

BEST PRACTICES:

GENERATIVE AI USE AND CITATION IN ACADEMIC WORK AND RESEARCH TEXTS

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Generative AI. Use and Citation in Academic Work and Research Texts.

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1. Context and Recommendations

The Library of Universidad Francisco de Vitoria recommends reviewing the relevant regulations before using AI for academic work, such as undergraduate or master's theses, conference presentations, or research articles.

For academic work (e.g., theses), follow UFV's specific regulations and obtain authorization from supervisors or coordinators.

For research publications, comply with the rules of the call for papers, publishers, scientific committees, or conference organizers.

The challenges introduced by AI—such as algorithms, deepfakes, and learning processes (INTEF, 2024)—require digital literacy in best practices for AI use in education.

The EU AI Act (2024) recommends always disclosing AI-generated content (text, images, etc.).

The use of generative AI (e.g., chatbots) in academic/scientific production must be negotiated in advance. Citation models should ensure transparency and a clear link between results and methodology (Weaver, K.D., 2024).

Since 2020, citation models have adapted to include AI-generated content. The academic debate now focuses on the rapid evolution of AI and its varied uses.

Citations are essential for academic quality. As Umberto Eco said: "Citing is like bringing witnesses to a trial" (Eco, 1982, p. 188).

Generative AI use in research is more of a methodological interaction—through prompts and creative models—than a direct source. The content generated is often non-reproducible and varies by bot and prompt.

This makes it difficult to apply traditional citation models, as generative AI does not present original ideas like a human author (Weaver, 2024). Instead, it performs multiple functions: researching, drafting, comparing, and analyzing.

Thus, it is recommended to reference AI use as a note for transparency or as part of the methodology (Franganillo et al., 2023).

Another key debate is whether AI can be considered an author. Copyright law generally opposes this, as AI does not produce reliable, reproducible, or verifiable content (COPE, 2023). AI lacks responsibility for its output (Palanca, 2023).

2. How to reference AI use

There is consensus that AI use must be declared, including:

- The AI tool used
- How it was used (prompts)
- For what purpose

This can be included in the methodology section of the work.

Example:

- AI Tool: Perplexity
- Use: Summarizing relevant articles for the final project
- Graphics: MadMapper for visual analysis
- Writing: Microsoft Copilot for editing
- Summarizing: Explain Text for thematic summaries

In research, more detailed data is required. Good practices include:

- Describing AI use in the methodology section
- Including AI-generated content as appendices
- Verifying AI-provided references
- Citing AI tools and generated content throughout the text
- Including prompts and results when required by publishers

A good practice to consider is the one recommended by the Library of the University of Alicante (Universitat d'Alacant, 2025), which suggests:

The methodology section of the work should include a brief description of how AI was used, as it can be considered one of the techniques employed, but never as an academic source.

It is advisable to include in the appendices the texts or content generated by AI, since even when using the same prompt, the result may differ from what was obtained in the original query.

If you are going to include bibliographic references provided by AI, verify their authenticity. Throughout the text, cite the AI tool used and the documents or content (texts, images, videos, etc.) created with it.

Most citation styles typically include in the reference list those that correspond to artificial intelligence.

Example Prompts:

Sometimes, publication guidelines require the inclusion of the prompts used and even the texts generated from those prompts. This allows for an assessment of the quality of the question in terms of optimal search criteria, which influence the quality of the response and, consequently, the information used or written in the final text.

Prompt 1: I will give you the content of six news articles about antidepressants. Identify the main topic, differences in coverage, and signs of bias, and analyze the polarity in how the information is presented. Create a comparative table that includes a concise analysis of the language used (emotional, scientific, technical, etc.) and the level of difficulty of the texts.

Prompt 2: Act as an evaluator of teaching innovation and improvement projects. Assess the attached teaching innovation proposal, determine to what extent it meets each of the evaluation criteria and indicators, evaluate whether the funding request is sufficiently justified, and propose improvement actions. Be strict and use professional yet understandable language. Base your assessment on the following criteria for evaluating teaching innovation proposals.

I need a video game analogy to explain to a teenage audience the economic concepts of scarcity and choice, supply and demand, market and exchange, and inflation.

3. AI in Different Citation Styles

Almost all bibliographic reference style regulators have published guidelines for citing AI, except for IEEE. For this purpose, IEEE refers to the Chicago style.

APA-AI

Descripción:

First, describe in the methodology section of the paper or text how AI was used in its development, including the use of sources, etc.

Regarding citation and referencing standards, APA treats AI references similarly to software citations.

The full text generated by AI may be included in an appendix.

In-text citation:

Direct: (OpenAI, year)

Indirect: OpenAI (year)

Reference:

Model or chatbot author (Year). Model name (version) [Model description]. URL

OpenAI (2023). ChatGPT (May 25 version) [Large language model].
<https://chat.openai.com>

Chicago-IA

Description:

Treats the use of AI as personal communication.

It recommends citing it in the text and adding more information in a footnote or at the end of the document if necessary.

It does not need to be included in the reference list.

In-text citation:

If the prompt is mentioned in the text, include a note:

Text generated by [Model], date the content was generated, OpenAI, tool URL.

Example: Text generated by ChatGPT, May 15, 2025, OpenAI, <https://chat.openai.com>.

Bibliographic reference:

If the prompt is not mentioned in the text, it should be included in the bibliography:

[Model used], response to "[Prompt title]," date, web link.

Example: ChatGPT, response to "The third space in the library," May 15, 2025, <https://chat.openai.com>.

Harvard-AI

Description:

Both the text and any other product generated by AI must be cited. The citation should appear within the text, and the full reference should be included at the end of the document.

Sometimes, AI is treated as a tool and cited similarly to software.

In-text citation:

Direct citation: Name of the chatbot (year)

Example: ChatGPT (2023) generated a document in which...

Indirect citation: (Name of the chatbot, year)

Example: The document thus generated (ChatGPT, 2023) showed that...

Bibliographic reference:

Model or chatbot author (year). AI tool (version, if known). [Format]. URL [Accessed: day-month-year]. Prompt: title of the prompt.

Example:

OpenAI (2024). ChatGPT 4 (version 3.5). [Large language model]. <https://chatgpt.com/> [Accessed: 14-05-2025]. Prompt: Circular economy business models.

ISO 690-IA

Description:

Cited and referenced similarly to software, as outputs from a computer program.

In-text citation:

Included in a footnote.

Bibliographic reference:

AI tool and version. Prompt or question [online]. [Date of access]. Available at: URL

Example:

ChatGPT 4. The third space in the library [online]. [14 May 2025]. Available at:
<https://chat.openai.com/>

MLA-IA

Description:

Discourages treating AI tools as authors and recommends using the basic elements defined for general references.

In-text citation:

("Shortened version of the prompt text")

Bibliographic reference:

"Title of the source" prompt. AI tool, version, publisher, date the content was generated, tool URL.

Example:

"The third space in the library" prompt. ChatGPT, May 24 version, OpenAI, 14 May 2025, <https://chat.openai.com/>.

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dex.php/crlnews/article/view/26548/34482](https://crln.acrl.org/in-
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Otros recursos

Contributor Roles Taxonomy (CREDIT). <https://casrai.org/credit/>

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