How to Use Artificial Intelligence When Writing Final Theses

Guidelines of the University of Pardubice for Students

1) Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools have become a common part of study and academic work. The University of Pardubice (UPCE) permits their use if they are used responsibly, ethically, and transparently, and in accordance with the principles of academic integrity.

The purpose of these guidelines is to provide UPCE students with a clear and practical framework for the use of AI tools when writing final theses (bachelor's, master's, and doctoral theses). The document outlines the basic rules, provides examples of good practice, and offers recommendations on how to use AI tools in a way that does not compromise the originality of the thesis and allows their use to be properly declared or cited.

For the purposes of these guidelines, AI tools are understood primarily as tools that use machine learning to generate, process, or modify text, images, audio, or other data in a way that imitates human work. In the context of writing final theses, this mainly includes tools for generating and editing text, summarizing academic information, language correction, and other AI-based support tools.

These guidelines provide a general UPCE framework for the use of AI tools in final theses. Students are also required to respect the following:

- **the internal regulations of their faculty**, where applicable, and to act in accordance with them;
- **the instructions of the thesis supervisor**, who may specify the way AI tools may be used in line with these guidelines and the faculty's rules.

2) When the Use of AI Tools Is Appropriate

The use of AI tools when writing a final thesis is appropriate if they support the writing process but do not replace the student's own academic work.

AI tools may therefore be used in the following situations:

- **for an initial exploration of the topic** (followed by work with original academic sources);
- **for proposing a structure for the thesis**, including the organisation of chapters;
- **for summarising academic texts** to gain a better understanding of the topic (with subsequent verification in the original sources);
- **for explaining concepts**, particularly when becoming familiar with a new topic;
- **for language and stylistic editing of the text** (e.g., checking spelling, grammar, style, and overall clarity).

3) How AI Tools Must Not Be Used

AI tools must not replace the student's own academic work or assume the role of the author of the final thesis.

The use of AI is inappropriate in the following cases:

- **writing entire chapters or substantial parts of them** (whether by direct copy–paste or with only minimal modifications);
- **adopting research objectives, hypotheses, research questions, or conclusions**;
- **interpreting data, results or empirical findings without proper methodological description, verification and the student's own academic interpretation**;
- **replacing engagement with academic literature**;
- **generating or supplementing citations and reference lists** that have not been verified in the original academic sources;
- **adopting text or claims that the student does not fully understand or is unable to defend.**

The use of certain AI tools is prohibited under the applicable internal regulations of UPCE. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the current rules and to comply with them.

Quick Reference Guide to Using AI

AI may support the writing process, but it must not assume the role of the author or replace engagement with academic sources.

The use of AI is appropriate if:

- the student can explain, justify, and substantiate all information presented in the thesis;
- the student can verify the accuracy of AI-generated content;
- AI does not generate academic content in place of the student;
- AI does not assume responsibility for key parts of the thesis;
- its use is transparently declared in the final thesis.

If the thesis had not been produced without the use of AI or if the student is unable to explain its content, the use of AI is highly likely to be inconsistent with the principles of academic integrity.

4) How to Use AI Tools Safely, Responsibly, and Transparently

When working with AI tools, it is essential to bear in mind that their outputs do not constitute academic sources and may contain inaccuracies, oversimplifications, or incorrect information. The student is always responsible for the accuracy and quality of the content presented in the final thesis.

Basic principles of safe and responsible use of AI:

- **Verify all information in original academic sources**.
  Information obtained through AI tools must be traceable to real, identifiable sources (such as books, academic articles, or databases). AI may assist with orientation or searching, but it must not replace engagement with academic literature.
- **Work critically.**
  AI-generated outputs may be inaccurate or misleading. Every piece of information, claim, or summary must be assessed in terms of its accuracy, relevance, and currency.
- **Do not provide sensitive or confidential information.**
  Do not enter personal data, confidential materials, non-public data, or non-anonymized research data into AI.
- **Ensure transparency.**
  If AI has influenced the substantive content of the thesis, its use must be clearly and transparently declared in the thesis (see the following section).

5) How to Indicate the Use of AI in a Final Thesis: Declaration and Citation

The use of AI tools in the preparation of a final thesis may vary in scope. The obligation to indicate their use depends on the extent to which AI has influenced the thesis. The procedures for declaration and citation set out below apply unless a faculty specifies otherwise in its internal regulations.

For these purposes, three basic levels of AI use are distinguished:

Level 1: Formal Support (No Impact on Content)

If AI tools were used solely for language editing (e.g., checking spelling, grammar, style, and overall clarity) without altering the meaning of the text, their use does not need to be declared or cited.

Level 2: Content Support (Without Direct Copying of Generated Outputs)

If AI tools influenced the content of the thesis, for example, by

- assisting with an initial literature search;
- proposing a structure or outline of the thesis;
- summarising academic texts;
- helping to explain concepts or relationships,

Their use must be declared in an appropriate section of the thesis. The student must not adopt AI-generated content verbatim and must verify all information in the original academic sources. In this case, citation of the specific AI tools used is not required.

Level 3: Direct Use of AI-Generated Outputs

If AI-generated outputs are incorporated verbatim into the thesis (for example text or parts thereof, tables, images, diagrams, data, code or other outputs),

The use of AI tools must be declared, and the specific tool used must also be cited.

Overview Table

Type of AI Use	Declaration	Citation
Language editing and stylistic correction	❌ no	❌ no
Content support (literature search, structure, summaries)	✓ yes	❌ no
Verbatim use of AI-generated outputs	✓ yes	✓ yes

How to Declare the Use of AI Tools

If the use of AI tools has influenced the content of the final thesis, the student is required to clearly and transparently indicate this fact. The declaration must specify:

- which AI tool was used;
- for what purpose;
- to what extent.

The declaration should be included in an appropriate section of the thesis, for example:

- in the introduction;
- in the methodology chapter;
- in a separate methodological chapter describing the use of AI tools, particularly where such tools have been used extensively.

The following formulation is provided as an example of possible wording:

In the preparation of this thesis, I used the AI tool [name] for [purpose] to the following extent: [brief description]. All academic content, analyses, and conclusions are the result of my own work.

Example:

In the preparation of this thesis, I used artificial intelligence tools, specifically ChatGPT, for an initial literature search and for proposing the structure of the thesis, and Consensus for

summarizing selected academic texts. All information included in the thesis has been verified in the original sources, and its interpretation is the result of my own academic work.

How to Cite AI Tool Outputs

AI tools must be cited only where a student incorporates their outputs verbatim into the thesis, for example text, tables, images, diagrams, data, or code.

Outputs generated by AI tools should be cited **as software**, not as websites or individual conversations.

This approach is recommended because:

- most citation styles currently do not provide a specific format for citing AI tools; citing them as software is therefore the most appropriate available solution;
- individual conversations or prompts are generally not archived on a long-term basis, their content may change over time, and they cannot be reliably verified retrospectively.

At UPCE, the recommended citation standard is ČSN ISO 690:2022. The examples below are based on this standard. When using a different citation style, students should proceed in a comparable manner and cite AI tools as software.

General Structure of a Software Citation According to ČSN ISO 690:2022

Creator. *Title of the tool*. Format; type of resource. Version. Publisher, date of last update or release. Name of hosting archive. Identifier. Availability. System requirements.

Examples of Citation

The following examples are based on the general software citation format under ČSN ISO 690:2022. Only information that is available and verifiable (format and type of resource) is included. Other elements of the format (e.g., version, identifier) are generally not available for AI tools.

OPENAI. *ChatGPT5.2*. Online; AI chatbot. Available from: https://openai.com/chatgpt/. [viewed 2025-11-28].

MICROSOFT. *Microsoft Copilot*. Online; AI chatbot. Available from: https://copilot.microsoft.com/. [viewed 2025-11-28].

ANTHROPIC. *Claude 3*. Online; AI chatbot. Available from: https://claude.ai/. [viewed 2025-11-28].

CONSENSUS. *Consensus*. Online; AI vyhledávač. Available from: https://consensus.app/. [viewed 2025-11-28].

OPENAI. *DALL·E 3*. Online; AI generátor obrázků. Available from: https://openai.com/dall-e-3/. [viewed 2025-11-28].

Where AI-generated outputs are incorporated verbatim, it is also advisable to include screenshots of the relevant conversations and/or generated outputs in the appendices of

the thesis. This enhances transparency and enables subsequent verification of how the AI tools were used.

6) Student Responsibility

The student is responsible for the entire content of the final thesis, regardless of whether artificial intelligence tools were used in its preparation.

The student must be able to:

- explain and defend all parts of the thesis;
- demonstrate the origin of the information and sources used;
- demonstrate that the academic content, interpretation of results, and conclusions are the result of their own work.

The use of AI tools does not exempt the student from responsibility for the originality, accuracy, academic standard, or ethical integrity of the final thesis.

The use of AI in a manner inconsistent with the principles of academic integrity may be considered a breach of study obligations.

Document version: January 2026

These guidelines will be updated on an ongoing basis in response to developments in artificial intelligence tools and changes to the UPCE's internal regulations.