

The Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) By Students in Law

AI Student Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> AI use at UQ - AI Student Hub - Library Guides at University of Queensland Library
PPL Reference	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> https://policies.uq.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=184 https://policies.uq.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=145
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1.0 Purpose and scope

- Outline the expectations and professional standards for Law Students when using Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools as part of their law degree, including those students in a dual law program.
- Provide guidance to assist Law students with making informed decisions about using AI ethically and effectively.
- Outline examples that may constitute academic misconduct and poor professional practice for Law students.

2.0 The role of AI in your legal education

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools are now part of modern legal practice, and they will almost certainly form part of your future professional life. The Law School recognises that these tools can be powerful and useful. But they are tools, not substitutes, for the kind of rigorous, research-led legal education you are undertaking at the TC Beirne School of Law.

Our aim is not simply to help you produce answers, but to educate you as a lawyer: someone who can identify what really matters in a complex problem, frame the right legal questions, locate and evaluate authoritative sources, test competing arguments, and exercise sound ethical and professional judgement. These are the skills that distinguish a good lawyer, and they are the skills that courts, clients, and the profession expect you to develop while you are here.

AI tools may generate plausible responses to legal questions. However, a central part of your education is learning how to assess whether those responses are accurate, coherent, relevant, and appropriate. You must be able to recognise when an answer is missing something important, when a source is wrong or fictitious, and when professional obligations require you to rely on your own legal reasoning rather than on an automated output.

Learning to do this is not a limitation on your education; it is essential to it. Used properly, AI can support your learning. Used uncritically or as a substitute for your own thinking, it undermines the very capabilities you are here to develop.

3.0 Why there are limits on AI tool use in assessment

You are, therefore, encouraged to learn how to use AI tools ethically and effectively in your learning and assessment. Where AI tools are permitted, their use is subject to clear and deliberate limits. These limits exist for two reasons:

- Assessment tasks are designed to develop and evaluate *your* legal reasoning, research skills, and professional judgement. If AI tools perform those tasks for you, the assessment no longer measures what it is intended to measure.
- The legal profession places a premium on accuracy, accountability, and ethical responsibility. Lawyers are personally responsible for the work they submit, including the correctness of authorities and the soundness of their reasoning. Furthermore, inaccurate information or advice can have serious implications for your clients and your employer. The assessment tasks you undertake are part of your preparation for those professional expectations and standards.

Accordingly, some uses of AI tools may constitute academic misconduct, while other uses may simply reflect poor academic practice and lead to lower marks. Understanding this distinction and using AI responsibly, is part of your development as a future legal professional.

4.0 What you MAY do (permitted use of AI)

Unless an assessment task prohibits AI use, you may use generative AI tools as a support tool.

This may include:

- clarifying task instructions or assessment criteria
- assisting with planning or structuring your work
- improving grammar, spelling, or expression of text that you have drafted
- helping you identify issues or generate prompts for further research
- explaining legal concepts at a general level (which you must then independently verify).

All permitted use must be transparent, subordinate to your own work, and outputs critically evaluated by you.

5.0 What you MUST do (non-negotiable rules)

When using AI tools in any form, you must:

- independently verify all legal authorities, legislation, cases, quotations, and references
- ensure that all analysis, arguments, and conclusions reflect your own reasoning and judgement
- comply with any assessment-specific AI conditions stated in the task description or criteria
- reference and/or acknowledge AI use where required by the assessment instructions.

In law, reliance on unverified or fictitious authorities is professionally unacceptable. Courts have expressly warned that unchecked AI-generated content may mislead and undermine the administration of justice. As such, improper use of AI is regarded as professional misconduct.

6.0 Academic misconduct

The following uses of AI tools constitute academic misconduct and may result in disciplinary action:

- submitting AI-generated text, analysis, or answers as your own work

- using AI tools to generate substantive legal analysis, arguments, or conclusions
- submitting fabricated, inaccurate, or non-existent cases, legislation, or sources generated by AI
- using AI tools to paraphrase or disguise copied material to evade detection
- using AI tools where the assessment task prohibits its use
- failing to disclose AI tool use where disclosure is required.

These behaviours involve misrepresentation of authorship or sources and, therefore, breach UQ academic integrity requirements.

7.0 Poor academic practice

The following uses of AI do not usually amount to misconduct, but will result in poor academic performance (which will be reflected in your marks):

- over-reliance on AI tool explanations instead of engaging with primary legal sources yourself
- superficial or generic analysis or reasoning reflecting AI-style outputs
- failure to evaluate and adapt AI-assisted drafting to the specific legal problem
- errors arising from inadequate verification of AI-generated outputs
- work that lacks originality, depth, or critical legal reasoning.

In professional legal practice, such failures would reflect inadequate preparation and judgement, falling below professional standards.

8.0 Professional standards expected of Law students

Law students are expected to work to standards consistent with the legal profession. This includes:

- taking responsibility for the accuracy of all content including legal references
- exercising independent professional judgement
- ensuring that any tool used (including AI) tools does not compromise integrity, accuracy, or accountability.

If you would not rely on the material in court or in professional legal practice, you should not submit it as your work.