The Islamic College's Guidelines

For Staff and Students on the Use of Generative AI Tools in Education

(Version 01)

N.B.

In view of the continuous development of Generative AI Tools, the College's guidelines may be amended from time to time.

Introduction:

Generative AI Tools (GAITs) are increasingly interacting with and integrating into various aspects of citizens' lives in almost all communities to varying degrees. The acronym GAITs refers to a set of technologies which use Large Language Models (LLMs) in order to generate content.

All educational institutions, and in particular those that deal with higher and further education, are among a cohort of social organisations that are experiencing the impact of GAIT on their functions more intensely than many other institutions. Given the rapid tempo of change in the abilities of AI and its almost non-stoppable encroachment on modern ways of life, it is important for all educational institutions, The Islamic College included, to develop appropriate policies and guidelines for their staff and students to help them to make use of GAITs in a constructive and fruitful manner for the purpose of improving their research and analytical skills and helping them to excel in their academic and professional activities.

Fortunately, globally, almost all academic institutions have introduced guidelines for the use of GAITs. In the UK, a number of educational institutions, including the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), Jisc (the UK digital, data and technology agency) and the Russell Group, have produced useful documents[1], which can help other academic institutions to develop their own guidelines. The following set of principles and guidelines has benefitted from various documents and guidelines prepared by a number of universities in the UK and the US but adjusted to address the needs of the staff and students of the Islamic College.

Principles & Guidelines:

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[1] These documents are as follows:
JISC) https://nationalcentreforai.jiscinvolve.org/wp/2023/05/11/generative-ai-primer/
QAA) https://www.qaa.ac.uk//en/membership/membership-areas-of-work/academic-integrity/chatgpt-and-artificial-intelligence
Russel Group) https://russellgroup.ac.uk/media/6137/rg_ai_principles-final.pdf
Moreover, the University of Oxford has also produced a number of useful documents related to guidelines for dealing with GAITs: https://www.ctl.ox.ac.uk/ai

1. **GAITs Literacy:** The Islamic College is committed to educate its staff and students with regard to their use of GAITs. To paraphrase a point noted in the document produced by the Russell Group, The Islamic College's staff and students ought to become GAITs literate. This means that the Islamic College welcomes and promotes the responsible and ethical use of GAITs in all aspects of its educational programmes.

2. **Ethical and Enabling Aspects:** Of the various facets of GAITs that are relevant to academia, the ethical and enabling aspects in teaching, learning, and research are of the utmost importance.

3. **Training:** To fulfil its responsibility referred to in (1), the Islamic College is committed to organising training courses in appropriate intervals to make sure that its students and staff are familiar with the latest developments in the field of GAITs and are capable of dealing with them in a competent manner.

4. **Awareness of Implications:** The staff and students of the College must be fully aware of the ethical implications of their use of GAITs, including the serious charge of plagiarism. GAITs are trained by using the content produced by others without obtaining the consent of the original producers of those contents.

5. **Positive and Negative Aspects of the use of GAITs in academia:** Among the positive and negative aspects of employing GAITs for educational purposes, the following must be highlighted:

5.1. **Assistance with Content Creation:** GAITs can help staff and students with editing the texts and contents they produce. These tools can also help academics to study texts and other educational materials, e.g. videos, in languages other than the languages they are familiar with. However, in all cases where staff and students are seeking the assistance of GAITs, they must be aware of the fact that these systems are not conscious and have no power of discernment. This means that they can produce incorrect content or provide misguided advice. This tendency of GAITs is known in the technical literature as 'hallucination'.[2] It is, therefore, of utmost importance that when dealing with GAITs, the users keep their critical wits about them.

5.2. **Overreliance:** Overreliance on GAITs can seriously hamper the ability of the users for independent thinking and producing novel content.

5.3. **Ethical Concerns in Development:** To train their AI systems, the companies developing GAITs often exploit vulnerable individuals who need a meagre income. Some researchers have highlighted the plight of these unfortunate individuals.[3]

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[2] There are some types of GAITs which are, more or less, immune from this type of error. One such tool is Elicit which is useful for finding relevant academic papers. Since its source for choosing the required papers is Semantic Scholar Database, and unless some of the papers in this source are fake, its responses to the prompts put to it are reliable.

[3] See Nash Weerasekera (2022) "The Exploited Labor Behind Artificial Intelligence", *Noema Magazine,* https://www.noemamag.com/the-exploited-labor-behind-artificial-intelligence/

Billy Perrigo (2023) "Exclusive: OpenAI Used Kenyan Workers on Less Than $2 Per Hour to Make ChatGPT Less Toxic", https://time.com/6247678/openai-chatgpt-kenya-workers/

5.4. **Bias in Content:** The content produced by GAITs inevitably carries with it the bias embedded in the data used to train them.

6. **New Methods of Testing Students' Academic Attainments:** Given the rapid development of GAITs, and the lack of fault-proof machine-based systems to accurately determine the extent to which students have relied on GAITs in producing their work, it seems a reliable way to assess students' academic abilities—especially at the postgraduate level—to be the application of the good old methods of oral or written exams.[4] However, some universities have introduced some other more innovative methods of assessing the work of the students. One of the suggested methods called "The AI Marble Layer Cake" which is introduced by Tufts University aims at: "incentivising students to think independently regardless of AI use".[5]

7. **Students' Responsibility with Regard to Their Use of GAITs:** While the Islamic College encourages its students to become AI literate, it expects them to observe the following minimum obligations:

- Provide "written acknowledgement of their use of generative artificial intelligence",
- Explain "the extent of their use of GAITs, and the ways in which generated materials were used",
- Provide "descriptions of how the information was generated (including the prompts used)",
- When "using generated material that has not been adapted, cite and reference it by selecting the closest source type in the relevant referencing style (e.g., as 'artificial intelligence' or 'non-recoverable sources')."[6]
- Students should fully cooperate with the lecturers' proposed schemes for the use of GAITs in their modules.

8. **Disciplinary Measures:**

Students who fail to comply with the provisions outlined in Regulation No. 7 will be subject to the College's disciplinary actions, including those related to plagiarism.

If lecturers are not convinced that the works produced by students are their own, they may invite them for face-to-face meetings to discuss their work. If, following this meeting, the lecturer remains uncertain about the authorship of the submitted work, the case will be referred to the registry for a formal investigation. The registry, in consultation with the Head of Education, will form an investigation team and forward the case to them. The student will be notified that their case has been referred for investigation. After the investigation team reaches a decision, the student will be informed of the outcome.

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[4] One of the colleagues suggested to combine the traditional method of testing the abilities of the students with the current assignment system with the proviso of suggesting questions for written essays which are focused on highly specific contents could be included to assess the independent understanding of students. However, when this colleague and I tested a number of highly specific questions, ChatGPT, even in its free of charge form, was able to produce highly impressive answers.

[5] https://sites.tufts.edu/teaching/2024/09/20/serving-the-ai-layer-cake-educational-technology-can-help/

[6] This is based on the guidelines of Middlesex University, https://libguides.mdx.ac.uk/AI