Using Generative AI to Support Assessment and Feedback of Student Work: Guidelines for University of Regina Faculty and Instructors

Prepared by the Centre for Teaching and Learning

Purpose of the Guidelines:

This guide is intended to provide guidance for instructors who choose to explore GenAI tools for ethical, pedagogically appropriate, and safe use. It was developed in response to queries from faculty members regarding the use of GenAI for assessing students' academic work. It also draws on an environmental scan of relevant emerging practices at other universities in Canada. The aim is to help instructors make informed decisions about how GenAI might be used to enhance assessment practices while maintaining academic integrity, transparency, and respect for student privacy. It is not meant to endorse or encourage the use of GenAI in assessing students' academic work.

As GenAI becomes more common in higher education, this guide outlines both its potential to support the assessment process and the associated risks. Such risks include biased or unreliable feedback, concerns about student data use, and the need to ensure fairness when evaluating student work. The purpose of this document is to offer clear, practical recommendations grounded in responsible use and professional judgment. The key principles that follow serve as a foundation for this guidance.

Key Principles:

These foundational principles support the thoughtful use of GenAI in assessment while maintaining professional and pedagogical standards:

- **Human Decision-Making:** Human judgment remains central to all assessment. GenAI should support, not replace, instructor evaluation and responsibility. Instructors are responsible and accountable for student grades.
- **Fairness and Reliability:** GenAI tools must be used equitably and with critical awareness of their potential biases and inaccuracies. Instructors should always review AI-generated content for quality, consistency, and alignment with grading criteria and course outcomes when using such tools in assessing student work.
- **Transparency:** Students should be informed when GenAI tools are used in grading or feedback. Openness fosters trust and models academic integrity.

- **Student Privacy and Data Protection:** Adopted AI tools must be compatible with institutional data standards, and instructors must not input students' personally identifiable information into non-approved platforms.
- **Instructor Autonomy**: Instructors decide how and when to use AI, depending on discipline-based norms, learning outcomes, and quality assessment.

Applying the Principles in Practice:
The following sections illustrate how the above principles can be applied when using GenAI to conduct assessments and/or provide feedback on students' academic work.

1. Appropriate and Inappropriate Use Cases:
Instructors can use GenAI in several responsible ways to support assessment. However, GenAI tools must not be used to fully automate assessment processes, replace instructor expertise, or process highly personal student work (such as journaling on personal experiences, self-reflection papers etc.).

GenAI May Be Used To:

- Draft formative comments on written assignments
- Suggest language aligned to a grading rubric
- Identify patterns or common issues across multiple submissions
- Support time-saving feedback workflows (with review)

GenAI Should Not Be Used To:

- Assign final grades
- Assess highly personal or sensitive material
- Generate feedback without human editing or review

2. Informing Students
When using GenAI to support assessment or feedback, it is important to clearly communicate this to students. Instructors should explain when and how GenAI will be used, why it is being used, and what steps are taken to ensure that the final assessments are accurate, fair, and human-reviewed. This can be done through early class conversations and by including a statement in the course syllabus or assignment instructions. Examples of both a general-use and specific-use syllabus statement are found below.

General-Use Statement:

> *"Generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, etc.) may be used to support feedback on assignments in this course. All feedback is reviewed and approved by the instructor to ensure accuracy and relevance."*

Specific-Use Statement:

> *"In this course, ChatGPT will be used by the instructor to assist in drafting formative feedback on written assignments. The GenAI tool will be guided by assignment criteria and rubrics and its outputs will be reviewed and revised by the instructor before being shared. This process is intended to improve the timeliness and clarity of feedback while ensuring that all evaluations reflect human judgement."*

3. Student Privacy and Data Protection

When using GenAI tools to support assessment, instructors must take care to protect student data and uphold privacy standards. Only tools that are approved by the University of Regina should be used. Approved platforms have been vetted to comply with relevant policies, including provincial privacy legislation and data residency requirements, and are expected to ensure secure handling of student information.

Instructors should avoid inputting personally identifiable information into AI tools. This includes full student names, ID numbers, or content that reveals personal reflection or other potentially identifying details. Submissions that contain students' personal material or confidential context should be handled with discretion and excluded from public AI systems. Examples may include reflective essays or assignments that disclose personal experiences or identifiable context.

Please note that the University's Governance Committee for Academic Technologies (GCAT) developed a process and form for academic staff to use for requesting an institutional evaluation of an academic technology tool/software, including GenAI. The form is available on the "Resources" page of the Centre for Teaching and Learning's website (https://ctl.uregina.ca/academic-software-assessment-form).

4. Emerging Good Practices for Using GenAI in Feedback

Thoughtful prompting and critical review are essential when using GenAI to support feedback. GenAI should streamline instructor tasks, not replace sound pedagogical judgment. Clear, targeted prompts can help produce more relevant and usable feedback suggestions.

Use Prompts Like:

> *"Provide formative feedback on this undergraduate history paper, focusing on clarity, strength of argument, and relevance to the course learning outcomes. Use a constructive and supportive tone."*

> *"Identify specific areas for improvement in this student's lab report, referencing both the grading rubric and expected scientific reasoning. Ensure suggestions are practical, respectful, and written in accessible language."*

Do Not Use Prompts Like:

"Assign a grade to this assignment."

"Give general feedback on this assignment."

Recommendations:

- Use specific prompts that reference assignment outcomes or grading criteria.
- Avoid overly generic feedback; ensure comments are tailored and helpful.
- Always review AI-generated content and revise before sharing with students.
- Maintain consistency in use across students or sections.
- Consider encouraging students to use GenAI tools to self-evaluate their work against course rubrics.

5. Ethical and Pedagogical Considerations

Generative AI tools are best used to build positive instructor-student relationships and support learning. Feedback should remain meaningful, developmental, and guided by instructor insight.

Recommendations:

- Ensure that GenAI use enhances, rather than reduces, student engagement.
- Use GenAI to support learning, not to make evaluative decisions about student work.
- Avoid using GenAI for tasks that require nuanced academic judgment or contextual interpretation.
- Center educational values such as fairness, clarity, and respect.

6. Suggested Workflow

A careful process can help instructors use GenAI tools effectively while protecting student rights and maintaining quality.

Suggested Steps:

- Collect digital student submissions;
- Remove identifying information before sharing with GenAI;
- Create prompts with clear instructions and include rubric areas or course outcomes that specify what kind of feedback is needed;
- Review and revise GenAI feedback critically and thoroughly;
- Share feedback with students alongside instructor notes, if applicable; and
- Communicate openly about how feedback was developed.

7. You are also advised to consult other GenAI related guidelines in the area of teaching and learning at the University of Regina. These guidelines were developed by the CTL in consultation with the AVP-Academic and the Provost. They are available on the CTL website. Centre for Teaching and Learning » Generative AI at the U of Regina

Note: This guidelines document was prepared by the Centre for Teaching and Learning and endorsed by the Provost's Office, UR Deans' Council, and Council Committee on Academic Mission (CCAM) at the University of Regina.

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