

DECISION GUIDE

Can I use AI for this

Use this guide before entering material into an AI tool. It helps you choose a next step; it does not grant permission to use AI.

Follow the decision path

1 What am I expected to learn

Name the skill, judgment, or performance this task assesses. If you cannot identify it, read the assignment again or ask your instructor before choosing an AI use.

2 What do the rules say

If the proposed use is prohibited, complete that part without AI. If instructions are unclear or conflict, pause and ask. If that specific use is permitted, continue to the next check.

3 What have I already tried

Gather appropriate sources and make your own initial attempt, notes, sketch, or analysis. If you have no independent starting point, do that work first. An approved accommodation or instructor-directed activity may specify a different process.

4 Would AI do the assessed thinking

Compare the proposed request with the learning goal. If it would supply the reasoning, answer, or performance you must demonstrate, revise the request to seek questions or feedback. If the boundary is unclear, ask.

5 Can I share this material with this tool

Check local rules for approved tools, personal information, confidential material, and course content. If sharing is not permitted or you are unsure, do not upload it. Use an approved alternative or ask for guidance.

6 Can I check and explain the result

Plan how you will verify claims, sources, calculations, and suggestions. If you cannot evaluate the output, seek instruction or use another approach before relying on it.

If all six checks are satisfied, use only the permitted assistance, verify it, make your own decisions, and follow the required disclosure process. Permission for one use does not authorize every use.

Choose a useful next step

Situation	Next step
The rules prohibit the proposed use	Complete that part without AI.
The rules or learning goal are unclear	Ask a specific question before using AI.
You have not tried independently	Research, sketch, calculate, or draft first.
The prompt asks AI to do the assessed work	Narrow it to feedback or questions if allowed.
You cannot share or verify the material	Use approved sources or get help.
Your proposed use passes the checks	Apply RAFT and retain appropriate evidence.

Compare these requests

- Essay argument: “Write my argument” would supply the reasoning. After your own outline, “Ask questions about gaps in my argument” may support revision when feedback is allowed.
- Reading response: “Summarize the assigned text so I do not have to read it” bypasses the reading goal. Read first; then ask questions about your own interpretation if permitted.
- Practice problem: “Give me the final answer” may conceal a gap. After attempting the problem, ask for one hint and try again if AI tutoring is permitted.

A question you can send your instructor

Adapt this message

“This assignment asks me to demonstrate [skill]. I have already completed [independent work]. May I use [tool] to [specific assistance] while completing [assessed thinking] myself? What should I document or disclose?”

After permission comes RAFT

Research Independently First. Augment Your Work. Fact-Check Everything. Transform Into Your Own Work. You remain responsible for the final submission.

Being allowed to use AI does not make every output reliable. A disclosure statement also does not turn prohibited assistance into permitted assistance.