

# Access to HE Diplomas

## Guidance on Use of Artificial Intelligence

### *Preamble:*

1. This policy sets out the ‘formal’ position adopted by Laser Learning Awards (hereafter LASER) in relation to the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by students studying upon LASER validated Access to Higher Education Diploma Titles.
2. AI software is defined within this policy as any software application which is able, using knowledge contained within a digital ‘memory’, to respond to a given ‘question’ or ‘prompt’ with a ‘tailored’ response. This should be taken to include software such as Chat GPT, which can construct essays in response to a given title, or indeed any other response generated by such a platform.
3. LASER accepts the significant potential of AI as a teaching and learning tool, but also recognises the potential hazards presented in relation to Malpractice and Plagiarism.<sup>1</sup>
4. The LASER *Assessment Handbook* sets out the general expectations in relation to assessment practice within Section 1, which *inter alia*, notes the need for planned assessments to be ‘*authentic, valid, reliable and consistent, accessible, transparent, fair and accurate*’, in reflecting the attainment of the student.
5. The LASER *Academic Malpractice Policy* defines ‘plagiarism’ as ‘*the use of other people’s ideas and concepts in assessed work without proper acknowledgement, so they are passed off as if they were the student’s own* (see Section 2.1 of the said ‘*Academic Malpractice Policy*’).
6. The ability of AI software to construct detailed and individualised responses to set questions or prompts represents, in the view of LASER, a significant potential threat to the validity and reliability of assessment practice within Access provision. The fact that said AI responses are not copied from a published source or written by another human being does not reduce the core issue which remains that the student is attempting to present material which is not their own as if it were.
7. **Therefore, where AI is used it must be acknowledged as a source in precisely the same manner as any other source used within an assignment and therefore should be referenced and where appropriate made available for consideration by the assessor.**
8. The potential use of AI is not restricted to its use to provide full essays which are claimed as the students’ own work. AI should be acknowledged where it is used to provide information or a formatting guide for any part of assessment including where AI content is then paraphrased by the

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<sup>1</sup> A full discussion of Artificial Intelligence is provided within the LASER paper: ‘*Artificial Intelligence: Abandon Hope All Ye Who Access Here?*’

student. Where centres deem appropriate this may include an inclusion of the 'full text' of AI generated content.

9. Any use of AI which is not acknowledged shall count as **academic malpractice** and shall be dealt with in such a manner as is deemed appropriate as set out in the *LASER Academic Malpractice Policy* Section 4(d).

### ***Artificial Intelligence: Prevention and Detection***

10. The potential challenges presented by the introduction of AI software platforms and their possible use within academic malpractice, suggest a need for the development of additional safeguards to be considered, when giving planning assessment models for the assessment of unit content.
11. LASER actively encourages centres to debate and discuss the potential issues arising from use of AI with staff and students alike, such that there is clear awareness of the challenges that arise from use of the technology within academic faculties and such that students are aware of how to harness the potential of the software to promote their learning and when its use constitutes malpractice.
12. In relation to the delivery and assessment of Access to HE Diploma titles, any use or engagement with AI as a teaching or assessment tool should consider any GDPR issues, which may arise from said use of AI. For the avoidance of doubt, and in line with Department for Education guidance, 'no personal or sensitive data' should be entered into AI platforms or tools, given that this data will be retained by the said platform. Centres should neither enter, nor cause to be entered as a result of their provision, such data into AI platforms.
13. In adhering to the principles set out in Section 1 of the LASER Assessment Handbook, it is expected that Internal Quality Assurance within LASER validated Access to HE provision will consider strategies to minimise the potential for malpractice to be committed via the use of AI within their internal verification processes.<sup>2</sup>
14. Furthermore, it is expected that Internal Quality Assurance will also consider the possibility for AI generated work to have been included within assessment submission as an aspect of internal moderation processes.<sup>3</sup>
15. LASER expects Access to HE Providers to have clear processes and protocols set out for investigation of any incidents of alleged malpractice pertaining to AI. Any policies must remain in compliance with the general requirements of the QAA Grade Scheme (see Section

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<sup>2</sup> For example, the use of 'cross referenced' and / or 'tethered' assessment models as set out in the paper *Artificial Intelligence: Abandon Hope All Ye Who Enter Here?*

<sup>3</sup> This may be undertaken via a consideration of the work in relation to common 'tells', such as those discussed within the paper *Artificial Intelligence: 'Abandon Hope All Ye Who Enter Here?'*.

E(7)) and the more specific requirements of the LASER Academic Malpractice Policy as amended by this guidance. However, said centre level processes and protocols may provide more detailed guidance for staff and students in relation to the management of investigations where an allegation of malpractice relating to AI is identified.

16. LASER would not recommend the use of 'AI detection software' in any form as an increasing body of evidence suggests it is unreliable as a tool for the identification of malpractice.<sup>4</sup> However, where a centre chooses to employ 'AI detection technology' of any kind, the associated 'probability indicators' from said technology, should not be accepted as a definitive indication that the work was AI generated or that any malpractice occurred. Any use of such technology should only be used in the restrictive sense of a trigger for further investigation and should not be taken to indicate guilt or even the assumption of guilt without further substantive investigation.
17. For the avoidance of doubt, investigation of alleged malpractice should consider the student's achievement within and across subject modules and should consider academic voice and written style in relation to other assessments including those completed under 'controlled' conditions (such as examinations or presentations).
18. Where concerns remain in the wake of investigation, a viva voce may be employed to consider whether the student has a full understanding of the material in question.
19. All judgments pertaining to the alleged identification of malpractice should be measured against whether evidence both suggests that malpractice occurred and whether said malpractice involved an 'intention' to mislead assessors or was the result of an inadvertent misunderstanding in relation to the need to reference said content. The latter point further reinforces the need for centres to actively promote awareness of what constitutes acceptable use of AI technologies and conversely what constitutes their misuse.
20. External Quality Assurers will expect to see matters pertaining to the potential use of AI being given consideration as a part of on-going Internal Quality Assurance. All identified incidents of malpractice involving AI, records of any subsequent investigation and any sanctions arising from them should be subject to External Quality Assurance and should be agreed by the relevant External Quality Assurer (as is required by Section E(7) of the QAA Grade Scheme Handbook in the case of all incidents of malpractice).

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<sup>4</sup> Recent evidence suggests that AI detection technology has identified sections of the US Constitution and the Bible as written by AI. LASER has also identified evidence of work known to have been undertaken by LASER employees being identified as having an 80% probability of being written by AI.