

POSITION

Artificial intelligence tools and their responsible use in higher education learning and teaching

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Introduction

The arrival of ChatGPT and similar artificial intelligence (AI) tools has provoked concern and intense debate among educators worldwide, on the actual and potential consequences for learning, teaching and student assessment. The European University Association is actively monitoring these developments and looks forward to engaging with its members, as well as policy makers and other stakeholders, as this issue continues to evolve. Nonetheless, the Association's Learning and Teaching Steering Committee wishes to share some key considerations for European universities.

There are various shortcomings associated with the use of AI, such as lack of references to sources of information, biases in data and algorithms, intellectual property and copyright, or issues related to privacy, data security, and fairness. However, there are also numerous potential benefits for academic work, including improved efficiency, personalised learning, and new ways of working.

It is clear that banning the use of AI tools and other new technologies would be futile. Consequently, the higher education sector must adapt its learning, teaching and assessment approaches in such a way that AI is used effectively and appropriately. Universities must explore the responsible use of AI tools, in line with their mission, goals and values, and paying due regard to their legal framework and the broader consequences for and impacts on society, culture and the economy.

EUA will continue to support European universities by monitoring developments, consulting its members, and sharing advice and best practice.

Key considerations

EUA invites universities to consider:

THE IMMEDIATE CONSEQUENCES OF AI TOOLS ON LEARNING AND TEACHING

Universities should formally discuss the responsible, ethical, and transparent use of AI tools and other emerging technologies with staff and students. Aside from updating institutional-level policies, guidance on approaches to day-to-day practice will be needed. It is important to take account of academic integrity, such as the obligation to reference the use of AI in academic and student work and its restricted use for certain types of learning and assessment.

AI IN THE ONGOING INNOVATION OF LEARNING AND TEACHING

The current disruption caused by AI tools underlines the need to review and reform teaching and assessment practices. This further confirms the growing, sector-wide emphasis on recognition of course work and authentic formative assessment, which came to the fore during the Covid-19 pandemic.

THE UNIVERSITY SECTOR'S VISION FOR TECHNOLOGY IN SOCIETY

Regarding the broader role of universities in exploring the opportunities and mitigating the risks related to AI, EUA would like to recall the following from [Universities without walls: A vision for 2030](#):

“Technological developments are changing lives and disrupting labour markets. Universities produce knowledge for new technologies and social innovation. The development and promotion of such innovation is a central element of their activities. Universities also ensure that the impact of new technologies on our societies is studied and evaluated and that graduates are equipped for labour markets that are changing due to digitalisation and new technologies, in particular artificial intelligence. These will also change the way universities and their partners work.”