ACT Education Directorate position on the use of AI in ACT public schools.

The ACT Education Directorate recognises the importance of incorporating emerging technologies to enhance teaching and learning experiences and drive innovation in education. This position statement outlines the directorate's commitment to the responsible, ethical, and effective use of AI in public schools, providing clear guidelines and expectations for teachers, students, and staff.

Generative AI tools have the potential to engage learners, support teachers to personalise learning, provide customised feedback and support student-centred pedagogies.

The directorate is ensuring these technologies are introduced in ACT public schools in a way that is safe, age-appropriate, equitable and aligned with curriculum, assessment, information management and cyber security requirements. This includes evaluating how these technologies can be used safely, effectively and consistently, and through adhering to responsible and ethical usage practices in alignment with national guidelines.

This statement applies to all generative AI tools used in ACT public schools and by all directorate staff.

Generative AI tools include, but are not limited to:

- Large Language Models, such as Microsoft Copilot, and Google Gemini, GrammarlyGo
- Multimodal models, which make images, music, or video, such as Midjourney or Dall-E.

Guiding principles

The directorate's position on the use of generative AI tools in schools is guided by the principles in *Australia's AI Ethics Framework* and the *Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools*. These frameworks outline the ethical and safety considerations that creators, users, and authorising bodies should use when making decisions about the implementation and use of generative AI. The position aligns with the ACT Government Artificial Intelligence Policy.

The directorate recognises the importance of preparing students to navigate AI in future by developing their knowledge, skills, and ethical understanding in this area. Teachers are encouraged to educate students on generative AI in line with Version 9 of the Australian Curriculum. This will focus on students developing the knowledge, skills, and behaviours to understand and apply ethical principles when using AI and other technologies.

Use of AI

Teachers can use AI in classrooms to teach students:

- how AI technologies work – helping them to better navigate their use and recognising their risks and limitations
- the different types of AI (digital tools and AI systems) and their purpose, design and uses
- the responsible use and application of AI
- the broader impact of AI on society and reflecting on the ethical complexities of using AI.

Generative AI is available for staff to use for low to medium risk use cases and should refrain from using generative AI for high-risk use cases, such as personally identifiable data. It is the expectation of the directorate that staff will only use generative AI in line with existing policy, including the *Acceptable Use of ICT policy*, and relevant privacy policies. While the directorate recognises educators are keen to operationalise AI, this must be within the regulatory frameworks that underpin public education. This includes:

- No student's personal information, including but not limited to, their name, age, location, assessment work, behaviour and learning capacity, may be entered into generative AI.
- Students must not be encouraged to use unapproved tools by requesting to undertake work off school networks (for example instructing students to use ChatGPT as part of homework).
- Any software application that requires sign-in also requires third-party permission forms. This includes applications using single-sign-on (for example., students signing in to Canva using their schoolsnet account).
- A risk matrix for defining risk profiles for teachers is available to ACT public schools through the ConnectED Service Portal (internal staff use only).

The directorate has restricted student access to generative AI applications on devices within directorate networks. As part of its commitment to duty of care for all its students, the decision to restrict access is due to the lack of reliable safeguards preventing these tools from exposing students to potentially explicit and harmful content. Read more about student AI access.

The directorate will continue to explore, consult, and publish guidance on how AI technology is currently used and how these technologies can enhance student engagement and workload optimisation. The intent of this work is to assess tools for suitability, further strengthen AI-specific guidelines and plan for a staged introduction of AI in schools.

The Australian Government has identified AI as a critical technology in the national interest and the Directorate participates in national AI working groups, including the National AI in Education Taskforce and the National Education Digital Advisor Group.

More information

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