

The use of Generative AI in MACAL

Generative AI software such as ChatGPT and QuillBot are increasingly being used in a range of contexts such as art and design, manufacturing, research, and school. Generative AI and the technologies behind it are continually evolving. This provides both opportunities and challenges not only in education, but in how we create and represent our work in the world. These tools can be useful, but it is also important to use them in ways that are ethical and, in the context of an academic program such as the MA and GD in Climate Action Leadership (MACAL), use them in ways that adhere to the university's policy on Academic Integrity.

What is generative AI exactly – how does it work?

Before we talk more about how to ethically use Generative AI, it is important to understand how such software works. [Read this short blog on AI](#) to better understand the principles behind how AI generates information.

AI and Academic Integrity

As you already know from undertaking the Introduction to Academic Integrity course last week, students are expected to hand in work for assessments (i.e., assignments) that reflects their own work - their ideas, their research, their analysis. If you decide to use AI software such as ChatGPT or equivalents, to generate material for assessment (e.g., papers, blogs, presentations, team assignments), and represent this material as your own, this is **NOT in** keeping with Academic Integrity. Material produced through generative AI or by someone else, whether paid or unpaid, that you submit as your own work for assessment is deliberate cheating and an example of academic misconduct.

Academic Integrity at RRU. As a learning community, Royal Roads University follows an educational approach as set out in our Learning, Teaching and Research Model. This model highlights learning that is applied and authentic, caring and community-based, and transformational. To maintain these principles, we expect all members of the university community to uphold recognized standards of academic integrity, demonstrating a personal commitment to truth and our shared values. Students remain responsible for ensuring the academic integrity of their work, and advances in generative AI technologies do not alter this accountability.

Reliability of Generative AI

While we expect generative technologies to continue to improve over time, there are certain concerns to be aware of. Generative technology tends to invent false statements yet presents them as if they are fact. There are also unanswered ethical and privacy issues surrounding the data that is used to train such models in the first place. Users must take responsibility for finding ways to employ AI technology in a safe, factual, and ethical manner that adheres to Academic Integrity and the guidelines established in your program.

How to use Generative AI ethically and in accordance with Academic Integrity

The concerns about Generative AI don't necessarily mean you can't use it at all. There are times and ways of using AI that may be acceptable to an instructor, but the use of such technologies must be (1) approved by the instructor; (2) acknowledged and cited in ways consistent with APA format (the format used by RRU).

So, what do you need to do to use AI ethically in MACAL?

1. First, check with your instructor about their expectations on the acceptable use of Generative AI in their course. This will still be within the bounds of the University policy on **Academic Integrity**, but they may include the limited use of such software for certain purposes and ask you to document how the AI tool(s) has been used.
2. In the MACAL programs (Diploma and MA) any use of generative AI in the completion of coursework should be cited appropriately, including (1) a **declaration** that identifies the use of any of these tools, (2) a description of **how the tools were employed including prompts**, and (3) **how** the AI-generated content was **integrated into the submitted** coursework. **An appendix** detailing this information should be attached to the relevant assignment. (*see below for example statements)
3. When using AI tools to improve your own writing, you should **retain drafts of your original work** prior to modification by AI and have these drafts available for instructors to review if requested.
4. When using AI tools, it is **up to you to ensure the accuracy of the content**. As previously described, these AI software products often generate false statements and imaginary citations. They look quite real but because these citations are based on the *best guess* of the algorithms and patterns being used, they are often incorrect and/or completely made up.
5. When using generative AI tools to support the completion of coursework, students are **required to submit an appendix** to the relevant assignment consisting of the AI-generated content, the tool used, and any prompt(s) used in content generation.
6. If you choose to integrate **AI-generated content into group or team assignments**, all members of the team should be made aware of this and understand and be able to explain how this material was generated and used. Here as above, you must also explicitly differentiate what material was human-generated, and what was AI-generated in material submitted for assessment.

Use of AI Declaration Template:

You may use the following template example to craft your statement:

Declaration: I acknowledge the use of [AI tool or technology name] and [hyperlink] to generate [.....].

Prompt: I entered the following prompts. [share all prompts/questions you used to generate material through AI]

Use: I used the output to [describe how you used the material generated by AI]