

# AI smart glasses and the future of academic integrity in a postplagiarism era

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## Abstract

Using AI glasses as a focal case, we examine challenges wearable technology pose to teaching, assessment, and academic integrity. We argue that treating AI glasses as cheating devices overlooks their potential for accessibility and cognitive support while failing to address the structural disruption these technologies bring to education. Current enforcement models to detect academic misconduct rely on observable behaviours and verifiable evidence, at least on the balance of probability. The discreteness of AI glasses, combined with increasing prevalence of wearable technology for medical use, disrupts these established enforcement models, while simultaneously increasing the risk of unequal scrutiny and procedural injustice. We argue that a shift away from technological prohibition toward rethinking assessment and pedagogical design and policy reform may be more constructive and learner centred. In a postplagiarism era, academic integrity can be sustained by creating learning environments in which using AI to cheat becomes pedagogically irrelevant.

## Keywords

academic integrity, academic misconduct, AI glasses, artificial intelligence, postplagiarism, technology, wearable

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## Introduction

We are at an inflection point in education triggered by rapid advances in technology that are redefining teaching, learning, assessment, and academic integrity. This inflection point is defined not by a single disruptive tool but by a paradigm shift where the distinction between human cognition and technological augmentation is quickly dissolving. The development of artificial intelligence (AI) wearable devices is increasing in popularity (Kumar et al., 2018; Schreiber & Hyatt, 2018). In this paper, we chose AI glasses (also called AI smart glasses, AI-powered glasses, smart glasses, or AI-enabled glasses) as a case to consider the impact of wearable devices on teaching, learning, assessment, and academic integrity.

### What are AI Wearables?

AI wearable devices include a wide range of body-worn gadgets equipped with advanced features that simplify tasks and support user need, providing a personalized experience. AI wearables include smartwatches, virtual reality headsets, smart garments, smart rings, smart glasses, and smart hearing devices (Purushotham et al., 2024). Although AI glasses have existed for more than a decade (Mitrasinovic et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2025), availability and demand have increased in recent years (Elgan, 2025; Waisberg et al., 2024). AI glasses have evolved in terms of functionality and design, serving as wearable computers that integrate AI assistants, cameras,

and even heads-up displays into everyday vision correction and eyewear (Elgan, 2025; Gibbs, 2025; Wang et al., 2025), combining traditional glasses with advanced AI capabilities to enhance the user's visual experience (Sai & Gunda, 2024; Wang et al., 2025). These glasses can deliver a range of context-aware functions, including real-time translation, environmental information retrieval, navigation support, on-site report preparation, telemonitoring, personalized real-time health data, and hands-free productivity tools, such as note-taking or calendar access (Kumar et al., 2018; Sai & Gunda, 2024; Wang et al., 2025).

## AI Wearables through a Postplagiarism Lens

Postplagiarism is loosely defined as an era where advanced technologies, including generative AI (GenAI) and neurotechnology, become a normal and inseparable part of how we teach, learn, and interact, advancing beyond the tools we have today to technology that is “implantable/ingestible/embeddable and cosmetically invisible” (Eaton, 2023, p. 8). GenAI apps, and large language models (LLMs) in particular, have transformed education. As with previous rapid, large-scale changes that have impacted society, transformation may come with uncertainty, confusion, and chaos (Heifetz et al., 2009). This is where the final tenet of postplagiarism (Eaton, 2023) becomes instructive: when integrity is defined primarily through

inherited norms, institutions default to privileging past practices for students, faculty, and administrators. Is this what is at play? A postplagiarism framing (Eaton, 2023) advances the idea of integrity as a shared responsibility across all actors, not a burden shouldered disproportionately by students who may be early adopters of technological advances but may not understand how to navigate the tensions these advances create with their learning processes. We—educators, students, and leaders—can frame academic integrity as our shared responsibility if we want to adapt rather than retreat to familiar patterns about technology that ignore how the world is changing.

### **Resisting the Temptation to Conflate New Technologies with Academic Cheating**

As scholars and educators, we resist the impulse to automatically label new technology as cheating devices. The rapid evolution of universities' responses to chatbots, which shifted from initial prohibition to more nuanced student-centred approaches (AAIN Generative AI Working Group, 2023; Cassidy, 2023; Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, 2023), offers an instructive precedent for addressing emerging technologies. This transition illustrates the importance of critically assessing risks and benefits before implementing policies or taking decisive action. A more future-forward approach to teaching and its conceptual framing informed by postplagiarism acknowledges that advanced technologies, such as AI glasses, are part of everyday life for many people (Eaton, 2023).

### **Affordances: AI Glasses as Tools for Cognitive Equity and Enhancement**

To label AI glasses as instruments of deceit is to ignore their potential as learning and assistive technologies. The affordances of these devices align with a vision of education that prioritizes access and augmentation and recognizes diverse students' needs and emerging educational goals derived from new societal challenges and advances. AI glasses can make assessment processes more flexible and call for exploring the long-term effects of their use to ease decision-making processes through the use of empirical evidence (Grace & Haddock, 2023).

When applied to the learning environment, AI glasses can function as a cognitive prosthetic for students, offering instant access to information, as well as real-time knowledge retrieval and processing that can enhance comprehension and memory (Grace & Haddock, 2023; Kumar et al., 2018; Sai & Gunda, 2024). The power of a built-in AI assistant to translate conversations, identify landmarks, or answer immediate factual queries can turn the world into a real-time, interactive encyclopedia (Gibbs, 2025). In the healthcare sector, AI glasses have already demonstrated their value by offering hands-free documentation, facilitating telemedicine, and enabling rapid data retrieval for professionals, ultimately increasing efficiency and decreasing time spent on manual input (Mitrasinovic et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2025).

AI glasses are a significant leap in assistive technology. Modern smart glasses are being developed with LLMs to provide real-time image processing, object recognition, and conversion of visual information into speech for individuals with vision impairments (Waisberg et al., 2024). For these students, the technology is an important tool for navigation and comprehension, fundamentally enhancing their quality of life and their ability to participate in academic settings (Waisberg et al., 2024).

### **Drawbacks: The Integrity Dilemma**

Despite their potential, the ubiquity of AI glasses has drawbacks for academic integrity that are legitimate and cannot be dismissed. One concern is the discreet nature of the technology. Models that feature a heads-up display project information onto the inside of the lens, which is not visible to an external proctor (Gibbs, 2025). This capability essentially allows a student to access the entirety of the internet and a powerful AI assistant during a high-stakes, closed-book exam, rendering traditional proctoring methods obsolete (Eaton, 2023).

Beyond facilitating academic misconduct, the normalization of ubiquitous AI glasses destabilizes both the evidentiary and relational foundations upon which academic integrity regimes depend. Conventional academic integrity processes regulate unauthorized assistance and rely on observable conduct, traceable artifacts, and demonstrable causal links between behaviour and assessment outcomes to support fair adjudication. AI glasses can disrupt this framework by embedding cognitive assistance directly into a student's perceptual field in ways that leave no external trace. At the same time, using AI glasses could also obscure a user's development of internalized foundational knowledge as the user may appear to have more knowledge than they have actually learned, giving an appearance of a deep knowledge base when interaction with technology is the reason for the rapid recall or presentation of information.

The detection of AI glasses cannot, in itself, establish that unauthorized assistance occurred, when it occurred, or whether it influenced performance. Academic misconduct could become functionally indistinguishable from legitimate individual performance under existing evidentiary standards. The use of AI glasses lies beyond the scope of conventional proctoring methods, which are not designed to identify or regulate such discreet technology. At present, effective strategies to detect their use and determine appropriate institutional responses remain largely unexplored.

This evidentiary ambiguity complicates academic policy and procedures. In the absence of verifiable proof, responsibility for identifying misconduct falls on instructors and proctors, who may be pressured to rely on intuition, behavioural cues, or assumptions about student intent. Such conditions heighten the risk of uneven scrutiny and selective enforcement, particularly for students who already occupy structurally vulnerable positions within academic misconduct systems, includ-

ing those differentiated by language background, disability-related accommodations, or racialization (McCarthy, 2020; Pagaling et al., 2022). If we treat the presence of AI glasses as self-evident proof of academic misconduct, we risk collapsing the distinction between possession, access, and use. In turn, this could undermine procedural fairness and possibly even expose institutions to legal and ethical challenge, especially if the AI glasses are being used as medical devices or assistive/adaptive technology.

The integration of high-resolution, front-facing technology also exacerbates privacy and consent concerns. The media has already documented campus-wide alerts regarding individuals using AI glasses to film others discreetly (Arantes et al., 2025; Pero, 2025). The risk of non-consensual recording, live broadcasting of exam materials, or surveillance of peers creates a hostile and unethical environment that directly conflicts with the values of the academic community. These privacy intrusions must be addressed to prevent a widespread cultural backlash against the technology (Pero, 2025). In their policy analysis through the perspective of cognitive overload and epistemic inequity, Arantes & Welsman (2025) critically examined the rise of AI glasses in K-12 science education and identified that those glasses “pose substantial risks of the cognitive, ethical, and pedagogical variety, risks that remain unacknowledged and unaddressed in current educational policy” (p. 14). Similarly, Tanwar (2025) stressed a significant question: “What does it mean to learn in an era where information is instantly accessible and augmented reality can overlay knowledge on the world around us?” (n.p.). This question extends beyond the philosophical; it gets to the crux of ethical education in a postplagiarism era.

## The Vision Correction Question

The question of a student using AI glasses for vision correction presents both an ethical and logistical challenge. When a student relies on AI glasses as their only form of medically-prescribed vision correction or approved accessibility support, a blanket ban on the device is an infringement on their right to an accessible education (Mitrasinovic et al., 2015; Waisberg et al., 2024). This scenario forces us to move beyond a reductionist ‘technology-as-cheating’ mindset and confront real-world implications of a postplagiarism era. We argue for choosing access, equity, and inclusion over the fossilization of outdated assessment models or risk legal and ethical challenges.

The response cannot be to simply deny entry into an examination for any person using wearable technology. Instead, we are called upon to puzzle through how to decouple assessment from restriction or, put another way, how to decouple pedagogy from punishment. If a student’s vision-correcting AI glasses can access and deliver information, then the integrity of the high-stakes assessment has already been compromised by the technology’s discreet nature, regardless of the student’s personal integrity. This is not a failure on the part of students but rather a failure of the educational system.

## Proactive Recommendations

Instead of reacting with bans on AI wearables, we can proactively and collaboratively implement institutional policies and classroom practices that prioritize learning and accessibility. We propose five proactive recommendations.

### #1 Support Students to Learn How AI Glasses Work

Students should learn how AI glasses function and understand their benefits and drawbacks in educational settings (Arantes & Welsman, 2025; Grace & Haddock, 2023). As educators and educational leaders, it is our responsibility to support students to use technology for their day-to-day learning in ways that are both beneficial and ethical.

### #2 Re-Design Assessment

We recognize that there is no perfect way to assess student learning. Assessments must be fit-for-purpose, valid, and secure. Assessment redesign is a complex task that extends beyond the scope of any individual educator. A full exploration of assessment re-design is beyond the scope of this reflection paper, but we would be remiss not to include a recommendation about assessment that includes acknowledging that AI wearable technology can perform information retrieval tasks much faster than humans. Beginning with this acknowledgement can help to drive dialogue and decisions about how to develop and assess students’ higher-order cognitive skills: critical synthesis, ethical reasoning, complex problem-solving, and creation of original artifacts that require contextual, human-driven insights. However, none of this can happen without internalized foundational knowledge. The use of wearable technology can augment learning, but it does not replace it. As part of assessment reform in a postplagiarism age, the role of wearable AI needs to be carefully considered and not immediately rejected as simply a new way of cheating.

### #3 Establish a Centralized Accommodation Protocol for the Use of Wearable Technology

We encourage institutions to establish a protocol, developed in collaboration with the accessibility services office, for students requiring AI-enabled devices as medically-prescribed or accessibility tools. Such a protocol could define acceptable use, secure environments for assessment (e.g., a monitored, non-recording mode or a dedicated low-distraction space), and the necessary verification process, ensuring that accessibility is prioritized before any allegations of misuse. In this context, AI glasses would not be viewed as performance enhancers but rather as legitimate accommodations that allow students with learning challenges to participate on equitable terms.

### #4 Develop Transparent, Course-Specific Technology Guidelines

We urge institutions to resist blanket institutional bans against wearable technology. Instructors can be supported to create explicit, course-specific guidelines on using AI, including AI glasses. We note that it is the responsibility of the institution,

rather than an individual instructor, to define what constitutes acceptable augmentation and help-seeking (e.g., using AI for concept translation in a lab) versus misconduct (e.g., real-time answer retrieval during an exam); creating supports for instructors to follow institutional guidelines is an important part of policy implementation (Stoesz & Eaton, 2022). As with other AI tools such as chatbots—where scholars recommend beginning with open conversations about AI literacy and expectations (Eaton & Anselmo, 2023)—instructors are encouraged to have open conversations with learners at the beginning of the semester to ensure shared understanding, invite questions, and collaboratively shape norms for appropriate use. Instructor-modelled transparency empowers students and facilitates productive dialogue on ethical boundaries. Engaging students in open dialogue about the use of AI glasses can foster the development of ethical decision-making skills, a core aspect of their formation as responsible technology users.

### #5 Integrate Technology into the Learning Ecology

An overall approach to integrating AI glasses and other wearable technology into teaching, learning, and assessment is both future-forward and equity-focused. For example, for in-person, proctored assessments, integrate open-web or open-resource components that allow, or even require, students to use external information sources, including their devices. The focus of the exam then shifts from recall (which AI does better) to application, evaluation, and synthesis of the information (which we are training humans to do). This makes the technology part of the learning ecology, not the enemy of it.

Assessments that shift from recall to application or synthesis may not be suitable in all learning environments. Foundational knowledge is not only required for some tasks, it must also be easily and quickly retrievable from one's own memory. Based on how learning works, side-stepping retrieval could be detrimental to learning how to apply or evaluate knowledge. In other words, there is no one-size-fits-all answer for the ethical integration of wearable technology into education. Understanding the benefits, drawbacks, and risks is essential to effectively integrating wearable AI for teaching, learning, and assessment.

### Concluding Remarks

In a postplagiarism era, new technologies should not be reflexively categorized as cheating devices. AI glasses, particularly for those with medically-prescribed needs, may be useful and powerful tools for accessibility and cognitive enhancement. Understanding the technology and creating systems for its ethical integration require pedagogical and policy effort that can be informed by equity, inclusion, and student experience. Transitioning toward a postplagiarism era is not a rapid endeavour but a long-term paradigmatic transformation in which roles, responsibilities, and expectations are renegotiated anew. Our job is no longer to police the devices students wear but rather to support learning technologies, environments, and

systems that allow students to bring their best selves to their classrooms and the world around them.

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