

## **Munster Technological University**

### **Artificial Intelligence (AI)<sup>1</sup> – statement of intent**

#### **1. Background and introduction**

MTU acknowledges that Artificial intelligence (AI)<sup>i</sup> is increasingly a part of learning, teaching, research, innovation and administration for many across the University community and will be a key component of graduates' working lives. When used responsibly, AI is a tool that presents opportunity and has the potential to revolutionise practices and be used for positive purposes in a wide range of fields. It is acknowledged that students and staff are already using AI tools. MTU is supportive of the legitimate and appropriate application of AI tools and research into all aspects of AI tools when this is done in keeping with the University's values and with adherence to the relevant University policies. However, caution must be exercised and appropriate limits respected to ensure the use of AI remains legal, conforms with academic and research integrity, is ethical and responsible and is performed in such a manner to minimise risk, including cybersecurity<sup>2</sup> risks.

The speed of development in this area, in particular the integration of AI within other digital tools and technologies, means this field and the potential challenges to existing practice, standards and approaches is constantly evolving. Given this context, the need to ensure our staff benefit from AI and the imperative to equip our students for an AI-enabled workplace, MTU has developed this statement to guide our use of AI. This statement is in keeping with the wider framework of the University's published values and related policies which give effect to these, including relevant policies on the use of personal data, cyber security, research integrity and academic integrity. Ultimately there is a responsibility on all individuals to approach the use of AI ethically and responsibly and to be aware of the potential pitfalls the technology presents.

The primary purpose in producing the following statement is to provide an overarching position and steer which will enable the production of consistent further guidance across a range of specific areas where this is necessary.

#### **2. Statement**

The University will convene a series of working groups to develop AI literacy<sup>3</sup> and promote guidance in a number of areas (e.g. teaching and learning, research and innovation, PMSS, student use – a comprehensive list is supplied at the end of this

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<sup>1</sup> In this document Artificial intelligence (AI) is used to refer to all forms of AI, including generative AI.

<sup>2</sup> [Cybersecurity Guidance on Generative AI for PSBs.pdf](#)

<sup>3</sup> Defined in the EU Artificial Intelligence Act as '...skills, knowledge and understanding that allow providers, deployers and affected persons, taking into account their respective rights and obligations in the context of this Regulation, to make an informed deployment of AI systems, as well as to gain awareness about the opportunities and risks of AI and possible harm it can cause'

document) building on the ongoing work of existing activity<sup>4</sup>. In doing so, the University will seek to:

1. Provide guidance and ongoing support for staff and students to ensure they understand and engage in effective research and academic practices and adhere to the principles of academic and research integrity and data security in relation to AI.
2. Develop guidance and policy which ensures transparency and openness about the use of AI technologies in teaching and learning, assessment, research and innovation, and PMSS services.
3. Develop opportunities for staff engagement with and training in the appropriate use of AI in educational practice, including in learning design, assessment, marking and moderation and consistent with the principle of academic integrity.
4. Support the evolution of our programmes to reflect changing subject knowledge, and engagement with that knowledge, in the context of AI technologies, including in relation to learning outcomes and graduate attributes more broadly.
5. Work with students to openly explore, discuss and co-create the University's approach to AI within learning and assessment, including opportunities for students to develop their ability to apply AI tools and technology ethically and effectively and develop AI capabilities within a wider range of graduate attributes.
6. Critically evaluate assessment approaches in the context of AI tools and technologies, focusing on the design of assessments that continue to evaluate individuals' relevant knowledge and understanding.
7. Seek to raise awareness of advances in AI technology and practice in Higher Education.
8. Develop guidance which ensures transparency, openness and integrity about the use of AI technologies in research and innovation.
9. Ensure academic rigour and integrity is upheld through ongoing reviews of policy and regulation, and in response to the evolution of AI tools technologies.

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<sup>4</sup> For example, the Autumn 2023 *Implications of Generative AI for Higher Education MTU - Draft Guidelines* developed by (TEL) and the *New Horizons for Higher Education: Teaching and Learning with Generative AI Report* by Professor Mairéad Pratschke, commissioned by the N-TUTORR network.

10. Undertake periodic critical reflection on MTU's use of AI with a view to sharing our experiences and learning, supporting the wider academic community's understanding of AI, and promoting effective practice.
11. Have due regard to the legal, regulatory and policy considerations surrounding the use of AI, including the University's existing relevant policies and the following:
  - **The EU AI Act, and government guidelines on that legislation:** This EU's first comprehensive legal framework for AI regulation, which aims to ensure the safe development and use of AI systems, while protecting fundamental rights and encouraging innovation.
  - **National AI Strategy:** Ireland's national AI strategy, "AI – Here for Good," which outlines how AI can benefit the economy and society and related Government guidance.<sup>5</sup>
  - **Equality and Human Rights:** Preventing bias and discrimination in AI systems to protect vulnerable groups.
  - **Data Protection:** AI system compliance with data protection laws, including the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), to ensure that personal data is handled responsibly and securely.
  - **Cybersecurity:** AI systems integrated into products must meet cybersecurity requirements to prevent risks.
  - **Intellectual Property:** Ensuring AI innovations are protected, and creators' rights are respected.

### 3. Approach to policy development

In progressing the various areas referenced in this statement of intent, it is proposed that the development of policy and the establishment and tasking of related working groups to take forward this work is overseen by the relevant Executive Team leads. This would lead to the formation of working groups in the following areas:

- Academic Affairs & Registry
- Research and Innovation
- People and Culture
- Engagement & International
- Corporate Services

There may be multiple groups in each area as the Executive lead determines.

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<sup>5</sup> See e.g. <https://aiireland.ie/2025/02/27/irelands-ai-advisory-council-releases-key-recommendations-to-shape-the-nations-ai-future/>

This approach would not preclude communities of academic practice forming around individual subject areas, or research topics. The overarching group which has developed this statement of intent will also remain in place to offer feedback and input on draft policies, with the intention this will maintain a broad consistency of approach and enable a wider consideration before draft policies progress to the Executive Team for consideration.

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<sup>i</sup> Artificial Intelligence - European Commission (2019). *A Definition of AI: Main Capabilities and Scientific Disciplines*.

Software (and possibly also hardware) systems designed by humans that, given a complex goal, act in the physical or digital dimension by perceiving their environment through data acquisition, interpreting the collected structured or unstructured data, reasoning on the knowledge, or processing the information, derived from this data and deciding the best action(s) to take to achieve the given goal. AI systems can either use symbolic rules or learn a numeric model, and they can also adapt their behaviour by analysing how the environment is affected by their previous actions. As a scientific discipline, AI includes several approaches and techniques, such as machine learning (of which deep learning and reinforcement learning are specific examples), machine reasoning (which includes planning, scheduling, knowledge representation and reasoning, search, and optimization), and robotics (which includes control, perception, sensors and actuators, as well as the integration of all other techniques into cyber-physical systems).

Gen AI – European Union (2024). Artificial Intelligence Act. <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/eli/reg/2024/1689/oj/eng>

A specific type of AI model capable of generating text, images, and other content, that present unique innovation opportunities but also challenges to artists, authors, and other creators and the way their creative content is created, distributed, used and consumed.