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for counsellors

2024 - 2025

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) Guidance for Centres



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1. Introduction

CPCAB recognises the increasing multi-faceted role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools in the education sector and the opportunities AI could potentially provide for enhancing the teaching and learning experience. However, when AI tools are used inappropriately by either candidate or tutor in the assessment process, the integrity of the assessment process may be jeopardised.

The purpose of this document is to provide guidance to CPCAB's recognised centres regarding AI use in the delivery and assessment of CPCAB qualifications. This includes identifying the risks associated with AI misuse and to support centres to understand their responsibilities in identifying and implementing prevention strategies according to their own centre policies and processes.

2. Definitions of AI, Chatbots and GenAI

AI refers to systems or machines that simulate human intelligence to learn, problem-solve, reason and perform tasks, with performance improving over time as more data is collected.

Chatbots are AI software programmes that can generate text to answer questions, mimicking human conversation.

Generative AI (GenAI) is notable for its ability to create new content autonomously, such as text, images, and simulations. Some chatbots, such as ChatGPT, incorporate generative AI elements to provide contextual intelligence.

For the purposes of this guidance document we use the term 'AI tools' to encompass all AI in its various forms.

3. AI misuse in assessment

Our qualifications encompass the counselling, helping and coaching professions and are underpinned by the [CPCAB model of helping work and counselling practice](#). Within this model, candidates' self-awareness and the ability to reflect on the factors that support client change is pivotal. To achieve the qualification, candidates must be internally assessed as proficient across seven learning outcomes, using three assessment methods (documents, tutor observations and testimony). Where internal assessment has been designed to test subject knowledge, reasoning and critical thinking skills, the use of chatbots and AI tools to generate responses has the potential to undermine the validity of the assessment.

AI misuse is therefore defined by CPCAB as the intentional use of chatbots or GenAI tools to generate and present for assessment coursework that is not the candidate's original and authentic work. To use AI tools to generate content for internal assessment purposes therefore constitutes **candidate malpractice**, as the work cannot be considered to be a genuine representation of a candidate's capabilities. Where incidences occur CPCAB expect that this should be dealt with by the centre as such, in line with the centre's malpractice policy.

CPCAB encourage candidates to develop independent study skills within the learning environment, and this involves completing coursework honestly and ethically, whilst having respect for the work of others. It is also important for candidates to recognise their responsibility to ensure fair assessment.

Please refer to CPCAB's [Malpractice and Maladministration Policy](#) for further information.

4. Responsibilities of Centres

Centres should identify to their candidates, as early as possible, the expectations regarding assessment standards and AI misuse. In line with the JCQ guidance¹, it should be communicated to candidates that work submitted for assessment purposes should be entirely their own, and this is usually published within the format of a centre policy document (e.g. Plagiarism Policy, Academic Misconduct Policy or Candidate Malpractice Policy) as well as detailed in the candidate qualification handbook (also known as the student handbook).

Candidates should be made aware of the consequences of submitting work which is not their own and/or indicates AI misuse, including the investigation process of potential malpractice and whether a malpractice finding will result in dismissal from the qualification.

CPCAB recommends centres should consider:

- creating and implementing a published, accessible policy document that covers the definitions and risks associated with AI misuse, including potential implications where misuse has been identified;
- explicitly informing candidates about which AI tools are permitted, specifying the tools' intended purposes, such as grammar and spelling assistance, formatting support, or translation, to ensure clarity and adherence to guidelines;
- offering candidates guidance regarding the referencing of permitted AI tools in coursework;
- a variation in assessment methods that goes beyond relying solely on written submissions, such as incorporating for example in-class work completed under direct supervision or verbal activities conducted in the classroom.

5. Responsibilities of tutors

Just as candidates are required to demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to achieve their qualifications, tutors have a responsibility to ensure that the assessment of candidate work is authentic and reflective of their professional judgement. The potential use of AI tools to assess candidate work may undermine the integrity of the assessment process, and CPCAB are bound by regulation which explains that any assessment within qualifications cannot use AI as a “sole marker”². It is important for tutors to be vigilant in looking out for signs of generative AI misuse – this could be a change in tone, flow or language in written work. In qualifications where self-reflection, self-development and

¹ JCQ (2024) “AI Use in Assessments” available online [here](#)

² Ofqual (2024) “Ofqual’s approach to regulating the use of artificial intelligence in the qualifications sector” available online [here](#)

interpersonal connection are essential components, the use of AI-generated feedback *in place of* personalised, human feedback compromises the quality of learning and the relational rapport between a tutor and candidate.

The process of providing meaningful feedback goes beyond correcting errors or suggesting any improvements, it allows the formation of a relationship of trust and engagement. The reliance on AI-generated feedback means that tutors can miss valuable opportunities to understand their candidate on a deeper level, including thought processes, learning styles, and writing habits. This could then weaken the tutor's ability to build rapport with their candidates but could create a disconnect that can make it more challenging to identify potential misuse of AI in candidate written work, such as sudden shifts in tone or vocabulary.

CPCAB candidates can benefit from the thoughtful use of AI in their educational journey when it is employed transparently and within clearly defined boundaries. Open communication about the use of AI in the learning and assessment process is key to ensuring responsible use. Tutors can actively foster conversations with their candidates about how AI might assist with learning and where the limitations of its use lie. By discussing AI's role openly, tutors and candidates can work together to ensure that it enhances learning without replacing critical human elements of feedback.

The encouragement of transparent discussion around AI not only creates an environment of trust but also re-enforces the importance of human insight in education. Tutors by remaining actively engaged in their candidates' learning journeys, ensure that technology is seen as a supportive tool rather than a substitute for genuine interaction and personalised development.

6. Responsibilities of candidates

AI misuse in assessment is a new, constantly evolving area of interest and debate. We have acknowledged that it is a centre responsibility to make candidates aware of inappropriate use of AI tools and the risks associated with using these. Likewise, candidates have a responsibility to familiarise themselves with their centre's policies and processes relating to AI misuse.

Some AI software programmes can be used to check text for spelling and grammatical errors to help the writer make decisions about the style and format of their own writing. Use of these programmes may be permitted by the centre, but it would be a candidate's responsibility to check the use of such programmes with their tutor first and to always reference the software that has been used.

A candidate should:

- find out the centre's policy and processes regarding AI use;
- reference the use of any AI tools in coursework, where prior permission to use these tools has been obtained by the centre;
- speak to tutors regularly about any issues and concerns relating to AI misuse.

7. Identifying AI misuse

Tutors can play an integral role in detecting the misuse of AI by building a strong rapport with candidates and developing an understanding of their individual writing styles over time. Through regular interaction, in class assessments, and direct feedback, tutors can familiarise themselves with the unique voice, tone and language tendencies of each candidate. This familiarity would make it easier to identify inconsistencies or sudden shifts in writing style that may indicate the use of AI tools beyond what is permitted. For example, drastic changes in vocabulary, structure, or understanding may raise concerns about AI misuse.

Where AI misuse is identified and the centre's processes and policies have been followed accordingly, there is no requirement to report these cases to CPCAB. However, it is strongly recommended that centres maintain detailed records of how each incident was managed. This should include documentation of any investigation, any findings or any sanctions applied in accordance with the centres policies. Such records ensure transparency and allow for consistent application of rules and provide a basis for addressing future concerns. By forming a close relationship with candidates and having clear policies on AI usage, centres can effectively manage the integrity of assessments ensuring fair outcomes for all students.

CPCAB 2025