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AI and Authorship: Student Writing, Voice and Digital Communication Practices in Higher Education

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Abstract

The increasing use of generative artificial intelligence in higher education is reshaping how students engage with writing, communication and authorship. While institutional responses have largely framed AI as a challenge to academic integrity, less attention has been paid to how AI operates within students' broader digital communication practices. This paper examines questions of authorship, voice and responsibility in AI-assisted student writing, situating AI use within communicative environments shaped by everyday digital communication practices. Adopting a practice-informed conceptual approach, the analysis draws primarily on published research, with professional experience in UK higher education providing contextual grounding for the conceptual problem. Rather than treating authorship as a fixed or stable category, the paper conceptualises it as a negotiated and context-dependent process shaped by evolving technologies and shifting expectations of originality, voice and ownership. On this basis, the paper develops authorship literacy, illustrated through a matrix distinguishing forms of AI assistance, as a way of helping students recognise and account for their intellectual and expressive contribution within AI-mediated writing. By framing AI within the context of digital communication, the paper contributes to discussions on authorship, identity and meaning-making in contemporary educational environments. It argues that AI should be understood not solely as a tool or a threat, but as part of an evolving communicative landscape that is reshaping how writing, authorship and responsibility are experienced and negotiated.

Keywords: generative AI; authorship; authorship literacy; academic integrity; AI literacy

1. Introduction

Generative artificial intelligence has become increasingly visible within the academic writing environment of higher education. Students can engage with GenAI throughout the writing process, from developing and organising material to revising existing text. Zhao et al. (2024), drawing on interviews and observations with 23 students at a British university, locate ChatGPT within a longer process of the digitisation of writing and describe academic writing as an iterative practice already supported by multiple digital tools. Wang (2025) likewise found that students used ChatGPT across different components of writing, from brainstorming and outlining to revision and editing. These studies suggest that the relevant question is no longer

simply whether AI appears in a completed submission. Attention also needs to be given to the process through which the submission was produced.

GenAI may nevertheless intensify this existing digital mediation because its contribution can extend beyond conventional proofreading or formatting support. Wang (2025), for example, found that students used ChatGPT for global aspects of writing such as argument, structure and coherence, as well as local aspects including syntax, diction and grammar. Kim et al. (2025) similarly found that students expected GenAI to occupy different roles within academic writing, ranging from a writing assistant to forms of tutoring and interaction. The significance of these findings lies in the extent to which AI can now participate in choices that affect not only the presentation of a text but also how ideas are organised and expressed.

Against this background, higher education has understandably approached GenAI primarily through academic integrity (Velez & Rister, 2025). Concerns about unauthorised assistance and the outsourcing of assessed work are especially important where writing is being used as evidence of an individual student's learning (Bretag, 2013; Cotton et al., 2024). Institutional policy has consequently sought to define acceptable and unacceptable uses of AI. Velez and Rister's (2025) analysis of 100 university AI policies illustrates this emphasis, finding that higher-education policy frequently frames AI use through academic integrity and individual authorship. Such regulation is necessary because students and staff require clear boundaries. At the same time, determining whether a particular use is permitted does not necessarily explain what that use means for the student's authorship.

The authorship problem becomes particularly visible when a distinction is made between having an idea and producing its written expression. A student may regard an argument or interpretation as their own while asking AI to restructure the paragraph through which it is communicated or to rewrite that paragraph in more academic language. From the student's perspective, the intellectual content may still appear to belong to them. Yet academic writing does not consist only of ideas that exist independently of their formulation. Organisation, emphasis and linguistic choices contribute to the meaning conveyed by the final text. Wang's (2025) participants themselves encountered this tension when they tried to improve their writing through ChatGPT while retaining a recognisable sense of their own voice.

Evidence from outside assessed academic writing also indicates that the extent of assistance can influence perceptions of authorship. Formosa et al. (2025) examined responses to different levels of human and AI assistance in the writing of a short novel. Their experimental study of 602 participants found that higher levels of assistance reduced the extent to which the human writer was perceived as the author and creator of the resulting work. Because the study concerns creative writing rather than student assessment, its findings cannot simply be transferred to higher education. Nevertheless, it provides useful evidence for the narrower proposition that perceptions of authorship can depend on the nature and degree of contribution rather than merely on whose name is attached to a text.

This paper develops that problem through the related concepts of authorship, voice and ownership. Authorship concerns the contribution made to the meaning and textual expression of the work. Voice refers here to the academic style and textual self-presentation through which the writer becomes present in the writing. Ownership concerns the student's relationship to the submitted work and the claim that it is theirs. Responsibility is closely connected to these concepts but is not treated as interchangeable with them. A student may feel that an assignment belongs to them because they selected the topic and made decisions during its production, while still relying heavily on AI for parts of its expression. Academic responsibility, by contrast, concerns their accountability for the work they ultimately submit.

This distinction is important because disclosure alone cannot resolve every problem of responsibility. Gonsalves (2025), examining student non-compliance with mandatory AI-use declarations, found that ambiguous guidance and fear of academic repercussions affected students' willingness to declare their use of AI. The study therefore shows that simply introducing a declaration mechanism does not ensure that students have a shared understanding of what responsible AI use means. Academic-integrity principles remain essential, but the educational task also involves helping students understand the significance of their own choices within an AI-mediated writing process (International Center for Academic Integrity, 2021).

Accordingly, the central argument of this paper is that AI-assisted academic writing can be understood as a digital communication practice as well as an academic-integrity concern. This position builds on work that already treats educational practice as inseparable from its technological and social conditions. Fawns (2019), for example, argues against a rigid separation between digital and non-digital educational practice, while Zhao et al. (2024) place contemporary AI use within the wider digitisation of writing. Approaching AI-assisted writing in this way directs attention towards how meaning and academic expression are produced, rather than treating technology as something that appears only after the writing itself has taken place. Seen through a communication lens, the significance of AI lies not only in whether a tool has been used, but in how meaning is produced and presented through technologically mediated choices about wording, organisation and academic voice. AI-assisted writing can therefore alter the communicative process through which a student turns an intellectual contribution into a text that represents that contribution to a reader.

From this perspective, the paper uses the term authorship literacy to describe students' capacity to recognise and critically account for their contribution to AI-mediated writing. The term is not intended to establish a universal threshold beyond which AI use automatically removes authorship. Such boundaries will depend partly on what an assessment is designed to test and the level of AI support permitted within it. Instead, authorship literacy provides a language through which students can consider how their use of AI has affected the intellectual and expressive work represented in a submission. This keeps the argument aligned with academic-integrity regulation while addressing a question that regulation alone may leave unresolved.

2. Conceptual and Practice-Informed Approach

This paper adopts a practice-informed conceptual approach rather than an empirical research design involving student participants. Conceptual research does not rely on the collection of new empirical data, but it still requires a clear analytical purpose and an explicit account of how existing literature and concepts are used to develop an argument (Jaakkola, 2020). In this paper, published research provides the principal evidential basis for examining how GenAI affects academic writing, while professional experience provides contextual grounding for the problem being considered. No student case records, identifiable meeting material or direct quotations from professional interactions are analysed.

The term practice-informed is used here in a specific and limited sense. Recurring questions encountered through teaching, academic support and integrity-related work in UK higher education helped to formulate the authorship problem addressed in the paper and to assess the practical relevance of distinctions emerging from the literature. These experiences are not treated as evidence of the prevalence of particular student behaviours, nor are individual professional encounters presented as research findings. This distinction allows professional practice to inform the conceptual analysis without being recast retrospectively as qualitative data.

The literature was selected purposively for its conceptual relevance to the authorship problem rather than through a systematic-review protocol. Priority was given to recent peer-reviewed empirical and conceptual work on GenAI-assisted writing processes, authorship and authorial voice, academic integrity, AI literacy and student contribution within assessment, while foundational sources were retained where they provided necessary theoretical grounding. Studies concerned primarily with technical model performance, detection accuracy or AI use unrelated to assessed writing were excluded unless they directly informed questions of authorship, contribution or responsibility. Zhao et al. (2024), Wang (2025) and Nguyen et al. (2024) are particularly important because they examine AI-assisted writing as a process rather than only the completed text; other sources are used more selectively to examine attribution, voice and responsibility. The aim is therefore not an exhaustive review, but a conceptually coherent body of literature through which the authorship problem can be developed.

Several adjacent conceptual frames illuminate different aspects of this problem. AI literacy concerns students' capacity to understand, evaluate and use AI critically and ethically (Ng et al., 2021), while academic-integrity frameworks foreground compliance with institutional and assessment requirements (International Center for Academic Integrity, 2021; Velez & Rister, 2025). Constructive alignment asks whether the contribution demonstrated in assessed work corresponds to the intended learning outcomes (Biggs, 1996), while a postdigital perspective situates technology within wider social and pedagogical practice (Fawns, 2019). These perspectives are complementary, but none directly resolves the narrower attribution question addressed here: what remains the student's intellectual and expressive contribution when AI participates in producing assessed text. Authorship literacy is developed to address that specific question rather than replace these broader frameworks.

Foucault's (1977) account of the author-function provides a limited theoretical point of departure. His work is useful because it unsettles the assumption that authorship can be established simply by identifying the individual who physically produced particular words. Authorship also involves the ways texts are attributed and classified within particular social arrangements. The present paper does not attempt a full Foucauldian reading of GenAI-assisted writing. Rather, the author-function helps open the question that guides the analysis: when technological assistance contributes materially to the production of academic text, how should the student's own contribution be understood? The analysis develops from this question by first examining the distinction between ideas and textual expression. It then considers what happens when AI contribution is distributed across an iterative writing process, before turning to the relationship between authorship, ownership and responsibility. The purpose of this progression is to develop a clearer conceptual basis for the pedagogical idea of authorship literacy introduced later in the paper.

3. Authorship, Voice and Responsibility in AI-Assisted Writing

3.1 Authorship Uncertainty: Ideas and Expression

A central difficulty in AI-assisted academic writing concerns the relationship between an idea and the language through which that idea is communicated. Students may regard the substantive content of a piece of work as their own where the argument or examples originated with them, even when AI has subsequently altered the organisation or wording. In this understanding of authorship, the initial intellectual contribution carries particular weight. The difficulty is that writing itself also contributes to meaning. A substantial change to structure or expression may therefore affect more than the surface presentation of an independently complete idea.

Wang's (2025) findings provide useful empirical support for this problem. Students in the study used ChatGPT not only to correct local language issues but also to organise ideas, improve the flow of outlines and revise the structure of drafted work. One participant produced her own outline before asking ChatGPT to make it flow more effectively, while another used the system iteratively to improve the structure and argument of an existing essay. Such cases do not support a simple conclusion that the student either authored the text or did not. Instead, they show how a student's existing intellectual material can remain present while the organisation through which that material becomes meaningful is partly shaped through AI assistance.

This matters because the description of AI use can conceal substantial differences in the degree of intervention. Terms such as editing, paraphrasing and restructuring may refer to relatively limited support, but they can also describe changes that significantly reshape a student's expression. Formosa et al. (2025) found that assessments of human authorship declined as the amount of assistance increased, regardless of whether the assistance came from a person or an AI system. Their study does not establish where an academic threshold should be drawn, but it supports the importance of considering the extent of contribution when discussing authorship.

For assessed academic writing, the appropriate boundary must remain connected to the purpose of the assessment. A task designed to assess independent written argument will raise different questions from one in which language support is explicitly permitted. The point here is therefore not that any technological intervention into language removes student authorship. Rather, it is that the statement “the ideas are mine” cannot, on its own, settle the authorship question where AI has substantially shaped how those ideas are organised and expressed. Recognising this distinction provides the basis for considering AI-assisted writing as a process of contribution rather than as a binary choice between human-written and AI-written text.

3.2 AI-assisted writing as a layered process

The difficulty of locating authorship becomes clearer once AI-assisted writing is viewed as a process rather than a single event. Nguyen et al. (2024) analysed 626 recorded activities produced by doctoral students working with a GenAI-powered writing tool and identified different patterns of human-AI interaction. Wang (2025) similarly describes students moving through repeated stages of feedback and revision, sometimes returning their own revised text to ChatGPT for further comment. These findings indicate that AI involvement may be iterative, with human and machine contributions occurring at different points in the development of the text.

Describing the process as interactive does not imply that AI should be treated as an academic co-author. Here, interaction simply describes the sequence through which the text is produced. A student may begin with their own material, request suggestions, assess the response and subsequently modify the text again. By contrast, another student may provide a limited prompt and adopt a largely generated response with little substantive reworking. Both processes involve GenAI, but they do not represent the same degree of human contribution. Treating them as equivalent because “AI was used” would therefore obscure an important difference in how the final text came into being.

Kim et al. (2025) provide another perspective on this process through their study of 20 Chinese students at a Sino-British university in mainland China. Their participants expected GenAI to operate in different capacities during academic writing and described it as more than a simple content-generation tool. This does not establish that every student experiences AI as a collaborator, nor should such language determine its institutional status. It does, however, reinforce the point that students may engage with AI through continuing interaction rather than a single request for finished text. The study also broadens the context of this discussion beyond

UK higher education by showing how these questions arise within an English-medium, multilingual educational environment.

The educational implication is that the nature of the student's decisions within the process matters. Whether the student generated the starting material and critically evaluated or substantially reworked AI output can help explain the contribution represented in the final submission. These factors do not override an assessment's rules: a prohibited use remains prohibited even when the student has reflected carefully on it. They do, however, provide a more precise way of discussing authorship than asking only whether AI was present. This process perspective leads directly to the question of voice, because repeated AI intervention may affect not merely what a student writes but how that student appears in the text.

3.3 Voice, ownership and responsibility

Voice is especially important because academic writing is not simply the transmission of content. Authorial voice is also shaped by the conventions through which writers position themselves and their readers within disciplinary discourse (Hyland, 2008). Voice is therefore not treated here as a fixed or entirely private linguistic signature. Rather, it concerns the textual presence through which a student communicates an academic position within learned disciplinary conventions. Against this background, Wang (2025) found that students experienced tension between using ChatGPT to improve their writing and retaining a sense of authentic voice. Participants reported concerns that AI-generated diction or sentence patterns could make their work sound generic or unlike them, while some multilingual writers also felt that AI assistance could help them express their existing ideas more effectively. This variation is important because it prevents an overly simple assumption that AI assistance necessarily diminishes voice; its effect depends partly on how the technology is used and on the communicative work the student is attempting to perform.

Evidence from a Korean university context further complicates any simple distinction between language support and authorship. Lee (2024) examined Korean university students using an AI-powered writing assistant to revise paraphrases in summary writing. Students most frequently produced paraphrases involving both lexical and syntactic modification, while their reflections indicated that the process could help them explore alternative formulations and writing styles while extending their English-language learning. At the same time, participants identified limitations including semantic errors and insufficient explanatory feedback. These findings suggest that AI-mediated reformulation can operate as a form of language learning, particularly for multilingual writers, while also sharpening the authorship question addressed here. Where a system materially reshapes paraphrase and style, the distinction between supporting a student’s expression and contributing to that expression becomes increasingly important.

Recent work on authorial voice supports the educational significance of this distinction. Singh et al. (2025), in a proof-of-concept study involving 23 first-year ESL students, evaluated an AI-supported system specifically designed to develop authorial voice rather than simply produce improved text. Their findings suggest that AI-supported writing technologies can be designed around students' authorship beliefs and their development as writers. The study concerns a particular educational intervention and should not be generalised to all GenAI use. Nevertheless, it provides useful evidence that AI support and authorial development do not have to be treated as inherently incompatible.

This understanding of voice also helps separate ownership from authorship. Ownership is used here in a pedagogical rather than a legal sense; the paper does not address copyright or intellectual-property ownership of AI-generated material. A student may regard an assignment

as theirs because they selected the subject and remained involved in its production. That sense of ownership is meaningful, but it does not establish that every aspect of the resulting text is equally attributable to the student. Where AI has materially shaped organisation or expression, the student's claim to ownership can remain strong even while the extent of textual authorship becomes more difficult to determine. Formosa et al.'s (2025) findings are relevant here because they show that perceptions of authorship and responsibility can change as the level of assistance changes.

Responsibility introduces a related but distinct requirement. The student who submits assessed work remains responsible for what is presented under their name within the institutional context of assessment. This includes being able to account for the content and the decisions represented in the submission. Yet Gonsalves (2025) shows that the mechanisms universities use to encourage transparency can themselves become difficult for students to interpret when expectations are ambiguous. The implication is not that disclosure should be abandoned, but that responsibility needs to be taught alongside clearer explanations of contribution.

Taken together, these distinctions show why authorship, ownership and responsibility should not be collapsed into a single question of whether a student believes that a submission is “my work”. Ownership concerns the student's relationship to that work; authorship asks what contribution they made to its intellectual and textual production; responsibility concerns what they are prepared and required to account for when they submit it. Separating these concepts provides a clearer basis for the pedagogical response developed in the next section.

4. Towards Authorship Literacy

Existing work on AI literacy provides an important starting point for this response. Ng et al. (2021), in an exploratory review of 30 peer-reviewed studies, conceptualise AI literacy as extending beyond technical use to include understanding, evaluation and ethical awareness. Zhao et al. (2024) similarly develop a generative AI literacy model in the context of digitised student writing. These approaches are valuable because they move away from an understanding of AI literacy based merely on the ability to operate a tool.

Within academic writing, however, students also need to understand what their use of AI means for their own contribution to the text. This paper uses authorship literacy as a focused way of describing that capacity. Authorship literacy involves being able to recognise where one's intellectual work is located within an AI-mediated writing process and to consider how technological assistance has affected the expression ultimately presented for assessment. This connects AI literacy with the more specific problem of attribution: not simply can I use this tool? but what has this tool done to the work I am claiming as mine?

Authorship literacy therefore requires a more differentiated understanding than a simple distinction between “AI use” and “no AI use”. Language support after an argument has been independently developed is not equivalent to AI reorganising its logic, just as feedback on an existing paragraph differs from replacing it with generated prose (Wang, 2025). Students should not be expected to infer these distinctions from broad statements that AI is permitted “for support”, particularly where terms such as “editing” or “paraphrasing” can describe very different levels of intervention. Where some AI use is permitted, guidance should connect the form and degree of intervention to what the assessment is intended to evaluate and to the contribution that must remain demonstrably the student’s. Because perceptions of authorship shift with the degree of assistance (Formosa et al., 2025), worked examples can make these boundaries more intelligible. Table 1 maps different forms of AI assistance against authorship, ownership and responsibility. It is illustrative rather than regulatory, since acceptable

thresholds depend on disciplinary expectations, assessment design and the forms of assistance permitted within a particular task.

Table 1. Illustrative authorship-literacy matrix for AI-assisted writing

AI assistance and student contribution	Authorship	Ownership	Responsibility
Feedback without rewriting: Student produces ideas, structure and wording; AI comments on clarity or coherence.	Student authorship remains strong because substantive and expressive decisions remain theirs.	Ownership remains strong.	Student remains responsible for deciding whether and how to act on the feedback.
Local language intervention: Student produces argument and organisation; AI corrects or reformulates grammar, syntax or diction.	Authorship remains comparatively strong where intervention is limited, though repeated reformulation may affect expression.	Ownership may remain strong.	Student remains responsible for accuracy, meaning and compliance.
Paraphrasing or stylistic rewriting: Ideas may originate with the student, but AI materially reshapes expression.	Intellectual contribution may remain student-led, while authorship of the final expression becomes less straightforward.	Ownership can remain despite less exclusive textual authorship.	Responsibility remains but does not by itself establish authorship.
Global restructuring or substantive generation: AI contributes to organisation, argument, analysis or substantial prose.	Exclusive student authorship becomes increasingly difficult where AI shapes communicative or intellectual work.	Ownership alone does not resolve authorship.	Student remains accountable, but responsibility cannot substitute for the contribution required by the assessment.

A further implication concerns reflection on process. Where it serves the assessment, a short AI-use reflection could ask students to identify what they had produced before using AI, what the system subsequently changed, whether those changes were local or extended to structure and argument, and which suggestions they accepted, rejected or substantially rewrote. Students could also be asked to consider whether the final submission still demonstrates the contribution that the assessment is intended to evaluate. These prompts are not intended to convert every assignment into an audit trail, nor should reflection be treated as evidence that otherwise prohibited use has become acceptable. Their value lies in encouraging students to distinguish between using AI, making decisions about AI output and retaining authorship of the work being assessed. Gonsalves' (2025) findings on AI-use declarations make this educational dimension particularly important, since compliance is less likely to be meaningful where expectations remain unclear.

Authorship literacy should therefore sit alongside, rather than replace, academic-integrity rules. Regulation establishes what kinds of assistance are acceptable within a particular assessment. Authorship literacy addresses a different question by helping students understand the consequences of those choices for their intellectual and expressive contribution. This broader concern with what assessed work can validly demonstrate is consistent with Dawson et al. (2024), who argue that assessment validity is a more important concern than cheating alone. Keeping the two functions distinct prevents the argument from becoming a case for unrestricted AI use while also avoiding a purely compliance-based response to a changing writing environment.

The implementation of authorship literacy also requires attention to risk and institutional feasibility. Critical work on AI in education cautions against treating AI as neutral, drawing attention to questions of power, governance, commercialisation and inequality (Williamson et al., 2023). Where authorship literacy is translated into disclosure or reflection mechanisms, these may discourage meaningful engagement if experienced primarily as surveillance or

evidence gathering in misconduct investigations. Kohnke's (2024) study of EAP students at a Hong Kong university similarly identified concerns about over-reliance, data privacy and unequal access to premium features, alongside perceived benefits for language learning. Authorship-literacy activities should therefore be proportionate and pedagogically purposeful. Short reflection prompts or worked examples can be incorporated into assessment guidance relatively easily, whereas extensive process documentation or compulsory AI-use logs may increase workload and shift attention from learning towards compliance.

5. Discussion

The analysis suggests that academic-integrity regulation captures only part of the challenge presented by GenAI-assisted writing. Compliance with assessment requirements remains essential, but it does not by itself explain how a student's contribution was produced across an AI-mediated writing process. Authorship literacy addresses this narrower question by directing attention to where intellectual and expressive contributions are located and how they change as AI intervention moves from feedback or local language support towards restructuring or substantive generation.

A communication perspective is useful here because the submitted text is not simply a container for ideas; it is the form through which a student's knowledge, argument and academic position become available to the reader. If AI materially reshapes that form, authorship cannot be determined solely by asking who originated the initial idea. Foucault's (1977) author-function remains relevant because it unsettles the assumption that authorship follows straightforwardly from textual production or attribution. GenAI makes this problem particularly visible within assessment: a text may remain institutionally attributed to one student while parts of its organisation or expression have been technologically mediated.

These distinctions also connect authorship to assessment design. Constructive alignment requires attention to whether the contribution demonstrated in assessed work corresponds to the intended learning outcomes (Biggs, 1996). GenAI-specific approaches such as the AI Assessment Scale similarly distinguish levels of permitted AI use in relation to assessment design (Perkins et al., 2024). Authorship literacy complements such frameworks by focusing more specifically on what different forms of assistance mean for the student's contribution. Disciplinary expectations also differ: assumptions about individual authorship can sit uneasily beside forms of professional writing that are already more collaborative (Velez & Rister, 2025). Where independent formulation of an argument is itself being assessed, substantial AI restructuring has different implications from an assessment in which critical use of AI is an intended part of the task. The appropriate boundary must therefore remain connected to the learning outcomes of a particular assessment, which is why Table 1 is illustrative rather than prescriptive.

Within these assessment-specific boundaries, authorship literacy offers a pedagogical rather than regulatory contribution. Having the idea is relevant to authorship but does not necessarily account for the whole of it; writing is itself part of intellectual and communicative work. Nor can responsibility substitute for authorship: a student who can explain or defend an AI-assisted text has not thereby shown that they authored all of the work being assessed, and a reflective or oral defence should not become a retrospective justification for AI involvement that the assessment did not permit. AI-mediated writing also intersects with multilingual development and unequal access (Kim et al., 2025; Kohnke, 2024; Lee, 2024), so authorship-literacy approaches should remain sensitive to students' different linguistic and material circumstances.

The scope of the argument should nevertheless be recognised. This is a conceptual paper drawing on purposively selected literature and practice-informed grounding rather than a systematic review or empirical test of authorship literacy. Further research could examine how students across different linguistic and institutional contexts interpret distinctions between ideas, expression and responsibility, and whether explicit teaching of authorship changes their decisions when using GenAI. Within this scope, authorship literacy offers a conceptual and pedagogical language for connecting academic-integrity requirements with a clearer understanding of contribution in AI-mediated writing.

6. Conclusion

Generative AI has brought renewed attention to questions of academic authorship because technological assistance can now contribute directly to the organisation and expression of student writing. This paper has argued that academic-integrity rules remain necessary, but that compliance alone does not fully explain what happens to authorship when AI becomes part of the writing process. The analysis has distinguished the student's underlying ideas from their textual expression and has shown why ownership of an assignment should not automatically be equated with authorship of all aspects of its final form. It has also emphasised that responsibility remains important without functioning as a substitute for authorship. Together, these distinctions provide a more precise way of considering student contribution in AI-mediated writing. On this basis, the paper has used authorship literacy as a focused extension of wider AI literacy. The aim is not to weaken boundaries around AI-assisted assessment or to normalise the outsourcing of writing. Rather, students need clearer ways of understanding how technological assistance affects the work they present as their own. In an increasingly AI-mediated writing environment, institutional guidance needs to communicate not only what students are permitted to do, but why particular forms of assistance matter for authorship.

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