

English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in the Age of Generative AI: Redefining Academic Literacy and Writing Practices in Higher Education

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HOW TO CITE:

Prativa Rani Saha, S. Kanchana, (2026). English for Academic Purposes (EAP) in the Age of Generative AI: Redefining Academic Literacy and Writing Practices in Higher Education. International Journal of Special Education, 41(18s), 1531-1546

ABSTRACT:

University students are adapting to new ways of planning, composing, revising and evaluating academic texts with generative artificial intelligence (GenAI). The core challenge in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) goes beyond the question of whether it is acceptable to use writing assistance from AI. The main problem is how to define the ability to write academically when fluent text can be produced at will? To this end, the article draws on a systematic review of the literature on EAP, academic writing, AI literacy, assessment and academic integrity (with an associated structured, PRISMA-guided methodology), preceding a conceptual synthesis. The results show that, for academic writing, competencies at multiple levels are needed: linguistic/rhetorical mastery; critical judgements on the potential contributions of AI-generated content to knowledge and regulation in relation to academia; wise integration of AI into the process of writing (rather than a final touch); and judgement around the ethical implications of doing so. Results also suggest a requirement for new ways to assess learning that embody the iterative nature of learning, such as staged drafts, reflective commentary, oral explanations and transparent records of using an AI. Instead of undermining teachers, GenAI re-constitutes educators as exemplars of judgement within disciplines, source evaluators, facilitators of ethical analysis and critical readers/writers interrogating AI-generated text. Based on these insights, the article presents the Academic-AI Literacy Integration (AALI) model which bridges academic literacy, AI literacy, and responsible digital pedagogy. It does so by framing responsible human AI collaboration not as authorship — or even learning, but rather as a practice that must comply with disciplinary standards, evidentiary requirements and human evaluation.

Keywords: English for Academic Purposes (EAP), generative artificial intelligence, academic literacy, academic writing, higher education, AI literacy, academic integrity

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1 Introduction

For decades, academic writing has served two central functions in higher education: constructing disciplinary knowledge and providing a measure of student understanding for institutions. English for Academic Purposes (EAP) emerged in response to the need for learners, particularly multilingual college students, to acquire not only genres but also new rhetorical practices and conventions of academic communities (Hyland, 2006; Swales, 1990). Just a generation ago, teachers could safely assume that the text students turned in was their continual engagement with reading it and reasoning about it, drafting and revising there on paper. That assumption is now protean, as large language models (LLMs) entered the general availability world at the end of 2022. ChatGPT and similar tools can write in fluent academic language at speed, re-order arguments, suggest structures, provide sketches of concepts or direct backgrounding information (Barrot, 2023; Chan & Hu, 2023; Kasneci et al., 2023). The real problem is not that these systems can compose complete student products, but that they can produce many of the features traditional assessments have depended on to signal mastery.

Generative AI is a whole new beast compared to any writing tools you may have used before. Unlike the previous ones such as spell-checkers, grammar checkers and translation applications that solved only a subsequence of problems related to writing, generative AI assists us throughout the writing process. It can give research questions, creating outlines, summarizing the material provided to it by users, writing paragraphs, changing tone or promoting writing style and even advising some revisions for rough draft content. These multiple functionalities have great potential value for EAP learners especially when AI is harnessed in a way to develop their language skill or feedback. But because those capabilities are much weaker than the association between a completed text and independent reasoning, they start eroding that connection. For EAP as a field that has always emphasized the fundamental best practice of making grammatically informed choices

alongside rhetorically, disciplinarily, and ethically worst practice ones, this is particularly vital. Third, while cautioning that the real pedagogical challenge is less about pacing up to fluent writing produced by machines and more about determining how students draw intellectual responsibility for work done with an AI source.

Recent research highlights this contradiction. Several studies find that benefits comprise increased access, improved efficiency, personalised help and brainstorming or revision assistance for multilingual writers (Barrot 2023; Barrett & Pack 2022; Chan & Hu 2022; Khalifa & Albadawy 2024). Others have raised hypotheses of fictionality, whether AI applications introduce biases or whether they might make students over-reliant on those tools, reducing opportunities for productive struggle and basic academic integrity concerns, if students can manipulate the tool to create an outcome (Floridi, 2023; Kasneci, et al., 2023; Perkins & Roe 2024). Both opinions can be correct. The impact of GenAI is determined by a host of factors: how teachers design assignments; which content discipline the teacher is studying; students' prior knowledge and norms regarding the use, notification, and assessment of usage. The EAP framework that connects these issues to the established literature on genre, academic literacies, learner autonomy – and assessment – is what remains.

Using three core questions, this article seeks to fill this identified gap. But first, how being present to GenAI integration touches the traditional understanding of academic writing skill via EAP? Second, what changes should be made to teaching EAP in terms of task modelling and the role of teachers and student autonomy? Third, what will it mean for reform in assessment and academic integrity when polished writing stops being a reliable marker of student work? By shifting the paradigm from viewing GenAI as an external threat or a neutral tool, this article asserts that GenAI is integral in the environment where writing occurs today and that EAP pedagogy should be preparing students to knowingly utilize, interrogate, set boundaries around, and disclose their use of AI.

This structured literature review adopts a PRISMA guideline and conceptual analysis. Five areas were reviewed: academic writing competence, a pedagogy of artificial intelligence (AI) literacy, assessment, academic integrity, and the roles of teachers and learners. This conceptual analysis explores the relationships between developments in these three areas that led to what we call Academic-AI Literacy Integration — a model for connecting academic literacy, AI literacy and responsible digital pedagogy. The point here is not to provide GenAI as universal one-size-fits-all solution but develop a framework for evidence based-program design of EAP curriculum, assessment and policy.

2 Literature Review

2.1 The Tradition of Genre and Academic Literacy in EAP

EAP evolved from the frontiers of English for Specific Purposes, emphasizing practical needs and situational wants relating to academic discourse rather than on general language use in an abstract way (Hyland, 2006). Genre analysis, particularly as outlined by Swales (1990, 2004), has been the primary theoretical underpinnings of EAP for many years; such models have seen academic genres like the research article being viewed as structured and motivated communicative events that inform members of specific discourse communities. Continuing along the former lines of thinking, Hyland (2004, 2007) also demonstrated, for instance, that variation between disciplines in their use of hedging and stance is a reflection of differences in epistemological standards across fields; and he asserted that genre-oriented teaching can perform an authorization function by making explicit the unwritten rules on academic writing and providing something teachable. The Academic Literacies approach co-developed by Lea and Street (1998) and Lillis (1997), in combination with genre analysis, since they provided a more critical perspective seeing student writing as not just a technical ability to be mastered but rather a socially situated practice associated with power, identity, and access to

knowledge. Clark and Ivanič (1997) also highlighted the way in which writing is never an ideological neutral code; it embeds students in specific ways of knowing and how they engage with being seen as legitimate members of communities exchanging scholarly communication.

Genre-based pedagogy and academic literacies have historically been positioned in varying degrees of opposition: the former emphasizing explicit instruction writing as a relatively stable disciplinary practice, and the latter foregrounding how such practices are socially contested, frequently marginalizing sites (Benesch 2001; Bawarshi & Reiff 2010). However, both perspectives include the notion that proficiency in academic writing is much more than just grammar. In this view of writing, writing itself is seen as a disciplinary and social act where writers are expected not only to know how to compose with language (that is, sentence constructing) but also why a certain rhetorical move is appropriate for given content or context in relation to the community and its epistemic aim. This layered understanding of writing expertise is relevant to the current study because, as the results described below will demonstrate, GenAI produces complications precisely in those layers that go beyond basic linguistic correctness—specifically rhetorical decision-making and argumentation, disciplinary engagement, and critical lens application. The ability of a student to get a chatbot to write them grammatically perfect prose has not therefore demonstrated the more substantive capacities which genre-based and academic-literacies research have long identified as a goal of EAP teaching.

2.2 The Benefits that Generative AI Offers for Academic Writing

A large amount of research has shown the practical benefits that Generative AI provides to writers, especially to multilingual and second-language writers who have in the past had to bear a heavier burden in English-speaking scholarly communication. Chan and Hu (2023) claim that large language models can reduce the difficulties that non-English first language speakers face

when engaging in academic writing in English, while Giglio and Costa (2023) say that AI tools have the potential to lessen the inequalities between native and non-native English-speaking researchers by helping with the composition of their work. Khalifa and Albadawy (2024), after reviewing 24 studies on the role of AI in academic writing and research, see Generative AI as a productivity tool which helps researchers at various stages of the writing process, such as during idea generation, content structuring, literature synthesis, editing, and even some parts of publication and outreach. Likewise, Chan and Colloton (2024) point out that Generative AI can make a significant difference at a number of stages in the writing process, including reading and synthesising the literature, brainstorming, shaping linguistic expression, and giving feedback during revision and editing.

Studies into AI-assisted writing show that generative AI can help with various stages of the writing process, such as brainstorming, outlining, rephrasing language, providing feedback, and revising (Barrot, 2023; Barrett & Pack, 2023; Chan & Colloton, 2024; Khalifa & Albadawy, 2024). This is particularly important in EAP since multilingual writers often have to devote a great deal of mental energy to linguistic formulation while at the same time getting used to the disciplinary conventions that are unfamiliar to them. Yet, improvements in fluency or in surface accuracy should not be taken as proof of advanced academic reasoning. A more helpful distinction is one between assistance that enables learners to express and test their own ideas and substitution, which eliminates the need for learners to carry out the intellectual work that the assignment is meant to assess. This distinction appears repeatedly in the literature and offers a better foundation for making teaching decisions than a simple allowed/prohibited approach.

2.3 Risks: Academic Integrity, Dependence on Knowledge, and Equity

There is also a parallel and equally significant body of work that examines the risks involved. Floridi (2023) provides a prominent criticism of generative AI, describing it as “agency without

intelligence”, the idea being that these systems separate the appearance of successful communicative behaviour from any actual understanding, reflection, or reasoned judgment. This kind of criticism is especially important in the context of higher education, since writing has for a long time been the main way in which students show what they have learned and in which instructors assess that learning. If it is possible to produce fluent text without going through the reflective and reasoning processes that writing has traditionally been taken to involve, then the value of using writing as a substitute for measuring learning is called into question (Kofinas et al., 2025). In addition to this epistemic issue, generative AI writing tools give rise to well-known problems relating to bias. Large language models are able to reproduce the political, racial, cultural, and gender biases present in their training data. Their outputs might rely too heavily on English-language and Western-oriented sources, thereby threatening to diminish the disciplinary and cultural diversity that EAP, as a field which has always aimed to cater to highly international student populations, has tried to include (Kofinas et al., 2025).

Academic integrity continues to be one of the aspects that attracts most attention. A: While institutions are increasingly more likely to require students disclose or explain AI use, the rules governing disclosure vary widely in both specificity and intent. Studies on transparency regulations have discovered that requirements are usually vaguely stated and voluntary disclosure is typically not linked to a specific method of performance measurement (Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026). This matters because there can never be a true measure of integrity from transparency if students lack clarity around what they are expected to disclose, why disclosing is important, or how non-disclosure will affect their mark. Thus, a more functional protocol involves much more than merely putting out a policy statement — it must include specific expectations regarding various types of tasks expected, further examples of acceptable versus unacceptable assistance (solution-focused vs. learning-oriented), and evaluation criteria that can distinguish between

legitimate support vs. outsourcing of the thinking for the assessment being made.

The equity angle also requires a bit more nuance. While GenAI might help tackle some of the challenges with multilingual writing by ease of access to language support, it can also just replace one set of inequalities with another: between students who have trustworthy access to high-quality systems and those who do not; between students who know how to assess AI outputs critically and those who don't. This survey, conducted in the United Kingdom in 2025 (the latest year we have data from), indicated that student use of GenAI had gone up, from 66% in 2024 to 92% in 2025 but confidence and usage differed across groups. The 2026 (Aug 2023) survey shows AI use among undergraduates is almost universal. These developments further emphasize the need to treat AI literacy as an educational duty instead of one that students will pick up informally. In EAP, an equity-oriented perspective then would include teaching all learners how to fact check claims and ascertain their limitations, how to maintain authorial responsibility, and contextualize the decision of when to use AI assistance.

2.4 Frameworks for AI Literacy and the Redefinition of Competence

Alongside the literature specifically concerned with writing, there is another, distinct but closely related area of work that has aimed to define AI literacy as a separate construct. The core framework proposed by Long and Magerko (2020) sets out the key competencies needed to understand and critically assess AI systems, although it was originally designed for a general and K-12 audience. Ng et al. (2021) provide a frequently cited overview that presents AI literacy in four aspects: knowing and understanding AI, using and applying AI, evaluating and creating AI, and managing the ethical issues connected with AI. Likewise, Ng et al. (2021) define AI literacy as comprising the knowledge and skills necessary to understand, use, and evaluate AI in a safe, ethical, and effective manner, with human decision-making and justice being regarded as values that should

underlie all these competencies. At the policy level, UNESCO's AI Competency Framework for Teachers (Miao & Cukurova, 2024) specifies five dimensions of professional AI literacy: a human-centred mindset, the ethics of AI in education, foundational AI knowledge, AI-enhanced pedagogy, and AI-supported professional development, while the accompanying framework for students (Miao & Shiohira, 2024) treats student autonomy and academic integrity as the guiding principles of a human-centred approach to AI in education.

Although general AI-literacy frameworks offer a good starting point, they on their own do not define what responsible AI use should look like in the context of academic writing within specific disciplines. Long and Magerko (2020) and Ng et al. (2021) emphasize understanding, using, evaluating, and considering ethical aspects. UNESCO's student framework likewise puts a strong focus on a human-centered approach, ethics, technical understanding, and responsible creation, while its teacher framework includes AI pedagogy and professional development (Miao & Cukurova, 2024; Miao & Shiohira, 2024). EAP requires that these competencies be linked to knowledge of genre, the use of sources, stance, argumentation, and disciplinary evidence. A student might be technically competent at obtaining a response from an LLM but still fail to realize that the response is rhetorically unsuitable, poorly supported, or inconsistent with the norms of the discipline. On the other hand, an experienced academic writer who has no AI literacy may not be able to identify typical risks such as fabricated references, confident factual errors, or hidden assumptions in the generated text.

2.5 Assessment in the GenAI Era

And this is a huge question of validity of the assessment. For example, Kofinas and others (2025) at two UK universities found that markers could not reliably distinguish between human-authored work and work that had been modified by or generated using GenAI, nor did authenticity alone protect written assessments from being gamed by AI-assisted cheating. But

open-ended writing has not been rendered educationally useless; the issue is that final, polished versions cannot carry the burden of demonstrating what the student learned. Assessment needs other types of evidence: for instance, staged drafts, version histories, annotated decisions about sources, reflective commentaries or oral explanations, presentations or other contexts where students demonstrate their ownership of their thinking. These measures ought to be chosen as they improve construct validity, and not simply because they are harder for AI to perform.

This reliance on detection is especially malpractice, because AI detectors can both flag innocent content (false positive) as well as be bypassed with AI-generated text (false negative), and blind trust in them turns learning into a charade of suspicion. You might instead develop your assessments around skills that the teachers wish to see, and state explicitly whether anything done by AI is part of this process. Policies built upon a model of isolated originality are becoming increasingly unworkable anywhere with AI (Luo 2024). As such, the drastic yet feasible solution for EAP would be a total ban on uncontrolled utilization of AI. You train to use it, not with blanket bans— AI output may be not clear as a purely linguistic analytic for some tasks; bounded support-through-AI will simply be okay in other cases; while in some instances, the evaluation might really aim squarely at students' ability to critique and correct AI-produced outputs.

Synthesising the literature reveals several lingering themes: GenAI has tremendous potential to support academic writing, especially for multilingual writers; at the same time, it presents considerable risks to academic integrity and epistemic development and equity; that existing frameworks for AI literacy provide useful but often broad support; and that many assessment practices may require complete redesign in order to be valid. It is an underdeveloped area but as specified explicitly in several of the papers reviewed (Funabashi, 2025; Roe et al., 2024), a framework to capture these elements for EAP has yet to be developed. The framework would connect traditional values long

held in the field, including narrative commitments to genre and academic-literacies theory, with newer literatures emerging around AI literacy by establishing implications for pedagogy, teacher agency/roles & learner independence, - assessment design. This study will aim to address that gap in the literature.

3 Methodology

3.1 Research Design

An analysis method involving two distinct phases: a structured review based on PRISMA and a conceptual model of the approach [4]. Identification, screening, eligibility and reporting stages were guided by PRISMA 2020 (Page et al., 2021). As the article aims at conducting a conceptual synthesis rather than a meta-analysis, these reviews also include pillars of foundational research in EAP and some applicable models that would be necessary to interpret the more recent empirical studies. This is a design appropriate for a field where the body of literature published post 2022, in method, population and outcome are markedly more diverse. Notably, this is a guide on exactly what we mean by 'PRISMA-informed': for a systematic review to be fully reproducible the search strings specific to each database must be described in full, dates used and methods of deduplication must be described; should provide numbers screened, reasons for excluding full-text articles and where possible a flow diagram. Further, if such details were not imposed on the current manuscript, then the review should not claim a level of reproducibility that is actually unrecorded.

3.2 Search Strategy and Sources of Data

The search was performed in Scopus and Web of Science databases, as well as policy and framework documents from official bodies, such as UNESCO. All search terms were classified into three categories: EAP and academic writing (e.g., "English for Academic Purposes," "academic writing," "academic literacy," "genre pedagogy", and & disciplinary writing"; GenAI (e.g., generative artificial intelligence, large language model, ChatGPT) and AI-assisted writing); and pedagogy/assessment (e.g. ("assessment"; academic integrity, AI literacy,

learner autonomy, higher education). The main span was from January 2019 until the middle of 2026, and older legacy EAPs were retained whenever theoretically needed. If it was claimed that a fully systematic review had been conducted, the exact search strings and date for the final search should be noted in an appendix or supplementary file in a future submission.

3.3 Eligibility Criteria and Screening Process

A source was considered eligible if it dealt with generative AI or large language models in the context of academic writing, EAP, higher-education literacy, assessment, academic integrity, or AI literacy; if it was a peer-reviewed or authoritative policy or framework document; and if it was available in English. Those purely technical studies on AI that did not focus on writing or education were excluded, as well as commentaries which lacked a clear evidential or conceptual foundation. Although foundational EAP sources published before 2019 were kept helping build theory, they were not counted as evidence of the effects of generative AI. The process of screening began with a review of the titles and abstracts before moving on to a full-text assessment, and further relevant work was identified through searching the reference lists. The synthesis separates empirical findings from conceptual and policy claims and does not regard all kinds of source as equivalent evidence.

3.4 Conceptual Analysis Procedure

The analysis was carried out in two stages. In the first stage, the studies were grouped into five recurring areas: writing competence, assessment, academic integrity, the role of the teacher, and learner autonomy. In the second stage, the relationships between these areas were looked at. For instance, a move towards assessment that is visible in the process means that students will need to reflect on their use of AI and that teachers should assess decision-making rather than just the final written work. Similarly, a transparency policy is unlikely to be effective if the design of the evaluation encourages concealment or if students think that any disclosure will result in them being penalised. The

model that results is therefore relational in that it explains how academic literacy, AI literacy, and pedagogical and assessment decisions interact with and reinforce one another.

Reliability was enhanced by prioritizing peer-reviewed empirical studies and systematic or scoping reviews over opinion pieces, and by employing policy models primarily to interpret educational responsibilities rather than to infer causal relationships. Nonetheless, several methodological limitations remain. The literature is evolving rapidly; many studies rely on self-reported data or short-term perceptions; publication bias toward English-language sources is likely; and the present manuscript does not include a complete numerical PRISMA flow or protocol registration. Consequently, the review provides stronger support for a conceptual framework and research agenda than for definitive causal claims about the effects of GenAI on learning.

4 Findings

4.1 Academic Writing Ability as a Multi-Layered Construct Mediated by AI

In the literature that has been reviewed, there is a clear suggestion that GenAI alters the evidential value of fluent academic prose and as a result demands a broader definition of academic writing competence. Previously, under the pre-GenAI model, academic writing competence in EAP was generally seen as including linguistic accuracy, an understanding of rhetoric and genre, and knowledge of the subject matter, all of which had been developed through the type of explicit genre instruction referred to by Hyland (2004) and Swales (1990, 2004). The literature examined shows that this concept now must be seen as involving at least five interrelated layers. The first of these is linguistic and rhetorical competence, which is still necessary but is no longer enough since GenAI tools can now produce fluent prose that meets surface-level linguistic requirements by themselves. The second is critical evaluation, that is, the ability to judge the accuracy, appropriateness, bias, and suitability within the discipline of AI-generated content rather than accepting it without question (Ng et al., 2021).

The third is strategic AI collaboration, meaning the ability to use GenAI purposefully at the right stages of the writing process, for example for brainstorming or for refining the language, while leaving the work involving argumentation and analysis to oneself (Chan & Colloton, 2024; Khalifa & Albadawy, 2024). The fourth is disciplinary discourse competence, which refers to the knowledge of genre and register that enables a writer to decide whether AI-generated text actually meets the expectations of their field, a judgement which GenAI itself cannot consistently carry out on the writer's behalf because disciplinary norms are locally negotiated and only partly reflected in the training data (Hyland, 2004; Swales, 2004). The fifth is ethical and AI-literate decision-making, which is the ability to make clear and well-justified decisions about when, how, and whether to disclose the use of AI assistance, in accordance with institutional and disciplinary expectations (Moorhouse et al., 2023; Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026).

The importance of this multi-layered view lies in the way it resolves an apparent contradiction in the existing literature between those studies which find that GenAI enhances the quality of student writing regarding cohesion, clarity, and fluency, and others which claim that GenAI harms critical thinking, authorial voice, and epistemic development (Barrot, 2023; Barrett & Pack, 2023). Both of these findings can be true at the same time if academic writing competence is seen as being multi-layered: GenAI can easily improve performance at the linguistic and rhetorical level while at the same time posing a threat to development at the critical-evaluation and disciplinary-judgment levels if learners are not specifically taught to engage with those levels. It therefore follows that the main educational task for EAP is no longer to teach students to write well in the conventional sense, but rather to teach them to exercise judgment about writing, such as judging when and how to use AI assistance.

4.2 Assessment Reorganised Around the Learning Process and Its Evidence

Another important finding relates to the way assessments are carried out. The body of literature strongly supports the view that relying solely on product-based assessment is becoming increasingly inadequate as evidence of the competencies that EAP says it aims to develop. Kofinas et al. (2025) give immediate empirical support for this assertion by showing that experienced assessors were not able to reliably tell the difference between assessments carried out with the help of AI and those done without AI assistance, thus casting doubt on the idea that authentic, real-world-type tasks are naturally resistant to circumvention through the use of AI. As a result, the literature suggests several strategies that are in agreement. Assessment that makes the process visible — this involves submitting the work in stages, providing annotated drafts, or including a record of revisions — enables teachers to judge the way in which a text has evolved rather than being limited to evaluating just the final version (Khlaif et al., 2025). Interactive and verbal assessment enables an instructor to ensure that a student does truly comprehend the material and reasoning articulated in the submitted work (Khlaif et al., 2025; e.g., oral exams, presentations, and led discussions of their writing). Lastly, reflective and metacognitive elements embedded with the requirement to explain and justify their writing decisions or revisions that incorporated AI support incorporate the disclosure of such assistance as part of the assessment process itself rather than viewing interest in disclosure as an administrative problem (Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026).

The literature reviewed also provides important caveats summarising that a response of pure restriction or surveillance is not one to be taken. Policies that focus more on entrenching a narrow pre-AI definition of ‘originality’ may be unrealistic and pedagogically irresponsible: policies that see instructors as detectives (or even worse, the judge/punisher) armed with unproven tools are morally suspect at best (Luo 2024). More robustly across the literature is a shift toward assessments once considered appropriate revealed uses of AI as their own established and teachable skill, nudging evaluative attention to

skills that are genuinely immune from GenAI replacement—critical judgment, disciplinary framing, and reflective self-awareness. This means that, in practical terms, EAP assessment tasks need to be explicitly constructed so that students have to demonstrate the five-layered competence described in Section 4.1 (rather than simply banning the use of AI outright – a proposition that evidence reviewed suggests is difficult to implement and harmful to sound pedagogy more generally).

4.3 Academic Integrity Reframed as Process Transparency

Something closely related to the assessment findings is a more general redefinition of what academic integrity means. In the past, academic integrity in EAP had been based on preventing plagiarism, which was defined as the use without attribution of another author's words or ideas; however, the literature reviewed shows that universities and scholars are now more likely to organise academic integrity around the transparency of the process — that is, not whether AI was used, but whether its use was disclosed, was appropriate for the task, and was in line with the intellectual responsibility that remains with the student author (Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026). The fact that Moorhouse et al. (2023) found that most of the institutions they surveyed now have some kind of AI guidance, typically requiring acknowledgement or citation of content produced by AI, shows this change at the policy level, even though the same study pointed out large gaps between policy and enforcement.

However, the literature reviewed also identifies a significant obstacle to implementation: integrity frameworks based on transparency depend on students being motivated to self-disclose information, and that motivation is typically undermined by fear of academic or social consequences. Even though students can formally disclose their use of AI assistance and no formal consequences should be attached to that, due to a misconception that for disclosing this kind of help the teachers would lower the marks or judge them negatively (Pérez-Pérez et al. A scoping review of transparency mechanisms

in assessment also showed that where there are requirements for disclosure, this is usually not well defined with broad ethical statements rather than without clear definitions as to what and how it should be assessed from the point of view of disclosure and rarely any verification (Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026). This corpus of evidence suggests that, for integrity frameworks based on transparency to operate optimally in EAP contexts, disclosure is not just a box to tick but something incorporated into the very logic of the pedagogy itself—for example, using discussions of AI use in class as a staple component of the course; awarding credit for thoughtful and well-justified collaboration with AI rather than blanket penalties for any such collaboration; or ensuring that any declared use of AI is explicitly and equitably factored into marking rather than generating automatic suspicion.

4.4 The Teacher as a Facilitator of Reflective Inquiry

Fourth, the study focuses on an EAP instructor who has been "repositioned". Review of the literature provides a reasonably strong consensus on the assertion that GenAI removes the teacher from being the primary or exclusive knowledge provider. While a version of this position has already faced some degree of challenge in academic-literacies scholarship (Lea & Street, 1998), it is now being directly and practically challenged by GenAI. From a situation where feedback on grammar, structure and content was historically dependent on instructor recommendations as the primary source of insight, online GenAI tools can now be provided in an instant — all three at a scale & speed that no human instructor could match. The literature reviewed in this work contends that this shift is a reallocation of the teacher as skilful practice to functions for which AI cannot substitute: demonstration of how to model evaluation of AI-generated text, routine judgment in the content area(s) where the writer engages with idea generation, structuring reflection on drafts produced with AI assistance, and serving as a source of moral reasoning regarding responsible use (Miao & Cukurova, 2024). A similar emphasis on human perspectives and AI-enhanced

pedagogy as pedagogical content knowledge is presented in the teacher-facing AI competency framework for teachers developed by UNESCO, which places an important focus on the role of the teacher as mediator between students and AI systems involved in writing.

The shift has clear implications for EAP teaching methods. Several of the studies reviewed propose a “human-in-the-loop” approach, whereby AI acts as just one of a number of voices taking part in a collaborative and reflective process rather than acting as an oracle, the teacher's role consisting in providing opportunities for students to question, check, and revise the AI's output using disciplinary and rhetorical criteria that the teacher is still in the best position to teach (Miao & Cukurova, 2024). This is in line with, and can be seen as a natural development of, the genre-pedagogy tradition mentioned in Section 2.1, in which the teacher's main role has always been to make implicit disciplinary conventions explicit; GenAI now introduces an additional layer in the form of AI-generated text, whose conventions and limitations also have to be made explicit to learners.

4.5 Promoting Learner Autonomy Through Intentional Engagement with AI

The last and fifth main finding is related to learner autonomy, a concept which has for a long time been at the heart of EAP and more widely within language-learning theory, including responsibility for one's own learning goals, making informed decisions regarding learning strategies, and carrying out continuous self-assessment (Holec, 1981). A considerable part of the literature that has been reviewed looks at the connection between GenAI use and learner autonomy and as a rule concludes that this relationship is conditional and not fixed: GenAI can help in the development of autonomy if learners interact with it in a critical and reflective manner but is capable of damaging autonomy when learners simply accept AI output without any thought (Chan & Hu, 2023). Those learners who critically assess the content produced by AI are more likely to say that they feel a sense of autonomy and take ownership of their learning,

since critical engagement enables them to identify the value and limitations of what the AI produces rather than just accepting it as authoritative (Chan & Hu, 2023). On the other hand, unregulated or uncritical use of AI has been linked to lower levels of cognitive engagement and to a weaker development of intellectual autonomy, especially in cases where the institutional or classroom norms do not explicitly encourage reflective use (Kasneci et al., 2023).

In the case of ESP and EAP, GenAI has been found to have a positive correlation with learner autonomy when students use it as a means of supporting their own decision-making — for example, by checking or expanding on their initial draft ideas — rather than replacing those decisions (Barrett & Pack, 2023). This is of pedagogical importance since it suggests that in the GenAI era learner autonomy should not be promoted by limiting students' access to AI tools, an approach which the broader literature indicates is difficult to implement in practice, but instead by intentionally designing tasks that require students to carry out the kind of judgement, decision-making, responsibility and self-evaluation which Holec (1981) identified as essential to autonomy from the start, now specifically relating to the question of when and how to make use of AI assistance. Across the literature, reflective techniques such as keeping a record of the AI interactions, noting which parts of a draft were assisted by AI and the reasons for this, and critically comparing the AI-generated content with one's own subject-specific knowledge appear as practical ways in which this kind of autonomy-building engagement can be put into practice in the EAP classroom.

5 A Conceptual Model of EAP in the Age of Generative AI

The five interrelated areas mentioned in Section 4 — the redefinition of writing competence, the reconfiguration of assessment, the reframing of academic integrity, the repositioning of the teacher, and the cultivation of learner autonomy — cannot be dealt with separately from each other or inconsistent or self-contradictory institutional reactions will result. For example, if

assessment is restructured so as to reward work that is visible in the process and reflective, but the academic integrity policy still regards any use of AI as inherently suspicious, students will receive conflicting messages which are likely to lead to the very kind of concealment behaviour that the literature identifies as most harmful to integrity (Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026). In a similar way, if teachers are required to help students carry out critical inquiry into AI-generated content, but institutional professional development fails to improve their own AI literacy according to the five dimensions set out in UNESCO's teacher framework (Miao & Cukurova, 2024), then that facilitative role will not be able to be carried out in practice.

In order to deal with this issue, the current study introduces an integrated conceptual model, known as the Academic-AI Literacy Integration (AALI) model, which brings together three earlier separate areas of theory — the theory of academic literacy in the genre and the academic-literacies traditions, AI literacy as defined in frameworks such as those of Ng et al. (2021) and UNESCO's competency frameworks, and responsible digital pedagogy as set out in the assessment and transparency literature — as three mutually reinforcing pillars all contributing to one outcome: ethically informed, critically engaged, and academically responsible human–AI collaboration in written scholarly communication.

The aspect of academic literacy keeps all the points that have for a long time been stressed by the genre and academic-literacies approaches: a clear understanding of the conventions of the discipline, the structure of the genre, the appropriate rhetorical position, and the fact that disciplinary discourse is situated within social contexts (Hyland, 2004; Lea & Street, 1998; Swales, 1990). In this model, academic literacy provides the specific criteria by means of which AI-generated or AI-assisted text must be assessed; unless students have this, they have no basis for deciding whether an AI-produced paragraph is appropriate within the discipline, rhetorically effective, or epistemologically sound. The second element, AI literacy, offers the

procedural and evaluative skills necessary for interacting with generative AI tools: this includes understanding generally how these systems produce text, identifying their typical limitations and biases, using them strategically and only at suitable stages in the writing process, and critically assessing their output rather than accepting it without criticism (Long & Magerko, 2020; Ng et al., 2021). The third element, responsible digital pedagogy, provides the institutional, curricular, and assessment arrangements in which the first two elements can in fact be put into practice: these involve clear and thoroughly specified rules regarding disclosure, an evaluation design that is transparent in terms of the process and incorporates reflection, and teacher support that demonstrates critical engagement rather than either banning the use of AI tools or endorsing them without critical thought (Khlaif et al., 2025; Miao & Cukurova, 2024).

The model also makes it clear that these three pillars interact dynamically, not simply in a checklist fashion. If there is academic literacy without AI literacy, students will be able to evaluate conventional text written by humans but will not be prepared to examine AI-generated text, since the errors found in such text — for example, plausible but made-up citations or a subtly inappropriate disciplinary approach — are of a different kind from the mistakes made by beginning human writers. In the case of AI literacy without academic literacy, students may be technically able to use and manipulate GenAI tools through prompting but will not be in a position to assess whether the output conforms to disciplinary standards, and as a result the text produced may be fluent yet empty. Where either of the two pillars is missing responsible digital pedagogy, the competence of individual students becomes isolated within the institution's existing structures, assessment methods, and integrity policies, which do not acknowledge, reward, or support that competence and thus reproduce the policy-practice gaps described in Section 4.3. Only when all three pillars work together — using disciplinary knowledge to assess the content, possessing AI literacy to judge and use

the tool, and having institutional arrangements that make it both possible and rewarding to engage with the material in a transparent and reflective way — can EAP reasonably say that it is preparing students for genuinely responsible academic participation in an environment that is saturated with AI.

The AALI model suggests that there is a clear order in which to present the content for curriculum designers. Basic instruction in genre and in disciplinary-discourse should continue to form the starting point of any EAP curriculum, as it provides the criteria for evaluation that the other two areas rely on; instruction in AI literacy, this involving structured practice in prompting, in critically assessing and in properly setting boundaries around the use of AI, should be incorporated into writing tasks rather than being presented as a separate module that is disconnected from real disciplinary writing. Assessment and integrity policies should be redesigned at the same time as, not after, the changes made to the first two areas, so that what is taught and what is rewarded stay in line. The sequencing logic which has been developed inductively from the literature reviewed here serves as the practical link between the conceptual model and the recommendations given in Section 7.

6 Discussion

This review has several consequences for the way that EAP as a field should understand its own theoretical foundations in the light of GenAI. The genre-based and academic-literacies approaches, which have in the past been seen as opposing paradigms in EAP research, are in fact both together and possibly even now essential in the GenAI age. The focus in genre-based teaching on explicit and teachable disciplinary conventions exactly matches the kind of criterion-referenced knowledge that students need to assess AI-generated text critically. On the other hand, the academic-literacies approach, with its stress on writing as a socially situated and power-influenced practice, offers the kind of conceptual tools necessary for examining how GenAI tools — having been trained mainly on

English-language and Western-oriented corpora — might themselves reproduce or exacerbate the existing inequalities regarding whose academic voice is regarded as normal (Kofinas et al., 2025). Instead of overcoming the tension between these two traditions, GenAI seems to increase the need for both at the same time, something that is in line with the integrative logic of the AALI model outlined in Section 5.

Second, the findings suggest that debates about whether GenAI is, on balance, beneficial or harmful for academic writing instruction are somewhat mis-specified. As the multi-layered competence findings in Section 4.1 indicate, GenAI can simultaneously improve surface-level writing outcomes and undermine deeper epistemic and critical competencies, depending entirely on how it is pedagogically framed and scaffolded. This reframes the central empirical and pedagogical question away from “should EAP permit GenAI” toward “what pedagogical, assessment, and institutional conditions determine whether GenAI use supports or undermines the competencies EAP is responsible for developing.” This reframing aligns with, and is supported by, findings from the self-regulated-learning literature indicating that the relationship between AI use and learner autonomy or critical thinking is conditional on the quality of engagement rather than fixed by the technology itself (Chan & Hu, 2023).

The information in sections 4.2 and 4.3 about assessment and academic integrity also implies that the issues of EAP, and higher education in general have a coordination problem than a strict pedagogical one. Redesigning individual assignments by individual instructors cannot address the policy-practice gaps illustrated in the transparency-mechanisms literature (for a review, see Pérez-Pérez et al., 2026), nor are they capable of reshaping student disclosure behavior when institutional incentives continue associating disclosed AI use with suspicion or punishment. This means that the conceptual model developed in Section 5 and grounded particularly in the understanding of EAP as not just classroom-level practice but an institutional-level pillar via investment in responsible digital pedagogy,

applies not only for us as EAP practitioners forced to work within the disempowerment of our existing institutions.

Fourth, based on the finding of teacher role and learner autonomy working in conjunction, this calls for a reconceptualization of EAP classroom as equating to triadic interaction rather than dyadic interaction: Noting purely teacher and student, but instead teacher, student, and AI system (with the evolving role of the teacher being mediator and structuralist of second and third relations rather than competitive with AI when it comes to their source-dominance position) (Miao & Cukurova, 2024). This triadic framing aligns with recent understandings of AI as broadly reshaping the nature of educational experience from one of teacher-to-student relations to a more pedagogically irreversible teacher-AI-student triad (Miao & Cukurova, 2024). This indicates a research agenda for EAP: establishing and trialing task designs, feedback protocols, and reflective assessment tools that make this triadic model operable in the face of EAP-specific demands.

7 Implications and Recommendations for Practice

From the findings and conceptual model described above, this paper therefore proceeds to provide recommendations for EAP instructors (UK), curriculum designers and institutional policymakers. For teaching in the classroom, we recommend EAP instructors to explicitly teach the five-layered competence model introduced in Section 4.1, but not present AI literacy as something supplementary to current writing courses. This includes designing tasks where you ask students to compare AI generated drafts against the genre-specific requirements of each discipline, identify areas of disciplinary or rhetorical deficiency with the AI-generated text and defend their choices about which parts of a text were aided by the AI and why. In this example of structured reflection, comments on the draft annotated are employed as a normal aspect of the writing process instead of as special

assignments only (in line with the reflective-practice mechanisms outlined in Section 4.5).

When designing assessments, programmes should move away from relying on single, unsupervised written tasks that focus only on the product and instead adopt a variety of assessment methods which include submissions that make the learning process visible, oral or interactive elements, and tasks that incorporate reflection, in accordance with the resilient and authentic assessment models explained in Section 4.2. If the use of AI is allowed and the relevant literature indicates that it is generally more effective and easier to enforce to permit rather than to prohibit disclosed use, then the expectations regarding disclosure should be stated clearly rather than merely given as a general ethical recommendation, specifying exactly what needs to be disclosed, the level of detail required, and how the disclosed use will be taken into account in the evaluation. To comply with the principles of their academic integrity policy, institutions should strive to develop the low-stakes trust-based disclosure culture that transparency literatures suggest is a necessary condition for honest reporting; this likely requires moving away from the presumption that disclosed AI use constitutes academic misconduct (and is also simultaneously problematic because then it should be avoided and even punished) but instead recognize justifiable disclosed AI use as an exemplar of precisely the competence EAP attempts to foster. As members of the EAP and writing-program teams are uniquely suited to articulate what “appropriate” AI-assisted writing really entails—after all, they are trained in genre and rhetorical evaluation—the policy should also be developed in conjunction with these stakeholders. Universities should use this to work toward the kind of EAP-instructor training structured AI-literacy development envisioned by UNESCO's teacher competency framework (Miao & Cukurova, 2024), rather than rely on instructors developing expertise informally or individually in modelling critical engagement with AI. The coordinated redesign of academic literacy outcomes, AI literacy outcomes, and assessment and integrity policy should be a joint

effort of curriculum committees (following the interdependent-pillar structure of the AALI model described in Section 5).

8 Limitations and Future Research

The argument has several limitations. First, regarding the pace of change of generative AI capabilities, institutional policy and student behaviour means that any statement made about specific tools is likely to be outdated in a short period of time. Second, most of the literature is on people's perceptions and/or cross-sectional or conceptual; there very little research evidence into what happens in terms of subject-specific learning, language development and authorial independence over time. Thirdly and perhaps most importantly, the emphasis on English-language materials may not properly encapsulate scholarship and pedagogical practices beyond the Anglophone world, an important issue in EAP. Fourth, the AALI model is a conceptual synthesis and has not been corroborated based on longitudinal research conducted within classrooms or at the programme level. Fifthly, this manuscript is developed from PRISMA guidelines but does not report a full PRISMA systematic review here however it does not include complete numerical screening records, database-specific search strings or a formal flow diagram. Preregistration, non-English evidence bases, classroom interventions and longitudinal studies that assess not just writing quality but also learning, transfer and independent disciplinary judgement would address these limitations in future research.

9 Conclusion

This is a short article on generative AI and how it's changing the purposes, pedagogies, and assessment types of English for Academic Purposes. Its point is that this doesn't mean academic writing has less value, but instead that

the connection between a polished piece of writing and the skills it purports to demonstrate have become more tenuous. Thus, EAP cannot afford to pay attention only to linguistic accuracy and rhetorical fluency. Students must also learn to interrogate the claims that a generative model creates, to note the possible limitations and biases of those claims, to apply discipline-specific standards (for example, statistical analysis varies among disciplines), when AI assistance should be used, how the usage of AI should be documented if needed or appropriate, and acknowledge responsibility for the argument and evidence in a final text. Assessment, too, must be based on evidence of process, reasoning, reflection and discipline-based judgement, rather than the finished product. However, the AALI model accounts for this transition by conceiving of them as interdependent academic literacy, AI literacy, and responsible digital pedagogy (see Figure 2). Academic literacy furnishes disciplinary and rhetorical standards by which we assess a text; AI literacy enables informed and critical interactions with generative systems; responsible pedagogy establishes the assessment and policy conditions under which transparent use might be taught, evaluated, or otherwise practiced. Thus, the model rejects both universal disqualification and wholesale wade-in. Learning outcomes may require different levels of assistance from an AI. Yet, those decisions must be explicit, match assessment intent, and be reinforced by the provision of opportunities for students to show what they know and what they can do themselves. In future research, we explore testing this model between disciplines and language areas, the medium- to long-term effect of generative AI-assisted writing on language development and disciplinary learning, and what this may mean across a variety of educational contexts.

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