

AI-Assisted Research

Category: Artificial Intelligence in Education

AI-assisted research is the deliberate use of artificial intelligence to support defined research tasks while researchers retain responsibility for the question, method, evidence, interpretation and communication. Assistance may include exploring terminology, organising material, analysing data or improving expression, subject to disciplinary, ethical and institutional rules.

AI output is not a substitute for a documented method or an original source. Responsible use requires task-level judgement, independent verification, protection of confidential or personal data and transparent reporting of material assistance ([van Dis et al., 2023](#)).

Responsible Research Workflow

1. **Define:** Specify the research task, expected benefit, risks and institutional or disciplinary conditions.
2. **Select:** Use an appropriate approved tool and avoid entering protected, proprietary or identifiable data.
3. **Interrogate:** Treat outputs as provisional; test assumptions, alternatives, calculations and possible bias.
4. **Verify:** Locate, read and cite original evidence rather than generated summaries or references.
5. **Document:** Record material prompts, versions and decisions, and disclose AI use as required.

Examples in Practice

A postgraduate uses AI to generate synonyms for a database search, then develops and records the final strategy with a librarian. The student screens the retrieved literature, reads every included paper and writes the synthesis. No unpublished interview data are uploaded to the system.

Why It Matters

AI may accelerate exploratory or routine work, but fabricated sources, hidden bias and unclear data practices can undermine research integrity. Keeping a human accountable for methodological choices and evidential claims allows assistance without outsourcing scholarly judgement, contextual interpretation or authorship to a potentially opaque third-party automated service ([Miao & Holmes, 2023](#)).

Further Reading

6. van Dis, E. A. M., Bollen, J., Zuidema, W., van Rooij, R., & Bockting, C. L. (2023). [ChatGPT: Five priorities for research](#). *Nature*, 614, 224–226.
7. Miao, F., & Holmes, W. (2023). [Guidance for generative AI in education and research](#). UNESCO.
8. Walters, W. H., & Wilder, E. I. (2023). [Fabrication and errors in the bibliographic citations generated by ChatGPT](#). *Scientific Reports*, 13, 14045.

Related Terms: AI Source Verification | Research Ethics | Literature Searching | Academic Integrity