

# AI Use Policy - Traffic Light Model

College of Staten Island

## Preface

The use of Artificial Intelligence in both academia and industry has been greatly increasing over the past few years. This document discusses the "Red Light, Yellow Light, Green Light" traffic light model. This model allows for a general solution to a very field-specific problem. While not one-size-fits-all, each course would have its AI Use Policy designed and voted on by the faculty of that department. Cross-listed courses should have approval from all departments involved. The AI Use Policy should not be the sole responsibility of the professor of the course as expecting adjunct professors to effectively craft policy is outside the scope of their employment. The approved policy should be written into the course's syllabus for easy reference by the students.

Violation of any AI Use Policy falls under violation of CUNY's Academic Integrity Policy, specifically under Section 1: "Cheating" [1]. AI use threatens a student's learning as well as a professor's pedagogy and must only be used when sanctioned by the professor and the department. The inclusion of AI tools in a course should be determined when considering the students' current fundamental knowledge and skills, the expected learning outcomes of the course, and the current relevancy of skills in industry. As a gentle guide, students earlier in their academic journey should have less access to AI tools to facilitate growth of their own skills.

This document does not discuss ways to monitor students on AI use and is only meant to be a reference on what the traffic light model of AI use in academia is.

## Traffic Light Model

In general, the traffic light model breaks down AI use into one of three categories:

**Red Light:** AI Use is *prohibited*. It's use would undermine the skill being assessed.

**Yellow Light:** AI Use is *restricted*. It's use may aid the process, but cannot replace the work done by the student. The AI tool should be cited or referenced in the assignment.

**Green Light:** AI Use is *permitted or required*. It's use is legitimate however the student is still responsible for the output. The AI tool should be cited or referenced in the assignment.

AI tools are not all created equal nor are they applicable for every possible use-case. Many of the general AI tools such as ChatGPT, Copilot, and Claude have a wide array of capabilities, however field-specific AI tools should be cataloged by the departments to keep the policy current. As a quick acknowledgment, the College of Staten Island provides a premium subscription for Microsoft Copilot to every .edu email address within network.

Below is a list of use-cases for AI. This is a non-exhaustive list and may include types of work that is not relevant to any one specific course. Non-relevant use-cases should be excluded from the course's AI policy so to not confuse the student.

- Brainstorming & Outlining
- Summarization
- Writing & Revisions (Including Emails)
- Presentation Slides & Revisions
- Data Analysis
- Coding & Debugging
- Notetaking & Transcription
- Tutoring
- Image Generation
- Grading (Faculty should be Transparent)

## References

[1] The City University of New York, "Academic Integrity Policy," CUNY. [Online]. <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/legal-affairs/policies-resources/academic-integrity-policy/> [Accessed: Feb. 27, 2026].