

BMAT Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence

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| Approving Body | Trust |
| Date of Last Review | March 2026 |
| Statutory (Y/N) | Y |
| Responsible Officer | BMAT CEO for and on behalf of the Trust |

I. PURPOSE AND RATIONALE

- 1 Artificial intelligence and generative AI in particular are now widely available to staff and students alike. Tools such as ChatGPT, Microsoft Copilot, Google Gemini and others can generate text, images, code and other content at speed. This presents both significant opportunities and material risks for a school community.
- 2 This policy sets out how the Trust will manage the use of AI by all members of our community. It reflects the current positions of the Department for Education (DfE), Ofqual, the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ), and the requirements of Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE).

II. GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- a. AI is a tool to support, not replace, human expertise, professional judgement, teaching and learning.
- b. AI is only as good as the input it receives and the critical judgement of the person using it. Poorly framed prompts produce poor outputs.
- c. AI can depersonalise communication and interaction if not used carefully, and the school values authentic human relationships between staff, students and families.
- d. AI can produce content that is inaccurate, biased, or based on outdated or irrelevant legislation, data and sources. Users must always verify AI-generated content before relying on it.
- e. Students who use AI to generate work they do not understand will not develop the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to succeed.
- f. Student and staff use of AI in examinations and assessed work is covered in the BMAT Exam Malpractice Policy.
- g. Unauthorised use of AI is exam malpractice, which includes using AI without permission or crediting during exams and/or NEA/coursework.
- h. JCQ and Ofqual regulations mean this will lead to disqualification from qualifications; students must sign declarations stating their work is their own.
- i. Staff must have processes in place for verifying student work, including keeping draft work.

III. SCOPE

- 3 This policy applies to all staff (teaching and support), students, trustees and governors, volunteers and any other person operating within the trust community and our local community.
- 4 It covers the use of all generative AI tools, including but not limited to large language models (e.g. ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot, DeepSeek), image generators (e.g. DALL-E, Midjourney), code generators, and any educational technology products that are powered by generative AI.
- 5 This policy applies to AI use on school premises, on school devices, and — where it relates to trust or school work, communications or assessments — on personal devices outside of school.

IV. THE LIMITATIONS OF AI

- 6 AI is only as good as the input it receives. A vague or poorly constructed prompt will produce a vague or unhelpful output. Conversely, even a well-crafted prompt can produce content that is plausible but wrong.
- 7 AI does not understand; it predicts. Large language models generate text by predicting the next likely word or phrase based on patterns in their training data. They do not comprehend meaning, context or truth in the way that a human does.
- 8 AI can fabricate information with confidence. This includes inventing academic references, citing legislation that does not exist or has been repealed, presenting outdated legal frameworks as current, generating statistics that have no basis in reality, and producing historical or scientific claims that are false. Users must independently verify any factual claim before relying on it.
- 9 AI can depersonalise communication. When used to draft emails, reports, references or pastoral communications, AI tends to produce generic, formulaic text that can feel impersonal and detached. In a school community built on relationships, this carries real costs. A parent reading a SEND report that clearly was not written by someone who knows their child, or a student receiving feedback that feels automated rather than personal, will notice and trust can be eroded.

- 10 AI output may not reflect the values of the school. AI tools do not know our school’s ethos, culture, expectations or community. Content generated by AI must be reviewed to ensure it aligns with the school’s values before it is used or shared.

V. THE REGULATORY AND SECTOR CONTEXT

Department for Education (DfE)

- 11 The DfE policy paper Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) in Education (updated June 2025) sets out that schools and colleges should decide whether and how AI tools will be permitted in their setting and must have clear policies defining appropriate use.
- 12 The DfE position recognises greater immediate benefits and fewer risks from teacher-facing use of AI (e.g. lesson planning, resource creation, administration), while emphasising that student-facing use requires careful safeguarding, close supervision, and age-appropriate controls. Many popular AI tools carry age restrictions of 18+. The DfE has specifically identified AI-generated abuse such as ‘deepfakes’ as a form of child-on-child abuse.
- 13 The DfE guidance requires schools to consider AI within their safeguarding policies, filtering and monitoring systems, data protection obligations, intellectual property responsibilities and homework policies.

VI. STAFF USE OF AI

Permitted and Encouraged Uses

Staff may use AI tools to support their professional practice in the following areas, subject to the conditions in this policy:

- a. Generating initial drafts of lesson plans, schemes of work, and teaching resources, which must then be reviewed, adapted and quality-assured by the member of staff.
- b. Creating differentiated resources or alternative explanations to support students with varying needs.
- c. Supporting administrative tasks such as drafting routine correspondence, summarising meeting notes, or producing template documents.
- d. Exploring AI as a subject for professional development and as a tool to model critical digital literacy for students.

Critical Conditions for Staff Use

- a. **Human oversight is non-negotiable.** AI-generated content must always be reviewed by the member of staff before use. The professional responsibility for accuracy, appropriateness, safeguarding and quality rests with the individual, not the tool.
- b. **AI outputs may be inaccurate, biased, or misleading.** Generative AI tools can ‘hallucinate’ — producing confident-sounding content that is factually wrong, citing legislation that does not exist, referencing studies that were never conducted, or presenting outdated information as current. Staff must verify factual claims, legal references and data independently before relying on or sharing AI-generated content.
- c. **AI can depersonalise communication.** Written communication with students, parents, carers and colleagues should retain a personal, authentic voice. Over-reliance on AI-generated text for pastoral communications, reports, references, SEND documentation or safeguarding records risks producing generic, impersonal content. Staff should use AI as a starting point, not a finished product, in any communication that matters to a relationship.
- d. **Personal and sensitive data must not be entered into AI tools.** Staff must not input student names, assessment data, SEND information, safeguarding concerns, medical information, behavioural records, or any other personal data into any generative AI tool without proper safeguarding. This is a requirement under UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- e. **Intellectual property must be respected.** Staff must not input other people’s original work (including student work, colleagues’ resources, or published materials) into AI tools without appropriate permission. AI-generated content may itself contain unattributed copyrighted material.
- f. **AI must not be the sole marker of student work** for any regulated qualification, or the sole marker of any student work. This is an Ofqual regulatory requirement. Where AI tools are used to support formative assessment or feedback, the professional judgement of the teacher must always be the determining factor.
- g. **Transparency.** Staff are expected to be transparent about their use of AI where relevant — for example, if a resource was substantially generated using AI, or if AI was used to support report writing.

VII. STUDENT USE OF AI – GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- 14 The purpose of education is for students to develop their own knowledge, understanding and skills. AI tools that generate answers, essays, analysis or creative work on a student’s behalf

undermine this purpose. A student who submits AI-generated work may receive a mark, but they will not have learned the material, will not have developed the relevant skills, and will not be able to reproduce that standard under examination conditions.

- 15 Students must understand that public examinations at GCSE, A Level and vocational qualifications are predominantly sat under timed, supervised conditions without access to AI. If a student has relied on AI to complete preparatory work, homework or coursework, they will be at a significant disadvantage in the examination hall. This is not a theoretical risk; it directly impacts grades and outcomes.
- 16 We are committed to educating students about digital literacy, including teaching them to critically evaluate AI-generated information, fostering skills of identifying misinformation when they analyse, evaluate and synthesise information to inform their understanding.

VIII. **RULES FOR STUDENT USE**

- 17 Use of AI to generate work that is submitted as the student's own is prohibited. This applies to all homework, classwork, coursework, non-examined assessments, controlled assessments, internal assessments and any other work submitted for credit. Submitting AI-generated content as one's own work constitutes academic dishonesty and will be treated as such under the school's policies and procedures.
- 18 For externally assessed qualifications (GCSE, AS, A Level, BTEC, Cambridge Nationals, etc.), AI misuse constitutes malpractice under JCQ regulations. The consequences are severe and may include loss of marks for a component, disqualification from a subject, or disqualification from all qualifications in an examination series. These sanctions are applied by the awarding organisation and are beyond the school's control to reverse.
- 19 Students may only use AI in the classroom when explicitly directed and supervised by their teacher for a specific, structured learning activity. Examples of appropriate supervised use include:
 - a. Critically evaluating AI-generated content for accuracy, bias or quality as a learning exercise.
 - b. Exploring how AI works as part of the computing or digital literacy curriculum.
 - c. Using AI to generate quiz questions or revision prompts for self-testing (not to generate model answers to memorise and reproduce).

- 20 Where a teacher permits AI use for a specific task, the teacher will make clear the boundaries of that use, and the student must acknowledge and reference any AI involvement in their work.
- 21 Age restrictions apply. Many generative AI tools (including ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude and Copilot) carry terms of service that restrict use to those aged 13 or 18 and over. The school will observe these restrictions. Students in Key Stage 3 and below should not be creating personal accounts for AI services.
- 22 Students must not input personal information about themselves or others into AI tools.

Why This Matters

- a. AI can feel like a helpful shortcut. It can produce an essay in seconds that might take a student hours to write. But the hours spent writing are where the learning happens — the thinking, the structuring, the grappling with ideas, the making and correcting of mistakes. When a student bypasses this process, they bypass their own education.
- b. Furthermore, AI does not ‘know’ things in the way a teacher or a textbook does. It generates plausible-sounding text based on patterns, and it can produce content that is factually wrong, legally inaccurate, culturally inappropriate, or entirely fabricated. A student who submits AI-generated work without understanding it will not be able to discuss it, defend it, or build on it — and a teacher will notice.

IX. DETECTION AND CONSEQUENCES

Detection

- 23 The school will use a combination of methods to identify possible AI misuse in student work, including but not limited to:
 - a. Professional judgement of teaching staff who know their students’ abilities and writing styles.
 - b. AI detection software (while acknowledging the limitations of such tools).
 - c. Requiring students to evidence their working process (drafts, plans, notes, annotations, version histories).

- d. Verbal questioning about submitted work — students will be asked to present their understanding orally rather than in writing.
- e. Comparison with work produced under supervised conditions.

Consequences – Internal Assessments

- 24 Where AI misuse is identified in internal work, the school may take action which may include:
- a. The work being returned with a mark of zero and a requirement to resubmit.
 - b. A recorded academic integrity concern.
 - c. Parental notification.
 - d. Placement on academic monitoring.
 - e. For repeated or serious offences, further disciplinary action in line with the school's Behaviour Policy.

Consequences – External Assessments

- 25 Where AI misuse is identified in work submitted for external assessment (NEA, coursework, controlled assessment), the school is legally obligated to report this to the relevant awarding organisation under JCQ regulations. The school cannot choose to overlook or manage this internally. Awarding organisation sanctions may include loss of marks, disqualification from the component, disqualification from the subject, or disqualification from all subjects in that series.

Please refer to the BMAT Exam Malpractice Policy for full details.

X. SAFEGUARDING AND ONLINE SAFETY

- 26 Generative AI tools can produce content that is harmful, inappropriate, sexually explicit, violent, or otherwise unsuitable for children. Some tools have limited content filters, and others can be manipulated to bypass safety features.
- 27 In line with Keeping Children Safe in Education (KCSIE), the school will ensure that its filtering and monitoring systems cover access to generative AI tools on the school network and school devices.
- 28 Any student who encounters harmful or concerning content through an AI tool should report it immediately to a trusted adult. Staff should follow existing safeguarding reporting procedures.

- 29 Staff should be aware that AI can be used to generate deepfake images, voice clones, or other manipulated content that may constitute abuse, harassment or exploitation. Any concerns should be reported to the Designated Safeguarding Lead immediately.

XI. **DATA PROTECTION AND PRIVACY**

- 30 The use of AI tools must comply with UK GDPR, the Data Protection Act 2018, and the school's Data Protection Policy.
- 31 No personal data relating to students, staff or any other individual should be entered into generative AI tools unless the school has conducted a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA), the tool has been approved for use with personal data, and all necessary legal bases and safeguards are in place. In practice, personal data should not be input into general-purpose AI tools.
- 32 Staff must be aware that data entered into AI tools may be stored, processed in jurisdictions outside the UK, and potentially used to train future AI models. This has implications for confidentiality and data security.
- 33 Microsoft 365 Copilot, where deployed by the Trust within the Microsoft 365 environment, operates under Microsoft's enterprise data protection framework and does not use school data to train its underlying models. However, a DPIA must still be completed before Copilot is deployed, and staff must ensure that existing Microsoft 365 permissions and sensitivity labels are correctly configured, so that Copilot cannot surface personal, SEND or safeguarding data to unauthorised users.

XII. **INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT**

- 34 The DfE is clear that schools and colleges must not allow or cause students' original work to be used to train generative AI models unless permission has been obtained from the copyright holder (or, for students under 18, their parent or legal guardian), or a copyright exception applies.
- 35 Staff should not upload students' original work, colleagues' original resources, or published materials into AI tools without appropriate permission.
- 36 Staff and students should be aware that AI-generated content may contain material derived from copyrighted sources without attribution, and that using such content may constitute secondary copyright infringement.

XIII. **EQUALITY, INCLUSION AND THE RISK OF BIAS**

- 37 AI tools are trained on large datasets that reflect the biases present in their source material. Outputs may contain or reinforce racial, gender, cultural, socioeconomic or other biases.
- 38 Staff must critically evaluate AI-generated content for bias before using it with students, particularly in the creation of teaching resources, assessment materials, and communications.
- 39 The school is mindful that differential access to AI tools outside of school may create or widen inequalities between students. This is one reason why the school takes a cautious approach to permitting AI use for homework and independent study.

XIV. **TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

- 40 The school will provide ongoing training and professional development to all staff on the safe, effective and ethical use of AI, including awareness of this policy and its requirements.
- 41 Students will receive age-appropriate education on AI literacy, including how AI works, its limitations, the importance of critical evaluation, and the ethical and academic integrity implications of AI use.