

Ethical Guidelines for AI Use

Social and Cultural Anthropology | University of Bayreuth

This guideline provides students in Social and Cultural Anthropology courses at the University of Bayreuth with questions to self-assess their AI use in academic work.

As anthropologists, we understand anthropology and the social sciences to be about understanding the world in its complexity and multiplicity, led by critical reflection on our biases and assumptions. We are committed to the cultivation of our own unique perspectives, drawing on lived experience and careful attention to detail to rethink ideas about the world in unexpected ways. We strive to encounter human and nonhuman beings with tolerance, sensitivity, respect, and curiosity. We take academic work to be a creative craft, which includes acquiring skills such as source work, critical reading, and ethnographic writing. We think of learning as a messy process that relies on and builds community, and grows from the courage to fail.

The following questions encourage and enable students to reflect on the academic, political, ethical, and practical implications of using AI in anthropology assignments, helping them evaluate how it shapes their learning.

Transparency: Have I been transparent about how and where I have used AI (including by completing the "Declaration on AI usage")?

Originality: Have I made use of my lived experience, creative potential, and independent thinking in this assignment?

Discernment: Have I considered how the AI tools I use are trained, and whether they risk reproducing biases, assumptions or generalisations I want to think beyond?

Diversity: Have I considered multiple avenues to find and engage with literature and other scientific sources (e.g. library databases, bibliographies, literature review essays, and my university community)?

Learning: Has my approach to the assignment helped me cultivate my own ideas, writing voice, and style of thinking? Has it helped me connect with others in my class or my research?

Ethics: Have I considered the environmental and human costs of my AI usage (e.g. pollution, unsustainable water and electricity use, unpaid labour)? Do the tasks I delegate to AI justify these costs?