

AI Tools Hinder Academic Writing by Stifling Creativity and Reducing Personal Engagement

The advent of artificial intelligence (AI) as a subject for learning has been a key source of controversy, with mounting concern that these technologies will end up shortchanging valuable aspects of academic development. Although software such as ChatGPT, Quillbot, and Grammarly improves writing, and research, over-reliance on them or their unthinking use threatens to crush students' creativity, reduce critical thinking, and promote dependency. These effects can have the tendency to result in a superficial output of scholarly work, where students utilise machine-writing at the expense of originality, self-expression, and actual learning.

One of the key concerns regarding the integration of AI in scholarly writing is that it will demote creativity. Academic writing is not merely producing grammatically correct sentences or being able to find information—academic writing is about developing novel arguments, interpretive choices, and articulating personal opinions. AI tools, by contrast, tend to produce formulaic standardised responses based on statistical patterns rather than new thought. This may lead to student work homogenisation in which individual voice is diluted or eliminated (Dawson, 2023). Secondly, because AI models learn from existing datasets, they can reproduce only what has been previously published, thereby discouraging students from producing original arguments or developing different perspectives (Leone, 2023). Another significant issue is the decline in personal effort and engagement in the writing process. Higher education writing is an exercise that calls for establishing through efforts, an argument, refining expression, and grappling with challenging ideas. When AI resources are used to bypass these processes, students miss out on the mental development writing is meant to cause. Research has shown that excessive reliance on AI content has a negative effect on student self-assurance and learning of skill sets because students learn to trust in technology as the problem-solver rather than dealing with the material directly (Mohamad et al. 2024) . As a result, students may tend to treat learning as a commodity of content creation rather than a process of critical thinking and intellectual growth.

More broadly, the widespread usage of AI in educational environments also raises ethical and pedagogical concerns. Although certain systems offer a tool to support grammar or paraphrasing, others enable students to write complete essays or perform literature reviews with minimal effort. This ease of getting things done prompts the desire to pass off work produced by AI as one's own, hence compromising academic integrity (Demetriou, 2024). Even when students do not intend to plagiarise, the vagueness between their work and AI-produced work offers space for speculation regarding authorship. This means that teachers are bound to underestimate the capability of their students, and even students may not avail themselves of the sense of ownership of tasks (Cotton et al., 2023).

There is also the risk that AI-based applications will replace rather than augment conventional research skills. If brief summaries and explanations can be had from software like ChatGPT, students may opt to avoid primary and academic sources entirely. This undermines the essential scholarly principle of evidence-based argument and diminishes the academic rigour. According to scholarship by Saltman (2024), there is a growing trend among students to replace AI-generated summaries with directly confronting journal articles, thus impairing their ability to critically evaluate evidence and construct independent arguments. In the long term, this can hinder the development of important scholarly competencies such as synthesis, citing, and critical comparison.

Overall, AI undoubtedly has several significant benefits when it comes to supporting students in their academic work. These benefits can range from more efficient research to a higher level of spelling punctuation and grammar being learnt by replicating the high quality written articles produced by AI. Though AI technologies possess the possibility of bestowing certain benefits when applied carefully and reflectively, their overuse risks doing critical damage to students' intellectual development. Academic writing is more than a mechanical task, it is an individual and creative one which stimulates critical thought, originality, and intellectual strength. By making much of this process automatic, AI tools risk destroying the very aims upon which higher education rests and can very much likely lead to a reduction of creativity and engagement with writing due to the high risk of over dependence on AI.

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