

# **Generative AI in assessment: from the 2026–27 academic session**

August 2026

We are committed to using plain language. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve, let us know at [editor@qualifications.gov.scot](mailto:editor@qualifications.gov.scot).

# Purpose and scope

This document outlines Qualifications Scotland's stance on learners' use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in assessments from the 2026–27 session until further notice. This stance applies to all Qualifications Scotland summative assessments, whether set externally by us or devised internally by centres to meet our course or unit requirements.

This resource is primarily for practitioners, and its purpose is to help you make informed decisions about the use of GenAI by learners in assessment contexts.

We recognise that you may wish to make use of GenAI tools in your wider learning and teaching activities. Classroom practices, including teaching and learning methods, are outside the scope of this stance because our remit is limited to the assessment and awarding of qualifications.

Qualifications Scotland's stance focuses on two key areas:

- GenAI tools and acceptable use
- GenAI tools and unacceptable use

## Context

The rapid advances in GenAI technologies offer opportunities for education and assessment. Together with our partners in the education sector, we continue to explore those opportunities and seek ways to overcome potential challenges. Qualifications Scotland will continue to develop our understanding of the impact of GenAI on learning and teaching, and the implications for assessment through engagement with the wider education sector. Through this work, we have already seen many examples of GenAI's potential across the sector. However, at present, a number of concerns remain about the potential for misuse of GenAI in assessment contexts. It is important that we all embrace emerging technologies responsibly while maintaining the integrity of qualifications and ensuring equity, transparency and fairness.

# Our position on GenAI in assessment

## GenAI tools and acceptable use

The use of GenAI is only acceptable when it does not compromise the integrity of Qualifications Scotland assessments or certification.

Learners may use GenAI tools where the relevant course or unit specification explicitly allows their use, provided that doing so does not undermine their ability to demonstrate the skills, knowledge and understanding required to meet the assessment standards of the qualification.

Before using GenAI tools, learners should discuss their intended use with you to check that using GenAI will not undermine the achievement of their learning and assessment objectives.

Learners must acknowledge any use of GenAI tools in their submissions. This acknowledgement should include which tool was used and what function it performed within the assessment. There is flexibility in how the use of GenAI tools can be acknowledged and you should carefully consider the best way to do this for a particular context or purpose.

An example of an acknowledgement (note this is for indicative purposes only):

‘GenAI (insert name of the tool) was used to generate ideas for...’

GenAI tools have limitations and may not always produce reliable outputs. As with any resource or tool, you should critically evaluate the appropriateness of GenAI for a given task. When using GenAI, consider user age restrictions and the possible implications of sharing personal information or learners’ work.

Learners can choose not to use GenAI tools if they wish.

# Deciding whether GenAI use is acceptable

To help you decide whether a particular use of GenAI is acceptable in an assessment, and to ensure fairness for all learners, consider these three questions:

- Will the use of GenAI tools **substitute** for the acquisition of key skills, knowledge and understanding by learners?
- Will the use of GenAI tools **undermine** the need for learners to **demonstrate** genuine evidence of their skills, knowledge and understanding?
- Are **marks** awarded for the activity which will be undertaken by GenAI?

If the answer is 'yes' to any of these questions, then the use of GenAI for that purpose would be unacceptable.

# GenAI tools and unacceptable use

## Sources and citations

AI-generated outputs should not be used as independent or primary sources of information for citations.

Learners studying towards Qualifications Scotland's qualifications should use valid, reliable and authoritative sources to support their work. GenAI outputs do not meet these criteria and should not be cited as stand-alone sources of factual evidence or to support arguments. These are some of the significant issues regarding the reliability and validity of GenAI outputs:

- **They are often not verifiable:** AI-generated outputs cannot always be linked to the original source(s) of information, making the information difficult to verify.
- **They can be inaccurate, biased or nonsensical:** GenAI tools can generate apparently convincing but incorrect or misleading content, as well as 'hallucinations', which are fabricated facts, data, citations and references.
- **They lack credibility:** AI-generated outputs lack authority. Qualifications Scotland's qualifications require citations from reputable sources that credit the original authors or sources.

## Malpractice

Learners' assessed work must reflect their own knowledge, skills and understanding, demonstrating independent competence. Inappropriate use of GenAI tools may undermine this and mean that learners' assessed work fails to meet the marking criteria.

Additionally, learners must not submit AI-generated outputs or ideas as their own work for assessment tasks that contribute towards a Qualifications Scotland qualification. Doing so would constitute malpractice and may result in awards being cancelled.

# GenAI in assessment: key points

Before using GenAI, it is essential to ensure that the conditions of assessment specified in the course or unit specification are always followed. This is crucial to maintaining fairness and consistency in assessment.

You should consider the following points, which summarise Qualifications Scotland's position:

- Where permitted, GenAI can support, but must not replace, learners' demonstration of the required skills, knowledge and understanding.
- GenAI should not be used if it compromises the integrity of assessments or the certification of qualifications.
- Learners should always check with their practitioners before using GenAI tools.
- Where the use of GenAI is permitted, its use must always be acknowledged.
- Use credible sources for citations: don't use GenAI instead of authoritative and verifiable sources.
- Submitting GenAI outputs as a learner's own work is considered malpractice.
- Beware of GenAI limitations, such as potential bias and hallucinations.
- Protect any personal and confidential data.
- Consider any age restrictions associated with the GenAI tool used.
- If the use of GenAI tools is deemed acceptable in one part of an assessment for one course, this does not mean that their use is acceptable for the same part in all courses. Always check course documentation and marking criteria relevant to the course you teach and consider the three questions within this document.
- 'Reasonable assistance' guidelines must be followed. Take care that the use of GenAI does not provide assistance that you would not be allowed to provide.

## Version control

| Version number | Revision date | Summary of changes                                     | Author       |
|----------------|---------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------|
| 1.2            | Aug 2026      | Removed references to 'SQA' and improved the language. | David Purdie |
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