

Guidelines for the Use of AI Tools in Reports, Seminar Papers, and Theses

Chair of Supply and Value Chain Management

These guidelines define how students may and may not use AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, GitHub Copilot, Grammarly, DeepL, etc.) when writing project reports, seminar papers, bachelor's theses, and master's theses at the *Professorship of Optimization and Sustainable Decision Making*. They supplement the official AI policies of the Technical University of Munich (TUM). If in doubt, please always **ask your supervisor before using a tool**.

1. General Principles

- You are fully responsible for the originality, correctness, and academic integrity of your work.
- AI tools may assist you but must **not** replace your independent research, reasoning, or writing.
- All use of AI tools must be **transparent, documented, and appropriate**.
- You must follow all school and TUM-wide policies regarding academic integrity and AI.

2. Allowed Uses of AI Tools

AI tools may be used for the following purposes:

2.1 Language Support

- Grammar correction, spell checking, and style refinement.
- Translation of text you have written yourself.

Condition: You must carefully **verify the correctness** of all AI-generated suggestions. AI-generated or AI-translated text must never be included verbatim in the final document without manual revision.

2.2 Idea Exploration and Clarification

- Brainstorming research questions.
- Getting high-level explanations of concepts (without copying text).
- Generating examples to deepen your understanding (not to include verbatim in the final document).

2.3 Programming Support

- Code completion and debugging suggestions.
- Explanation of error messages.

Condition: You must **understand, verify, and take responsibility** for any code you submit.

3. Prohibited Uses of AI Tools

Students are **not** allowed to use AI tools for any of the following:

3.1 Generating Substantial Parts of the Thesis, Seminar Paper, or Project Report

- Writing full paragraphs, sections, or the entire document.
- Paraphrasing sources via AI instead of reading and synthesizing them.
- Using AI-generated text as a substitute for your own academic writing.

3.2 Fabricating or Manipulating Content

- Inventing citations, sources, data, proofs, or experiments.
- Generating literature summaries without reading the original papers.
- Producing code, models, or results you do not fully understand.

3.3 Undisclosed AI Use

- Any use of AI tools that is not properly documented.

4. Required Documentation of AI Use

All AI use must be briefly documented in a dedicated section of the submitted document (e.g., "Declaration of AI Use"). It should include:

- **Which tools were used** (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Grammarly).
- **For what purpose** (e.g., proofreading, generating initial ideas, debugging code).
- **How you ensured accuracy** (e.g., manual verification, comparison with original sources).

Example statement:

"I used ChatGPT (GPT-5, June 2025 version) for language polishing and for clarifying general background concepts. All generated content was manually checked and rewritten by me. No AI-generated text was included verbatim in the final thesis."

5. Best Practices for Responsible Use

- Always critically evaluate AI outputs; never assume correctness.
- Keep notes or screenshots documenting your workflow when relevant.
- Make sure all academic contributions (modeling, analyses, proofs, derivations) are your own work.
- When unsure whether a certain use is acceptable, ask your supervisor before proceeding.

6. Consequences of Misuse

Violations of these guidelines or of TUM's academic integrity policies may lead to:

- Rejection of the thesis, seminar paper, or project report.
- A failing grade.
- Reporting to TUM's examination committee for academic misconduct.

8. Use of Turnitin for Plagiarism and AI-Generated Text Detection

This procedure follows the official **TUM Guidelines for Dealing with Plagiarism and for the Use of Plagiarism Detection Software**, which outline the university-wide standards for handling suspected plagiarism and the permissible use of automated detection systems. To ensure compliance with TUM's standards of academic integrity, your submitted work may be checked using Turnitin (<https://turnitin.tum.de/>). Turnitin is used to detect:

- Plagiarism or uncredited use of external sources,
- AI-generated text that has not been properly disclosed or is inconsistent with the declared use of AI tools.

Before being uploaded to Turnitin, your work will be **anonymized** (e.g., removal of the title page and any parts containing your name, student number, or other identifying information).

By submitting your work, you **consent to its anonymized upload and analysis by Turnitin**. The system compares your submission against a large database of academic texts, web content, and prior submissions to identify potential irregularities.

Turnitin reports do not automatically imply misconduct but may lead to further clarification or an investigation if significant issues are detected.

7. Final Remarks

AI tools can be useful assistants, but they **cannot replace** academic thinking and writing. Your report, seminar paper, or thesis must reflect your own understanding, insights, and contributions. Use AI responsibly, transparently, and within the rules.

If you have any questions about appropriate AI use, please discuss them with your supervisor early in the writing process.