# Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in REF Preparations

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is a fast evolving area, and as such the School's policies and guidance on the ethical use of AI are regularly reviewed and updated. As the School undertakes its preparations for the next REF, it is essential that any use of AI aligns with the School's policies and guidance.

**Appropriate Use of AI in REF Processes**
AI may support early-stage REF activities, including:
- identifying eligible outputs and collating research environment data
- synthesising publicly available information
- generating initial drafts or structural outlines of impact case studies and environment narratives
- aiding organisational or administrative REF tasks

AI-generated material **must always be subject to substantive human intervention**, including verification, editing, contextual understanding, narrative shaping and final approval.

**Staff Development and AI Literacy**
To promote responsible and effective use of AI, staff involved in REF preparations are encouraged to undertake training on generative AI for research and impact-related work. Tailored, role-specific training will be provided in the second year of the School's AI Foundations programme.

**Secure and Approved AI Environments**
Any REF-related activity involving confidential, sensitive or unpublished material must only be conducted within School-approved secure AI platforms (e.g., Microsoft Copilot or Claude for Education) Such material must not be entered into other external tools as they may store prompts, use data for model training or lack full enterprise-grade confidentiality protections.

**Recording and Transparency of AI Use**
For the purposes of auditability and accountability, please keep an internal record of the use of AI including:
- tools and models used
- prompts or instructions provided
- the purpose and scope of AI assistance
- steps taken to validate the accuracy, integrity and completeness of outputs

Where appropriate, REF-related documentation should transparently cite the use of AI, (in the work itself, not just as an internal log). This includes specifying the stages at which AI was utilised, the extent of its contribution and the subsequent human interventions for verification and refinement.

**Quality Assurance and Validation**
All AI-assisted outputs must undergo rigorous human validation, including:
- fact-checking and source verification

- scrutiny of references to identify hallucinations, inaccuracies or distortions
- confirming compliance with REF guidance and disciplinary expectations

Clear, School-level guidance will be provided on the validation expectations for each stage of the REF process.

**Risk Assessment and Governance**

A formal **risk assessment** will be developed to document:
- potential risks arising from AI use in REF activities
- mitigation approaches
- responsibilities for oversight and escalation

This will support consistent practice across all Units of Assessment and ensure alignment with institutional governance.