

Responsible Use of AI in Research at Leeds Beckett University

Background

1. Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools and platforms are becoming ubiquitous. Whilst they hold great promise for new scientific discoveries, research applications, and/or efficiencies in research processes, we need to ensure they are used responsibly.
2. A working group was set up to develop principles and guidance around responsible use of AI in research. Members include Grigoris Antoniou (Professor of Computer Science BEEC); Mark Gilthorpe (Professor of Statistical Epidemiology CSS); Anne-Marie Gallagher (Business Development Manager Research & Enterprise Office); Adam Hardy (Senior Research Fellow, Leeds Sustainability Institute); George Lodorfos (Dean, LBS); Julian North (Professor in Sport Coaching, CSS); Tom Maxwell and Stewart Johnson (Digital Services), and Silke Machold (PVC R&I).
3. As this is a fast-moving field, this guidance will be a live document which will be published on our Good Practice in Research webpages. Periodic updates will be provided via University Research and Enterprise Committee and through the research & KE communications channels.
4. This guidance applies to all staff and students conducting research under the auspices of Leeds Beckett University. It aligns with, but is complementary to, Leeds Beckett's Generative AI and Academic Practice guidance.

Principles on the Responsible Use of AI

5. We identify the following principles that should guide researchers in using AI tools and platforms¹:
 - **Transparency:** Researchers should clearly distinguish between what is their own contribution and what is generated or assisted by AI. Researchers should disclose where, how, and, where applicable, why AI tools were used. Guidance on how to cite the use of AI is available here https://library.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/articulate/rise/quote_unquote/index_target.html#/lessons/cKlIqnXB73KZUdjKTiaz0kkmkQVzzZSQ0.

¹ These principles draw on guidance from the UK Research Integrity Office, UKRI and other Universities. See <https://ukrio.org/ukrio-resources/embracing-ai-with-integrity/>
<https://www.ukri.org/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-application-and-assessment-policy/use-of-generative-artificial-intelligence-in-application-preparation-and-assessment/>
<https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/-/media/files/our-university/academic-regulations/principles-for-the-use-of-generative-ai.pdf>
<https://www.gla.ac.uk/research/strategy/ourpolicies/ai-for-researchers/#researchandacademicintegrity.generativeaitools%3Arisksandlimitations.usingaitoolstocheckyourwriting>
<https://www.york.ac.uk/staff/research/governance/research-policies/generative-ai/>

- **Research Integrity:** Research integrity forms the foundation of good research, and these principles must be upheld regardless of the tools or technologies employed. Any use of AI must comply with LBU policies on ethics, data protection, privacy, consent, and fairness.
- **Maintain critical thinking:** Avoid depending on AI for critical thinking. Utilise your own abilities, backed up by trustworthy sources and discussions with your peers and/or supervisors.
- **Author accountability:** Final outputs must always be reviewed and approved by a human researcher, who remains fully accountable for the work.
- **Respect publishing ethics and funder guidance:** Researchers need to be familiar with specific rules for AI use by publishers and funders of their choice. Note that these rules vary between publishers and research funders and are frequently being updated.
- **Be aware of bias:** AI tools may reinforce existing biases, largely due to a lack of diversity in the data on which they are trained. Take action to reduce this bias where possible by, for example, altering prompts accordingly. Disclose and openly discuss any identified bias.
- **AI can be incomplete and unreliable:** AI tools are not trained on the most “up-to-date” information, nor can they access information behind a paywall. AI can also make false statements - or 'hallucinations' - that appear convincing but do not stand up to scrutiny.
- **Be aware of potential misuse:** AI should always be used as a tool to advance knowledge and contribute to the public good. If AI tools, platforms or outputs have the potential to be misused, for example by compromising confidentiality, then seek guidance from relevant colleagues² to reduce risk and ensure compliance.
- **Consider the environmental footprint:** AI tools and platforms have an environmental impact, mainly through energy and water usage by large data centres. Some estimates suggest that each AI request has an energy consumption of 2.9 Wh³, the equivalent of boiling 30 kettles.

² This may include colleagues from Digital Services, Information Governance or Research Ethics. If in doubt, please speak with your supervisor or Director of Research in the first instance.

³ Barker (2025) Artificial Intelligence and the environment: Putting the numbers into perspective. JISC Advice and Guidance, <https://nationalcentreforai.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2025/05/02/artificial-intelligence-and-the-environment-putting-the-numbers-into-perspective/>

AI research at Leeds Beckett

6. Our research spans a broad spectrum of AI applications, from optimising industrial processes to advancing healthcare and improving building safety. We also have expertise in understanding causal inference. The team in Research & Enterprise Services maintain a record of ongoing projects that incorporate AI technologies. This is meant to be illustrative rather than exhaustive, and serves as a resource for colleagues who want to connect, collaborate and/or learn more about AI tools.

[AI R and KE projects.xlsx](#)

Funder Guidance

7. Research funders have specific terms and conditions for the use of AI, including in the writing of funding applications and reviewing of bids. Researchers must ensure they comply with these requirements. We provide links to guidance from the main funders below but this not an exhaustive list and is likely to change over time. If in doubt, please contact the research funding team at FundingSupport@leedsbeckett.ac.uk.

- UKRI <https://www.ukri.org/publications/generative-artificial-intelligence-in-application-and-assessment-policy/use-of-generative-artificial-intelligence-in-application-preparation-and-assessment/>
- European Commission https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/news/all-research-and-innovation-news/ai-science-feedback-consultations-future-strategy-shows-strong-interest-public-and-scientific-2025-06-10_en and https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/2b6cf7e5-36ac-41cb-aab5-0d32050143dc_en?filename=ec_rtd_ai-guidelines.pdf
- Research Funders Policy Group Joint Statement <https://wellcome.org/about-us/positions-and-statements/joint-statement-generative-ai>

Training, development and resources

8. We recommend the following resources for colleagues who wish to learn more about the responsible use of AI in research.

- [Looking before we leap: Case studies | Ada Lovelace Institute](#)
- [Webinar: Ethics and integrity for AI in research \(AI in Science\) - Sep 10, 2024](#)
- <https://ukrio.org/ukrio-resources/embracing-ai-with-integrity/>
- <https://www.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/teachlearn/learning-and-teaching-guidance/generative-ai-and-academic-practice/>
- <https://my.leedsbeckett.ac.uk/bbcswebdav/institution/Online%20Learning/DLU/Website%20files/Rise360/An%20introduction%20to%20generative%20ai%20in%20higher%20education/content/index.html#/>
- [Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence for Scientific Writing: Current Trends - PMC](#)
- [2b6cf7e5-36ac-41cb-aab5-0d32050143dc_en](https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/2b6cf7e5-36ac-41cb-aab5-0d32050143dc_en)