usages (usages 4-11 in the Detailed Guidance - Section 3) requires appropriate acknowledgement.

There are two main ways of appropriately acknowledging uses of generative AI:

3.2 Citation (Usages 4-6)

This is for when you have drawn on AI-generated material at a specific point in your assignment, and the Detailed Guidance (Section 2) tells you to acknowledge this use of AI explicitly at the point where it occurs. For example:

- Where you directly include text that was created by a generative AI tool, you should add a citation at the point where you use that text. For example, you might write,

  > You should use AI to facilitate, not to undermine learning. As one AI put it, 'AI-generated material may be used to inspire, explore, or reframe ideas – but not to bypass learning or relational depth.'[23]

  You would then need to add a footnote:

  > [23] Quotation generated by Aiden Cinnamon Tea, a custom version of ChatGPT, https://chatgpt.com/g/g-6786112cedfc819190a656adb28bb58f-aiden-cinnamon-tea, 28 April 2025.

- Where you have drawn directly on AI-generated content for specific elements of your assignment, without directly quoting it, you should cite the AI, just as you would when paraphrasing or drawing from any other source. For instance, you might write

  > It is a problem when AI is used in ways that weaken the relationships that should surround our learning.[23]

  You would then add a footnote:

  > [23] Idea suggested by Aiden Cinnamon Tea, a custom version of ChatGPT, https://chatgpt.com/g/g-6786112cedfc819190a656adb28bb58f-aiden-cinnamon-tea, 28 April 2025.

3.3 Declaration (Usages 4 and 7-11)

This is for when you have drawn on AI-generated material to inform and shape your assignment directly, and the Detailed Guidance (Section 2) tells you to acknowledge this use of AI explicitly with the 'Declaration' form that accompanies all your summative assignments. See **Appendix 2** for a copy of the Declaration Form.

If you use AI in any way not specified in Section 3: Detailed Guidance, then you should tick Box 8 on the Declaration and give details of your particular usage. We advise consulting your module tutor before employing AI in any ways not included already under the Detailed Guidance of Section 2.

In order to be able to complete this declaration accurately, it is important to **keep good notes**. Just as it is good practice to keep careful note of the books, articles, web pages, videos, and other materials that you consult when preparing assessed work, it is also good practice to keep a log of any use you make of generative AI. You won't always know, because the generative AI technology is often invisibly embedded in apps and devices that you use regularly – though you should make reasonable efforts to find out. Often, however, you will be aware of using an app, function or online tool on your computer, phone or tablet, to improve, extend or revise your writing. If you do this in any way that goes beyond simple correction of spelling and grammatical errors, make a note of what you were using and what you did with it. If you do (within the limits set in this policy) use AI to assist with large-scale alterations to your assignment – e.g., stylistic improvements, shortening, revision in the light of AI feedback, or similar – it is good practice to keep 'before' and 'after' versions (clearly labelled as such). This can help protect you if you are accused of academic misconduct.

Part 2: The Instructor Level

Section 4: Additional AI Restrictions for Assignments

The Core Policy (Section 2), together with the associated Detailed Guidance (Section 3), applies at an institutional level. As outlined above, it governs the use of generative AI in summative assessments on Common Awards modules insofar as it relates to the concept of academic misconduct, as defined in the Academic Integrity Policy.

Accordingly, any student who remains within the boundaries established by the Core Policy and Detailed Guidance **cannot incur an academic penalty** for their use of AI, irrespective of any additional requests or advice issued by a module tutor for a particular assignment.

Nonetheless, there may be occasions where, for sound pedagogical, ethical, or other reasons, a module tutor wishes to **discourage or prohibit** uses of AI that the Core Policy does not classify as academic misconduct. In such cases, tutors will provide explicit written instructions concerning AI use for a specific assignment. Where this occurs, the instructions will be justified in writing in the Moodle assessment brief, with a clear rationale referencing the relevant learning outcomes. Those instructions may be reflected in the application of the mark scheme for that specific assignment

If a student chooses not to comply with these tutor-issued instructions, the academic misconduct process cannot be invoked, nor can formal penalties be imposed solely on that basis. However, non-compliance may legitimately affect the student's grade. It may also be appropriate for the module tutor to invite the student to a personal and/or pastoral conversation about the reasons for their non-compliance with formal written instructions.

Part 1 of this document sets out the standard policy, hereafter referred to as the Default. Where a tutor elects to impose additional restrictions on AI usage beyond the Default, and provides a written justification for doing so, those restrictions will be applied as follows:

	Category 1 AI Usages (#1-3)	**Category 2 AI Usages (#4-11)**	**Category 3 AI Usages (#12-19)**
Default	**Always academic misconduct**	**Permitted (with appropriate acknowledgment)**	**Permitted (no acknowledgment required)**
Default with Restriction Level 1 (R1)	**Always academic misconduct**	**Prohibited**	**Permitted (no acknowledgment required)**
Default with Restriction Level 2 (R2)	**Always academic**	**Prohibited**	**Prohibited**

	misconduct		

Students with diagnosed SpLDs can choose to apply the 'Default' restriction level to their assignments even where the module tutor has chosen to apply R1 or R2 restrictions. In such situations the student should note carefully the marking implications associated with using generative AI outlined in Section 1.4, and consider carefully how to use generative AI in keeping with the justifiable reasons (with relation to learning outcomes) given for the tutor's decision to apply R1 or R2 restrictions. If in doubt, the student should consult the module tutor about the specifics.

Part 3: The Individual Level

Section 5: The Capabilities and Concerns of AI usage

It is important to be aware of the moral, ethical, and academic issues surrounding AI. These include, but are not limited to:

- Generative AI **cannot be trusted to make accurate factual claims**. You should never rely on AI-generated content as your only source for a claim, but should always check against non-AI sources.
- Generative AI **cannot be trusted to give accurate information about sources**. It may invent sources; it may misquote or otherwise misrepresent real sources; it may give inaccurate references to them. You should never rely on AI-generated content as your only evidence for saying that a source exists, what that source says, or where that source can be found.
- Generative AI **cannot be trusted to be unbiased**. It tends to reproduce the biases of the material on which it was trained. You should always ask whose voices are being amplified and whose are being ignored, and where appropriate should look for ways of introducing perspectives beyond those that AI has highlighted.
- The use of generative AI is **a focus for various ethical issues**, and it seems entirely appropriate to be aware of and concerned about these. These concerns include, but are not limited to energy usage, water Usage, harm to content moderators, stealing content, bias, and the impact on learning. These ethical concerns are explained more in **Appendix 3,** with links to further reading.

When considered in light of its inherent capabilities and limitations, the use of generative AI may sometimes serve as a valuable tool. It can, for instance, help us engage more deeply with the ongoing conversations that shape theology, ministry, and mission, sharpening our understanding and enabling us to navigate complex debates with greater clarity. It may also assist us in discerning how best to make our own contributions, helping us to articulate responses that reflect our history, context, and convictions.

Yet the technology quickly becomes inappropriate when it short-circuits these very processes: when it discourages us from listening carefully and respectfully to others by filtering or pre-digesting what they have said, or when it weakens our ability to think, write, and speak for ourselves by stepping into the role of author on our behalf.

More broadly, its use is problematic whenever it undermines the shared commitments that should mark us out as Oak Hill students: commitments to honesty in all our work; to respecting the integrity and diversity of those whose voices we hear; to caring for the people with whom and for whom we study; and to stewarding the wider human and natural contexts in which these conversations unfold.

Section 6: Respecting Individual Decisions about AI Usage

For these reasons outlined in Section 5 and others, any individual student may want to minimise their use of generative AI beneath even what this AI policy restricts you to or beneath any further restrictions given by individual module tutors (*see Part 2: The 'Instructor level*) , or even to refuse any avoidable use of it. Judgments about this will differ between students, but Oak Hill College module tutors will respect your decisions about this. In particular:

- No module tutor will require you to use AI tools or create an environment where heavy AI use is unavoidable. You will not be directly or indirectly penalised if you don't use AI tools.
- If a standard assignment requires you to use AI, module tutors will provide an alternative for you if requested in writing. They might, however, require you to engage with content that has already been produced by generative AI.

Please see **Appendix 4** for an explanation from the Durham University Common Awards team as to why they chose not to impose a 'blanket ban' on all AI usage.

Appendix 1: Oak Hill's Theological Posture toward Engaging with AI

(Produced and agreed upon by Oak Hill Faculty, summer 2025)

At Oak Hill, our approach to AI should be framed not simply in terms of rules and restrictions but in light of our values and theological commitments. We recognise that AI is not merely another iteration of technological progress, like moving from pen to typewriter. It is a phenomenon that mimics human reasoning, problem-solving, and creativity, and therefore raises deeper questions of formation, discipleship, and human identity before God. In this context, we are called to be thoughtful, collaborative, and dependent: thoughtful in being intentional and discerning about how AI is used; collaborative in working together as a whole community of staff and students; and dependent in acknowledging our weakness and embracing technology only as it serves others in that weakness.

A key distinction for us is between functional and formational learning. Functionally, AI may help speed up research, formatting, or repetitive tasks, enabling us to handle immediate academic demands more efficiently. Formationally, however, the focus is on how our lives, habits, and skills are being shaped for long-term ministry and service. In some tasks, AI might be a helpful tool without undermining this deeper formation (for example, generating correctly formatted references). In other cases, it could bypass the very process by which growth and maturity take place (for example, producing an argument outline in place of the learner's own wrestle with ideas). As a community, we need to think carefully about which uses of AI support formation and which hinder it.

Our calling is therefore not to strike a compromise between extremes, but to allow the gospel itself to shape our posture towards AI. On the one hand, AI can be received as a tool, a gift of human ingenuity under God's common grace, which may be discerningly appropriated for specific purposes in service of neighbour-love and gospel ministry. On the other hand, AI also represents a cultural system or discourse, laden with values that are often inimical to human flourishing and Christian witness. In this respect, we are called to subversively engage AI...being attentive to ways to subvert any inhumane or 'anti-gospel' dynamics it may carry. This approach avoids both uncritical embrace and fearful withdrawal, instead affirming that AI is both tool and system in that it involves tools that Christians may discerningly appropriate and forms a system with which Christians must subversively engage.

Taken together this means Oak Hill's stance will not be exhausted by compliance with Academic Misconduct policies. Those rightly constrain what is permitted in assessments, but our theological responsibility is to form and articulate values, identity, and convictions that shape our posture towards AI. In short, our goal is not simply to regulate the use of a tool but to form students who know how to live and minister 'above the algorithm' and not just 'apart from the algorithm': wise, discerning, and gospel-shaped in their engagement with the technologies of their age.

Appendix 2: Declaration Form

AI DECLARATION

I acknowledge the following uses of generative AI in preparation of this piece of work:

Box 1: ☐ I am not aware of having made any use of generative AI.

Box 2: ☐ I used AI to generate text that I have quoted or paraphrased, and I have acknowledged all such uses where they occur in the assignment (Usage #4).
List tools used:

Box 3: ☐ I used AI to clarify or otherwise improve my phrasing (Usage #7).
List tools used:

Box 4: ☐ I used AI to shorten this piece to meet the word length (Usage #8).
List tools used:

Box 5: ☐ I used AI to give me feedback on a draft of this assignment (Usage #9).
List tools used:

Box 6: ☐ I used AI to generate ideas for structuring this assignment (Usage #10).
List tools used:

Box 7: ☐ I used AI to suggest avenues for research (Usage #11).
List tools used:

Box 8: ☐ I used generative AI in some other way not included in Section 3 (Detailed Guidance).
Describe your use, and list tools used:

Appendix 3: Ethical Concerns about the use of Generative AI

A number of ethical concerns have been raised about the use of generative AI. To help staff and students make judgments about how much they will use generative AI, here are some initial pointers to some of the issues, and relevant further reading.

Energy usage

Generative AI is powered by data centres that consume a great deal of energy. According to one analysis, sixteen queries to ChatGPT require the same amount of energy as boiling a kettle. According to another analysis, 'Already, data centers account for 1% to 2% of overall global energy demand, similar to what experts estimate for the airline industry.... That figure is poised to skyrocket, given rising AI demands, potentially hitting 21% by 2030, when costs related to delivering AI to consumers are factored in.' See also the BBC article, 'Electricity grids creak as AI demands soar' and the earth.org post 'Generative AI is exhausting the power grid'.

Water usage

The data centres that power generative AI also require a lot of water for cooling, often in areas where water is a scarce resource. According to one analysis, one 100-word email generated by GPT-4 uses enough water to overfill a half-litre bottle. See the Forbes post: 'AI is accelerating the loss of our scarcest natural resource: water', the Bloomberg UK article

'AI is draining water from areas that need it most' and this Guardian comment piece 'AI's craving for data is matched only by a runaway thirst for water and energy'.

Harm to Content Moderators

Some AI tools require human moderators to sift the material on which the tool is trained, removing harmful content. This can be low-paid, psychologically damaging work. In one Guardian Report, 'moderators in Nairobi ... were tasked with reviewing texts, and some images, many depicting graphic scenes of violence, self-harm, murder, rape, necrophilia, child abuse, bestiality and incest.... The moderators say they weren't adequately warned about the brutality of some of the text and images they would be tasked with reviewing, and were offered no or inadequate psychological support.'. It is, however, hard to discover how much human moderation is involved in the training of generative AI tools at present.

Stealing Content

Generative AI tools are only able to generate new content because they are trained on vast quantities of existing content. Most of that content is produced by human beings, and it is typically used without the consent of those human creators. Although the AI tools may not store this content, and may not be able to reproduce much of it directly, they are often capable of generating content closely based on it, for financial gain, without any recompense being offered to the creators. See, for example Forbes 'Is generative AI stealing from artists?' and IEEE Spectrum.

Bias

Generative AI tools tend to reproduce the biases of the data on which they are trained – and so their use can reinforce those biases. One analysis, for instance, points to the tendency of generative AI to create images that reinforce racial stereotypes. See also UNESCO Challenging systematic prejudices: an Investigation into Gender Bias in Large Language Models and Bloomberg UK article: 'Humans are biased. Generative AI is even worse'.

Impact on Learning

Conflicting claims are made about the impact of generative AI on its users' learning. One widely cited study, for instance, reports that the more confident people were about using generative AI, the less they employed critical thinking. Other reports suggest that generative AI can be used in ways that enhance learning.

Appendix 4: Why not a blanket ban?

(Produced by Common Awards, Durham University)

In the light of the ethical issues surrounding generative AI (See **Appendix 3**), and in light of evidence of the negative impact some of its uses can have on student learning, some will ask why our policy is not for a blanket ban on the use of generative AI in summative assessments.

Opinions differ strongly around the Common Awards community as to whether such a ban would have been desirable in principle. Had we agreed to impose one, however, we would immediately have run into problems. Generative AI has been all-but-invisibly embedded in many tools and services that we use regularly, often without any notice to users or any requirement to 'opt in'. Avoiding generative AI while using these tools and services has therefore become, in many contexts, both time-consuming and technically difficult – sometimes all but impossible. In this context, a blanket ban would have ended up punishing students for things that tech companies have done.

For example: suppose a student performs a simple Google search on the topic of their assignment, and notices something in the 'AI Overview' at the top of the results page that informs their thinking – a useful idea, compelling structure, or captivating form of words. Under a blanket ban on any use of generative AI in preparation of an assignment, that student would already have committed academic misconduct. And whilst it is possible to turn this feature off, a student trying to avoid misconduct would need to remember to do this – and know how to do it – on every device on which they used Google.

There are an increasing number of such contexts in which generative AI (and other closely related technology) is embedded in tools we use regularly. A student might, say, use Google to get a translation of an untranslated Latin sentence in a book they are reading – and yet those results may now be fine-tuned by generative AI. Or a student might write some of their assignment on an Apple device that completes sentences with Autocorrect – and yet the 'Transformer language model' that Apple's Autocorrect now uses is a form of generative AI. Or a student might even simply use the normal Windows search function to find documents on their own hard drive relevant to their assignment, without knowing that for some users that function is already now enhanced by a technology based on generative AI. The list could go on, and we expect it to grow rapidly in coming months. Under a blanket ban, all of these would count as academic misconduct.

We have taken the view that we cannot ban as academic misconduct activities that it is very easy to engage in unwittingly or accidentally, or that are very hard to avoid, even for tech-savvy students.

We have also taken the view that we should not create a context that encourages students to be dishonest – to pretend, for instance, that they did not see that summary at the top of a Google results page, or that it did not influence their thinking, because to admit that it did would mean admitting to academic misconduct.

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