

Guideline for the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Teaching and Studies at Pforzheim University

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Preamble

¹Artificial Intelligence (AI) and large language models (LLMs) have created new opportunities in both business and society as well as in the academic sector, and are increasingly becoming a part of entrepreneurial, societal, and academic reality.

²Against this backdrop, Pforzheim University remains committed to the principles of good scientific practice and to teaching that is based on the current state of knowledge and oriented toward practical application, enabling our students to navigate safely in a dynamic, interdisciplinary, global, and digitally shaped professional world. ³The ongoing digital transformation, particularly through AI tools, presents numerous opportunities for universities in this context but also poses challenges.

⁴Pforzheim University supports the use of AI and endorses a modern approach to higher education. ⁵It strives to meaningfully integrate the advantages and opportunities of digitalization—especially AI tools—into teaching and to familiarize its students with these tools and possibilities in order to train them in their informed use and to prepare them optimally for professional life.

⁶At the same time, Pforzheim University seeks to adequately address the risks that AI tools pose, particularly to proper study conduct and teaching based on ethical principles, fairness, and justice.

⁷With this in mind, Pforzheim University provides a set of guidelines intended to help students, teachers, and researchers create a secure environment for the effective and appropriate use of AI in teaching and studies. ⁸However, given the dynamic development of this topic, the guidelines can only be provisional.

AI Tools in Teaching and Studies

⁹Pforzheim University is open to the use of AI tools in teaching and supports the exploratory enthusiasm of learners, instructors, and researchers. ¹⁰It fundamentally considers these tools an enrichment in terms of the development of didactic concepts and competence- and method-oriented teaching.

¹¹It is the responsibility of the individual instructors to evaluate the integration and use of AI tools in their specific context and to inform students about their use.

1. Permissible Use of AI Tools

¹²Responsible use of AI can support various purposes, particularly:

- ¹³In research and preparatory work: use for brainstorming, topic research, structuring, and summarizing academic texts.
- ¹⁴For creative purposes: as design and visualization tools to support one's own ideas.
- ¹⁵As assistive functions: using AI for spell and grammar checks, translation of individual words, or formatting reference lists.
- ¹⁶In execution: for creating, for example, text sections, graphics, images, motion pictures, or code.

¹⁷It is important to regard AI tools as aids and not as sole sources.

2. Responsibility for Data Protection

¹⁸Both students and instructors are responsible for complying with applicable data protection regulations (e.g., GDPR).

- ¹⁹Sensitive, personal, or confidential data must not be entered into AI tools.
- ²⁰Users must inform themselves about the data protection policies of the tools they use and ensure that the data is not inadvertently processed or published.
- ²¹The university supports data protection-compliant use but also notes that external AI services, in particular, do not always guarantee the required level of protection.

3. Generative AI and Copyright

²²The use of AI-generated content raises important questions regarding copyright.

- ²³AI tools can produce content that is subject to copyright. ²⁴When incorporating such content into academic work, license conditions and third-party rights must be observed.
- ²⁵Students and instructors are encouraged to cite all used sources—AI-generated ones included—transparently and correctly.

4. Prohibited Use of AI Tools and Poor Academic Practice

²⁶Certain uses of artificial intelligence violate the principles of academic integrity, particularly:

²⁷The exclusive creation of academic work by AI without the user's intellectual and creative contribution.

²⁸It is always inadmissible to adopt AI-generated content without critical evaluation.

- ²⁹Concealing the actual use of AI tools by failing to disclose or cite their contributions.
- ³⁰Using AI to circumvent academic requirements, e.g., generating exam content in cases where such usage is not allowed.

5. Citing AI Tools

³¹Transparency in dealing with AI is a key component of academic work.

- ³²If AI is used as a tool for creation and design (e.g., to generate text, graphics, images, motion pictures, or code), its use must be explicitly declared.
- ³³If an academic work contains a verbatim excerpt from an AI-generated text passage, an embedded image, or a figure, this must be referenced in the text or assignment content and in the bibliography.
- ³⁴For assistive applications (e.g., spell checks, formatting, improvement of one's own wording, translation refinement), no separate citation is typically required as long as the content of the work is independently created.

AI Tools in Examinations

³⁵The potential use of AI tools in exams raises new legal questions regarding examinations.

³⁶It is up to the examiners to decide whether AI tools are permitted for exams. ³⁷This must be clearly communicated to students in writing.

³⁸If AI tools are not permitted, their use during an exam constitutes an act of deception, leading to failure of the exam in accordance with § 25 para. 2 and § 26 para. 1 of the Study and Examination Regulations (SPO). ³⁹If AI tools are permitted, students must be required to submit a declaration of independent work. ⁴⁰Pforzheim University provides templates for this purpose.

Ethical Aspects of AI

⁴¹Ethical principles should be followed in all areas of university life, especially to avoid data misuse and the spread or reinforcement of stereotypes. ⁴²(Gender) bias in AI systems—based on prejudices and stereotypes—can result in discrimination against women or other groups. ⁴³At Pforzheim University, the responsible use of AI is an essential part of good academic practice.