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Generative Artificial Intelligence in Education and Research: User Guidelines and Policy



1. Preamble

At NMIMS, we stand at the forefront of technological advancement, embracing the transformative potential of Generative AI (Gen AI) to revolutionize our educational landscape. We recognize that Gen AI holds immense promise in enhancing creativity, fostering innovation, and driving productivity across a myriad of academic and administrative domains. As we integrate Gen AI into our university's fabric, we do so with a clear vision of harnessing its power to enrich educational experience, advance research capabilities, and streamline administrative processes.

Our positive stance on Gen AI is underscored by our commitment to prepare our students and faculty for a future where artificial intelligence plays a pivotal role in various sectors. We believe that by incorporating Gen AI into our curriculum, research, and operations, we can cultivate a generation of forward-thinking leaders who are adept at leveraging cutting-edge technologies to address complex challenges.

However, we recognize that with the great potential of Gen AI comes the responsibility of ensuring that it is used ethically and responsibly. At NMIMS, we are keenly aware of the need for robust checks and balances to govern the use of Gen AI. We understand that different types of users within the university—students, faculty, researchers, and administrators—have varied needs and responsibilities. Therefore, our guidelines are designed to provide clear and specific directives for each user group, ensuring that Gen AI is utilized in a manner that upholds our values of ethical standards, academic integrity and data privacy.

For students, our guidelines emphasize the importance of using Gen AI as a tool for learning and innovation while maintaining the originality and authenticity of their academic work. For faculty and researchers, the focus is on harnessing Gen AI to push the boundaries of knowledge and innovation, while adhering to ethical research practices. For administrative staff, Gen AI is seen as a means to enhance efficiency and service delivery, with strict protocols to protect sensitive information and maintain data security.

Through thoughtful integration and mindful oversight, NMIMS University is dedicated to leveraging Gen AI to create a brighter, more compassionate future. We are committed to fostering an environment where Gen AI is a catalyst for positive change, driving us towards our goal of becoming a leader in technological and educational excellence. By setting clear guidelines and fostering a culture of responsible AI use, we aim to ensure that Gen AI serves as a powerful ally in our mission to educate, innovate, and inspire.

2. About the Policy

2.1.Scope: This policy applies to all members of the NMIMS community, including students, faculty, staff, and researchers.

2.2.Rationale: Gen AI tools have a far-reaching impact on teaching, learning and research. As such, a need was felt to make the University's stance clear, to offer guidelines on responsible usage and to make known the consequences of misuse of Gen AI tools. The University recognizes the potential of Gen AI yet is mindful of its ill effects and therefore adopts a flexible approach towards Gen AI usage – one that on

a case-by-case basis may range from whole-heartedly embracing the technology to using it with caution and attribution to prohibition.

2.3.Feature: Given the fast-paced and unpredictable changes in Gen AI's capabilities and its impact on education and research, the policy will be revisited and revised as and when required.

3. Ethical Use

3.1.Respect for human dignity: Respect for human dignity is understood as a cornerstone principle and one that is non-negotiable. The principle emphasizes the ethical responsibility we all share when utilizing these tools. Here's a breakdown of what it means in this context:

3.1.1. Upholding Fundamental Rights: Generative AI should never be used to infringe upon the fundamental rights of individuals. This includes, but is not limited to, the right to privacy, freedom from discrimination, and protection from harm.

3.1.2. Prohibition on Offensive Content: The creation and dissemination of content that is offensive, hateful, or discriminatory is strictly prohibited. This includes content that targets individuals or groups based on religion, gender, caste, race, sexual orientation, disability, or any other protected characteristic.

3.1.3. Protecting Privacy: When using generative AI tools, users should be mindful of the data they input. Users are warned against inputting private or confidential information. Additionally, the outputs generated by AI tools should not reveal sensitive details about individuals.

3.1.4. Promoting Respectful Communication: Generative AI can be a powerful tool for communication. However, it is crucial to ensure that the content generated fosters respectful and inclusive dialogue. Gen AI should not be to create content that dehumanizes anyone, promotes stereotypes, or incites violence.

3.2.Academic Integrity: NMIMS is a forward-looking university. It is also steadfastly committed to nurturing a culture of academic honesty and integrity. As such, we embrace and encourage the use of Gen AI tools for the revolutionary potential they hold. Simultaneously though we are cautious regarding the misuse of these tools in ways that hinder true learning, skill development, originality and what in summary we might call the development of human intelligence. In principle, the University encourages a flexible framework where the nature of the task determines the correct, ethical use of these tools. The subsequent sections of the policy provide clear guidelines regarding responsible use and the consequences of the failure to do so.

4. Confidentiality and Data Privacy

NMIMS steadfastly upholds the principle of protecting the confidentiality of all stakeholders and the University. All users of Gen AI tools must therefore educate themselves about the potential threats to confidentiality that may arise due to such usage. They must be able to: identify confidential data, be cautious while inputting any data, be cautious while disseminating any output generated by Gen AI, familiarize themselves with data protection laws and seek guidance when in doubt.

4.1.Identifying Confidential Data: Recognize the types of data considered confidential within NMIMS. This might include personally identifiable information (PII) of students, faculty, staff, or researchers. Additionally, proprietary information, trade secrets, and intellectual property fall under the umbrella of confidential data.

4.2.Securing Confidential/Personal Data: Users must refrain from feeding any form of confidential or sensitive data into generative AI systems. This includes names, addresses, phone numbers, financial information, or any data that could be used to identify or harm individuals or compromise privacy or intellectual property.

4.3.Data Protection Laws: Users should familiarize themselves with laws such as India Digital Personal Data Protection Act 2023 (DPDPA), EU GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) or US HIPAA (Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act) depending on the type of data involved. These laws outline specific requirements for data collection, storage, and use.

4.4.Understanding AI Tool's Data Practices: Users should investigate the data practices of the generative AI tools they intend to use. Some tools may anonymize user data, while others may retain it for improvement purposes. Understanding these practices is crucial for ensuring confidentiality.

4.5.Seeking Clarification: If users are unsure about the confidentiality status of data or have questions regarding its use with generative AI, they must consult the NMIMS IT department.

5. Responsible Deployment

5.1.Informed Use: While Gen AI can offer content at the click of a button, users need to be aware that this is unverified content. The following measures ensure more responsible use of this technology:

5.1.1. Understanding Limitations:

5.1.1.1. Awareness of Algorithmic Biases: Generative AI tools are trained on massive datasets. However, the tools are susceptible to biases present within the data they are trained on. For instance, a language model trained on biased news articles may perpetuate stereotypes in its generated text. These biases can manifest in factual inaccuracies, skewed perspectives, or unfair representations in the generated content. Users can mitigate bias by selecting a tool wisely. Users must look for tools that have been trained on diverse datasets to minimize the risk of bias in the generated content.

5.1.1.2. Disclosure of Limitations: When incorporating AI-generated content into one's work, users must be aware of the limitations of the tool and content generated. They should acknowledge the possibility of bias and the need for human verification.

5.1.2. Verification before Use: Users should not blindly accept AI-generated content as factual and correct. They should critically evaluate the outputs for accuracy and reliability. There are various ways in which one can verify content, some of these include: using fact checking tools such as Snopes, SciCheck, Media Bias/Fact Check; seeking expert review; seeking reviews from colleagues or reviewers; referring to published research.

5.1.3. Awareness of and Adherence to User Agreements: Providers of Gen AI tools state terms and conditions outlining how user data is collected, stored, and used. They may specify limitations on data types, anonymization requirements, or restrictions on commercial use of generated content. Users must carefully review these terms before accepting them. Once accepted, following these terms ensures responsible data usage practices and avoids potential legal or ethical disputes.

5.1.4. Competent Use: Users should cultivate a critical approach while evaluating the information generated by Gen AI. This includes questioning the source, purpose, and potential biases inherent in AI-generated content. They should be transparent and demarcate the contribution of AI content as well as discuss the strengths and limitations caused by using AI tools. They should at all times consider the ethical implications of their use of Gen AI.

5.1.5. Attributions: Users must clearly identify AI generated content and use different formatting styles for human and AI content. Correctly citing AI content involves including the name of the AI tool, the date of access, and any relevant parameters used for generation.

5.2.Adherence to Non-Malicious Use: NMIMS is committed to fostering a community built on truth, integrity, and ethical conduct. This extends to the use of generative AI tools, which hold immense power but also carry the potential for misuse. As such, all stakeholders at NMIMS must ensure that the technology is not used for any harmful purposes such as, but not limited to - fabricating news, or data, or records; spreading falsehood in any form; creating, retrieving or

circulating information that could cause harm. AI should also not be used for malicious purposes such as identity theft, phishing scams, or financial fraud.

6. Training and Support

6.1.Training: NMIMS recognizes the importance of continually educating its community towards: advancements in the field of Gen AI, its potential, its risks, its limitations, and methods of fair use. The university also recognizes the need to impart technical training to its stakeholders so that users may make the most of Gen AI tools. Towards this end, the university will host workshops, guest lectures, and training sessions and share information via newsletters, blogs and emails.

6.2.Support: NMIMS recognizes that navigating the complexities of Gen AI can be challenging. To empower its community towards responsible AI use, NMIMS offers a comprehensive support system.

6.2.1. Ethics Advisory Groups: The University's ethics advisory groups having experts from computer science, AI, social science, law, philosophy, ethics and school/domain specific experts will guide researchers and students in matters such as fair use, risks, and attribution.

6.2.2. Technical Support Teams: These teams will provide users with technical assistance, such as: troubleshooting technical problems encountered while using generative AI tools; answering questions about the technical capabilities and limitations of specific tools; providing guidance on optimizing use of generative AI tools for desired outcomes.

6.2.3. Centralized Online Repository: An online repository comprising FAQ's, tutorials, case studies, training modules will be available for continuous learning.

6.3.Benefits of Utilizing Support Resources:

6.3.1. Promoting Confidence: Access to expert guidance and technical support fosters confidence in navigating the complexities of generative AI. This empowers users to leverage its potential while mitigating risks.

6.3.2. Ensuring Compliance: By consulting with support resources, users can ensure that the use of generative AI adheres to NMIMS policies, data protection laws, and ethical best practices.

6.3.3. Fostering Collaboration: The support system encourages collaboration within the NMIMS community. Users can learn from the experiences of others and at the same time contribute their knowledge to promote responsible AI use across disciplines.

6.4.NMIMS's Commitment to Ongoing Support: The University is committed to continually refining its support system. This includes:

6.4.1. User Feedback Mechanisms: NMIMS will establish channels for users to provide feedback on the effectiveness of the support resources and identify areas for improvement.

6.4.2. Expanding Expertise: The University will continually seek the guidance of experts in the field to ensure adequate and timely response.

7. Compliance - Monitoring and Reporting:

NMIMS is committed to fostering a culture of responsible Gen AI use within its community. This section of the Generative AI User Guidelines and Policy outlines the monitoring and reporting mechanisms implemented to achieve this goal.

7.1.Monitoring: NMIMS reserves the right to monitor the use of Gen AI tools within the university. This monitoring is not intended to be intrusive but rather serves to ensure that users are adhering to the principles outlined in this policy.

7.1.1. Purpose of Monitoring: Monitoring may be carried out for purposes such as: identifying potential misuse of generative AI tools - such as creating false information or engaging in malicious activities; verifying compliance with data privacy regulations; assessing the overall effectiveness of the policy in promoting responsible AI use.

7.1.2. Transparency in Monitoring:

- **Respect for Privacy:** NMIMS will prioritize user privacy while conducting any monitoring activities. The university will only monitor data relevant to ensuring adherence to this policy and will anonymize data whenever possible.
- **Communication of Monitoring Practices:** NMIMS will keep the university community informed about its general monitoring practices related to generative AI use.

7.2.Reporting: Reporting is a shared responsibility of all NMIMS stakeholders. If one suspects that someone is misusing generative AI

tools, it is crucial to report it to the designated university authorities. There are several benefits of being alert and reporting any misuse of Gen AI. Some of these benefits are: addressing a potential misuse of generative AI before it escalates into a serious issue; and creating a safe environment that upholds integrity, privacy, and dignity.

The University will:

7.2.1. Provide Confidentiality and Support: The University will ensure confidentiality for those reporting misuse and will provide support throughout the investigation process.

7.2.2. Create Opportunities for Open Communication: The University will organize forums and discussions where the community can discuss concerns, share best practices, and collectively contribute to a culture of responsible AI use. In these forums, users can also discuss the university's Gen AI policy and provide feedback to ensure that the policy is comprehensive, practical, and adaptable to the evolving landscape of generative AI.

8. Enforcement

The preceding sections have provided clear guidelines regarding the ethical, responsible deployment and integration of Gen AI tools. This section details the potential consequences of violating the guidelines.

8.1.Spectrum of Violations: The severity of consequences will depend on the nature and intent of the policy violation. Minor infractions, like unintentional use of biased data, might be addressed through educational interventions. More serious violations such as deliberately creating harmful content could lead to stricter repercussions.

8.2.Disciplinary Actions: Potential consequences for violations include:

8.2.1. Suspension of AI Tool Access: Individuals who misuse generative AI tools may have their access suspended for a specific period. This allows time for reflection and retraining self on responsible AI use.

8.2.2. Academic Penalties: For academic misconduct involving generative AI, penalties may range from deduction of marks to failing grades or, in extreme cases, expulsion from academic programs depending on the severity of the violation and university regulations.

8.3.Emphasis on Education:

8.3.1. Corrective Measures: The primary focus of consequences is not punitive but rather corrective. NMIMS aims to educate individuals about the ethical implications of their actions and provide opportunities to learn from their mistakes. This will involve mandatory training sessions on responsible AI use for both faculty and administrative staff.

8.3.2. Promoting a Responsible Culture: By addressing misuse constructively, NMIMS aims to create a culture where responsible AI use is the norm. Open communication and learning from past incidents are crucial aspects of this endeavour.

8.4.Continuous Revisions:

8.4.1. Reviewing Consequences: NMIMS will periodically review the established consequences for policy violations to ensure they are effective and proportionate to the severity of the misuse.

8.4.2. Adapting to Change: As the field of generative AI evolves, NMIMS may need to adapt its approach to addressing misuse. This may involve addressing new types of violations or revising existing consequences.

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