MENDELU
Ústav
vědecko-pedagogických
informací a služeb

Declaring the use of artificial intelligence tools in student work*

These recommendations, issued by the MENDELU Library, have been designed as a guide to writing student seminar papers and qualification works. In the case of publications by academics and doctoral students, we recommend checking the current rules of the publishing house or journal for which the text is being prepared. An overview of the policies of the selected publishers can be found in the contribution of the Open Science Centre.

Which artificial intelligence tools (hereafter referred to as AI tools) are used by students and for what purpose varies according to the discipline or assignment. Therefore, these recommendations are designed to leave enough space for each MENDELU department to choose some of the proposed ways of declaring or to apply their own solutions if they are better suited to the specificities of the field. If you use these recommendations as a student, it is advisable to consult them with your teachers and supervisors or compare them with the faculty or departmental guidelines, if they exist.

MENDELU documents on artificial intelligence

At the university level, the use of AI tools is regulated in three documents:
The standpoint of Mendel University in Brno on the use of artificial intelligence (of 9 May 2023)
Principles of Artificial Intelligence Utilization at Mendel University in Brno (of 11 May 2023)
Full Wording of the Rector's Guidelines 2/2021: Prevention and Detection of Plagiarism (specifically Article 9 "Use of Artificial Intelligence at University"; of 7 November 2023).

The above-mentioned documents establish the basic parameters of MENDELU's approach to the use of AI tools, but they do not address specific issues such as which tools to use or how to declare them in the paper or thesis. The MENDELU Library builds on these documents and, with its recommendations, wants to provide support to students and teachers on the issue of citing AI tools.

When to declare

There are many tools based on AI technology, and these tools are used for a variety of purposes. This determines whether and how their use will be reported in the work. The first simple clue may be the question whether the tool was used for formal editing (e.g., to correct grammar or make stylistic changes) or whether it affected the content of the text. In the case of basic formal editing, it is usually not necessary to refer to the tools used. However, if the content of the work has been affected, the use of the tools should be declared.[1]

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* This is a translation of the Czech document "Deklarování využití nástrojů umělé inteligence ve studentských pracích", issued by the MENDELU Library on February, 19, 2024.
[1] See also Masaryk University's document Recommendations on the use of artificial intelligence tools in fulfilling study requirements.

Which tools do not have to be declared in the work:[2]

- Tools used for basic grammar and stylistic editing (including tools such as Writefull or Grammarly)
- Reference managers
- Applications that provide an overview of publications searched according to specified criteria (e.g., Google Scholar)

AI tools need to be declared in the work in the following situations:

- You have used an AI tool to inspire the thematic focus of the work, its structure, or to provide suggestions for the content of a section of the work that have been further elaborated.
- You have used an AI tool to get input on the research methodology on which your work is based. These suggestions have been further critically elaborated.
- The content generated by the AI tool was used in the text of the work, either verbatim or in the form of a paraphrase.

The examples of situations are not exhaustive and, depending on your discipline, you may be dealing with other ways of using AI tools. If you are unsure whether or not you should declare a tool you have used in your work, please contact your supervisor or teacher, or email the Library at citace@mendelu.cz.

How to declare

1) Describing the use of AI tools in the methodological part of the work

This applies in cases where you do not directly include the AI-generated content (text or image) in your work or paraphrase the generated text, but the generated suggestions have influenced the content of the work.

Information about the use of an AI tool should be provided in the Methods section or other appropriate part of the work (e.g., the Introduction):[3] the name of the tool and its version should be given, the purpose and use of the tool should be explained, and it should be specified which parts of the work were created using the AI tool. If this information is not followed by a statement or citation in other parts of the work, it may also be accompanied by the exact wording of the prompt and the date the prompt was entered. The full details of the prompts and generated responses may also be included as a separate appendix to the work.

This summarising description in the Methods section can be combined with a footnote statement that is attached to a specific place in the work (see the following section).

2) Statement in a footnote

A statement on the use of an AI tool can be included in a footnote to the relevant part of the work. Such a statement may look like the following, but its wording may be adapted to the needs of the field, the specific work or the assignment:

"In writing this part of the thesis, I have used the tool *[name and version of the tool and URL link]* for the purpose of *[description of the purpose of using the tool]*. The tool was prompted with *[text of the prompt]* on *[date of the prompt]*. The response was used in the manner *[specifying the wording of the response and how it was used or processed]*."[4]

If the information on prompts and generated responses is too extensive, the "conversation" (i.e., the full sequence of prompts and generated responses) can be included in the appendix.

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[2] See the overview of AI tools in the Masaryk University's Recommendations and the policy statement of Elsevier publishing house.

[3] See, e.g., the policy of PLOS ONE or the Springer publishing house.

[4] Cf. the model declaration published by Elsevier (in the FAQs section) and examples of declarations provided in the MENDELU Open Science Centre overview paper.

3) Citation of an AI tool

Citation (i.e., a reference to an information source) is used in situations where the authors incorporate the AI-generated content (text, image, etc.) verbatim or as a paraphrase into their text. It must be noted that generative AI tools cannot automatically be considered a source of trustworthy scientific information and their outputs must always be critically worked with and verified.

It is also important to remember that the full responsibility for the use of the output of an AI tool in the work rests with the author of the text.[5] The author guarantees that no part of his or her text is plagiarised, including AI-generated content.

Citing follows the rules of the citation style used for the work. The limitation is that a number of citation styles do not yet have guidelines for citing AI tools. However, it is expected that the number of those that do will increase over time. Recommendations for citing AI tools have been published by institutions that manage citation styles such as APA, Chicago and MLA. In contrast, the widely used ISO 690 citation style does not yet have such recommendations. In parallel with the rapid development of AI technologies, we can also expect existing recommendations to be continuously revised.

In the following, we present two different approaches to citing AI tools. As reference managers usually do not yet have specific forms for citing AI tools, we consider it practical to use, or slightly modify, existing templates for citing other types of sources: website contribution and software. We leave it to the discretion of individual departments or academics to decide which of these templates they consider most appropriate. The reference templates and examples of bibliographic citations below **follow the Library Recommends citation style**, but can easily be adapted to other citation styles.

a) Citation according to the template for a website contribution

This way of citing AI tools follows the template for citing a website contribution (website post). We prefer the solutions that do not specify the author but start with the "title of the contribution", in this case, the wording of the prompt.[6]

Citation template:

Prompt wording [prompt]. Year. In: *Name of the tool*. Version (if not included in the tool name). Publisher, date the relation (conversation) was generated. [cit. date of citation]. URL. Notes.

Bibliographic citation:

Describe the three most common ways in which ChatGPT is cited in scientific texts [prompt]. 2023. In: *ChatGPT-4*. OpenAI, 20. 12. 2023. [cit. 2024-01-10]. https://chat.openai.com/chat. For the full transcript of the conversation, see Appendix 1.

In-text citation: (Describe the three most common ways, 2023)

Comments:

- In the field for the title of the contribution, enter the wording of the prompt, followed by the specification in square brackets [prompt]. If the prompt is too long, it can be shortened by using an ellipsis (i.e., three dots). The prompt can also be summarised or simplified, followed by the relevant description in square brackets, for example, [summary of the prompt]. When shortening or simplifying a prompt in a bibliographic citation, it is recommended that its full version be included in an appendix or other appropriate place in the work.
- In the URL position, enter either the URL leading directly to the conversation (if the linked content is accessible to third parties) or the URL leading to the AI tool.

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[5] See the Full Wording of the Rector´s Guidelines 2/2021: Prevention and Detection of Plagiarism, article 9, par. 3, letter d.

[6] See also, for example, the Citace.com approach. The wording of the prompt also opens the citation according to the MLA citation style, although the citation is not formatted according to the citation scheme of the website post.

- A note can be added after the URL link to indicate that the entire conversation is attached as an appendix to the work.

b) Citation according to the template for software

A citation of an AI tool created according to the template for citing software[7] in the Library Recommends citation style will be as follows:

Citation template:

Creator of the tool. Year. *Name of the tool* [type of the tool]. Version. Publisher (if different from the creator), date of publication or last update (if not included in the version). [cit. date of citation]. URL. Notes.

Bibliographic citation:

OPENAI. 2023. *ChatGPT* [large language model]. Version of 14. 3. 2023. [cit. 2023-04-25]. https://chat.openai.com/chat. See Appendix A for the full transcript of the conversation.

In-text citation: (OpenAI, 2023) or (OpenAI, 2023; the full transcript in Appendix A)

Comments:

- The company that developed the cited tool is in the position of the creator.
- The citation includes the URL leading to the tool. Thus, we are citing the tool used, not the specific conversation. However, in the notes in the citation, we may put a reference to the appendix that contains a record of the entire conversation, or we can include the wording of the prompt. Alternatively, the wording of the prompt can be included in a footnote in the appropriate place in the text.

Archiving conversations

In addition to providing the citation or other type of reference, we recommend archiving the entire conversation (i.e., the sequence of prompts and generated responses). If the type of work and the scope of the conversations allow it, the conversations can be placed in the appendices of the work. The appendix can also contain a description of how the generated responses were processed and used in the paper or thesis, or provide other clarifying information. An alternative to archiving is to provide a URL that allows public access to the referenced conversations. However, it is necessary to carefully consider the terms and conditions of the service that generates such URLs, in particular, whether and under what conditions these URLs will be functional in the future.

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[7] This way of citing AI tools is suggested by the APA citation style. The citation example in this section was taken in a slightly modified form from the APA citation style website, specifically from a contribution by Timothy McAdoo.

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