Policy on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence

Version 1.1.

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1. Purpose and Scope:

At the University of South Asia, we recognize Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) as a transformative tool that can support creativity, productivity, and learning across disciplines. However, its use must align with our values of academic integrity, transparency, and critical thinking.

This policy provides guidelines about the responsible, ethical, and socially acceptable use of GenAI tools in academic setup among the stakeholders i.e., students, mentors/supervisors, researchers, faculty members, and staff of Universities. It addresses a central problem regarding the negative impacts of the use of GenAI Tools in the existing academic system and provides guidelines to the stakeholders for fair and ethical usage of this technology.

The policy applies to students, faculty members, researchers, and staff of the University. Moreover, it applies to all degree programs at undergraduate and graduate levels.

2. Prohibited and Unacceptable Uses of Generative AI Tools for Students

Generative AI (GenAI) tools offer valuable support for learning and research, but their misuse can seriously compromise academic integrity and violate institutional and HEC policies. Students are expected to use these tools responsibly and transparently. The following practices are strictly prohibited:

2.1. Using AI as a Shortcut to Learning

Students must actively engage with course materials and learning outcomes. Generative AI should not be used to bypass personal intellectual

effort. Submitting AI-generated answers without critical thinking or personal understanding undermines the learning process and is not allowed.

2.2. Impersonation Through AI

It is strictly forbidden to use AI tools to impersonate faculty members, staff, or fellow students in any form of communication. For instance, generating fake emails that appear to come from instructors to gain unfair academic advantages is a serious violation.

2.3. Manipulating Automated Grading Systems

Students may not use GenAI tools to exploit weaknesses in auto-grading or plagiarism detection systems. Attempts to tailor AI-generated responses to deceive these systems constitute academic misconduct.

2.4. Cheating in Assessments

Unless explicitly permitted, using GenAI tools during quizzes, exams, or any form of testing is considered cheating. This includes using ChatGPT or similar tools to obtain real-time answers during closed-book assessments.

2.5. Creating Fake Reviews or Endorsements

Fabricating peer feedback, recommendation letters, or endorsements for academic work using AI is unethical and prohibited. Academic validation must be authentic and verifiable.

2.6. Spreading Misinformation

Students must not use AI to generate or circulate false academic content. Creating papers, citations, or data that do not exist, even if done through AI, constitutes academic fraud.

2.7. Neglecting Bias and Ethical Implications

AI-generated content must be reviewed carefully for bias, stereotypes, or discriminatory language. Submitting such content without critical assessment is unacceptable and violates the University's inclusivity and ethical standards.

2.8. Exploiting Sensitive or Confidential Data

Uploading confidential or proprietary data (such as patient records, unpublished research, or personal student data) into public AI tools is strictly banned. This violates data privacy and security protocols.

2.9. Academic Fraud via AI

Using GenAI to create false academic documents, such as recommendation letters or transcripts, is considered a serious offense and will be treated as document forgery.

2.10. Citing Inaccurate or Fabricated Sources

AI-generated citations must always be verified. Students are prohibited from including citations that reference non-existent or fabricated sources created by AI.

2.11. Bypassing Plagiarism Detection Tools

Using paraphrasing tools or GenAI to reword existing content with the intent of avoiding plagiarism detection is a deceptive practice and violates academic honesty standards.

2.12. Unacknowledged AI-Generated Content (Plagiarism)

All content generated by AI must be clearly cited using appropriate academic formats. Passing off AI-generated work as one's own without citation is a form of plagiarism.

2.13. Ghostwriting via AI Tools

Students must not submit entire assignments, research papers, or theses generated by AI. All academic submissions should reflect the student's own effort, with AI support (if any) transparently declared.

2.14. Fabrication or Manipulation of Research Results

It is prohibited to use AI to generate or falsify research data, results, or experimental findings. All research outputs must be based on genuine and verifiable data.

2.15. Automating the Entire Research Process

While AI can assist in summarizing literature or generating initial drafts, students must engage with all materials and ensure AI outputs are validated against academic sources. Blindly copying AI content without understanding or analysis is not acceptable.

2.16. Encouraging Intellectual Laziness

Generative AI should serve as a tool to support and not replace students' intellectual development. Submissions must reflect genuine effort, critical

thinking, and problem-solving. Overreliance on AI to complete assignments without meaningful input from the student is discouraged.

3. Permitted Uses of Generative AI in Academic Work for Students

University authorizes the responsible use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools to support teaching, learning, and research, provided such use aligns with academic integrity principles and the following guidelines. These provisions are based on HEC's framework and international standards.

3.1. Brainstorming and Ideation

GenAI tools may be used to generate initial ideas, research questions, or project outlines. However, users must critically evaluate and substantially develop AI-generated suggestions through independent thought and analysis.

AI-assisted brainstorming must lead to original work; direct submission of AI-generated ideas without refinement is prohibited. No attribution required for internal ideation, but any AI-generated content included in submissions must be declared.

Example**:**

A student uses ChatGPT to explore potential angles for a history paper, then selects and develops one topic through independent research.

3.2. Language Editing and Proofreading

GenAI tools may assist with improving grammar, syntax, and clarity. The final work must retain the user's original voice, arguments, and academic rigor. Minor edits (e.g., grammar corrections) do not require attribution. Substantial AI-assisted rewrites (e.g., paragraph restructuring) must be declared using the University's AI disclosure statement.

3.3. Research Assistance

GenAI tools may help summarize literature, suggest sources, or explain complex concepts. However, users must verify all references, data, and conclusions against authoritative sources. AI-generated summaries or references must be cross-checked with original sources.

Example**:**

A researcher uses Elicit AI to identify key papers on a particular topic but reads and cites each source directly.

3.4. Coding and Technical Support

GenAI may debug, explain, or suggest code snippets. Users must understand and validate all code before submission. AI-generated code exceeding 5 lines must include a declaration (e.g., "Code debugged using [Tool Name]"). Users are responsible for ensuring code functionality and originality.

Example**:**

A computer science student uses GitHub Copilot to troubleshoot errors in a programming assignment but tests and modifies the code independently.

3.5. Accessibility Support

GenAI tools (e.g., text-to-speech, translation) may be used to accommodate disabilities or language barriers, in line with the HEC's accessibility policies for disabled students. Personal use for comprehension (e.g., translating lecture notes) does not require disclosure. AI-assisted accommodations for graded work must be pre-approved by the instructor or accessibility office.

Example**:**

A dyslexic student uses Speechify to listen to assigned readings but writes essays without AI assistance.

3.6. Creative Exploration

AI-generated art, music, or design concepts may inspire original work in creative disciplines, provided the final product demonstrates significant user input and transformation. Direct submission of AI-generated creative works is prohibited. Derivative works must include a statement describing the AI's role and the user's creative process.

Example**:**

An architecture student uses Midjourney to visualize building concepts, then develops original blueprints by hand or using the course related software/application.

4. Permitted Uses of Generative AI for Faculty Members

University recognizes the transformative potential of (GenAI) in enhancing pedagogy, curriculum development, and student engagement. This policy outlines permitted uses of GenAI tools by faculty members.

4.1. Course Design & Content Development

Faculty may use GenAI tools to assist in creating and refining course materials while ensuring academic oversight. For syllabus development, AI

can help generate draft outlines that faculty then customize to meet specific learning outcomes. When preparing lecture content, instructors might use AI to create initial versions of presentation slides or reading summaries, which they subsequently review and enhance with discipline-specific expertise. All such contents can be used with the approval from respective departmental curriculum review committees.

4.2. Assessment Creation & Evaluation

GenAI may support assessment development when properly supervised. Faculty can use these tools to generate draft quiz questions or exam prompts, which must then be carefully reviewed for accuracy, appropriateness, and alignment with course content and PLOs. For providing student feedback, AI might help identify grammatical errors or suggest areas for improvement in student submissions, but final evaluations must reflect the instructor's professional judgment.

4.3. Student Support & Engagement

AI tools can enhance student support when used as supplements to human instruction. Faculty might employ chatbots to answer frequently asked questions about course logistics, while reserving substantive academic questions for direct interaction. These tools can also help create study guides or practice exercises, which instructors should verify for accuracy before sharing with students.

4.4. Administrative Tasks & Communication

GenAI can streamline administrative responsibilities when used carefully. Faculty may employ these tools to draft routine communications like department announcements, emails, notifications or meeting agendas, which should always be reviewed before distribution. For data analysis tasks like interpreting course evaluations, AI can help identify trends, but final interpretations require human judgment.

5. AI Ethical Review Standing Committee

The AI Ethical Review Committee is established to oversee the ethical use of Generative AI (GenAI) and related artificial intelligence technologies in teaching, research for students and faculty at the University. The committee will serve as a centralized body to assess, advise, and guide AI-related practices to ensure compliance with ethical norms, national policies, and academic integrity

standards, particularly those issued by the Higher Education Commission (HEC) of Pakistan.

5.1. The AI Ethical Review Committee will be comprised of the following:

i. The Dean Faculty of Computer Sciences and IT will serve as the Chairperson of the Committee;
ii. The Director, Institutional Quality Assessment and Effectiveness
iii. One head of department to be nominated by the Vice Chancellor;
iv. Once faculty member having expertise and understanding in the field of AI to be nominated by the Vice Chancellor;
v. The Registrar or his nominee;
vi. A representative of IQAE shall serve as the Secretary of the Committee;

5.2. The members other thank *ex-officio* shall serve in the Committee for a period of two-years renewable for further terms;

5.3. One student representative from the graduating semester will join as an observer to be nominated by the Director IQAE for each meeting.

5.4. The quorum of the meeting shall be three.

5.5. The functions of the Committee shall be to:

i. Review and monitor the ethical use of Generative AI tools across the University.
ii. Recommend updates to University AI policies in line with HEC and national guidelines.
iii. Develop and promote discipline-specific guidelines for responsible GenAI use.
iv. Organize capacity-building programs on AI ethics for faculty, staff, and students.
v. Evaluate reported incidents of GenAI misuse and advise on appropriate actions to the competent authority.
vi. Advise academic departments on emerging ethical issues related to AI technologies.

6. Departmental GenAI Ethics Committee

The Departmental GenAI Ethics Committee serves as the frontline body to monitor, guide, and ensure the ethical and responsible use of Generative AI (GenAI) tools in teaching, learning, and research within the academic department. It Operating under the control of the University AI Ethical Review Standing Committee for the

implementation of University-wide AI policies and contributes to upholding academic integrity.

6.1. The AI Ethical Review Committee will be comprised of the following:

i. The Head of Department shall serve as the Chairperson of the Committee;
ii. One senior faculty member with AI expertise and knowledge to be nominated by the Dean of the Faculty
iii. One faculty representative from the Computer Science department with AI educational background or subject knowledge to be nominated by respective department head;
iv. Departmental Research Committee Chairperson;
v. Representative of IQAE office to be nominated by its Director;

6.2. The members other thank ex-officio shall serve in the Committee for a period of two-years renewable for further terms;

6.3. One student representative from the graduating semester will join as an observer to be nominated by the Head of Department.

6.4. The quorum of the meeting shall be three.

6.5. The functions of the Committee shall be to:

i. Implement University-level GenAI ethical policies and directives within the department.
ii. Act as the first-level review body for teaching, learning, and research activities involving GenAI.
iii. Develop and recommend department-specific guidelines in line with University and HEC policy.
iv. Scrutinize and approve student projects, assignments, and theses that involve the use of GenAI tools.
v. Monitor ongoing use of GenAI in academic work and report periodic audit findings to the University Committee.
vi. Refer complex or unresolved ethical concerns to the University AI Ethical Review Committee.
vii. Organize awareness campaigns and workshops on GenAI ethics in collaboration with the University Committee.
viii. Ensure compliance with data privacy and academic integrity standards in the use of AI tools.

7. Reporting Mechanism for Generative AI Misuse

To ensure academic integrity, one can report suspected misuse of (GenAI) tools by following the process below:

7.1. How to Report:

i. Suspected cases of GenAI misuse (e.g., plagiarism, ghost-writing, fabricated content) can be reported via:
   a. As first point of contact, the cases can be directly submitted to the respective **Departmental GenAI Ethics Committee** as per their defined process.
   b. In case of unresolves matters the case can be emailed to the **University AI Ethics Committee** (ai-ethics@university.edu.pk)

7.2. Investigation & Resolution:

i. The reported cases will be taken up and decided confidentially by the relevant Committee within 30-days.
ii. If misuse is confirmed, the findings of the case will be forwarded to the University anti-plagiarism committee for appropriate action in line with University and HEC policies.

8. Rules for the Use and Penalties for the Misuse of Generative AI Tools

The misuse GenAI tools of in academic work undermines the values of academic integrity, originality, and critical thinking. This section of the policy document outlines acceptable usage, mandatory declarations, and penalties for violations related to GenAI tools.

8.1. Acceptable Use

Students are encouraged to use GenAI tools for enhancing understanding, brainstorming ideas, improving grammar, or clarifying concepts. The permitted use of such tools has been outlined above**.** Any content generated using AI must be properly cited and declared, and students must maintain responsibility for the accuracy and originality of their work.

8.2. Mandatory Declaration

In any academic document (e.g., thesis, project, manuscript) where GenAI tools have been used, the following declaration must be added before the references:

“During the preparation of this work, the author(s) used [Name of Tool/Service] for [reason/use]. After using this tool, the author(s)

thoroughly reviewed and edited the content and accept full responsibility for the final version."

8.3. Citation and Attribution

Use of GenAI tools must be transparently cited wherever relevant. The Academic Departments will adopt and update citation guidelines in line with HEC and international best practices for AI-generated content from time-to-time.

8.4. Prohibited Uses and Academic Misconduct

The misuse of GenAI tools is considered unethical and unacceptable and it has been explained above in this document. The misuse of these tools will be treated as academic misconduct and may result in disciplinary action as per the Anti-Plagiarism Policy of the University and HEC.

8.5. Plagiarism and Similarity Criteria

In line with HEC's plagiarism policy:

i. AI-generated text must be kept below **5%** of the total content.
ii. Overall similarity index must not exceed **19%**, with no more than **5% from a single source**.
iii. These thresholds may be updated by the University in accordance with HEC revisions from time-to-time.

All research work shall undergo plagiarism screening and AI-text detection. Supervisors are responsible for guiding students in compliance and may request revisions before submission.

8.6. Student Undertaking

All students submitting a project or thesis must include the following updated plagiarism undertaking:

"I, [Student Name], declare that the research work presented in my [Program Title] thesis/project titled "[Title]" is entirely my own, with no significant contribution from any individual or GenAI tool unless duly cited. I understand the zero-tolerance policy of HEC and University of South Asia on plagiarism and GenAI misuse. I accept that any proven misconduct may lead to revocation of my degree and public disclosure on official platforms."

8.7. Copyright and Legal Compliance

Students and faculty must ensure their use of GenAI tools complies with national and international copyright, trademark, and intellectual property laws.

8.8. Investigation and Penalties

If a submitted project or thesis is found to violate these rules, the supervisor may request revisions. If the work still does not meet ethical and academic standards, the case shall be referred to the Departmental GenAI Ethics Committee

References:

1. **Higher Education Commission (HEC), Pakistan (2024)**
   Policy for Ethical Use of Generative AI in HEIs (Version 3.3)
2. **UNESCO (2023)**
   Guidance for Generative AI in Education and Research
   UNESCO GenAI Guidance PDF
3. **European Union AI Act (2024)**
   Transparency requirements for education (Article 52)
   EU AI Act Final Text *(See Annex III for education-specific clauses)*
4. **Stanford HAI (2023)**
   Generative AI in Academia: Guidelines
   Stanford HAI Guidelines
5. **University of Sydney (2024)**
   Generative AI Policy for Students
   Sydney Uni AI Policy
6. **HEC Anti-Plagiarism Policy (2023)**
   HEC Plagiarism Policy PDF *(Sections on attribution/citation)*
7. **HEC Quality Assurance Guidelines**
   HEC QA Framework *(Relevant to research ethics)*

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