

Teacher's lesson plan:

AI and coursework discussion

Subject PSHE / Tutor time / subject-specific

Year Group KS4 and KS5

Duration 15–20 minutes

Topic Academic integrity and AI use in coursework

Learning objectives

By the end of this session, students will be able to:

- explain why, when working on coursework that counts towards a qualification, submitting AI-generated work as their own constitutes cheating
- articulate the personal and academic risks of misusing AI in coursework
- understand the consequences of cheating
- recognise the value of developing their own skills through genuine coursework

Suggested resources

- [JCQ guidance on AI use in assessments](#)
- School AI policy document
- Relevant exam board guidance (subject-specific)

Part 1: Opening (3 minutes)

Aim: Gauge students' understanding and open the discussion.

Teacher activity:

Open with an acknowledgement that AI tools are part of students' everyday lives. Set a tone that is firm but fair. This is about helping students, not catching them out.

Key points to consider:

- AI tools are everywhere. Students have probably used them for lots of things.
- When it comes to coursework that counts towards qualifications, it's important to understand where the line is and why it matters.

Student activity:

- Ask students what they think the current rules are around AI use. Use this to gauge existing understanding and address any misconceptions.
- Take a few quick responses.
- Note misconceptions without correcting yet – this sets up the next section.

Part 2: Clarifying the rules (3 minutes)

Aim: Provide clarity on acceptable vs unacceptable use.

Teacher activity:

Be explicit about what constitutes cheating. Emphasise the core principle clearly.

Key message to convey:

“The key question is: does this work represent your knowledge, your skills, your thinking? If AI did the thinking for you, the answer is no – and that's cheating.”

Differentiation note:

Direct students to JCQ guidance for detailed information on specific scenarios.

Reference for teachers:

The JCQ guidance on AI use in assessments explains what counts as misuse and how to avoid it (see your school's policy and [the JCQ guidance](#)).

Part 3: Why this matters (7 minutes)

Aim: Build understanding, not fear. Students engage more when reasons feel real.

Teacher activity:

This is the core of the lesson. Present 3 key arguments, then facilitate discussion.

Discussion questions:

- “Why do you think it’s important to do the work yourself?”
- “If everyone used AI to write their coursework, what would qualifications mean?”
- “What skills do you think you’re building by completing coursework yourself?”

Let students share ideas—**then introduce the three core reasons:**

Reason 1: Qualifications need to mean something

- Grades tell universities and employers what you can do.
- If AI produces your work, it says nothing about your abilities.

Mini-scenario for impact: “Imagine getting onto a college course because AI wrote your coursework—then realising you can’t actually do the tasks on day one.”

Reason 2: The learning is the point

- Coursework builds real skills: research, critical thinking, communication.
- If AI replaces that, you might get the grade but not the skill.
- In a world full of AI, people who can think for themselves will stand out.

Reason 3: Fairness to others

- Some students put in the effort; others might try shortcuts.
- Integrity protects fairness for everyone.

Assessment for learning: Listen to responses to gauge understanding and address any remaining confusion.

Part 4: The consequences (3 minutes)

Aim: Be factual and serious. Students need to understand this isn’t hypothetical.

Teacher explanation and key points:

- “If someone submits AI-generated work as their own, the consequences are serious:
- They could lose their grade for that subject.
- A record of malpractice could affect applications later.
- Universities and employers take academic honesty very seriously.
- Almost 2,000 students lost marks in 2025 due to malpractice.”

Part 5. Checking understanding (2 minutes)

Aim: Ensure key messages landed.

Quick activity:

- Ask students: “What’s the most important takeaway from today’s discussion?”
- Take 3–5 responses. This helps identify which parts resonated.

Part 6. Positive close (1–2 minutes)

Key messages:

- The work you are doing now builds skills that will last your whole life.
 - Do your own thinking. Build your own abilities.
 - Invite final questions.
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Follow-up actions

- Ensure students know where to access the school AI policy
- Consider displaying key messages in the classroom, and encouraging discussions during coursework periods
- Be available for individual questions from students who may be unsure about specific scenarios

Notes for teachers

- Be prepared for students to ask about grey areas (e.g. using AI for research or proofreading) – refer to JCQ and exam board guidance for specific scenarios
- This conversation may need repeating at key points during the coursework period



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