Generative AI in assessment: from the 2026–27 academic session

August 2026

We are committed to using plain language. If you have any suggestions on how we can improve, let us know at editor@qualifications.gov.scot.

Purpose and scope

This document outlines Qualifications Scotland's stance on learners' use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in assessments from the 2026–27 session until further notice. This stance relates to all of Qualifications Scotland's summative assessments, whether set externally by us or internally devised by centres to meet Qualifications Scotland course requirements.

This resource is primarily aimed at teachers, lecturers and trainers. Its purpose is to help you make informed decisions about learners' use of GenAI in assessment contexts.

We recognise that you may wish to use GenAI tools in your wider learning and teaching activities. We want to emphasise that classroom practices, such as teaching and learning methods, fall outside the scope of this stance, as Qualifications Scotland's remit is limited to the assessment and awarding of qualifications.

Qualifications Scotland's stance focuses on two key areas:

- GenAI tools and acceptable use
- GenAI tools and unacceptable use

Context

The rapid advances in GenAI offer opportunities for education and assessment. Together with our partners in the education sector, we continue to explore those opportunities and seek ways to overcome potential challenges. Qualifications Scotland will continue to develop our understanding of the impact of GenAI on learning and teaching, and the implications for assessment through engagement with the wider education sector. Through this work, we have already seen many examples of GenAI's potential across the sector. However, at present, a number of concerns remain about the potential for misuse of GenAI in assessment contexts. It is important that we all embrace emerging technologies responsibly while maintaining the integrity of qualifications and ensuring equity, transparency and fairness.

Position statement

GenAI tools and acceptable use

The use of GenAI is only acceptable when it does not compromise (or attempt to compromise) the integrity of Qualifications Scotland course assessments or certification.

Learners may use GenAI tools in the following situations:

- when doing so does not undermine their ability to demonstrate the required knowledge, understanding and skills to meet the assessment standards of the qualification
- when the course or unit specification explicitly allows such use, provided that the condition above is also met

Before using GenAI tools, learners should discuss their intended use with you to check that using GenAI will not undermine the achievement of their learning and assessment objectives.

Guidance on potentially acceptable and unacceptable GenAI use in assessments can be found in the Exemplification resource. This guidance provides examples from various subjects, and key considerations to help you decide if the use of GenAI is appropriate in other assessment contexts.

Learners must acknowledge any use of GenAI tools in their submissions. This acknowledgement should include which tool was used and what function it performed within the assessment. There is flexibility in how the use of GenAI tools can be acknowledged and you should carefully consider the best way to do this for a particular context or purpose.

Examples of acknowledgements (for illustration only):

‘ChatGPT was used to generate ideas for…’

‘Gemini was used to generate images for…’

GenAI tools have limitations and may not always produce reliable outputs. As with any resource or tool, you should critically evaluate the appropriateness of GenAI for a given task. When using GenAI, consider user age restrictions and the possible implications of sharing personal information or learners' work.

Learners can choose not to use GenAI tools if they wish.

GenAI tools and assessment arrangements

Learners who have prior agreement to use specific assistive technologies as an assessment arrangement may find that these tools now include integrated GenAI functionality.

Disabled learners and those with additional support needs can use assistive technologies that require the integration of GenAI to function, provided the use of this technology does not compromise the integrity of our qualifications and assessments. Centres should refer to the principles of assessment arrangements in Assessment Arrangements Explained: Information for centres on our website and the ICT Security Checklist on our secure website for further information.

GenAI tools and unacceptable use

Sources and citations

AI-generated outputs should not be cited as independent or primary sources of information.

Learners studying towards Qualifications Scotland's qualifications should use valid, reliable and authoritative sources to support their work. GenAI outputs do not meet these criteria and should not be cited as stand-alone sources of factual evidence or to support arguments. These are some of the significant issues regarding the reliability and validity of GenAI outputs:

- They are often not verifiable: AI-generated outputs cannot always be linked to the original source(s) of information, making the information difficult to verify.

- They can be inaccurate, biased or nonsensical: GenAI tools can generate apparently convincing but incorrect or misleading content, as well as ‘hallucinations’, which are fabricated facts, data, citations and references.
- They lack credibility: AI-generated outputs lack authority. Where citations are required as part of a Qualifications Scotland qualification, these should be from reputable sources that credit the original authors or sources.

Malpractice

Learners’ assessed work must reflect their own knowledge, skills and understanding, demonstrating independent competence. Inappropriate use of GenAI tools may undermine this and mean that learners’ assessed work fails to meet the marking criteria.

Additionally, learners must not submit AI-generated outputs or ideas as their own work for assessment tasks that contribute towards a Qualifications Scotland qualification. Doing so would constitute malpractice and may result in awards being cancelled.

Reminders for GenAI use in assessments

Before using GenAI, always follow the conditions of assessment specified in the course or unit specification. This helps maintain fairness and consistency in assessment.

You should consider the following points, which summarise Qualifications Scotland’s position:

- GenAI can be used to support, but not replace, the development of skills, knowledge and understanding.
- GenAI should not be used if it compromises the integrity of assessments or the certification of qualifications.
- Learners should always check with their practitioners before using GenAI tools.
- Where the use of GenAI is permitted, its use must always be acknowledged.

- Use credible sources for citations: don’t use GenAI instead of authoritative and verifiable sources.
- Submitting GenAI outputs or ideas as a learner’s own work is considered malpractice.
- Be aware of GenAI limitations, such as potential bias and hallucinations.
- Protect personal and confidential data.
- Consider any age restrictions associated with the GenAI tool used.

Before using any GenAI tools in assessment contexts, you must ensure that this does not undermine learners’ achievement of their learning objectives or compromise the integrity of the assessment.

If you wish to learn more about the use of GenAI in education the Exemplification resource offers a wealth of useful links in its final section.

Future use of GenAI: promoting transparency and collaboration

We have consulted our key stakeholders in preparing this position statement. We will continue to consult learners, practitioners, centres and our partners as we further explore the impact of GenAI tools on assessment. We will ensure your voices are integral to our decision-making process.

We also encourage you to discuss the role of GenAI in assessment and its broader implications for education with your colleagues, teams and learners.

Version control

Version number	Revision date	Summary of changes	Author
1.2	Aug 2026	Removed references to “SQA” and improved the language	David Purdie