

How arts schools in Singapore are adapting to AI and grading creativity

Local arts institutions are grappling with a world of creative work that is being reshaped by the latest digital tools.

As generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools become a fixture for many, the focus has shifted from whether students should be allowed to use them to finding a balance between teaching traditional techniques and preparing them for an AI future.

In 2024, Lasalle College of the Arts set up a working group to study GenAI's impact and how it can be integrated into its curriculum. In the same year, it introduced a set of guidelines to help faculty members decide how much AI students can use in assignments.

At the School of the Arts (SOA), students are allowed to experiment with AI where it serves

clear learning aims, like in brainstorming, exploring ideas or refining their work, said a spokesperson. This should be done in line with the tools' usage terms such as age requirements and with teacher supervision where needed.

They are also required to declare if they use AI in assignments.

At the Nanyang Academy of Fine Arts, some students and faculty are exploring how AI may be used for creative experimentation and research, said its provost and vice-president (academic) Chong Keng Hua.

Lasalle's president Venka Purushothaman said students have been using AI as a learning partner in the process of creative thinking.

Its working group found that students appreciated being encouraged to explore using GenAI



At the Lasalle College of the Arts, students have been using AI as a learning partner in the process of creative thinking. ST PHOTO: JASON QUAH

rather than being policed on their usage of the technology.

At the same time, schools are rethinking how they assess students.

"We emphasise process-oriented assessment so that student voice and authorship remain vis-

ible and verifiable," said Venka.

As AI detector tools grow unreliable, educators at Lasalle are relying more on methods to assess students' creative processes rather than to identify AI-generated content.

Most Lasalle programmes re-

quire students to document their creative process for assignments in what the school calls "creative process journals". This can include photos, recordings, sources of inspiration, successes, and failures, or the tools they use, including GenAI.

The school is introducing other methods, such as oral presentations, where students need to explain their work in their own words. Some assessments also require students to provide verifiable citation details, including digital object identifiers, ISBNs (International Standard Book Numbers) or direct web links.

SOTA takes a similar approach. Its spokesperson said it emphasises process work and evidence, requiring students to submit drafts, logs and version histories, and orally explain their work to show they have understood what they have produced.

Lasalle's Generative AI Assessment Scale – which applies to the college's diploma, undergraduate

and postgraduate programmes – has three broad tiers: no or minimal AI use, supported AI use, and integrated or exploratory AI use.

Students will be told in advance which tier applies to their assessment, so they know whether AI is prohibited, permitted or required.

The lowest tier disallows any use of GenAI, while the highest tier mandates creative use of GenAI to accomplish the task.

Institutions say the impact of GenAI is likely to vary across disciplines, with the performing arts potentially more insulated from disruption than fields centred on digital content creation.

Using music as an example, Venka said that though GenAI can be integrated into audio engineering, it cannot replace the performing artist on stage.

"A singer still has to sing, a guitarist still has to strum away... The performing arts still require the actor to act and command the space," he added.

Megan Wee