UNIVERSITÄT DES SAARLANDES

Handout LS:

Generative AI & Examinations

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Dealing with Generative AI in the Context of Examinations

Which examinations are affected?

Generally speaking: The extent to which students use generative AI to prepare for examinations is at their own discretion. The main aspect to regulate is the students' use of generative AI during the actual examination and assessment.

This may vary depending on the type, format and requirements of the respective examination:

- In analog examinations on campus (in oral or written form) digital aids and thus also the use of AI can be prohibited. It is feasible to realize checks due to the analog setting.
- However, when it comes to written or oral examinations which are to be completed without supervision by a lecturer or university staff (e. g., scientific papers), one cannot fully control the students' implementation of generative AI to provide a decent product (e. g., an essay) and pass the exam. At the time of writing this handout, there is no reliable method available to determine whether a text was produced with or without the use of generative AI.

How can generative AI be used in the context of examinations?

It is imperative that you clearly state the extent to which students may or may not use generative AI at the beginning of each semester. Additionally, you may require the students to document their usage of AI at certain stages over the course of the seminar. You should always provide a transparent set of requirements and explain the process of documentation in detail whilst providing students with written guidelines they can refer to. It is good practice to reference the students' declaration of originality.

Moreover, it is crucial to state that generative AI is a tool which does, under no circumstances, replace the students' autonomous performance and production of any text. Every student is responsible for themselves and they must abide by the rules of good scientific and academic practice.

Generally speaking: The use and consultation of generative AI as a tool to complete a task or pass an exam is permitted. However, the extent to which students may use or implement certain features may be restricted or prohibited entirely based on the preferences of the respective lecturer and the design of the seminar.

- Performance requirements must be designed in a way that ensures that students must make a significant contribution using their own acquired competencies to complete the course. The requirements must be in line with the competencies that are to be assessed (see supplementary notes).

- The permitted type of use and the required type of documentation are determined by the students' declaration of originality (see supplementary notes).
- A lecturer may also require all students to actively use generative AI to complete a task from the get-go since Saarland University offers all students access to generative AI (see supplementary notes). Nonetheless, it remains imperative that the principle of equal opportunity is untouched and respected.

How should the use of generative AI be documented?

- Generally speaking, no explicit documentation of the use of generative AI is required and the details included in the students' declaration of originality are sufficient.
- In particular, no typical traditional academic documentation of sources is required, as AI-generated information is not a scientific source and therefore is not object to common academic practices.
- However, an examiner may choose to require the students to document the use of generative AI in advance to better grasp the students' learning curve and development. In that case, concrete requirements for the type and scope of the documentation are to be specified as part of the examination and transparently communicated to the students (see supplementary information). This is of particular importance if the examination is about dealing with generative AI itself or if the lecturer aims at examining specific text passages and how they were created in more detail.

What happens if generative AI is used without permission?

- If generative AI is used in the performance of coursework or examinations without permission and/or if its use is not adequately indicated or documented despite the respective requirements, it is considered deception, which can lead to the invalidation of coursework and examinations and, in serious cases, to the loss of the right to be examined.
- In case of suspicion of unauthorized use of generative AI, the examination board may decide to carry out a supervised oral or written examination of the candidate's knowledge during the hearing process.

Additional Information

Availability of Generative AI at Saarland University

Generative AI is being used in education and science and can support a variety of tasks such as the generation of texts or the analysis and processing of data. The following platforms are available at Saarland University:

- **Microsoft Copilot Chat**
  Students and staff can access Microsoft Copilot Chat via copilot.microsoft.com. The browser-based application enables text-based interactions and offers features such as the analysis of uploaded files, including PDFs. These functions are comparable to those of other language models such as ChatGPT. The principle of data minimization should be applied, meaning that personal data should only be used as input if it is necessary in order to process the request.
- **HAWKI**
  The platform hawki.uni-saarland.de provides access to four open-source language models. These models support purposes such as text generation, translation or analysis. However, the models provided via HAWKI cannot generate images, access the internet or analyze files. They offer an alternative to commercial AI tools and comply with Saarland University's data protection requirements. However, the GWDG user regulations prohibit the input of personal data.

Additionally, the language model **ChatGPT** by OpenAI is well-known and widely used. However, no access is provided by Saarland University. Independent registration with OpenAI is required to use this tool. All aspects regarding data protection must be considered at your own risk.

Further information can be found on the intranet page "Artificial Intelligence at Saarland University".

Pre-Formulated Declarations of Originality

The updated declarations of originality can be used and adapted as needed, e. g., regarding the permissible subtasks in case of restricted permission.

AI-Based Language Models Are Permitted Without Restriction as Aids:

„I hereby declare that I have written this paper/thesis independently and without the involvement of third parties, and that I have not used any sources or aids other than those indicated. All passages of this work that have been taken verbatim or close to the original idea and gist from publications or other third-party statements are indicated as such. I agree to the paper/thesis being checked using a plagiarism software. I am aware that any violation of this declaration may result in the failure of this examination or even the loss of the right to be examined."

AI-Based Language Models Are Permitted as Aids, the Extent of the Use is to Be Indicated and Documented Properly:

„I hereby declare that I have written this paper/thesis independently and without the involvement of third parties, and that I have not used any sources or aids other than those indicated. All passages of this work that have been taken verbatim or close to the original idea and gist from publications or other external statements are clearly identified as such.

In particular, I hereby confirm that I have identified all parts of the work generated and/or edited using artificial intelligence software (e. g., ChatGPT), [stating specification for documentation as required, see supplementary notes] and have marked them as aids. I agree to the work being checked for the use of such software using a plagiarism program.

I am aware that any extent of failure to comply with this declaration may result in failing the examination or even losing the right to take further examinations."

AI-Based Language Models Are Permitted as Aids if Certain/Specific Requirements Are Met and Restrictions Are Respected:

„I hereby declare that I have written this paper/thesis independently and without the involvement of third parties, and that I have not used any sources or aids other than those indicated. All passages in the work that have been taken verbatim or close to the original idea and gist from publications or other external statements are clearly identified as such.

In particular, I hereby confirm that I have used artificial intelligence software (e. g., ChatGPT) in the preparation of the following work exclusively for [list of subtasks] and not for answering and reflecting upon the questions raised in the work. I agree to the paper/thesis being checked for the use of such software using a plagiarism program.

I am aware that any extent of failure to comply with this declaration may result in failing the examination or even losing the right to partake in further examinations."

AI-Based Language Models Are Permitted as aids if Certain/Specific Requirements and Restrictions Are Respected and Met, the Extent of the Use is to Be Indicated and Documented Properly:

„I hereby declare that I have written this paper/thesis independently and without the involvement of third parties, and that I have not used any sources or aids other than those indicated. All passages in the work that have been taken verbatim or close to the original idea and gist from publications or other external statements are clearly identified as such.

In particular, I hereby confirm that I have used software operated by artificial intelligence (e. g., ChatGPT) exclusively for [list of subtasks] and not for answering and reflecting upon the questions raised in the paper/thesis. All parts of the work generated and/or processed using artificial intelligence software (e. g., ChatGPT) have been properly identified as [specification for documentation as required, see supplementary notes] and indicated as aids. I agree to the work being checked for the use of such software using a plagiarism program.

I am aware that any extent of failure to comply with this declaration may result in failing the examination or even losing the right to partake in further examinations."

The Use of AI-Based Language Models is Entirely Prohibited:

„I hereby declare that I have written this paper/thesis independently and without the involvement of third parties, and that I have not used any sources or aids other than those indicated. All passages in the work that have been taken verbatim or close to the original idea and gist from publications or other external statements are clearly identified as such.

In particular, I hereby confirm that I have not used any software operated by artificial intelligence at all (e. g., ChatGPT) to work on the issues raised in the paper/thesis. I agree to the paper/thesis being checked for the use of such software using a plagiarism program.

I am aware that any extent of failure to comply with this declaration may result in failing the examination or even losing the right to partake in further examinations."

Recommendations Regarding Indication and Documentation of AI

If the use of AI-based language models is permitted and to be identified in the text, students must indicate the prompts used, the models used, the version numbers if applicable, the date and time of the interactions, e. g., in this form:

> "There is currently no legal obligation to label AI-generated texts. However, it is recommended to do so for reasons of transparency. From August 2, 2026, the EU AI Regulation will come into force, which will require mandatory labeling of certain AI-generated content

(„How do I indicate and document AI-generated passages in a text?“, Microsoft Copilot Chat, 02.02.2025, 11:42).“

The documentation as an aid for certain tasks or performances, such as literature research, linguistic revision or the creation of illustrations, etc., is to be carried out as required as a list of aids while also stating the prompts used or concerning further sub-tasks, the language model, the version number if applicable, the date and time of the interaction, e. g., in this form:

Aids

Microsoft Copilot Chat

- „How do I indicate and document AI-generated passages in a text?“, 02.02.2025, 11:42
- Language Revision, 02.02.2025, 11:52
- „Generate an image dealing with digital examination“, 02.02.2025, 12:02
- …

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- Literature research regarding the topic „indication and documentation of texts generated by AI“, 27.01.2025, 13:15
- …

It is also possible to fully document the interactions using the chat transcripts. However, as this type of documentation can be very extensive, it is recommended that it is only used if the chat protocols are included in the assessment of the performance to document a process (part of the examination), if the use of AI-based language models is a central component of the examination and is to be assessed or if the type and scope of the individual performance must be gauged and determined in detail.

Recommendations Regarding the Design of Coursework and Examinations

Generative AI as well as the generated content are continuously evolving and constantly improving. Recommendations regarding the design of appropriate task formats can therefore only be given with reservations. The question of the extent to which AI-based language models are capable of correctly solving these task formations without significant student input remains to be answered. The quality of the generated content can vary greatly depending on the individual subject and may need to be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

In the case of generative AI being permitted as an aid, students should first be informed about its possibilities and limitations, as well as taught a responsible use by taking the requirements of good

scientific practice into account. AI-generated content often appears plausible but can still contain many errors, which is why critically reviewing the generated content is an essential step in using generative AI. To use generative AI appropriately and responsibly, students must possess the appropriate subject-specific, digital, and (meta-)cognitive skills, such as subject-specific expertise in assessing the AI-generated content, methodological expertise in the targeted use of prompts, and strategies for planning, monitoring and reflecting on their individual work process. Students should consider generative AI as an opportunity to optimize their learning and work processes. Since the quality of the prompts can have a significant impact on the quality of the generated content, the use of generative AI should be studied and practiced before being applied in coursework or examinations.

Tasks that only require the reproduction of knowledge and no further skills, such as the application or transfer of knowledge, are not recommended, as these tasks can often be easily solved with the support of generative AI. Instead, tasks should be targeted at higher learning objective levels, so that generative AI can support the process without replacing the substantial competencies and skills that would be assessed through coursework and/or examinations. The tasks should rather aim at the application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation of class content, and thus target transfer skills and deductive thinking. In these tasks, students' subject-matter and methodological expertise play a significant role regarding their interaction with generative AI, as they put a decisive impact on the formulation of prompts as well as the critical evaluation of generated content. Examples of such tasks include analyzing a problem in an applied context, developing a solution to a problem with extensive and/or current contextual relevance, or comparing and evaluating solution approaches that require consideration of specific contextual conditions.

The advanced competencies students are expected to demonstrate in these tasks must correspond to the competencies they have objectively acquired in their studies up to that point. The required level must be consistent with the competencies defined in the module handbooks for individual study phases.

Task that are not recommended:

- Tasks that are solely focused on the reproduction of knowledge and/or content and do not require transfer or reflection (e. g., naming, describing, explaining).
- Tasks that are focused on an unbiased comparison of facts. AI-based language models can compare texts and summarize their differences/similarities.
- Tasks without context references or tasks that do not require an analysis of contextual conditions. AI-based language models can generate applicable examples, however, the contextual conditions must be taken into account through appropriate prompts.

These formats facilitate the misuse of AI-based language models, as suitable content can be generated without much effort from the students themselves.

Further Links

Current information and further links on the topic of AI can be found in the **Digitale Lehre UdS** team. You can join the team by entering the following team code in Teams: **24fhh2f**.