

FACULTY GUIDELINES FOR USE OF GENERATIVE AI
BACHELOR'S AND MASTER'S THESES

1. Even though the use of GenAI is sometimes allowed, it is best to consult the VUB Guidelines [Use of Generative AI](#) and also check carefully if specific instructions apply in your program. Program-specific guidelines are attached to this document. In case you are in doubt about something, it is best to consult the course description and inquire with your supervisor.
2. GenAI tools are allowed as a source of inspiration, to come up with ideas, as an information tool that provides explanations or helps you when terms and concepts are not clear to you, as additional help or support in locating sources, literature or information (except archival sources), for methodological questions, questions about ways of collecting data or as a language assistant. Be aware that you will often arrive at better insights without the use of GenAI.

- Never copy text directly in your thesis

You are never allowed to take over text passages or fragments of texts written by GenAI verbatim in your thesis or have entire sections written by GenAI. This will be sanctioned according to the procedure on irregularities in the [Teaching and Examination Regulations](#).

- Double check for bias

You are and remain responsible for the accuracy, veracity, and completeness of everything you have generated through GenAI and used in your thesis. GenAI can sometimes hallucinate and give you wrong information. When interpreting the output, it is also best to keep in mind the so-called "sycophancy": the excessive tendency to agree and confirm thought patterns. Be critical and check the data GenAI generates.

- Privacy and intellectual property

Never share confidential, sensitive or personal information you have collected for your research with GenAI. This could, in fact, lead to a privacy breach. Ensure that

any exchange with GenAI is done in accordance with copyrights (e.g., you should not enter copyrighted materials into GenAI because you will violate copyrights). Be aware that entering information from archival sources may violate the law around public access to archives and privacy laws. Anonymize names and always be selective with the information you share.

3. Always provide total transparency about when and how you used GenAI in your work. To assess and judge the authenticity and originality of your thesis, your supervisor and the readers of your thesis need complete clarity about what you did and where exactly you used GenAI. Even if you used GenAI to brainstorm, reformulate text or get feedback, it is necessary to disclose this. To ensure transparency, submit the "Generative AI: Statement of Use" form as an appendix to your thesis. The form is attached as an addendum to this document.
4. In most cases, it is not required to mention the use of GenAI tools in the reference list or bibliography, as long as the output is not taken verbatim and the use is transparently explained in the form "Generative AI: Statement of Use." If in doubt, always consult the VUB and program-specific guidelines or make an inquiry with your supervisor, because in specific cases – such as literal adoption of output – a formal reference may well be required.
5. If irregularities are suspected, all prompts and interactions with GenAI can be requested by the plagiarism committee.

ADDENDUM 1

GUIDELINES AI-USE FOR BA.MA THESES.

Program-specific supplement (TALK, MUBA, MUMA).

For the TALK-, MUBA-, and MUMA-programs we distinguish between 3 types of AI tools:

- word processing tools such as Microsoft Editor, Grammarly, etc.
- translation tools such as Google Translate, DeepL, etc.
- tools where you use prompting such as Microsoft CoPilot, ChatGPT, Perplexity, etc.

For your BA research assignment and MA thesis, you are allowed to use these tools unless otherwise specified by the supervisor. You report if and why you used AI tools in a general statement that you attach to your BA research assignment or MA thesis. If you used AI tools, specify which tools you used, for what purposes and at what stage of the assignment /thesis. You must also indicate how you handled the AI-generated results: in what way were the results integrated or not integrated into the assignment /thesis and in what form? You need to do this for each of the three categories listed above.

Moreover, for the third category of tools (tools where you use prompting), you must also keep a detailed log in which you document all exchanges with the AI tool(s): e.g., a list of URLs for all exchange sessions, screenshots of all prompts and exchanges (if the tool does not enable URLs), etc. You submit this log, as a separate document, along with the assignment /thesis.

ADDENDUM 2



GENERATIVE AI STATEMENT OF USE

Students should always keep a detailed log documenting all exchanges with the AI tool(s): e.g., a list of URLs for all exchange sessions or screenshots of all prompts and exchanges (if the tool does not allow URLs). Program-specific guidelines determine whether or not this log should be submitted with the assignment or thesis. If irregularities are suspected, the log may always be requested by the plagiarism committee.

1. Your name and student number:

2. This form pertains to my bachelor's paper/master's thesis/assignment:

Name of supervisor/teacher:

Title of thesis (if applicable):

3. Did you use GenAI tools (yes/no) in this assignment/thesis?

4. If GenAI was used:

4.1 What tools did you use?

4.2 For what purposes did you use GenAI tools?

yes/no	
	Brainstorming tool
	Search engine/to look up literature
	Writing Assistant
	Designer
	Practice tool
	Data analysis
	To promote efficiency
	To generate code
	Other:

3. At what stage of the task/thesis did you use GenAI? E.g. in data collection, in analysis, in writing....

4. In what ways were the results integrated into the task/dissertation or were they not integrated?

5. If you did not use GenAI, briefly explain why:

Date and signature