Artificial Intelligence For Students

Document Summary

Date of approval: 26/09/25

Approved by: Academic Board

Revision date: 31/08/2026

Next revision date: 31/08/27

At The City College, we believe that responsible and ethical engagement with AI is crucial for preparing our students for future careers and for enabling our staff to deliver an innovative and effective educational experience.

This policy outlines our approach to the use of AI, ensuring that we foster innovation while rigorously upholding our commitment to academic integrity, fairness, and the quality of the qualifications we award.

1: AI at The City College – Understanding and Acceptable Use for Students

This section provides a clear framework for all students on what AI is, how it can be used to support their learning, and what constitutes unacceptable use.

1.1 What is AI?

Artificial Intelligence (AI), particularly Generative AI (e.g., Large Language Models like ChatGPT, image generators like DALL-E), refers to computer systems capable of performing tasks that typically require human intelligence. This includes understanding and generating text, images, code, or other content. These tools learn from vast amounts of data and can create new material, summarise information, or answer questions.

1.2 Opportunities and Limitations of AI

While AI offers powerful opportunities to assist learning and productivity, it's crucial to understand its limitations:

- Inaccuracy and "Hallucinations": AI can generate incorrect, outdated, or fabricated information ("hallucinations"). Users are ultimately responsible for verifying any AI-generated content.
- Bias: AI models are trained on existing data, which may contain societal biases that can be replicated or amplified in AI outputs.
- Lack of Understanding: AI does not "understand" content in the way humans do; it identifies patterns and predicts sequences. It lacks critical thinking, empathy, and genuine creativity.
- Privacy and Data Security: Inputting personal, sensitive, or confidential information into public AI tools may expose that data to unauthorised access.
- Copyright and Plagiarism: AI-generated content may inadvertently infringe on existing copyrights, and submitting AI-generated work as your own constitutes plagiarism.

2. Our College's Philosophy on AI Use

The City College is committed to:

- Advancements: The ethical use of AI tools in teaching and learning is permitted, provided it aligns with academic integrity standards and supports educational objectives.
- Academic Integrity: We unequivocally uphold academic integrity. All work submitted for assessment must be the student's own, reflecting their independent knowledge,

skills, and understanding. Qualifications awarded by the college must be credible and genuinely represent student achievement.

- AI Literacy: We aim to equip all students with the understanding of how to use AI tools ethically, critically, and effectively, preparing them for a future where AI will be a common tool in professional life. This is supported by dedicated training and resources provided by the college's study skills team (see Section 7).
- Modular and Flexible Learning: Ensuring that our ethical framework, AI literacy support, and academic standards apply equally across full-time qualifications, bite-sized modules, and flexible industry sprints aligned with the Lifelong Learning Entitlement (LLE).
- Fairness and Transparency: Our use of AI will be fair, transparent, and designed to support equitable opportunities for all students.

3. Acceptable Uses of AI for Learning Support

AI tools can be valuable aids in the learning journey, provided they are used responsibly and ethically. You may use AI for the following purposes, always ensuring the final output is your own original thought and work:

- Brainstorming and Idea Generation: To generate initial ideas, concepts, or potential research questions.
- Summarisation: To summarise complex texts or identify key points from large documents.
- Drafting and Language Support: To refine sentence structure, check grammar, or rephrase text for clarity. (This is not for generating the core content).
- Research Assistance: To identify potential sources or key themes for further human-led investigation. (Always verify sources and content).
- Practice and Revision: To generate practice questions, quizzes, or explanations of concepts for self-study.
- Coding Assistance: To generate basic code snippets or debug code (for relevant subjects), which you then thoroughly review, understand, and adapt.

Mandatory Requirement: When utilising AI for acceptable learning support, users must invariably verify the accuracy, relevance, and originality of any AI-generated content. Ultimate accountability for all submitted work resides with the student.

Assistive Technology and Permitted Accessibility Support

The College fully supports students who utilise specialist assistive technology, including speech-to-text dictation, screen readers, mind-mapping software, and assistive literacy tools funded through Disabled Students' Allowances (DSA) or agreed as reasonable adjustments under the Equality Act 2010.

Permitted assistive tools function strictly as access aids, operating as a digital scribe or reader to record the student's own authentic thoughts and spoken words. The legitimate use of approved assistive software does not constitute academic malpractice.

Students must note that reasonable adjustments apply strictly to accessibility and never exempt any learner from demonstrating the academic competence standards of their

programme. The use of generative artificial intelligence, automated text generation, text-spinning plugins, or AI paraphrasing tools within or alongside assistive software is strictly prohibited.

Approved assistive software must not be used to generate arguments, write paragraphs, or alter the substantive meaning of an assessment. While students should declare their approved assistive software to the Student Welfare Officer and note its use on assignment coversheets, holding DSA or a support plan does not exempt any submission from academic malpractice scrutiny. Where generative writing is suspected, students may be required to attend a viva voce examination to explain and defend their work.

4. Unacceptable Uses of AI (Academic Malpractice)

Submitting work for assessment that is not demonstrably your own or misrepresenting the use of AI constitutes academic misconduct and will result in severe penalties. The following are examples of unacceptable AI use:

- Submitting AI-Generated Content as Your Own: Submitting work that is wholly or substantially generated by AI tools (e.g., assessments, reports, presentations) without meaningful human input and proper attribution is not permitted. Minor edits to AI-generated content do not make it original. All submitted work must reflect the student's own understanding and effort. AI must not replace critical thinking, analysis, or original expression.
- Failing to Acknowledge AI Use: Not declaring or misrepresenting the extent to which AI tools were used.
- Using AI in Prohibited Assessments: Accessing or using AI tools during supervised examinations, in-class tests, or any assessment where the use of external aids is explicitly forbidden.
- Using AI to Circumvent Learning Outcomes: Employing AI to complete tasks in a way that avoids demonstrating your own independent analysis, critical thinking, or practical skills required by the assessment criteria.
- Submitting Inaccurate or Unverified AI Content: Presenting AI-generated information as factual without independent verification, especially if it leads to errors in your assessment.
- Detection of AI Misuse: The College does not solely rely on automated AI detection software to determine academic malpractice, recognising the technical limitations and potential for false positives in these tools. Any suspected misuse of AI will undergo a holistic, fair, and evidence-based investigation led by academic staff, in line with established Academic Malpractice procedures. Human judgment, pedagogical expertise, and established academic malpractice procedures remain paramount.
- Misrepresenting Generative AI as Assistive Technology, defined as using generative writing tools, automated paraphrasers, or third-party text expanders and falsely presenting them as approved assistive accessibility software or DSA support.

Consequences of Academic Malpractice:

Any suspected instance of academic malpractice involving AI will be investigated in accordance with the college's Academic Malpractice Policy. Penalties may include, but are not limited to:

- A reduction in marks for the assignment.
- Resubmission of the assignment with a capped mark.
- Disqualification from the unit or qualification.
- Suspension or expulsion from the college.

5. Referencing and Acknowledgement Guidelines for AI Use

Transparency is key. If you have used AI tools in any capacity for your academic work (even for acceptable learning support as outlined in Section 3), you must acknowledge it clearly and appropriately.

When to Acknowledge: If AI tools have contributed to the generation of ideas, text, images, data analysis, or any other content that forms part of your submitted work, you must declare it.

How to Acknowledge:

- In-text citation/Footnote: Where specific AI-generated content is used, cite the tool (e.g., ChatGPT 4.0, Midjourney) and the date accessed.
- Specific AI Tools Section: Include a dedicated section in your bibliography or a reflective statement/appendix clearly outlining:
    - The AI tool(s) used (e.g., ChatGPT 4.0, Google Gemini, DALL-E).
    - The date(s) of interaction.
    - The prompt(s) you used.
    - A brief explanation of how the AI output was used and how you subsequently developed, verified, or critically engaged with it to produce your own work.
- Retain Evidence: For your own protection and potential verification, retain a non-editable copy (e.g., a screenshot) of both the prompt and the AI-generated output.

Important: Acknowledging AI use does not guarantee that the content will be rewarded if it does not demonstrate your independent achievement of the assessment criteria.

6. Data Privacy and Ethical Use

When interacting with AI tools:

- Do NOT input any personal, sensitive, or confidential information (e.g., your name, student ID, personal circumstances, college confidential data, unreleased

assessment questions, sensitive client information). Public AI models may use your inputs for training, which makes them publicly available.
- Be aware of Intellectual Property: Ensure that your use of AI does not infringe on existing copyrights or intellectual property rights. Do not input copyrighted material into AI tools without permission, and be cautious about publishing AI-generated content that may resemble existing works.

Use of AI-Generated Visual Content
Students may include AI-generated images in their assessments only when the use of such media is relevant to the task and clearly attributed. However, the inclusion of an AI-generated image does not in itself demonstrate academic understanding or creative effort. It therefore will not be credited toward meeting the marking criteria unless all the following conditions are met:

- The student provides a clear rationale for its inclusion,
- The image is contextually analysed or interpreted as part of the submission,
- And the student's own contribution (e.g., analysis, design decisions, or critical reflection) is clearly demonstrated.

7. AI Literacy Training and Resources for Students

The City College is committed to ensuring all students are equipped with the skills to engage with AI responsibly and effectively.

- Mandatory First-Term Training: All students will complete dedicated AI literacy training as part of their first-term study skills programme. This training covers the fundamentals of AI, its ethical implications, acceptable and unacceptable uses in an academic context, and practical guidance on effective prompting and critical evaluation of AI outputs.
- Ongoing Resources: Comprehensive AI literacy resources, including guides and tutorials, are continuously updated and remain available to all students throughout their entire course duration via the college's Virtual Learning Environment (e.g., Moodle/Sharepoint). Students are strongly encouraged to revisit these resources as their studies progress and as AI technology continues to evolve.
- Study Skills Support: The college's Study Skills team is available to provide additional guidance and support on AI literacy and its application to academic work.

8: Adapting Assessments for the AI Era

This section outlines how The City College is adapting its assessment strategies to ensure academic integrity in BTEC Pearson qualifications and all other college assessments, aligning with national guidelines.

8.1. Upholding Pearson (BTEC) and JCQ Requirements

The City College strictly adheres to the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) and Pearson's regulations concerning AI use in assessments.

- In accordance with current JCQ general regulations for Approved Centres and joint-council "AI Use in Assessments: Protecting the integrity of qualifications" guidance,

teachers and assessors must only accept work for qualification assessments which is demonstrably the learner's own.

- Students who misuse AI to the extent that the work they submit for assessment is not their own will have committed malpractice.
- If any sections of work are reproduced directly from AI-generated responses, those elements must be identified by the student. They will not be rewarded for these elements, as they do not demonstrate an independent meeting of the marking criteria.

Sources:
Pearson (BTEC): Refer to Pearson's specific BTEC qualification handbooks and assessment guidance, which align with JCQ.

8. 2 Our Strategies for AI-Resilient Assessment Design

To ensure the authenticity and validity of our assessments in the AI era, The City College is implementing the following strategies, drawing on best practices from QAA, Advance HE, and the Russell Group:

Enhancing Assessment Design
Process-Oriented Assessments: Increasing the focus on the learning process, not just the final product. This includes requiring submission of:

- Annotated outlines, research logs, and initial drafts.
- Reflective statements on the development of work, including any AI interactions.
- Progress journals or evidence of iterative development.

Oral Components and Presentations (Vivas): Incorporating oral examinations, presentations, and viva voce assessments, where students must explain, defend, and demonstrate their understanding of their work. This is particularly effective for BTEC units with grading criteria for communication and applied skills.

Authentic and Practical Tasks: Designing assessments that are highly contextualised, vocational, and mimic real-world scenarios where human judgment, practical application, and ethical reasoning are paramount. Examples include:

- Live practical demonstrations.
- Simulations are closely aligned with industry standards.
- Case studies require nuanced, vocational problem-solving based on specific, current, or localised data.
- Projects that involve multiple stages, collaboration (where permitted and acknowledged), and the synthesis of diverse information beyond what AI can generate on its own.

Focus on Higher-Order Skills:

Assessments will increasingly require:

- Critical analysis and evaluation of complex information.

- Synthesis of ideas from diverse sources to form original arguments.
- Creative problem-solving for novel situations.
- Application of theoretical knowledge to practical scenarios.
- Ethical reasoning and decision-making within a vocational context.

In-Class and Supervised Elements: Where appropriate, key components of assessment will be completed under supervised conditions within the college, limiting external access to AI tools. This may include:

- Handwritten elements.
- Controlled assessment periods for specific tasks.

8.3. Transparency and Communication

Ongoing Dialogue: Staff will engage in open discussions with students about the appropriate use of AI, its ethical implications, and how assessments are designed to measure their authentic learning.

9. Guidance and Training for Staff

The City College recognises the growing presence of AI in education and is committed to supporting staff in navigating this evolving landscape.

AI Literacy Training: Training will be provided to all teaching staff on:

- Understanding the capabilities and limitations of various AI tools.
- Designing AI-resilient assessments and adapting existing ones.
- Effectively integrating AI into teaching and learning practices to enhance student outcomes.
- Recognising potential indicators of AI misuse and appropriate investigation procedures.

- **Collaborative Practice**: Staff are encouraged to share best practices and challenges related to AI in assessment and teaching across departments and with external networks (e.g., through Jisc and Advance HE resources).

10. Review and Continuous Adaptation

The field of Artificial Intelligence is rapidly evolving. The City College commits to:

- Regular Review: This policy and our assessment strategies will be regularly reviewed and updated annually to reflect new technological developments, changes in national guidance (OfS, UUK, DfE), and emerging best practices within the HE sector.
- Student and Staff Feedback: We will actively seek feedback from students and staff on the effectiveness of our AI policies and assessment methods to ensure they remain fit for purpose.
- Any query considered **non-routine or non-trivial** should be submitted directly to Yamin Htwe yhtwe@citycollege.ac.uk

Sources and Further Information

- Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ): AI Use in Assessments: Your role in protecting the integrity of qualifications https://www.jcq.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/AI-Use-in-Assessments_Apr25_FINAL.pdf]
- Pearson (BTEC): Specific BTEC Qualification Handbooks and assessment guidance which align with JCQ regulations.
- Office for Students (OfS): Embracing innovation in higher education: our approach to artificial intelligence https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/news-blog-and-events/blog/embracing-innovation-in-higher-education-our-approach-to-artificial-intelligence/]
- Department for Education (DfE): https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/using-ai-in-education-settings-support-materials]
- Jisc: Principles for the use of AI in FE colleges (and other AI guidance) https://www.jisc.ac.uk/further-education-and-skills/principles-for-the-use-of-ai-in-fe-colleges]
- Russell Group: Principles on the use of generative AI tools in education https://www.russellgroup.ac.uk/sites/default/files/2025-01/Russell%20Group%20principles%20on%20generative%20AI%20in%20education.pdf]
- Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA): Academic Integrity guidance https://www.qaa.ac.uk/en/membership/membership-areas-of-work/academic-integrity/chatgpt-and-artificial-intelligence (or newer specific AI guidance)]
- Advance HE: https://advance-he.ac.uk/