

# Understanding Students' View on LSE generative AI Policy

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## Background

At LSE, different departments have different attitudes toward the use of generative AI (GenAI): the data science department allows students to use Chat GPT in coursework as long as they specify how they use it, whereas the Sociology Department imposes strict rules in the use of generative AI. We find this confusing but interesting, especially when the rationale of such policies is not clearly communicated with students. Thus, we want to investigate undergraduate students' reactions and interpretations of different GenAI policies, and how they navigate, negotiate and actively participate in the decision-making process on GenAI policies with the staff community.

## Methodology

This research focuses on the undergraduate community at LSE. Firstly, we conducted a survey using Qualtrics to reach a diverse audience. This survey has 51 valid responses and includes students from 13 different departments. Questions are built on findings and conclusions of Litvinaite's report, including the use of GenAI and students' attitude towards LSE's GenAI policy. To explore students' interpretations of AI regulations and policies and to contextualize the specific interactive process between student community and staff-community, we conducted 2 focus groups, one offline and one online with students from more than 10 different departments.

## Literature review

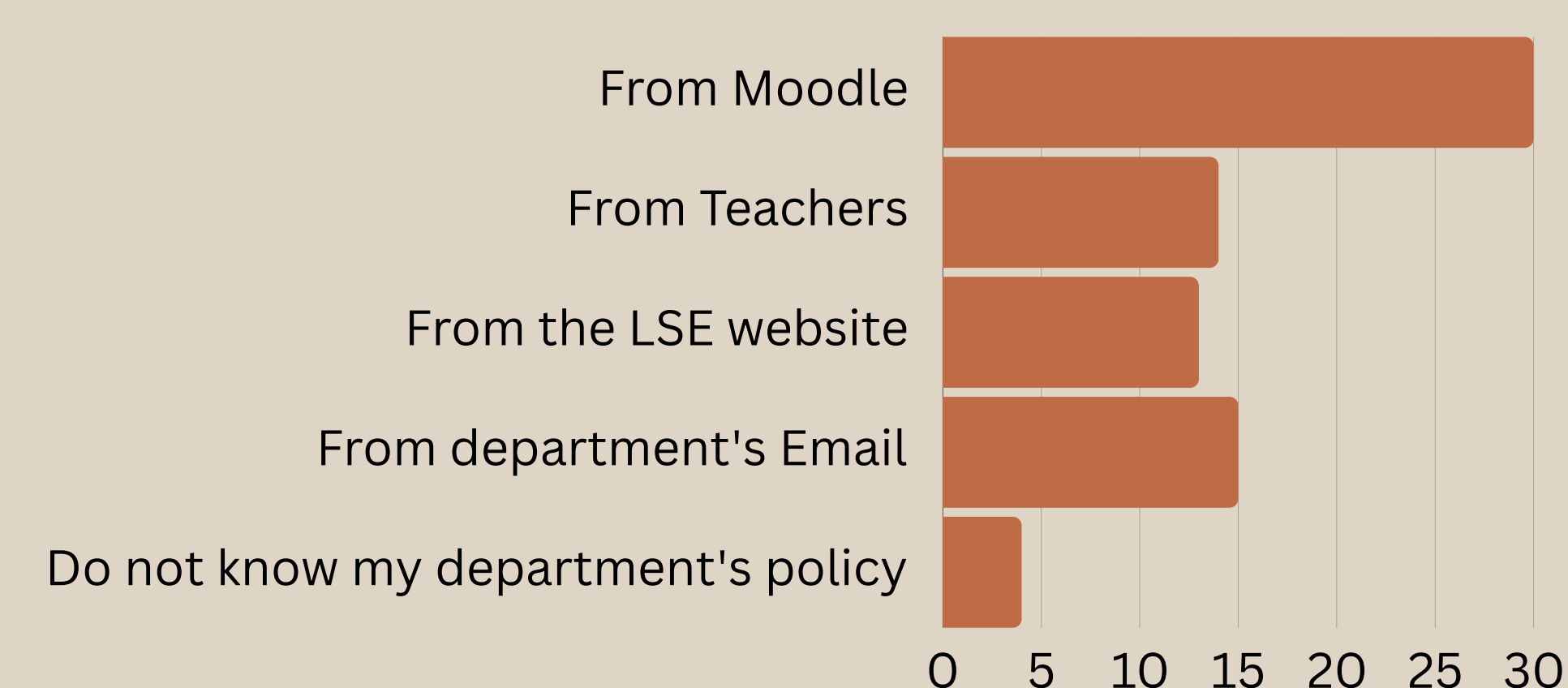
Prior to this project, Litvinaite (2023) has conducted a focus group research on the use of generative AI among LSE students. In her study, students reported use of AI despite a prohibitive policy and a general disagreement with the rules due to a disconnection between assessments and 'real world' (ibid.) Key recommendations include establishing clear guidelines for ethical use of GenAI in assessments and diversifying course assessments.

## Findings

In our survey, we found:

- 40% of respondents learned their department's GenAI policy through Moodle, 20% of students received information via email, direct communication from teachers, or LSE's website. A small portion of individuals is unaware of their department's stance on Generative AI.

How did you know your department's Generative AI policy? (multiple choice)



- About 30% of respondents are not familiar with their department's GenAI policy. Another 30% of respondents do not think that their department communicates GenAI policy clearly.
- 73% of respondents use it to understand academic terms; 70% of respondents use it to refine language in their essays.
- For students who take courses from various departments, 46% of respondents agree that it is difficult to navigate whether they can use GenAI for each course.
- Generally, students feel that the use of GenAI is discouraged at LSE.

In our focus group, we found:

- Generative AI is widely used among student groups for different purposes, particularly for coding, essays, summary of key concepts and understanding of the key theory, and self-evaluation e.g. asking AI for essay feedback
- The process is described as an interactive cooperative process of "AI usage as a teamwork".
- Most students in the focus group agree that the use of AI has improved their learning and academic performance, "gives me reassurance" in writing
- In terms of policy improvements, Unified school AI policy with specific instructions in terms of where AI can be used and how to use it.
- Different degree of violation is found: Students would always use AI regardless of what the policy is

## Key Recommendations

Clearer instructions in terms of where AI can be used and how to use it.

- Many students are confused or unfamiliar with the school's GenAI policy, especially when facing different GenAI policy.

Diversify assessment type and incorporate the use of GenAI

- Students feel that allowing the use of GenAI in assessments prepare them for "real world settings." Diversifying assessment types can possibly give students more chance to learn and use GenAI.

Setting up a special student committee; more Responsibilities taken by student academic representatives in discussing GenAI policy.

- Students reflect that they seldom bring concerns about GenAI to their student academic representative. While it is important to make use of the current representative system, a special student committee that meet at appropriate intervals might be able to give insights on students' view in a fast-changing environment, as GenAI policies are constantly being adapted.

More non-exam related guidance

- Many students also raise concern of how they can make use of GenAI in formative assessments and other assignments. To address this confusion, there should be some clearer guidance.

## Reference

- Litvinaite, U. (2023) 'Academic integrity and assessment in the context of digitalisation and the rise of generative AI: student perspective.'