



Case Study 10: Kingston University

Adopting a Default Approach to Generative AI in Assessment

What issue were we trying to address and why?

Kingston University adopts an AI positive approach to Generative AI, with its use being considered as a key future skill for our graduates. Our approach reflects the positive benefits to students of using generative AI to support their learning. In 2023/24 module leaders were asked to identify the most appropriate use of Generative AI for their module assessments. The institutional guidance prompted the module leader to explain to students how they were allowed to use Generative AI for the purposes of completing their assessment. Staff had the option to prohibit the use of Generative AI in their assessment brief, whatever the assessment if they felt that it was appropriate.

Staff and student guidance on using Generative AI was published. The staff guidance stated that “it is essential to make clear to students what constitutes acceptable use of AI (if any) within the context of module assignments”. The Student Guide to Generative AI stated, “where generative AI has contributed to an assignment the following information should be included in the submission: a statement on the use of generative AI as part of the assessment, including the extent of use, and how it was used as part of all stages in creating the final submission.”

This approach led to several challenges:

1. Staff practice varied across Schools and Departments. Some assignment briefs did not include a statement on the (in)appropriate use generative AI.
2. Students were reporting that they are unclear and confused about how generative AI could be used and were worried about using the tools inappropriately.
3. Students were not comprehensively complying with the AI guidance and identifying how they have used Generative AI in their assessment. Ostensibly this was because they were worried that they may have misinterpreted the brief and they would be challenged for inappropriate use.
4. The ubiquity of Generative AI as it is, embedded in widely used tools, meant that students were not necessarily aware that they had used Generative AI.
5. The well-documented challenge of identifying, fairly and without bias, the inappropriate use of AI.

What we did

To be implemented for the academic year 25/26, we have devised an institutional typology of three assessment types. Every module assessment must be designated as one of the following three types. This system is purposefully restrictive in the fact that assessments that are not being run under controlled conditions or do not have a dialogic element cannot require that AI is **not** used. This moves us beyond the traffic light approach widely adopted in the sector.

It is anticipated that most assessments will fall within the Default AI category, with a smaller number satisfying the criteria for NoAI. We are hoping that as staff built their capabilities and confidence in embedding generative AI into their curricula and learning and teaching and assessment practices that we will see a significant growth in ExplicitAI assessments.

No AI: The use of generative AI is prohibited in the execution of the assessment. Students may use generative AI for their preparation, but the assessments are either run under controlled conditions or are face to face and/or have a dialogic element. These assessments must be run under controlled conditions and/or include a dialogic element such as Viva/ Presentation QA, Skills / practical exam e.g., OSCE, supervised studio, laboratory or physical workshop assessments or invigilated exam.

Default AI: In this type of assessment, students will be allowed to use Generative AI for the following tasks:

- Support spelling, punctuation and grammar.
- Support ideation.
- Create a structure or outline for the assignment.
- Support research for the assignment (identifying sources, search).
- Take the role of a constructive critic.
- Aid understanding.
- Produce media artefacts to support the assignment where the artefacts are not the primary focus of the assessment.
- Perform basic image / media editing encompassing cropping, noise reduction,
 - sharpening, enlarging, compression, changing format type and adjusting lighting.

In these default AI assessments, all the core writing, creativity, ideas, arguments, analysis and reasoning must be the students' own. There is a clear statement in the institutional assessment brief which makes clear to the student that the work must be their own.

Explicit AI: This type of assessment requires students to explicitly use Generative AI to complete part or all of the assessment, and therefore gain credit for this use. Importantly, students demonstrate how effectively they have used AI and applied their critical thinking skills and knowledge from the discipline. The assessment must adhere to institutional AI policy and should only require students to engage with our KU Generative AI licensed tools. The use of generative AI (or the use of digital competencies/technologies more broadly) should be an explicit learning outcome.

An institutional assessment brief has been created which outlines the default use of Generative AI that applies to the completion of all assessments unless they are either No AI or Explicit AI.

Students will also be asked to confirm that they have complied with our institutional approach to generative AI through a 'Academic Integrity Pledge' before they submit an assignment in Canvas 'I have fully complied with Kingston University's policy on the use of generative AI in this assessment submission' and they will also need to summarise how they have used AI tools to ensure robust transparency.

Who was involved?

- Senior Leadership – Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) and Provost
- Learning and Teaching Enhancement Centre
- Academic Registry
- Faculty leadership and all academic colleagues
- Student-facing communications team and Student's Union

Measures of success

We are yet to implement this new policy so we will not have a robust evaluation until towards the end of the next academic year. However, we hope to see the following outcomes.

1. Students are clear about how they can use Generative AI appropriately in their assessments without a danger of breaching academic integrity regulations.
2. Staff are clear that students can use Generative AI for the default tasks and are not creating 'academic crimes' which cannot be policed or proven.
3. Assessments are reframed to ensure that they are valid and have integrity in a Generative AI enabled world.
4. Students learn how to use Generative AI tools critically and ethically within the context of their own discipline.
5. The required 'Explicit AI' learning outcome enable the institution to map where AI literacies are being developed in curricula.

How do you plan to develop the intervention/ activity?

The plan is that as staff become more confident in using Generative AI tools they develop more 'Explicit AI' assessments to support students to use Generative AI effectively, efficiently, critically and ethically in the context of their own disciplines.