GA publications and web AI guidelines

While we acknowledge that AI has almost endless applications, its use in our professional work and business comes with risks. As with any other tool, AI should be used with care and attention. These guidelines outline some acceptable and non-acceptable uses of AI for those creating, editing and publishing content at and for the Geographical Association (GA). GA staff should ensure all external colleagues they work with are aware of these guidelines, which are also published at https://geography.org.uk/get-connected/write-for-ga

However you plan to use AI, always bear in mind the following principles:

- Do not use AI in any way that risks sharing anyone's personal data, confidential/sensitive business information or copyrighted material – even the GA's.
- Do not use AI if it could lead to reputational damage for you and/or the GA.
- Do not use AI if it goes against the GA's ethical guidelines or it feels wrong (think about whether you and/or the GA would be happy to publicly acknowledge that AI was used for this purpose).
- Given that all AI output needs to be checked carefully for errors, bias, source info, etc., consider if it is truly the 'best' (be that quickest, easiest or cheapest) way to undertake the task.

If unsure, GA staff should speak to their line manager and external partners to their GA contact.

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Use of AI by Publications and Web team and other GA staff creating content

Use of AI by external partners

As this technology and our understanding of it are changing rapidly, this policy will be reviewed regularly.

Geographical Association

Use of AI by Publications and Web team and other GA staff creating content

AI use	Permitted or not	AI engine	Notes
Uploading GA content, including that written yourself, to check SPaG etc.	Not permitted and not needed as we have editorial staff. If you want to run a quick check, the review function in Word is just as good as AI.	n/a	
Uploading GA content, including that written yourself, to create summaries, blurbs, marketing materials	Permitted only for small amounts of text. Full or large sections of books or articles should not be uploaded.	Microsoft Copilot* only	Always check the output carefully for errors, tone, bias, GA house style, etc.
Uploading external content, e.g. to create summaries/notes to help with a project	Not permitted unless the text is available in the Public Domain or under a suitable Creative Commons licence, or you have the copyright owners' permission.	Copilot only	
To record meetings or take notes/minutes	Permitted within Teams – use the record function for transcripts then run through Copilot for notes and summaries.	Copilot	Always let attendees know that you are recording the meeting.
To create images	Not permitted to create photorealistic images of people or places. Permitted for general diagrams/graphics if use is acknowledged, including which AI engine was used. If creating data-based visuals – e.g. graphs, charts, choropleth maps – the data used must have been obtained from a verifiable source NOT generated from AI (see below).	Copilot	Images created must be checked carefully to ensure all aspects are correct.
To edit images	Minor tweaks permitted if this is allowed under terms of the image's re-use. Avoid editing people in photographs if possible. Any manipulation of images must be acknowledged.	Copilot or Canva's AI engine	Always save as a new file and keep a record of what has been changed.
To generate data, e.g. to include in text or graphs/charts	Not permitted. All data should be generated from verifiable sources.	n/a	
To generate ideas, e.g. for marketing campaigns, for web policies	Permitted.	Copilot	
To generate new text/materials, e.g. for web pages, new resources	Not permitted. AI should not be the author of GA materials.	n/a	
To check facts/find out information	Permitted but always ask AI to name its sources within the search and ensure these are reliable.	Copilot	Remember that Google/search engines still exist (ignoring the AI summaries).

* Microsoft Copilot is available as part of the GA's Microsoft package and is 'closed', meaning that content fed into it is not being passed on for further AI use.

Use of AI by external partners

This includes, but is not limited to, book and journal authors, series editors, journal editors, reviewers, copy editors, proofreaders, editorial/web project managers, illustrators, designers and cartographers. Note: *Geography* authors and editors should refer to T&F's policies on AI use.

AI use	**Permitted or not**
To undertake the work for which the GA is paying you a fee	Not permitted without prior permission. If we know or suspect content has been AI-generated, relevant action will be taken.
To generate written content for e.g. books, resources or articles	Not permitted – AI should not be the author/creator of GA materials. If we know or suspect content has been AI-generated, relevant action will be taken.
To generate visual material	Not permitted to create photorealistic images of people or places. Permitted for general diagrams/graphics if use is acknowledged, including which AI engine was used. If creating data-based visuals – e.g. graphs, charts, choropleth maps – the data used must have been obtained from a verifiable source NOT generated from AI (see below). If you are unable to source a suitable image for a project please talk to your GA contact.
To generate data, e.g. to include in text or graphs/charts	Not permitted. All data should be generated from verifiable sources.
Uploading material you have written for the GA to check spelling, punctuation and grammar, or to tweak text for improvement, before submitting	Not permitted and not needed as the GA employs professional copy editors for all its projects. If you want to run a quick check, please use the review facility in Word (or a similar program), which works just as well as AI.
Uploading GA published content, written by either yourself or others, e.g. to create summaries or make notes to assist with a project	Not permitted without GA prior approval.
To generate ideas, e.g. for journal articles	Permitted, if these are jumping-off points only and not the actual content. If relevant to the project, you may need to acknowledge how and where AI was used.
To check facts/find out information	Permitted, but always ask the AI to name its sources within the search and ensure these are reliable. You will need to acknowledge how and where AI was used. Remember that Google and other search engines are still available.