

Guidelines for the Use and Acknowledgement of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Graduate Level Major Papers and Theses

For the purposes of these guidelines, Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) refers to tools that use machine learning tools and algorithms to produce new substantive text, analysis, charts, images, code, audio, or video. Writers can normally assume that the use of AI tools for editorial purposes including grammar and flow, are broadly acceptable.

Society is increasingly experimenting with uses of GenAI to advance innovation and productivity. It is inevitable that the use of these technologies will increasingly be integrated into how students approach their academic work. UFV's AI Principles are excellent guides for understanding appropriate uses of AI in graduate writing. See <https://www.ufv.ca/teaching-and-learning/artificial-intelligence/> Graduate programs are well placed to facilitate student understanding and ethical use of GenAI without compromising their development in acquiring academic skills, such as academic research and writing, idea analysis and synthesis, and critical thinking.

The substantive use by graduate students of GenAI tools and outputs must be done with full transparency and the approval of their course instructor, research supervisor, and other advisors as appropriate. Approval of any use of GenAI must be proactively obtained and documented in students' work. Students are solely responsible for ensuring that their use of GenAI is in alignment with program guidelines and university policies regarding student academic misconduct.

If GenAI is used in research or the writing of a major paper or thesis, the Preface must include a concise description of how it was used. If GenAI was not used in any way, then a clear statement that Gen AI was not used for any aspect of the work must also be included in the Preface of a major paper or thesis.

The use of GenAI tools and outputs in students' work must always be cited with the exception of standard editorial uses (eg. grammar and spell-checking tools). This applies to both drafts submitted for review and final products. Writers must make it clear which sections or passages were created by or with the assistance of GenAI and identify the extent of the use. If materials that were fully AI-generated are used, then it must be quoted and cited just as the work of any other content creator would be cited. If GenAI is used to develop a first draft and then paraphrased, modified, or added to the result, then this must be stated. If GenAI was used to assist with searching for sources or ideas, then that must be clearly stated. It is the responsibility of graduate students to consult specific formats for AI citations, which are widely available in current citation style guidelines.

Students should be aware of the risks associated with GenAI, including, but not limited to inaccuracies in results, issues of data sovereignty, implicit bias, data protection, and privacy concerns. Students are encouraged to critically reflect on the risks of using GenAI, including its impact on study participants, which must be considered during the preparation of research ethics applications in advance of any research activity.

Students who intend to publish their work must check an intended publisher's AI policy as the research is being prepared. Most academic publishers now have AI policies.

Sources Consulted

UFV AI Principles. 2025. <https://www.ufv.ca/teaching-and-learning/artificial-intelligence/>

Generative AI in Teaching and Learning. February 2026. Graduate Studies, York University.
<https://www.yorku.ca/teachingandlearning/gen-ai/graduate-studies-resources/>

Graduate Education and Generative AI. February 2026. College of Graduate Studies, UBC.
<https://gradstudies.ok.ubc.ca/academics/graduate-education-and-generative-ai/>