



Guideline for the use of generative AI in the preparation of dissertations and habilitation theses

Decision of the Faculty Council from April 22, 2024

1. Introduction

The Faculty of Business, Economics and Social Sciences at the University of Hohenheim recognizes the growing importance of generative artificial intelligence (generative AI) in an academic context. With a complementary addition to the existing regulations in the form of these guidelines, it would like to ensure that committee members and persons who submit, examine or evaluate a written dissertation or habilitation thesis are aware of how to deal with generative AI in order to ensure high-quality scientific practice and reliably conduct examinations.

2. Conditional permission

The use of generative AI in the preparation of dissertations and postdoctoral theses is permitted. However, it is crucial that this use complies with the principles of good scientific practice and is disclosed transparently. This ensures scientific integrity and the evaluation of scientific performance.

3. Engagement with good scientific practice

Persons submitting a dissertation or habilitation thesis should actively engage with the principles of good scientific practice. This is also recommended with regard to generative AI, including awareness of the current developments and recommendations on the use of generative AI. Information from the German Research Foundation (DFG) can be used for orientation. For this purpose, examination candidates should familiarize themselves with the current status.

Depending on the discipline, different approaches may be considered as good scientific practice. It is therefore advisable to also consult professional societies, journals or conferences as sources of information for possible subject-specific requirements.

4. Transparency

Persons submitting a dissertation or habilitation thesis must disclose any use of generative AI in their written examination. This includes information on what they have used generative AI for and how they have ensured compliance with good scientific practice. If no system with generative AI was used, this must also be declared.

When submitting a dissertation or habilitation thesis, a written declaration must be enclosed. For this purpose, the faculty has developed a form which is based on the "Declaration on the use of generative AI systems" proposed by the senate on July 5, 2023 and is included as an annex to this guideline. This form is to be used.

To confirm compliance with good scientific practice, it is usually at least necessary (1) to inform oneself about the capabilities and limitations of the systems used, (2) to review the

content generated by AI systems, (3) to take responsibility as author for the statements made in the dissertation or habilitation thesis and (4) to disclose the use of generative AI in the context of the doctorate or habilitation for the examination. These points can be jointly confirmed by ticking the relevant box in the declaration for all uses of generative AI. If, in individual cases, some of these measures have not been taken or further measures have been taken, this is to be explained using free text.

5. Evaluation by the examining persons

The examining persons evaluate the independent scientific performance that is expressed in the dissertation or habilitation thesis against the background of the sources and aids used. The declaration on the use of generative AI systems provides information on the type and extent to which generative AI was used as an aid. The focus of this guideline on generative AI does not absolve the person being examined from also indicating any and all sources and other aids.

As with all other aids and sources, the evaluation of the extent to which the specific use of generative AI affects the independent scientific performance is the responsibility of the examining persons. The mere use of generative AI for the preparation or improvement of software code for prototypes or for data analysis or for linguistic proofreading will generally have no influence on the scientific performance. A fully automated creation of the entire written examination (which is not possible at the time of the adoption of this guideline) will have an impact on the evaluation of the independent scientific performance.

6. Entry into force

Following the decision by the Faculty Council on April 22, 2024, this guideline applies to all dissertations and habilitation theses submitted from June 1, 2024.

If parts of the respective thesis were finalized in the exact wording before November 1, 2022 (this will generally only apply to published specialist articles as part of a cumulative thesis), no declaration on the use of generative AI needs to be submitted for these parts. This is to be noted at the end of the declaration form (see appendix).

Appendix: Declaration on the use of generative AI systems in dissertations and habilitation theses

(Grey text is filled in as an example and must be deleted)

Title of the work: The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Enhancing Decision-Making Processes in Information Systems

Name of the author: Janina Musterfrau

In the preparation of the work, I or my co-authors have used systems based on generative artificial intelligence (AI).^{1,2,3} (Please select exactly one of the following fields)

- Yes
- No

If you have selected "Yes", complete the rest of the form. If you have selected "No", simply fill in the place, date and signature below.

I have used the following generative AI based systems in the creation of this thesis:^{2,3}

1. ChatGPT
2. Perplexity
3. Google Gemini

(List other systems if others were used)

I further declare that I

- have actively informed myself about the capabilities and limitations of the above-mentioned AI systems to the extent that I can use them responsibly,
- have labelled the content taken from the AI systems listed above with my details in the table below,
- have verified that the content generated by the above-mentioned AI systems and adopted by me is factually correct,
- am aware that, as the author of this work, I am responsible for the information and statements made in it.
- am aware that the violation of the disclosure of the use of generative AI in my work is a deception and leads to an evaluation with an insufficient grade.

¹ If parts of the work are written jointly with co-authors, this declaration also refers to their use of generative AI, insofar as this concerns work steps to which you have also made a contribution. In the case of joint work with co-authors, you must also submit a co-authorship declaration with your dissertation or habilitation thesis. In this declaration, you indicate the areas of contribution of a scientific article to which you have contributed. In the following, you must state to the best of your knowledge and belief whether and how generative AI was used in these areas of contribution in relation to your examination. To do this, you must obtain information from your co-authors. If scientific articles in your thesis contain areas of contribution in which you were not involved according to the co-author declaration, no declaration on the use of generative AI must be submitted for these contribution areas.

²This declaration does not apply to the use of basic widely used tools for checking spelling and grammar, translating texts and improving software quality for data analysis and software prototypes.

³ If you are unsure whether an IT system used is a generative AI system and/or whether you need to declare it, declare it.

I have applied the above-mentioned AI systems as indicated below.

Areas of contribution	AI system(s) used		Description of the manner of use and compliance with good scientific practice, if necessary separately by chapter of the work
Development and conception of the research project	None		
Collection and evaluation of literature sources	2		Chapter 5: Support with the initial literature search.
Elaboration, collection and/or procurement of data	1, 3		Chapter 3.1: Use of ChatGPT to generate ideas and formulate the interview guide. Chapter 4.2: Using Gemini for extensive linguistic revision of the invitation text for the experiment.
Processing of data	None		
Selection of methodology	None		
Programming	1, 3		Chapter 4.2: Pair programming of the experimental software with ChatGPT. Formatting the entire dissertation: Using ChatGPT and Gemini to identify suitable commands and generate code snippets for formatting with LaTeX.
Analysis/evaluation of the data/sources	None		
Interpretation of the analysis/evaluation and derivation of conclusions	1		Chapter 4.2, 5: Pair programming of the scripts for data analysis.
Writing of the manuscript: Creation of visualizations	None		
Writing of the manuscript: Structuring the text	3		Chapters 2.2 and 2.3: Initial outline.
Writing of the manuscript: Formulation of text	None		
Writing of the manuscript: Revision of text	1, 3		Linguistic refinement ("copyediting") of the entire text on the basis of Gemini suggestions. Chapters 1, 5: extensive editing using ChatGPT to achieve stylistic improvement.
Further contributions			

Place, Date, Signature