Gen AI Researchers' Checklist

Purpose and Permissions

☐ Consider the purpose of using Gen AI in your research; what specific research tasks do you intend to use Gen AI for and should you be using it for that purpose.

☐ Check that the use of Gen AI is permitted in your:

- **ethics protocols (including participant consent),**

- **funding agreements,**

- **journal guidelines for the journal you are intending to publish your research findings,**

- **data sharing agreements, and**

- **commercial contracts.**

Consideration: Are there restrictions in place about who can access your data, where it can transit/be stored, how long it can be retained by certain parties and/or whether it can be shared with third parties?

Data Privacy and Security

☐ Identify which Gen AI tool are you intending to use e.g. cloud based, open access, local tools without connection to the cloud, or the University-protected tool Copilot.

☐ Is the selected Gen AI tool appropriate for the classification of your data?

- **Public data** is generally safe to upload into Gen AI tools. You can use external tools (cloud and open access), local and/or the University-protected tool. However, check if the public material is subject to any copyright restrictions See Copyright permissions.

- **Protected data can only be uploaded to the University-protected tool – Copilot.** Caution should be taken when uploading any Intellectual Property as this tool does send the data offshore for a short period of time. Local Gen AI tools that aren't connected to the cloud may be approved for use with protected data on a case-by-case basis.

- **Highly Protected data should not be uploaded into any Gen AI tool including the University-protected tool.** There may be severe risks and privacy impacts for individuals.

☐ Does the tool handle data privacy in a way that meets University research data management requirements?

- [ ] Determine if you can use the University's protected tool Copilot for the use you are interested in.
- [ ] Identify the implications for the data that you want to upload to the tool and if you have the necessary permissions.
- [ ] Read the Gen AI tools' terms and conditions.

Considerations: Is data that you input into the Gen AI tool sent outside NSW, Australia? Who has access to the data? How long is it retained by third parties? What are the tool's security certifications?

Intellectual Property & Copyright Concerns

- [ ] Have you considered who will own the content generated by Gen AI?
- [ ] Determine if the information or data you want to upload includes sensitive or proprietary information?
  - o If so, you should not upload that content as you may risk relinquishing intellectual property and confidential research ideas.
- [ ] Determine if the uploaded data includes any unpublished data or manuscripts?
  - o If so, you should not upload that content as you may risk relinquishing intellectual property and confidential research ideas
- [ ] Is there copyright, licensing agreements or terms of service in place for the input that you want to upload into the Gen AI tool?
  - o If so, you could be non-compliant with policies and may breach copyright. Note, copyright agreements may apply to your own published work and/or other content. Content accessed through the University Library's databases and eResources should never be uploaded to Gen AI as they are subject to Copyright.

Integration, Cost and Accessibility

- [ ] Does the tool need to be set up on your computer as a local system with cyber security sign off?
  - o If so, please get in contact with cyber security to have your tool assessed.
- [ ] Determine if there are any costs for using the tool.
- [ ] Determine if the tool you want to use for the research project is accessible to all researchers in your field or are there limitations.
- [ ] Are you unsure about how to use a tool and get the most out of it for your research project?
  - o If so, please reach out to the Sydney Informatics Hub for assistance.

Publishing Policies and Peer Review

☐ Check the journal guidelines for the journals you are hoping to publish in, at the start of your project and ensure that they allow the use of Gen AI as you intend to use it.

☐ Read your journal's policies surrounding sharing or licensing of your published work for the training of Gen AI models, including correctly attributing or acknowledging use of Gen AI.

☐ Ensure that you don't breach policies regarding the use of Gen AI for peer review purposes outlined by Publishers or Funding bodies. You should NEVER upload a draft manuscript into Gen AI to do a peer review for you.

Record Keeping and attribution statements

☐ Ensure that you can demonstrate what your contribution is and what Gen AI's role is in the research. You must be able to *verify* and *replicate* your research processes and findings. Since Gen AI tools produce output which can differ each time even with identical inputs, you should keep a record of all prompt inputs and generated outputs. You may be required to quantify the contribution that Gen AI has made to your research.

☐ Research students are required to have a Gen AI attribution statement in their thesis and should refer to the ***Generative AI guidelines for Research Students*** for example statements. Researchers should read through the journal's author guidelines they wish to publish in, to determine the style and type of statement that is needed.

Reliability, Bias and Ethical Considerations

☐ Has the Gen AI tool been evaluated for biased output? Are there transparency measures in place for how the AI generates its outputs?

☐ What measures have been instigated in your research methodology to mitigate any biased or inaccurate output?

If there are any points on this checklist you are unsure about during the assessment of your Gen AI tool, please contact the Research Data Consultant team (digital.research@sydney.edu.au).