TRU AI Use & Governance Guidelines

1. Purpose & Scope

These guidelines establish a unified, institution-wide framework for safe, ethical, equitable, and effective use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) at TRU. They apply to **students, faculty, staff, and researchers**, with additional role-specific expectations.

Goals

- Support the TRU community on the foundational thinking of AI.
- Enable confident action by the TRU community.
- Build practical judgment for the TRU community.
- Encourage learning, experimentation, and escalation in a responsible manner.
- Protect privacy, security, academic integrity, and institutional trust.
- Provide a foundation for future **role-specific sub-guidelines**.

2. Guiding Principles

- **Human accountability** – Users remain responsible for decisions and outputs.
- **Privacy first** – Protect personal and confidential information.
- **Transparency** – Disclose meaningful AI involvement where required.
- **Equity & inclusion** – Reduce barriers and mitigate bias.
- **Security by design** – Use TRU-approved tools and follow information-security best practices.
- **Continuous improvement** – Review guidelines annually or when laws or technologies change.
- **Align with TRU policies** - FIPPA, academic integrity standards, research ethics, and cybersecurity practices.

3. Definitions

- ➢ **Personal information** is information about an individual who can be identified either from the information itself, or in combination with other available information. [FIPPA definitions]
    - ☐ **Any student information** is personal information, including the fact that an individual is a TRU student.
    - ☐ **Business contact information** (name, title, work phone/email) is not personal information.
- ➢ **Privileged information is** information covered by the various forms of privilege that exist in law. Any information that is marked as privileged, relates to the seeking and giving of legal advice (from a lawyer), or relates to anticipated or ongoing legal disputes is likely privileged. If in doubt, consult with Legal or the Privacy and Access Office prior to inputting the information.

> - **Non-sensitive data** refers to information that cannot be used to identify an individual, either on its own or in combination with other data. This includes general, anonymized, or aggregated content that does not contain personal identifiers.
>   - ☐ **Examples of non-sensitive data** include meeting agendas without names, generic templates, anonymized survey results, and content that excludes personal details.
>   - ☐ **Personally identifiable data** is not considered non-sensitive and must not be used in AI processes unless permitted and protected.

4. Tool Approval, IT Security & Responsible Use

- Use only TRU-approved AI platforms for any work involving sensitive or personal information.
- Do not share or store credentials in AI tools.
- Avoid personal accounts or consumer services for TRU business.
- Follow TRU IT Security guidelines, including remote-work safeguards.

5. Transparency, Accuracy & Academic Integrity

- Disclose meaningful AI use as required by instructors, departments, or publishers.
- AI must **not** be listed as an author.
- Students must follow assignment-specific rules.
- Cite AI tools appropriately when required.

Academic integrity violations include:

- Using fabricated or AI-generated sources.
- Submitting AI-generated work as original work when not allowed.
- Misrepresenting AI contributions.
- Falsifying data or research outputs.

6. Judgment & Oversight Requirements

All AI users must:

- Verify facts, citations, formulas, and code before use.
- Detect and correct hallucinations, bias, or inaccuracies.
- Avoid over-reliance on AI.
- Ensure compliance with TRU policies (Academic Integrity, FIPPA, Research Ethics, IT Security).
- Maintain full responsibility for submitted or published work.

7. Data Governance & Privacy Requirements

Do NOT enter this information into non-approved AI tools:

- Personal information (e.g. assessment content, student names/numbers, addresses)
- Privileged information
- Grades, evaluations, HR materials, hiring documents.
- Unpublished, sensitive, or identifiable research data.
- Internal financial or planning documents.
- Assessment content (exam banks, quiz items).
- Credentials, security configurations, or restricted IT information.

TRU Data Classification

➢ **Public:** Data designed for unrestricted public viewing, such as released research findings, course listings, or event notifications. This type of information can be freely distributed without causing harm to any person or to TRU.

➢ **Internal:** This information is for internal university use; unauthorized sharing could disrupt operations or harm TRU's reputation.

➢ **Confidential:** Confidential university data intended solely for authorized users. Exposure or misuse of this information can result in damage to the institution's reputation, breach of legal obligations, or violation of university policies. Examples include, but not limited to:
  - Academic records, including grades, transcripts, and student identification numbers.
  - Personnel documents such as faculty evaluations and tenure review materials.
  - Internal financial statements and budget planning documents.
  - Unpublished research data generated within the university.
  - Legal agreements, contracts, and related documentation.
  - Grant applications and proposals not yet released to the public.
  - Personal information as defined in Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (FIPPA).
  - Privileged Information
  - De-identified content that cannot reasonably identify individuals or institutional processes.

FIPPA Compliance

- As a BC public institution, TRU must ensure personal data is not stored or processed outside Canada unless permitted under FIPPA.
- TRU must only collect, use, and disclose personal information as set out in FIPPA. When entering personal information into an AI tool, ensure this use is consistent with the purpose for which the information was collected.
  - o This means personal information is either being used for the same purpose it was originally collected, or for a purpose that has a <u>reasonable and direct connection </u>to the original purpose, and that is necessary for a TRU program or activity.

8. Encouraged & Acceptable Uses

AI tools may be used to support creativity, learning, productivity, and accessibility **provided no restricted data is used**.

General Acceptable Uses

- Drafting, editing, outlining, and summarizing **non-sensitive data**.
- Brainstorming, ideation, alternative phrasing.
- Accessibility support (plain language, alt-text, captions, alternative formats).
- Administrative efficiency (templates, checklists, meeting notes).
- Coding assistance and workflow automation.
- Non-sensitive research assistance (e.g., summaries, structure generation).

Roles:

- **Students:** Follow course-level AI expectations. Use AI ethically for brainstorming, outlining, and study support unless prohibited by instructors. Enhance learning with explanation or practice questions. Evaluate AI output critically. Disclose AI use when required.
- **Faculty:** Clearly communicate AI rules in syllabi. Draft communications, teaching materials, job aids, and examples using AI, but protect student data and personal information. Only enter confidential data (including personal information) into approved tools. Ensure assessments maintain academic integrity. Develop alternative formats and accessibility-support resources with AI.
- **Staff:** Use AI for administrative tasks such as templates, checklists, and meeting notes. Only enter confidential data (including personal information) into approved tools. Support peers through training and safe practice.
- **Researchers:** Use AI for non-sensitive ideation, literature scaffolds, or coding assistance. Obtain REB approval before processing private or sensitive data. Document AI use transparently. Disclose AI involvement in publications as required. Follow TCPS2, FIPPA, and TRU research policy.

9. Equity, Inclusion & Accessibility

AI use should:

- Reduce barriers through simplified language, multimodal output, and alternative formats.
- Avoid reinforcement of stereotypes or bias.
- Support, not replace, required human accommodations.
- Promote accessible learning environments.

10. Escalation & Reporting

- **Privacy concerns or breaches** – TRU Privacy & Access Office, Information Security. See the TRU [Breach Protocol.](#)
- **Security or IT issues** – ITS Service Desk.
- **Research Ethics Questions** – Research Ethics Board / Research Services.
- **Library support** – TRU Library for citation, evaluation, and technology guidance.
- **Policy guidance** – Department heads or the TRU Policy Office.

11. Key Learning Resources

- TRU AI Education Hub [[GenAI in Education](#)]
- TRU AI Guidance for Educators [[Guidance – GenAI in Education](#)]
- TRU AI Hub for Employees [[AI for Employees](#)]
- TRU Library AI Guides (appropriate uses, evaluating output) [[Home - Artificial Intelligence: A Guide for Students - Research Guides at Thompson Rivers University Library](#)]
- TRU Academic Integrity Policies [https://www.tru.ca/vpacademic/education-quality-assurance/centre-for-academic-integrity.html, https://www.tru.ca/__shared/assets/AI_case_process_infographic_v245051.pdf]
- FIPPA (BC Privacy Legislation applicable to TRU) [https://www.bclaws.gov.bc.ca/civix/document/id/complete/statreg/96165_00]
- OIPC BC AI & Privacy Guidance [[Guidance Documents – Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner for BC](#)]

12. Governance & Review

- Owned by **Teaching & Learning + Research Office and ITS**.
- Reviewed **annually** or after significant policy or legislative changes.
- Workgroups may develop **role-specific sub-guidelines**.

13. Disclaimer

These guidelines support, but do not replace, official TRU policies, research ethics requirements, or provincial/federal privacy legislation. In cases of conflict, **TRU Policy Index** and **FIPPA** take precedence.

Acronyms & Full Forms

- **AI** – Artificial Intelligence
- **FIPPA** – Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act (BC)
- **ITS** – Information Technology Services

- **REB** – Research Ethics Board
- **PIA** – Privacy Impact Assessment
- **TCPS2** – Tri-Council Policy Statement: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans
- **TRU** – Thompson Rivers University
- **More Terms** – AI Glossary Terms – AI for Employees