

Guidance on Documenting the Use of AI

What is this? These notes and completion guide explain how the use of AI in academic work is documented and show, by means of examples, how the form “Documentation of AI Use in the Present Work” is to be completed. They also provide guidance on the research-ethically responsible use of AI tools and on labelling AI-generated or AI-assisted content in the running text. All entries given here – the checkboxes, the AI tools register, the “AI output check” column, and the labelling examples – are **examples only**. Do not enter your own information here, but in the separate form “Documentation of AI Use in the Present Work”.

As a general rule: Whether and to what extent AI tools may be used for the master’s thesis must be agreed in advance with the supervisor. Responsibility for all content of the work – including any AI-generated content that has been adopted – lies with the author.

Question 1: Were AI tools used to produce the present work?

☐ No

☒ Yes → please answer Question 2 (*example*)

Question 2 (only if “Yes”): What were AI tools used for?

☐ Solely to correct spelling and grammar

Even in this case, please briefly state which tool you used and how you proceeded. Example wording for this field: “Correction suggestions from [tool] were checked individually and only linguistic, not substantive, changes were adopted.”

☒ Also for further purposes (e.g. translation, structuring, summarising, image or code generation, support with the analysis) (*example*)

In this case, the AI tools used must be documented in the AI tools register (Section 1) and a reflection (Section 2) must be written.

1. AI Tools Register and AI Output Check

Please describe which AI tools you used and for what purpose (see also the University of Vienna AI guidelines) and how you checked the respective AI output. The “AI output check” column must relate specifically to the use listed in the same row. The table is to be included as an appendix in the work.

Example

AI tool (tool, module/model, provider)	Use	Parts of the work affected	Remarks (examples)	AI output check (how verified?)
deepL	Translation of text passages	1. Ch. 1.2 2. Quotations, paraphrases from English-language literature	1. The “Executive Summary” was translated from the German and then slightly revised. 2. The quotations/paraphrases were translated into German with the help of deepL, and the quality of the	Each translation was compared sentence by sentence with the English original; technical terms were corrected against the German-language specialist literature

AI tool (tool, module/model, provider)	Use	Parts of the work affected	Remarks (examples)	AI output check (how verified?)
			translation was checked independently.	
Midjourney	Creation of graphics	Figs. 12, 23, 24	The prompts were inserted with the individual figures	The figure was then checked to ensure that it renders the content to be depicted correctly and without meaning-distorting simplifications.
u:ai	Creation of Python code for a figure	Fig. 34	The Python code is shown in Appendix 1	Checked the Python code line by line for functionality and plausibility; additionally compared the generated graphic against the manually created frequency table. The displayed values, labels, and axes match.
u:ai	Suggestion for drafting the chapter outline	Ch. 3 and 7	The suggestions were subsequently revised.	The proposed outline draft was checked for coherence of content and argument with respect to the research question and material, adopted only in part; the final chapter structure was determined independently.
u:ai	Summarising of provided texts	Ch. 5	The summary of work X was produced as part of the experiment. The result was then analysed in Ch. 5.	The summaries were checked against the provided original texts for accuracy and completeness of content; passages that shortened or altered the meaning were corrected or reformulated independently.

Research-ethics note on data analysis. Research data – in particular interview transcripts, observation protocols, and personal or confidential data – must not be entered into commercial AI tools; doing so generally violates research-ethics principles and data-protection requirements. For AI-assisted work steps involving research data, only data-protection-compliant environments are eligible, such as u:ai (the University of Vienna’s AI platform) or the AI functions of established analysis software such as MAXQDA. For transcription, noScribe is one option, for example – free, data-protection-compliant open-source software that is installed locally on your own computer (<https://noscribe.de>). In these cases too, use must be clarified in advance with the supervisor; furthermore, the AI-assisted processing of the data must be covered by the participants’ declarations of consent.

Labelling of AI Results in the Running Text or Appendix

Labelling is required not only for AI results adopted verbatim (unchanged) but also for AI outputs you have revised or optimised. Texts adopted verbatim and AI-generated figures are marked directly at the relevant point in the running text or at the figure (e.g. in a footnote); revised or merely inspiring AI contributions may also be documented in summary form in the AI tools register (Section 1) or in the appendix.

Example

AI-generated result (text or image)	Suggested labelling (e.g. in a footnote)
“Glosse (opinion column): a short, opinionated, often satirical commentary on current topics. Leserbrief (letter to the editor): an expression of opinion written by readers on published content. (u:ai 2026)”	u:ai (2026), Chatbot module [specify model used], University of Vienna. Prompt: “Define the terms Glosse and Leserbrief. Use a maximum of 20 words.” Executed on 6 March 2026. Result adopted unmodified.
[AI-generated figure]	Figure 1: Schematic representation of the two-step flow of communication. Created with u:ai (2026), Image Generator module, University of Vienna. Prompt: “[specify full prompt]”. Executed on 5 February 2026. Result adopted unmodified.

2. Reflection

- A brief assessment of the added value of AI use for the present work (e.g. time saved, idea generation, structuring, literature research) and a brief assessment of whether and how AI use influenced the process of writing the master’s thesis.
- A statement of the limitations or challenges encountered in working with the AI tools (e.g. hallucinations, lack of domain specificity, difficulties in verifying sources, effort of post-editing, AI bias, sustainability aspects).
- An assessment of which work steps turned out better and which turned out worse with AI use than without AI support.