

Department of Classics and Archaeology

Statement and Guidelines on the Responsible Use of Artificial Intelligence in Assignments and Dissertations in Archaeology

1. Purpose and Scope

This document outlines the principles and guidelines for the ethical, transparent, and responsible use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in all assessed work within the Department of Classics and Archaeology for Archaeology. AI is becoming an increasingly important part of higher education, research, and professional practice, offering valuable opportunities to support learning, enhance productivity, and develop digital competencies. The Department recognises these benefits and encourages students to use AI thoughtfully and responsibly as a tool to support, rather than replace, their own learning. As AI is expected to become an integral part of many professional careers after graduation, it is essential that students develop the knowledge and skills to use these technologies critically, ethically, and effectively during their university studies. Providing clear guidance and opportunities for responsible engagement with AI is therefore an important part of preparing students for their future professional lives.

At the same time, assessment is intended to develop and demonstrate the knowledge, critical thinking, practical skills, and independent judgement that are essential to academic success and future professional practice. These guidelines are therefore designed to ensure that AI is used transparently and ethically in ways that preserve academic integrity and the educational purpose of assessment, while equipping students with the experience needed to navigate an increasingly AI-enabled workplace. They are aligned with the University of Malta's regulations on academic integrity and with broader European principles promoting human-centred and trustworthy AI. Inappropriate use of AI and a failure to disclose its use can result in serious disciplinary consequences for students.

2. Core Principles

2.1 Academic Integrity and Authorship

- All submitted work must represent the student's **own intellectual effort**.
- AI tools **cannot be authors or co-authors**.
- Interpretation, argumentation, translation, translation analysis, and critical evaluation must remain **entirely human-led**.

Any misrepresentation of AI-generated material as original work constitutes **academic misconduct**.

2.2 AI as a Support Tool, Not a Substitute

AI may assist learning, but it must **never replace disciplinary thinking**, especially in Classics and Archaeology, where interpretation, contextualisation, and source criticism are fundamental.

Students remain fully responsible for:

- Accuracy of facts, translations, and references
- Quality of argumentation
- Ethical use of sources

2.3 How to declare the use of AI?

- All use of AI must be **clearly disclosed** in all types of assignments, reports, and dissertations
- Failure to acknowledge AI use is treated as **cheating under University regulations**.
- The declaration must be included at the last page of an assignment and report. For dissertations this must appear after the abstract.
- The template for the Declaration of the Use of AI, which must be followed, is provided in the Annex. A copy of the template will also be sent to by the department administrator after registering for the dissertation.

2.4 Critical Evaluation of AI Outputs

AI tools can produce **plausible but incorrect or fabricated information** (“**hallucinations**”), including false references or mistranslations.

Students must:

- Verify all claims against **reliable academic sources**
- Consult **primary texts, inscriptions, or archaeological data**
- Never rely on AI-generated citations without verification

3. Discipline-Specific Considerations

AI use must respect the methodological foundations of the discipline:

3.1 Archaeological Data and Material Culture

- AI may assist with **data organisation or visualisation (for example: maps, graphs, drawings)**, but **interpretation of artefacts, or context must be original**.

- Fabrication or unethical manipulation of datasets, images, or site interpretations using AI is strictly prohibited.

3.2 Historiography and Source Criticism

- AI may summarise scholarship, but students must:
 - Engage directly with **original academic publications**
 - Demonstrate independent evaluation of arguments
- AI must not generate literature reviews or arguments.

4. Permitted Uses of AI

Unless explicitly restricted by a lecturer, students may use AI tools for:

- Language and writing support (checking of grammar, clarity, style)
- Assistance in the brainstorming process
- Explaining difficult concepts for learning purposes
- Assistance in structuring essays and arguments initially drafted by the student
- Translation of text from one modern language to another followed by a review from the student
- Reference formatting and organisation followed by a review from the student

5. Prohibited Uses of AI

The following are strictly forbidden:

- Generating **arguments, analysis, or interpretations** without the critical input and revision from the student
- Writing **any part of an assignment or dissertation** for submission
- Producing **translations from one modern language to another, commentaries, or artefact analyses** without critical input or review
- Fabricating or altering **data, inscriptions, or archaeological evidence**
- Using **non-existent or AI-invented references**
- Submitting AI-generated text **as original work**
- Failing to disclose AI use

6. Use of AI in Dissertations

- AI may be used **only for minor support functions** (e.g., proofreading, formatting)

- AI must **can be used as a support tool during research design and analysis**
- Any AI use must be explicitly described in:
 - Methodology (if relevant)
 - Acknowledgements section
 - Declaration statement at the end of the assignment/dissertation

7. Disclosure Requirements

Beyond the disclosure it is encouraged for the students to keep a reflective AI Use Log.

7.2 AI Use Log

Students should always keep:

- A list of prompts used
- Description of how AI contributed

This log promotes **transparency** and **reproducibility**. Students may be requested to present their AI use log to the Board of Examiners in the case of a dissertation, or to the lecturer responsible for a study unit, in order to verify and cross-check the student's AI declaration.

8. Data Protection and Ethical Use

Students must:

- Avoid uploading **unpublished research, excavation data, or sensitive material** to AI tools
- Respect **copyright**

9. Assessment-Specific Rules

- Lecturers have the right to specify additional AI usage rules in assignment instructions.
- If no mention for AI use is listed in the brief, the responsible lecturer must be consulted for guidelines.
- When unclear or in doubt, students must seek guidance before using AI.

10. Consequences of Misuse

Improper use of AI (including non-disclosure or substitution of authorship) will be treated as:

- **Plagiarism or academic misconduct**
- **Subject to penalties under University Assessment Regulations**

The University Assessment Regulations (2009) define plagiarism “as the unacknowledged use, as one's own, of work of another person, whether or not such work

has been published, and as may be further elaborated in Faculty or University guidelines.” For the avoidance of doubt, the use of unacknowledged work generated by AI tools is also considered by the University of Malta as plagiarised work.

A student may be asked to attend an oral examination if there is a suspicion that work submitted for assessment includes unacknowledged or forbidden AI-generated contributions. If there is a serious mismatch between the quality of work submitted and the performance of the student during the oral examination, a report shall be made to the University Assessment Disciplinary Board (University Assessment Regulations (2009) - Article 38(1)(f), p.17).

11. Final Statement

AI can enhance learning and research in Classics and Archaeology when used responsibly. However:

- It must **support—not replace—critical thinking and authorship**
- It must always be used with **transparency, verification, and ethical awareness**
- As Artificial Intelligence technologies continue to evolve rapidly, these guidelines will be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect emerging best practices, technological developments, changes in University policy, and evolving ethical and legal considerations. Students are therefore encouraged to consult the latest version of these guidelines available on the Department’s website to ensure they remain informed about current expectations regarding the responsible use of AI in learning, and assessment.

Please also consult these links for further guidance:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/astarte/submissionsection/artificialintelligenceaipolicy/>

<https://www.um.edu.mt/assessments/faqs/studentfaqs/writtenassignmentsfaqs/>

https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/2b6cf7e5-36ac-41cb-aab5-0d32050143dc_en

<https://www.um.edu.mt/maks/policiesandprocedures/responsibleuseofgenerativeai/>

<https://www.um.edu.mt/media/um/docs/directorates/registrar/policiesproceduresguidelinesandforms/policiesproceduresandguidelines/GuidelinesforAcademicStaffontheuseofGenerativeAIToolsinClassandinAssessments.pdf>

https://research-and-innovation.ec.europa.eu/document/download/2b6cf7e5-36ac-41cb-aab5-0d32050143dc_en?filename=ec_rtd_ai-guidelines.pdf

12. Annex

Example to follow:

Declaration Concerning the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

I declare that:

1. I have clearly indicated where Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, including generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT or similar), were used during the research, drafting, writing, or editing phases of this dissertation.
2. Any output derived from AI tools has been critically assessed, verified, and appropriately cited in accordance with academic integrity guidelines and UM policies.
3. The use of AI tools has not replaced my original intellectual contribution, nor has it undermined the originality of my work.
4. This dissertation remains primarily my own work, and all AI-assisted contributions are transparently disclosed.

The following AI tools were used for these purposes:

- ChatGPT, <https://chatgpt.com/> : For refining specific phrases, generating some graphs (Figures 3, 4, 5, 12, 19, 21, and 29), and providing R code for other graphs (Figures 55 and Figure 90).
- SCISPACE, <https://scispace.com/>: For assisting in the literature review, by inputting papers into the system and extracting their research aims, methods, results, conclusions, and knowledge gaps, as well as retrieving relevant papers based on specific queries.

Signature:

Date:

Approved by the Board of Studies

23rd September 2026