

Idea/Policy:	Generative AI [link to policy]
Date/Time/Location:	10 th February 2026 / 11:00 – 12:00 / MS Teams
Student Attendees:	Jacob Dyke, Education Officer – Chair (JD) Max Williams, Sustainability Officer (MW) Aliasgar Gandhi, Postgraduate Students Officer (AG) Fern Warwick, Student Proposer (FW)
Staff Attendees:	Jane Baston, Student Voice & Rep Manager – Staff (JB) Chloe Batten, Student Voice Coordinator (Democratic Engagement) – Secretary (CB)
Apologies:	N/A
Actions/Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ CB and FW discuss amendments to policy preamble ▪ CB send policy to ASV

Minutes

JB shares policy and group discuss

Discussion begins around the first paragraph “the Guild will look to change...”

FW asks why “discourage” is used rather than stronger wording. “Discourage” makes it broad. Concerns that it might not have any real effect/impact or might not achieve aims of what the policy intended.

MW agrees discourage might not be strong enough. Paragraph covers both staff and student groups, MW suggests separating them out. Student groups to be discouraged because we can't police them internally, and stronger wording for staff.

FW explains she wrote the policy because Guild comms and marketing put out a post about AI around Grad Ball last year. Was annoyed that the Guild as an institution, where students have input into its decisions, is pushing AI. Asks what can we ensure the Guild does as an institution? Putting out resources telling groups why AI is bad is fine but we can go further.

MW – makes distinction between two uses of AI – marketing graphics which don't need AI, and then people also will use it in ways that we can't do anything about. Personally, doesn't think AI is needed. Should be about only using AI unless absolutely needed.

FW – AI is broad/encompasses many types and uses. Grammarly uses generative AI and agrees that it's a good use. Issues more around using gen AI to make content rather than as an "assistant". Recognises "assistant" is also a broad term. There's a difference between using Grammarly vs using AI to summarise documents, if not needed. Would be against the latter because of impact on environment and the AI makes mistakes.

JB amends policy to reflect the discussion. Group members agree with change.

Second paragraph

JB: in terms of election regulations and how we enforce them, it is pretty much impossible to enforce a blanket ban. It's a judgement call on whether AI has been used unless, for example, we ask students to send tracked changes of documents. It's come up in previous elections where students think people are using AI in manifestos.

When considering 'fairness', gen AI is something everyone can access. If the use of it is a disqualifying offence, we need to be able to prove it. Hence why the previous action group edited the policy to *discourage* candidates from using it.

AG: why are we not encouraging students to use it in the most sustainable and environmentally friendly ways? Have we looked at the cost/benefit analysis? AG is pro-AI because it can be a good tool.

JD – requests this question be held to the next point

JD: Students can spot when a manifesto has been completely made by AI. Agrees with JB as we will need to create a new appeals process. This could be weaponised against certain students by accusing them of using AI if a staff member desired to.

MW: The enacting of it might be too complicated

FW: Can we approach the issue from a voter perspective such as encouraging voters to be aware of candidates using AI? FW also acknowledges this could be a bad idea

AG is not for banning the use of AI. If international students have only been here for 4 months, using AI to help shape their manifesto is helpful. They can use AI to research higher education in the UK and pressing issues for international students, for example. AI might make things fairer for international and disadvantaged students.

JB – This is about the elections team having conversations with candidates and supporting them by explaining that if they want to have a good manifesto we wouldn't recommend using AI. Writing a good manifesto means you're more likely to be elected.

CB – adds in response to AG's comments on fairness that the elections team offers specific training on manifesto writing

MW – do we want to keep “discourage” or should we encourage candidates to use gen AI thoughtfully? Personally, “prefers discourage”.

AG – discusses benefits of AI, particularly around employability. Suggests screening people's manifestos.

FW is amenable to the policy being changed. Understands Ali's points. From viewpoint of having gone through an election, writing a manifesto was hard but fulfilling. Even if you go on to work for an employer that wants use of AI, you have gained good skills. AI can lead to hallucinations - you can't just copy and paste. Saying “encourage candidates to use responsibly” might lead to students missing the “responsibly” part and taking it as just encouragement. While “encourage” isn't the right wording we do acknowledge that candidates will use it. We should acknowledge that learning how to write a manifesto is part of the learning process.

JD disagrees with acknowledgement that students may use for idea generation addition JB has added

CB: advises that the purpose of policy is to take a stance and will students vote on it. Writing that we discourage use of AI but also acknowledge it may be used for idea generation is perhaps saying two different things. It is ok for the policy to be led by FW's ideas as the proposer of the policy. Acknowledges Ali's international perspective is useful and requested, especially so for the following paragraph on what the Guild will lobby the university on. The university already has its own policies and so language around “encouraging” sustainable use might be more effective here, whereas if you want the Guild to take a different stance, we can use stronger language in the policy. CB suggests the paragraph might not need the added but “but recognise...” clause, as the clause before encompasses the policy's stance for the Guild.

JD suggests a vote on whether to include the extra clause or not in, “the Guild will discourage candidates from use of gen ai *but recognise they may use it...*”

Max – saying “discourage candidates in their final submission” covers it – the final product should be human written even if might have AI input.

Ali – votes to include second clause. Argues the first sentence alone is restrictive, doesn't paint the full picture. Even if we mean the whole thing students might think they can't use any AI.

Fern – the first version looks good

Majority vote is to remove the second clause of the sentence.

MW – Even though it's not included, it can still be mentioned when we do training and manifesto writing workshops. The Guild can say it might be useful but generally we would discourage. We can give more detail of how the policy is enacted at other points.

Ali – This is the policy that 48000 students will see, not all students will attend training so would have preferred it to be more explicit in the policy. However, is happy with the vote.

Final paragraph

FW – happy with it as is.

JD suggests adding “university approved Gen AI tools” to first bullet point

FW – good point. It's been known in peer reviewing for a student to put someone else's assignment into Chat GPT, which is now on the internet without their consent.

Ali – thinks it looks fair

MW – first section about “the Guild will look to change” should be taken out and taken to the E&E group.

JB – we would have to create that as a separate policy. Officers can still take ideas forward even if it doesn't pass the ASV.

Ali – What do we define as “absolutely necessary” in the use of AI? The defining of this and what is good or bad ethical use would be needed.

MW: up for E&E committee to define/decide

FW – questions whether the original preamble is update

JD – actions FW to talk to CB and to send to JD. Happy to get rid of preamble

AG: do we need FTO/trustees to approve and sign off?

JB: we report ideas to trustee board who can reject if they want to. We pass by James/Jo before sending to ASV

Meeting concludes.