

POLICY ON THE USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE IN SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH

Policy #	SR-700	Version	1.0
Policy owner	Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies		

Policy title	Policy on the Use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in Scientific Research
Policy number	SR-700
Version	1.0
Policy owner	Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies
Approving authority	University Council
Applies to	Faculty, researchers, staff, postgraduate and undergraduate students
Classification	Public
Approval date	15-09-2026
Effective date	From the start of the semester following approval.
Review cycle	Annually, or sooner if national regulations change

1. Preamble and Purpose

The responsible use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) in research is permitted at FBSU, provided that such use is transparent, verified, secure, and remains fully under human accountability.

This policy aims to:

- 1.1 Ensure that all research outputs of FBSU maintain research integrity, originality, and transparency.
- 1.2 Make it clear which uses of generative AI are allowed, which are conditional, and which are forbidden.
- 1.3 Protect personal, institutional, and unpublished research data in accordance with the Personal Data Protection Law (PDPL) and the national data governance requirements.
- 1.4 Align FBSU practice with the AI Ethics Principles and the Generative AI Guidelines issued by the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA), as well as with international publication ethics standards.
- 1.5 Ensure that university research incentives reward genuine intellectual contributions made by humans.

2. Scope and Applicability

This policy applies to all research conducted under the name of FBSU, utilizing its resources, or seeking funding or incentives from the university. The scope includes:

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- Articles for journals, papers presented at conferences, books, book chapters, and technical reports.
- Proposals for research grants and for funding, both internal and external.
- Master's theses, doctoral dissertations, and graduation projects that include a research component, supervised at FBSU.
- Peer review, editorial work, and research assessment carried out on behalf of FBSU or by its affiliates.
- Research data sets, code, figures, and supplementary materials.

FBSU's academic rules regarding the use of AI in teaching, assessment, and coursework are addressed separately. Researchers must also comply with any stricter AI regulations imposed by journals, publishers, or funding bodies, in addition to this policy.

3. Definitions

Generative AI	Systems that produce text, code, images, audio, or data in response to prompts, including large language models (LLMs) and image generators.
AI-assisted work	Work in which a human author directs, reviews, and takes responsibility for content partly produced or refined with generative AI.
AI-generated content	Text, data, code, or images produced substantially by an AI tool with limited human intellectual contribution.
Substantive use	Any use that shapes the content, analysis, interpretation, code, or figures of a research output. Spelling, grammar, and formatting correction alone is not substantive use.
Sensitive data	Personal data under the PDPL, human-subject data, classified or restricted institutional data, unpublished findings, confidential manuscripts under review, and proprietary or contractual data.
Approved AI system	An AI tool or environment approved in writing by the IT Center and the Deanship, with contractual guarantees that inputs are kept confidential and not used to train public models.
Hallucination	AI output that appears plausible but is false, unsupported, or fabricated, including non-existent references.

4. Guiding Principles

- Human accountability.** Individuals, rather than tools, are responsible for all research outputs.
- Transparency.** Any substantive use of AI must be explicitly disclosed within the research output.

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- 4.3 **Integrity.** AI must never be used to create, alter, or misrepresent data, sources, or contributions.
- 4.4 **Privacy and security.** Sensitive data must never be entered into AI services that have not been approved.
- 4.5 **Verification.** All AI-generated output is considered unverified until it has been reviewed by the author.
- 4.6 **Fairness.** Researchers must identify and address any bias in AI-generated output and ensure that such bias does not distort research findings.
- 4.7 **Originality.** Generative AI may support, but must not replace, the researcher's own intellectual and creative contribution; its use is therefore limited to the maximum proportion set out in Section 6.1.

5. Authorship and Accountability

- 5.1 **No AI authorship.** An AI tool, such as a large language model or an algorithmic system, cannot approve a final work or take responsibility for it and therefore cannot satisfy the requirements for authorship. An AI tool shall not be named as an author or co-author on any manuscript, proposal, thesis, or other research output.
- 5.2 **Full human responsibility.** All named authors are jointly responsible for the accuracy, originality, and ethical compliance of the entire work, regardless of whether any part was produced with the assistance of AI.
- 5.3 **Co-author consent.** The corresponding or first author is responsible for ensuring that all co-authors are informed of and agree to the declared use of AI in the work.
- 5.4 **Supervision.** Supervisors are responsible for informing students about this policy and verifying the student's AI declaration before submission.

6. Permitted, Conditional, and Prohibited Uses

Permitted without declaration	Spelling, grammar, and punctuation correction; reference-manager formatting; translation of the author's own text for personal understanding	None, provided meaning is unchanged.
Permitted with declaration	Language editing that rephrases the author's own text; literature search and summarization; brainstorming research questions; drafting or debugging code; assistance with statistical scripts; translation of the author's text for publication	Declare in the paper per Section 7 and verify per Section 9; language editing that does not change the meaning is not counted toward the 20% limit, while other AI-generated content is (Section 6.1)

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Conditional (prior approval required)	Processing sensitive or human-subject data with AI; using AI as a core research instrument (for example, AI-based coding of qualitative data)	Approved AI system only (Section 8); ethics committee approval where human subjects are involved; full methodological description in the paper
Prohibited	Fabricating or falsifying data, results, or references; generating text presented as the author's own original analysis without declaration; exceeding the maximum proportion of AI-generated content (20%) set out in Section 6.1; AI-generated core scientific figures (Section 10); uploading confidential manuscripts or proposals under review; using AI to evade plagiarism detection; listing AI as an author.	Not allowed in any circumstances

- 6.1 **Maximum proportion of AI-generated content.** To preserve intellectual originality and creative contribution, AI-generated content in any research output covered by this policy, including journal articles, conference papers, books and book chapters, research proposals, theses, dissertations, and graduation projects, shall not exceed twenty percent (20%) of the content.
- 6.2 **Language editing.** AI-assisted language editing of the author's own text, including English-language polishing, rephrasing for clarity, and translation of the author's own text for publication, is permitted and is not counted toward the 20% limit, if it is declared in accordance with Section 7.
- 6.3 **Declaration does not extend the limit.** Declaring AI use in accordance with Section 7 is mandatory but does not authorize AI-generated content beyond the 20% limit. Apart from language editing under Section 6.2, a research output that exceeds the limit is non-compliant with this policy even if the AI use has been fully declared.
- 6.4 **Assessment of compliance.** Compliance with the 20% limit shall be assessed using the AI-writing indicator of the similarity-checking system approved by FBSU, together with the author's declaration (Section 7) and the records kept under Section 7.4.
- 6.5 **Output exceeds the limit.** Research output that exceeds the 20% limit shall not be accepted for examination, incentives, internal grants, promotion, or any other internal purpose. Where a journal, publisher, or funding body applies to a stricter limit, the stricter limit shall prevail.

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7. Mandatory Declaration of Use

- 7.1 **Obligation.** Any use of generative AI in research design, data analysis, coding, writing, or editing must be explicitly stated within the published paper or research output. Declarations made solely to FBSU, or only in a cover letter or submission system, do not fulfill this requirement.
- 7.2 **Location.** The declaration should be included in the methods section, in the acknowledgments, or in a separate 'Declaration of Generative AI Use' section, according to the instructions given by the publisher in question.
- 7.3 **Content.** The declaration must state:
- The name and version of the AI tool together with the company that provides it.
 - The purpose as well as the sections or tasks in which it was used.
 - The authors have reviewed and verified the AI-generated output and accept full responsibility for the content.
- 7.4 **Record keeping.** Authors shall maintain a record of all significant prompts and outputs for at least three years after publication and shall make this record available upon request during any review or investigation.
- 7.5 **Standard statement.** Where a publisher gives no template, authors use the following wording in the paper:
- While preparing this work, the authors used [tool name, version, provider] for [purpose, e.g. language editing of Sections 2 and 4]. After using the tool, the authors reviewed and edited the text as necessary and accept full responsibility for the content of the publication.*
- 7.6 **Internal submissions.** Applicants for FBSU incentives, internal grants, or thesis submissions must include the Generative AI Use Declaration Form (SR-700-F1). This form is supplementary and does not replace the declaration required within the paper. Both declarations must be consistent, and the applicant must attach the published version or specify the page containing the declaration.

8. Data Security, Privacy, and PDPL Compliance

- 8.1 **Prohibited inputs.** Researchers must not enter the following into public or consumer cloud AI tools:
- Personal data as defined in the PDPL, such as identifiable data of research participants, students, or staff members.
 - Human-subject data collected under the approval of a research ethics committee.

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- c) Data that is classified, restricted, or marked as internal within the national data classification framework.
 - d) Unpublished findings, patentable inventions, and proprietary frameworks or code.
 - e) Manuscripts, proposals, or reports received in confidence for review.
- 8.2 **Approved environments.** AI processing of sensitive data must be conducted using an Approved AI System, defined as an enterprise-licensed service that guarantees confidentiality and no-training assurances, or a model deployed locally on FBSU-controlled infrastructure.
- 8.3 **Data minimization.** Before AI processing, data should be anonymized or pseudonymized whenever the research design permits, and only the minimum necessary data should be used.
- 8.4 **Ethics approval.** When research programs involve the use of AI to process data from human subjects, it is necessary to include a description of that processing in the submission to the FBSU Research Ethics Committee and to give participants the relevant information.
- 8.5 **Cross-border transfer.** When personal data is transferred to AI services hosted outside the Kingdom, the transfer must comply with the PDPL rules on cross-border data transfer.
- 8.6 **Incident reporting.** Any accidental disclosure of sensitive data to an AI tool must be reported to both the IT Center and the Deanship within 24 hours.

9. Quality Control and Verification

- 9.1 **Factual accuracy.** Generative AI may produce false or fabricated information; therefore, users must independently verify all statements, data summaries, calculations, and interpretations generated by AI before including them in any work.
- 9.2 **References.** All citations must be verified against sources. Citing references not personally checked by the author is prohibited, and fabricating references constitutes research misconduct.
- 9.3 **Code and analysis.** Code and statistical scripts developed with AI assistance must be reviewed, tested, and documented to ensure reproducibility of results.
- 9.4 **Plagiarism.** AI-generated text remains subject to similarity checks by FBSU. Authors are responsible for ensuring that AI-generated material does not reproduce others' work without proper attribution.
- 9.5 **Liability.** Authors bear full responsibility for any inaccuracies, biases, or errors resulting from reliance on AI-generated output.

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10. Figures, Images, and Visual Data

- 10.1 **Prohibition.** Generative AI must not be used to create or alter core scientific figures, including charts, micrographs, gels, blots, medical or satellite images, and any image presented as experimental evidence.
- 10.2 **Permitted use.** The use of AI is allowed only in the case where the visualization is directly and entirely based on the author's own data, and the author has verified that it accurately represents that data.
- 10.3 **Disclosure.** In the paper, any visual that has been assisted by an AI must be indicated in the caption by naming the tool employed.
- 10.4 **Illustrative graphics.** Conceptual diagrams or cover art created using AI are permitted only if the publisher allows them, must be clearly marked as AI-generated, and must never be shown as data.

11. Peer Review, Grant Proposals, and Theses

- 11.1 **Peer review.** Reviewers must not upload manuscripts, proposals, or reviewer reports to generative AI tools, as this breaches confidentiality. Reviewers remain personally responsible for their evaluations.
- 11.2 **Grant applications.** When submitting a grant application to FBSU or external funders, the applicant must include the AI declaration required by Section 7 in the proposal and comply with the funder's own AI regulations. The internal grant evaluators are subject to 11.1.
- 11.3 **Theses and dissertations.** The declaration of AI use must be included in the thesis itself, and the student must also submit the Generative AI Use Declaration Form (SR-700-F1), signed by both the student and the supervisor. The thesis must comply with the 20% limit set out in Section 6.1. Examination committees may question the candidate about any part of the work that involves the use of AI.

12. Publication and Citation Incentives

- 12.1 **Purpose.** The financial and academic incentives offered by FBSU for publications and citations are designed to reward genuine human intellectual contribution.
- 12.2 **Eligibility.** An output is eligible for incentives only if it complies with this policy, including the declaration requirement in Section 7 and the 20% limit in Section 6.1. If AI was used substantially, an output with no AI declaration in its published text is ineligible, even if the form (SR-700-F1) has been submitted. Declared and compliant AI use does not in itself reduce eligibility.

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- 12.3 **Application.** All incentive applications should include a completed form (SR-700-F1) which has been signed by the applicant.
- 12.4 **Compliance review.** The Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies reviews incentive applications for compliance and may request access to records, data, or drafts. AI-detection tools may be used as indicators, but decisions should not be based solely on such tools.

13. Violations and Penalties

- 13.1 **Research misconduct.** The following are considered to be research misconduct under FBSU regulations: the use of artificial intelligence in a manner not disclosed; the submission of content generated by artificial intelligence as if it were one's own original work; the fabrication of data, results, or references using artificial intelligence; and violations of Section 8.
- 13.2 **Procedure.** When violations are suspected, they are passed on to the Research Integrity Committee, which investigates in accordance with the FBSU disciplinary regulations. The researcher receives written notification and is given the chance to respond before any decision is made.
- 13.3 **Sanctions.** Depending on severity, intent, and recurrence, sanctions may include:

Minor: incomplete or late declaration, no impact on validity	Written warning; required correction or erratum to add the in-paper declaration; mandatory training
Moderate: undisclosed substantive use, or AI-generated content exceeding the 20% limit, even if declared (Section 6.1)	Revocation and recovery of incentives; suspension of eligibility for incentives and internal grants for up to two years; request for correction
Serious: fabrication, falsification, data breach, or repeat violation	All of the above; request for retraction; referral to the relevant disciplinary board under applicable university and national regulations

- 13.4 **Data breaches.** Breaches involving personal data are also subject to the PDPL and must be reported to the relevant authorities where required by law.
- 13.5 **Appeal.** An appeal may be made by researchers to the University Vice President for Academic Affairs within 30 days of being informed of the decision.

14. Roles and Responsibilities

University Council	Approves this policy and its amendments
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Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies	Owns and interprets the policy; reviews incentive applications; maintains declaration templates; runs awareness activities.
Research Integrity Committee	Investigates suspected violations and recommends sanctions
Research Ethics Committee	Reviews protocols that involve AI processing of human-subject data
Information Technology Center	Evaluates and maintains the list of Approved AI Systems; handles data-incident reports
College deans and department heads	Communicate with the policy and monitor compliance in their units.
Supervisors	Guide students and countersign their AI declarations.
Researchers and students	Comply with the policy, declare AI use in their papers, verify outputs, and protect data.

15. Related Regulations and References

- 15.1 The Personal Data Protection Law (PDPL), Royal Decree No. M/19 issued on 9/2/1443H, and its Implementing Regulations.
- 15.2 AI Ethics Principles and Generative Artificial Intelligence Guidelines issued by the Saudi Data and Artificial Intelligence Authority (SDAIA).
- 15.3 Policy on Data Classification issued by the National Data Management Office.
- 15.4 The regulations of FBSU concerning research ethics, research integrity, and academic discipline.
- 15.5 COPE's position statement on authorship and AI tools.
- 15.6 Recommendations on AI-assisted technologies from the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors (ICMJE).

16. Review, Amendment, and Effective Date

- 16.1 The policy will come into force on the date determined by the University Council and will replace all previous guidance concerning this matter.
- 16.2 The Deanship examines the policy each year, and more quickly if there are substantial changes in national regulations or publisher standards.
- 16.3 Questions regarding interpretation should be sent to the Deanship of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies, and its interpretation will remain binding until the University Council has reviewed it.

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Approval

Prepared by:	Dean of Scientific Research and Graduate Studies
Reviewed by:	Institutional Policy, Procedure & Compliance Committee (IPPC)
Approved by:	University President, on behalf of the University Council

17. Related Documents

Generative AI Use Declaration Form (SR-700-F1)