

ICCA Policy on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) by Bar Students

Introduction

There is widespread advancement in the way in which barristers and the judiciary are working with technology, yet we still have much to learn about how generative AI models will impact legal practice in the short and medium term. As a result of the speed at which developments are being made, there is a complex ethical landscape for Bar students and Bar training institutions to navigate.

The ICCA recognises that it has a responsibility to prepare Bar students for what lies ahead in practice. Equally, we have a duty to our students and to the profession more widely, to ensure that the highest academic standards are maintained.

Whilst AI improves every day, the current AI tools generate responses that are based on human-created data. As such, they might, for example, replicate societal biases and stereotypes that are embedded in the information they have been trained upon.

Academics in the field have produced a paper which explores the current debates around generative AI within education, the need for a broader perspective on AI's role in this domain, and outlines areas for which further investigation is needed. It also proposes a framework for AI education emphasising a responsible approach.ⁱ Some researchers in legal education have been far more critical of the risks that AI use in higher education poses to the successful acquisition of the critical reasoning skills crucial for legal practice.ⁱⁱ

Our validating partner *King's College London*, were one of the contributors to the [Russell Group's five principles on the use of generative AI tools in education](#), which are:

- Universities will support students and staff to become AI-literate
- Staff should be equipped to support students to use generative AI tools effectively and appropriately in their learning experience
- Universities will adapt teaching and assessment to incorporate the ethical use of generative AI and support equal access
- Universities will ensure academic rigour and integrity is upheld
- Universities will work collaboratively to share best practice as the technology and its application in education evolves.

These principles have been adopted by the ICCA, and they are central to the policies that we are now putting in place in relation to the use of generative AI by staff and students. As a guiding principle, we encourage all staff and students to *be critically reflective in their interactions with and use of generative AI*.

In the same way as our validating partner has articulated its aims, we will *‘follow and champion ethical and critical practices that seek authentic, accurate and safe use of any generative AI tool that is sustainable and values user empowerment.’*

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide clear guidance on the responsible and ethical use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools by students enrolled on the ICCA Bar Course. This policy seeks to recognise the importance of developing AI literacy among students and staff, to regulate the ethical use of AI, to maintain academic rigour and integrity throughout the Bar Course and to start to prepare students for practice at the Bar.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- Anyone who has enrolled as an ICCA student, until such time as they are ‘unenrolled’ from the course by virtue of completing the ICCA Bar Course (whether successfully or unsuccessfully), having their period of registration terminated, or withdrawing from the course.
- All AI tools, including but not limited to generative AI (e.g., ChatGPT, Google Gemini, Microsoft Co-Pilot, Claude, Bard), automated legal research platforms, and AI-assisted writing, transcription, or translation services.

3. ICCA Principles

1. ***Integrity and Independence:*** Students must ensure that their work represents their own words, ideas, analysis and reasoning.
2. ***Transparency:*** The use of AI must be openly declared where required.
3. ***Confidentiality:*** AI must not be used to process or disclose any information that is confidential, personal, or case-sensitive.
4. ***Competence:*** Students must critically assess the accuracy and reliability of AI outputs before relying on them. See also [Ayinde -v- London Borough of Haringey](#), [and Al-Haroun -v- Qatar National Bank](#) .
5. ***Professional Ethics:*** Rule rC20 of the BSB Handbook makes clear that barristers are personally responsible for their own conduct and for their own professional work. The core duties and conduct rules engaged by the use of AI in practice are explained in the [BSB Code Guidance on the use of Artificial Technologies and Other Technologies](#). Barristers must use their own professional judgement in relation to those matters on which they are instructed and be able to justify their decisions and actions. The Bar Council has also [published guidance](#).

Your use of AI must align with the ethical standards expected of barristers, including duties to the court, clients, and the administration of justice. We will hold you to this standard whilst you are a student on the ICCA Bar Course.

<https://www.barcouncilethics.co.uk/documents/considerations-when-using-chatgpt-and-generative->

[ai-software-based-on-large-language-models/](#)

4. Acceptable Uses

Examples of acceptable AI use include:

- Research support: locating cases, legislation, or commentary but it must not be used to circumvent the requirements of any assessment or any coursework that mandates a student to conduct non-AI supported legal research.
- Language assistance: improving clarity, grammar, or spelling.
- Practice exercises: generating practice scenarios or mock questions for learning, provided confidential information and ICCA materials are not shared.
- Accessibility support: assisting with language translation or text-to-speech functions.
- Administrative tasks: formatting documents, organising schedules.

5. Prohibited Uses

AI tools must **not** be used for:

- Assessment cheating: generating or substantially completing assessed work.
- Undisclosed assistance: using AI without declaring it where required by assessment rules.
- Fabricating content: creating or relying on false case law, legislation, or facts. It is your responsibility to check the existence and veracity of any sources you cite in your work.
- Confidentiality breaches: entering real client, case, or privileged information into AI tools. In addition, students are not permitted to upload ICCA copyrighted assessment or teaching materials into any AI software / chatbot.
- Delegating legal reasoning: relying on AI to wholly replace personal legal analysis. See the section on ***Professional Ethics*** above.
- Use in Final Assessments: the BSB does not permit the use of AI to generate content for any work submitted for a summative assessment (including the

generation of questions for use in oral skills assessments) unless the student has a Personalised Assessment Arrangement that allows for this. The use of software for English grammar and spell checking is permitted. When submitting any work for a final assessment, students will be deemed to have confirmed that no part of their submission has been generated by AI software (see Monitoring and Compliance, below).

6. Declaration and Attribution

Where an in-course activity permits AI use, students must provide a clear statement describing:

- The AI tool used.
- The nature and extent of its contribution.

Students should complete the following declaration and append it with any in-course work. Please note that so long as acknowledged AI use falls within the scope of appropriate use as defined in the student instructions/guidance then this will not have any direct impact on the grade awarded.

This Declaration is an important reflective step. You should consider whether a declaration is necessary before submitting any work to the ICCA.

“I declare that parts of this submission have contributions from AI software and that it aligns with acceptable use as specified as part of the assignment brief/guidance and is consistent with good academic practice. The content can still be considered as my own words. I understand that as long as my use falls within the scope of appropriate use as defined in the student instructions/guidance then this declaration will not have any direct impact on the grades awarded.

I acknowledge use of software to *[include as appropriate]*:

(i) Generate ideas or structure suggestions, for assistance with understanding core concepts, or other substantial foundational and preparatory activity.

[insert AI tool(s) and links and/or how used]

(ii) Write, rewrite, rephrase and/or paraphrase part of this piece of work.

[insert AI tool(s) and links]

(iii) Generate some other aspect of the submitted work.

[insert AI tool(s) and links]/include brief details]"

In order for the ICCA to model open and honest practice the same expectations will apply when we use AI to help to generate academic materials so that, if generative AI software has been used, you will see this statement: *[name/s/programme or module team] acknowledge/s the use of [named generative AI software] to [define purposes]*.

7. Monitoring and Compliance

The ICCA reserves the right to investigate suspected misuse of AI.

AI misuse in assessments will be treated as academic misconduct under the [ICCA Academic Misconduct Regulations](#). Note: Any misconduct procedures will continue to apply in cases where misconduct, whether academic or non-academic, is alleged to have taken place while enrolled as an ICCA student, even if that individual is subsequently 'unenrolled'.

8. Support and Guidance

- Students can seek clarification on AI use from the Director of Education or the Joint Directors of Online Learning.
- Training will be provided on the ethical and practical use of AI in legal practice.

9. Review

This policy will be reviewed annually to reflect developments in technology, legal education, and professional regulation.

Date adopted: 30 July 2026

Next review date: 30 July 2027

Approved by: Lynda Gibbs KC, Dean of ICCA

ⁱ Bentley, Caitlin and Aicardi, Christine and Poveda, Sammia C. and Magela Cunha, Leonardo and Kohan Marzagao, David and Glover, Richard and Rigley, Eryn and Walker, Simon and Compton, Martin and Acar, Oguz A, A Framework for Responsible AI Education: A Working Paper (August 17, 2023). Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=4544010> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.4544010>

ⁱⁱ Michael Veale, Isra Black, Mark Dsouza, Matthew Fisher, Mujtaba Ghaus, Thea Gibbs, Orla Lynskey, Colm O’Cinneide, Eloise Scotford, Olga Thomas, Alina Trapova, Kimberley Trapp (2025) ‘Artificial Intelligence, Education and Assessment at UCL Laws: Current Thinking and Next Steps for the UK Legal Education Sector’, [UCL Legal Studies Research Paper Series 04/2025](#).