

## Guide: How to document the use of AI tools and software tools

The use of AI tools in academic study and research is now a reality. Therefore, the crucial question is not whether, but *how* AI is used. University guidelines on the use of AI all adhere to the same fundamental principle: AI can support academic work but cannot replace it. Its use must be transparent, considered and accountable: Readers must be able to understand how the work in question was produced. To this end, all authors must disclose which tools they used and to what extent, so that it is entirely clear where the author's own contribution lies and where external systems (such as AI) have provided input.

These are key requirements of *good academic practice*—regardless of whether analogue sources or digital tools are used. AI can be applied in numerous ways throughout a working process, thus it is always essential to clearly indicate and document whether AI is used as a *source*, as a *starting point* or as a *support tool*. As with the use of all other sources, but **particularly in the case of AI**, a **critical evaluation** of AI-generated input is absolutely necessary.

**The required description of how AI was used** for the respective steps in the working process can be placed in the introduction or in the methodology section of an essay, seminar paper or thesis, for example, as with the following (or similar) wording:

***Disclaimer:** The following AI tools were used in the preparation of this [thesis]: [ChatGPT, DeepL etc.], to improve the style and linguistic readability. Responsibility for the content lies with the author.*

Furthermore, a **documentation table** on AI usage (provided below) must be included in the **appendix of every academic and artistic written work**. It not only documents the role AI played in the work process but also serves as a tool for reflection and guidance.

Beyond showing where and how AI has been used in the work process, the table demonstrates that the processes of thinking, evaluating and decision-making remain the result of human effort. Please use the following template to complete the table:

*AI Report: Documentation on the use of AI tools and software tools*

This table ensures compliance with the criteria of good scientific practice and guarantees traceability. At the same time, it serves as a reflection on one's own scientific working process and aids in quality assurance.

**NOTE:** Generative AI models can produce information that is incorrect, incomplete, unreliable or unsystematic. In scientific and artistic-scientific work, it is therefore important not only to document which tool was used, but also how the results were checked and verified. The table [*Column: own review/reflection*] makes this verification process transparent and traceable.

Responsible use of AI tools must demonstrate and document the compliance with these rules, as both readers and supervisors expect all sources to be disclosed, as is stated in the **author declaration** of originality.



## 2. SAMPLE REPORT :

### *Documentation Table for AI usage*

Work phase / Part of the work	Software / AI tool (version / provider)	Purpose	Result / Output	Date of use	Self-assessment / critical reflection	Comments
Entire Work	Citavi 7	Bibliography management, citations	Structured bibliography, automatic citations	ongoing	All sources have been independently verified and correctly classified	All sources have been checked
Literature review	AI Search Springer Professional	Assistance with literature research	References to relevant specialist literature	ongoing	Results manually assessed and selected	No automatic transfer
Choosing a topic	ChatGPT (GPT-5 / OpenAI)	Collection of ideas, proposals for structure	Suggestions for an outline	-	Selection and adaptation were carried out independently; suggestions were scrutinised	-
Writing phase	DeepL Write	Linguistic revision	Stylistically revised version of the text	-	Full responsibility for the content; no additions to the content have been made	-
Chapter 2, Discussion	ChatGPT (GPT-5 / OpenAI)	Drafting text, linguistic revision	Alternative wording, suggested text	September 10, 2025	Suggestions were used selectively and revised independently	Prompts documented in the appendix
Chapter 4, Results	SPSS (29 / IBM)	Statistical analysis	Statistische Kennwerte, Tabellen	September 5–8, 2025	carried out the analysis and interpretation themselves	Syntax included in the appendix

Chapter 3.1	Stable Diffusion (v3.0)	Image generation for concept studies	Design visualisations	July 2025	Final version fully manually revised	No direct use of the AI-generated images
Final Phase	ChatGPT (OpenAI)	Review of summaries	Alternative wording, Text optimisation	-	Not adopted; own version preferred	-

**Note 1:** *The table must be included as an appendix and forms part of the formal documentation of the thesis.*

**Note 2:** *Depending on the research question, specific software used for data collection, creating graphics, etc. should also be documented in the table, that is, in addition to the references in the main text. This includes, among other things, AI tools for artistic production such as DreamStudio, Midjourney, Adobe Firefly, Adobe Photoshop (Generative Fill), Adobe Illustrator (Generative Recolor), DALL-E, Deep Dream Generator, Runway ML, Leonardo AI, Artbreeder, NightCafe, Kaiber, Pika Labs, AIVA, Soundful, Amper Music, Opusmodus, etc.*

**Note 3:** *On the verbatim reproduction of prompts*

*Depending on the topic, the research question and/or the research methodology, it may be useful to include additional documentation of the specific use and application of AI and software in the form of the cited prompts in the appendix, that is, in addition to the table.*

**Example:**

*Step 1 (Date): Tool + Prompt – Result – Reason for decision – Further processing*

*Step 2 (Date): Tool + Prompt – Result – etc.*