Departmental Policy on AI for Students in Sociology

1. All Sociology students must be aware that, in our department, some uses of AI constitute academic misconduct (even if declared). We do not distinguish between the input of AI and the input of another human being in drawing the line between permissible help and plagiarism. A level of assistance that would be inappropriate if received from a person will also be inappropriate if received from AI. Please see *Departmental Guidance on AI for Students in Sociology* for more detailed information.

   For instance, you **must not use AI** to:

   - Generate text to include in your work or rough drafts on which to base your writing
   - Generate ideas or arguments for your research/essays/dissertations
   - Generate data for your research (e.g. fake interview transcripts)
   - Generate your research design and methodology (including interview questions)
   - Generate interpretations or substantive conclusions from your data
   - Generate any output based on personal data from your research (e.g. interviews, observations, survey responses, etc.)

   While we do not recommend use of AI, as it can impede learning processes, **AI may be used** in limited ways. You may only use AI to:

   - Search for existing literature (though it is best not to rely solely on AI)
   - Proofread your own writing for spelling, punctuation and grammar (though it must not change any content and you should retain your own writing style)
   - Summarise publicly available literature or non-personal data for a better understanding of it (though you should not rely on summaries alone, especially for required reading or other important texts)
   - Assistance with technical aspects of analysing of large-scale data sets (provided you understand and can explain the analytical steps yourself)
   - Transcribe anonymised interviews using a system deemed sufficiently trustworthy and that complies with GDPR (this requires prior approval by the departmental ethics committee)

2. All Sociology students (undergraduate, MPhil, and PhD) must submit a **departmental AI declaration form with any assessed written work, regardless of whether AI has been used or not**. Making undeclared use of AI in an assessment constitutes academic misconduct. You can access the departmental AI declaration form here: [insert link]

3. If you are suspected of making undeclared and/or inappropriate use of AI in assessment, an investigation will be conducted and depending on the outcome, you may be sanctioned. Investigations may include technical evaluations and oral examinations. **Sanctions vary but can include extreme penalisation of your grade (e.g. a mark of 0), and discontinuation from your degree.**

4. Permissible use of AI will not be penalised.

5. In some cases, student research (i.e. dissertations/theses) may be given explicit and prior approval to use AI in a way that would not normally be allowed. Please see the *Departmental Guidance on AI for Students in Sociology* for detailed information.

6. It is good practice to acknowledge any use of AI in any of your work, but for non-assessed work, such as supervision essays, this can be done informally (e.g. you could include a single-line declaration before or after the text of a supervision essay).

7. All students must recognise and think carefully about the privacy concerns implicated in the use of generative AI. This is especially important because our discipline often engages with sensitive personal data gathered from research participants. Many members of the Sociology Department are committed to exploring the implications and social issues relating to generative AI. We encourage our students, as emerging sociologists, to engage with these questions too.