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## *Caribbean lecturers' navigation and perceptions of academic integrity and AI-detection software in English for academic purposes (EAP) modules*

ONEIL MADDEN<sup>a,b</sup>  

RICARDO SMITH<sup>c</sup>  

KEVOL EDWARDS<sup>d</sup>  

JULIET JACKSON<sup>e</sup>  

<sup>a</sup>University of Technology, Jamaica

<sup>b</sup>University of the West Indies, Barbados

<sup>c</sup>Mico University College, Jamaica

<sup>d</sup>Independent Researcher, Jamaica

<sup>e</sup>Excelsior Community College, Jamaica

### Abstract

The rapid proliferation of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has fundamentally reshaped academic writing practices in higher education, prompting renewed debates surrounding authorship, academic integrity, ethical AI use, and assessment validity. These challenges are particularly pronounced in English for Academic Purposes (EAP) contexts, where language production constitutes a central learning outcome. This study investigates Caribbean EAP lecturers' perceptions of academic integrity in the GenAI era, focusing on evolving understandings of integrity, concerns regarding AI-detection technologies, strategies for balancing learning support and integrity enforcement, and professional development needs. Guided by Virtue Ethics and Gilligan's (1982) Ethics of Care, the study adopted a qualitative phenomenological approach. Data were collected through a mixed-methods questionnaire administered to 18 EAP lecturers across three Caribbean territories. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while qualitative responses were subjected to content analysis. Findings indicate that lecturers increasingly conceptualize academic integrity as encompassing transparency, accountability, ethical AI use, and meaningful human contribution rather than merely the absence of plagiarism. Lecturers expressed significant scepticism towards AI-detection software, citing concerns about false positives, reliability, and potential biases against multilingual and Creolophone learners. However, rather than advocating prohibition, lecturers favored pedagogical

approaches centered on assessment redesign, reflective practice, AI literacy, and responsible AI integration. However, participants also reported inadequate institutional guidance and limited professional preparation for addressing AI-related integrity challenges. The study proposes the Transparent Human-Centred AI Integrity (THAI) Model, which positions transparency, human agency, ethical responsibility, AI literacy, and institutional support as key pillars for navigating academic integrity in AI-mediated multilingual learning environments. As one of the first studies to examine these issues from a Caribbean EAP perspective, the research contributes a contextually grounded understanding of how educators negotiate the opportunities and risks of GenAI and offers practical implications for policy development, professional learning, and assessment design in higher education.

**Keywords:** Generative AI, Academic Integrity, English for Academic Purposes, Caribbean Higher Education, Professional Development

## Introduction

The rapid propagation of Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) has profoundly disrupted established understandings of authorship, originality, and academic integrity within higher education (Qu et al., 2025). While earlier forms of AI in Education (AIED) focused primarily on adaptive learning systems, intelligent tutoring systems, and learning analytics, contemporary tools such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and other AI-assisted writing platforms have shifted attention toward the possibility of profound pedagogical transformation (Tu & Lu, 2025), as these platforms are increasingly capable of producing coherent academic prose, paraphrasing scholarly texts, generating citations, and simulating critical argumentation with unprecedented fluency (Deep & Chen, 2025; Granjeiro et al., 2025). While these developments have created new possibilities for learning support and linguistic scaffolding, they have simultaneously intensified concerns regarding plagiarism, authorship ambiguity, assessment validity, and the ethical boundaries of AI-assisted academic work (Kangwa et al., 2025; Torres-Diaz et al., 2025). These tensions are especially pronounced within English for Academic Purposes (EAP) modules (Panmei & Shimray, 2025), where the explicit pedagogical objective is to cultivate students' competencies in academic writing, source integration, paraphrasing, citation practices, and critical thinking.

In response to these developments, higher education institutions globally have increasingly turned to AI-detection software such as GPTZero and Turnitin to preserve academic standards and identify potentially AI-generated submissions (Deep et al., 2025). However, growing scholarly debate has questioned the reliability, transparency, and fairness of these detection systems, particularly in relation to false positives, linguistic bias, and the inability of current technologies to consistently distinguish between authentic student writing and AI-assisted text (Pratama, 2025). These concerns become even more significant in multilingual and postcolonial educational contexts, such as the Caribbean, where students' linguistic patterns may diverge from dominant native-speaker norms and therefore risk misclassification by automated systems (Madden et al., 2025).

Within Caribbean higher education, the issue assumes additional complexity due to the region's unique sociolinguistic and educational realities (Farquharson & Migge, 2023). Many Caribbean students navigate Creolophone linguistic environments while simultaneously engaging with the conventions of standard English academic discourse. Consequently, EAP lecturers occupy

a particularly critical position at the intersection of language instruction, academic integrity enforcement, and technological adaptation. They are increasingly required to negotiate competing responsibilities: supporting students' linguistic development, maintaining ethical academic standards, interpreting AI-detection reports, and adapting assessments to an evolving technological landscape. Yet despite the growing global scholarship on GenAI in education, Caribbean perspectives—particularly those of EAP lecturers—remain significantly underrepresented in the literature.

This study is situated within the broader AIED discourse that increasingly examines the pedagogical, ethical, and institutional implications of generative AI in learning environments. Allison et al. (2025) argue that the future of educational computing depends on sustained scholarly attention to issues of equity and inclusion, ethical and social responsibility, pedagogical design, and human–technology interaction. These concerns are particularly salient in EAP contexts, where GenAI simultaneously offers opportunities for personalized learning, language support, and formative feedback while raising concerns about authorship, academic integrity, learner agency, and assessment validity. Similarly, although research on GenAI's impact on learning outcomes has expanded rapidly, comparatively less attention has been devoted to understanding how educators adapt pedagogically to AI-mediated learning environments and how learners engage cognitively and behaviorally with these technologies (Amzalag et al., 2025; Marras & Pasqualotto, 2026).

Consequently, this study investigates Caribbean lecturers' navigation and perceptions of academic integrity and AI-detection software within EAP modules. Specifically, it explores how lecturers conceptualize academic integrity in the age of GenAI, the concerns they hold regarding the fairness and accuracy of AI-detection systems, and the strategies they employ to balance pedagogical support with integrity enforcement. By foregrounding the voices of Caribbean EAP educators, the study contributes to emerging discussions on AI governance, digital ethics, and pedagogical adaptation in Small Island Developing State (SIDS) higher education contexts. In doing so, it seeks to advance a more contextually grounded understanding of how academic integrity is being renegotiated within an era increasingly shaped by generative artificial intelligence. To achieve this, the study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How do Caribbean EAP lecturers define academic integrity in the GenAI era?
2. What are Caribbean EAP lecturers' assessment of GenAI in their teaching experience?
3. What are Caribbean EAP lecturers' perceptions regarding accuracy of AI-detection software?
4. What are Caribbean EAP lecturers' professional development needs to better navigate AI-related challenges?

## Literature Review

### *Theoretical Framework*

The study of academic integrity in EAP contexts can be meaningfully informed by the perspectives of Virtue Ethics and the Ethics of Care. Rooted in the philosophy of Aristotle, Virtue Ethics shifts attention away from compliance with rules and toward the cultivation of moral character (Aristotle, trans. 2009). From this perspective, academic integrity is not merely the avoidance of plagiarism or other forms of misconduct but the demonstration of virtues such as honesty, responsibility, fairness, courage, and trustworthiness (Macfarlane et al., 2014). In the context of EAP modules, where students are expected to develop academic writing, critical reading, and source-based argumentation skills, integrity becomes an integral part of scholarly identity

formation. The emergence of GenAI technologies further underscores the relevance of this framework, as students are increasingly required to exercise sound judgment regarding the ethical use of AI-generated content. Rather than focusing solely on whether the use of GenAI violates institutional policies, Virtue Ethics encourages learners to reflect on how their choices align with the values and dispositions expected of responsible scholars (Bretag, 2013). Consequently, the framework offers a valuable lens for understanding how students can develop ethical habits that support authentic learning and responsible academic practice in technology-mediated environments.

Complementing this perspective, the Ethics of Care, associated with the work of Gilligan (1982), emphasizes the relational dimensions of ethical behavior and the responsibilities individuals have towards others within a learning community. Academic integrity is viewed not only as an individual obligation but also as a commitment to maintaining trust, fairness, and mutual respect among students, lecturers, and institutions (Gilligan, 1982; Noddings, 2013). This perspective is particularly relevant in the GenAI era, where concerns have emerged regarding transparency, authorship, intellectual ownership, and the potential erosion of authentic learning. Closely aligned with both frameworks is the Fundamental Values Framework advanced by the International Centre for Academic Integrity (ICAI), which identifies honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage as the core values underpinning academic integrity (ICAI, 2021).

Together, these theoretical perspectives provide a robust foundation for examining how students in EAP modules navigate the ethical challenges associated with GenAI use. They suggest that fostering integrity requires more than policy enforcement; it also necessitates the development of ethical reasoning, personal accountability, and a culture of trust that supports responsible engagement with emerging technologies.

### Academic Integrity in AI-Mediated Learning Environments

Academic integrity has traditionally been associated with values such as honesty, trust, fairness, respect, responsibility, and courage (Mejía & Garcés-Flórez, 2025). Historically, discussions centered primarily on plagiarism, cheating, and the misappropriation of intellectual work. However, the emergence of GenAI has complicated these established understandings by challenging conventional notions of authorship, originality, and intellectual contribution. Recent scholarship argues that academic integrity should no longer be viewed solely as compliance with rules but rather as an evolving ethical practice that reflects the changing realities of knowledge creation in digital environments (Lund et al., 2025). According to Cox and McPhee (2026), contemporary interpretations increasingly emphasize transparency, accountability, and responsible participation in academic communities rather than merely the absence of misconduct. From this perspective, the central question is no longer whether students use AI, but how they use it and whether such use remains aligned with the educational purposes of assessment and learning.

The proliferation of GenAI has generated intense debate regarding whether AI-assisted writing constitutes legitimate academic assistance, a form of collaboration, or academic misconduct. Bozkurt (2024) argues that GenAI functions as a cognitive partner capable of supporting idea generation, language refinement, summarization, and feedback, thereby blurring traditional distinctions between independent and assisted work. At the same time, scholars caution that excessive reliance on AI-generated outputs may undermine the development of critical thinking, disciplinary knowledge, and writing proficiency (Mapopota et al., 2026). These tensions have exposed limitations in existing institutional policies, many of which were designed to address human plagiarism rather than machine-generated content. Consequently,

universities worldwide are increasingly shifting from plagiarism-centered frameworks towards policies that prioritize disclosure, transparency of AI use, and evidence of meaningful human authorship (Bozkurt, 2024). Such developments reflect a broader reconceptualization of academic integrity in which ethical AI use is assessed not by the presence of AI assistance alone but by the extent to which students remain accountable for the intellectual substance of their work.

These debates are particularly significant within EAP classrooms, where language production constitutes both the primary learning objective and the principal mode of assessment. Given that GenAI systems can generate grammatically sophisticated texts, paraphrase sources, summarize complex readings, and construct academic arguments, they directly intersect with the very competencies EAP courses seek to develop. As Fan et al. (2024) note, concerns have emerged that students may bypass essential language-learning processes by outsourcing key writing tasks to AI systems. Conversely, proponents argue that GenAI can function as a valuable scaffold for multilingual learners by supporting vocabulary development, language accuracy, critical reading, and academic writing skills (Saarela et al., 2026). This tension renders EAP classrooms especially vulnerable to integrity-related challenges, particularly in contexts such as the Caribbean where many learners navigate complex linguistic realities involving English, Creole, and other vernaculars. Consequently, academic integrity in contemporary EAP contexts must extend beyond traditional concerns about plagiarism to encompass ethical AI literacy, transparent disclosure practices, responsible authorship, and the cultivation of critical engagement with AI-generated content. Such an approach recognizes that the future of academic integrity lies not in prohibiting AI use outright but in establishing clear pedagogical and ethical frameworks that preserve authentic learning while acknowledging the realities of an AI-mediated educational landscape.

### **Lecturers' Perceptions, Agency, and Pedagogical Adaptation**

The emergence of GenAI has introduced significant opportunities and challenges for higher education, prompting a re-evaluation of teaching, learning, and assessment practices. Scholars argue that GenAI has the potential to transform educational systems by enhancing efficiency, competitiveness, and access to personalized learning experiences (Cengiz & Gümüş, 2025). Through its capacity to analyze large volumes of learner data, AI can support tailored instructional interventions, thereby improving students' self-efficacy and attitudes towards learning (Vieriu & Petrea, 2025). In language education specifically, GenAI is reshaping instructional practices through intelligent dialogue systems, automated error correction, translation support, and digital resource development, creating new possibilities for language acquisition and academic literacy development (Teng & Shen, 2025).

As GenAI becomes increasingly embedded in higher education, lecturers play a central role in determining how these technologies are interpreted, integrated, and regulated within educational settings. Rather than functioning as passive implementers of institutional policies, educators act as policy interpreters and frontline negotiators who balance pedagogical innovation, academic integrity, and student learning needs (Mphatsoane-Sesoane & Jita, 2025). Consequently, their perceptions, levels of AI literacy, and professional agency significantly influence the effectiveness and sustainability of AI integration.

The literature indicates that educators generally adopt a cautiously optimistic stance towards GenAI while remaining aware of its pedagogical and ethical implications. Saydazimova and Saydazimova (2025) found that teachers were largely familiar with AI tools and had progressed to the roles of GenAI adopters and collaborators, although few possessed the expertise necessary to become innovators. Similarly, Alqarni (2026) reported moderate willingness among teachers to integrate GenAI, with confidence in using the technology emerging as the

strongest predictor of adoption. However, Selamet (2026) expressed concerns about its impact on teachers' professional autonomy, pedagogical control, and ethical responsibility, while Yang et al. (2026) raised concerns regarding students' overreliance, limited technical support, and unclear institutional policies as significant barriers, underscoring the need for professional development initiatives, ethical implementation frameworks, and institutional guidance.

Within EAP contexts, GenAI presents a particularly complex challenge because language production is both the primary learning outcome and the principal mode of assessment. Funabashi (2024) found that most EAP practitioners had begun discussing and teaching about GenAI, reflecting its growing relevance to academic writing instruction. While many educators recognized its potential to scaffold learning, enhance engagement, and support writing development, others expressed concerns regarding its impact on originality, critical thinking, and academic integrity. Moreover, participants frequently perceived institutional policies as inadequate for guiding classroom practice, suggesting a disconnect between institutional expectations and pedagogical realities.

A recurring concern across the literature is the possibility that excessive reliance on AI tools may undermine deeper learning processes. Fan et al. (2025) describe this phenomenon as "cognitive laziness," whereby students leverage AI-generated outputs to complete academic tasks successfully without fully engaging in the intellectual processes necessary for meaningful learning. Similarly, Yavich (2025) argues that overdependence on AI may reduce students' engagement with course materials, while Dorgu-Dastan and Mare (2025) caution that AI-assisted assignments may lack the originality, creativity, and critical engagement required for higher-order learning outcomes. Such concerns are particularly significant given that critical thinking, problem-solving, and independent learning remain foundational objectives of higher education and essential components of Bloom's higher-order cognitive domains.

Despite these concerns, many educators continue to recognize the pedagogical value of GenAI. Beyond supporting personalized learning, lecturers report that AI tools can streamline administrative tasks, facilitate digital assessment practices, enrich instructional delivery, and create opportunities for innovative learning experiences, including virtual simulations and laboratory-based activities that would otherwise be difficult to implement (Cengiz & Gümüş, 2025). Consequently, rather than rejecting GenAI outright, many educators are redesigning their pedagogical and assessment practices to emphasize authentic, process-oriented, and reflective forms of learning that require students to demonstrate critical engagement beyond AI-generated outputs (Dang et al., 2026).

Overall, the literature suggests that lecturers are neither wholly resistant nor uncritically accepting of GenAI. Instead, they exercise professional agency by negotiating its opportunities and risks within their specific educational contexts. Their experiences highlight the importance of AI literacy, ongoing professional development, institutional support, and clear policy frameworks in fostering responsible, ethical, and pedagogically meaningful integration of GenAI in higher education.

### AI-Detection Software: Accuracy, Fairness, and Ethical Concerns

As GenAI becomes increasingly prevalent in educational settings, institutions have turned to AI-detection software such as Turnitin AI Detection to safeguard academic integrity and verify the authenticity of student work. However, recent scholarship has raised significant concerns regarding the reliability, fairness, and ethical implications of these technologies. Although AI-detection systems are often marketed as effective mechanisms for identifying machine-generated content, growing evidence suggests that their results should be interpreted with considerable caution. Giray (2025) argues that AI-detection technologies are inherently limited

because they rely on probabilistic predictions rather than definitive evidence of authorship, making both false positives and false negatives unavoidable. Consequently, many scholars contend that AI-detection reports should not be treated as conclusive proof of academic misconduct but rather as one source of evidence within a broader evaluative process (Hadra et al., 2026).

A fundamental limitation of AI-detection systems stems from the way these technologies are developed and trained. Although AI systems are often perceived as objective, they are trained on historical datasets that may not adequately represent the diversity of linguistic, cultural, and educational backgrounds found within contemporary student populations (Foka et al., 2025). As Habbal et al. (2024) note, AI models operate on the assumption that historical patterns will continue, a process that can inadvertently reproduce existing biases and inequities. Furthermore, Bao et al. (2023) argue that non-representative or skewed training datasets may generate ethical concerns because underrepresented populations are less accurately represented within algorithmic decision-making processes. These limitations raise important questions about the appropriateness of relying on AI-detection software to make high-stakes academic integrity judgments.

One of the most widely documented concerns relates to linguistic bias against multilingual and second-language writers. Research suggests that AI-detection systems may disproportionately flag texts produced by English language learners because their writing often contains linguistic characteristics—such as formulaic sentence structures, predictable lexical choices, and grammatical simplification—that resemble statistical patterns associated with AI-generated content (Giray et al., 2026). Similar concerns are raised by Giray (2024), who highlights reports of false accusations of academic dishonesty involving non-native English speakers whose authentic writing was incorrectly classified as AI-generated. This issue is particularly relevant in contexts such as the Caribbean and Africa, where many students are Creolophone or vernacular-language speakers transitioning from creole or dialect varieties to standard English (Hofmann et al., 2024). Given that these students may already face linguistic and educational disadvantages, inaccurate AI classifications risk exacerbating existing inequalities and creating discriminatory assessment practices. The possibility that legitimate student work may be incorrectly labelled as AI-generated therefore raises serious concerns regarding fairness, due process, and educational equity (Liang et al., 2023).

Beyond issues of accuracy and bias, scholars have also identified broader ethical concerns surrounding the use of AI-detection technologies. Giray et al. (2025) argue that these systems can contribute to a culture of surveillance and suspicion in which students are implicitly treated as potential offenders rather than learners. Such practices may undermine trust between educators and students and shift the focus of academic integrity away from education and toward technological policing. Moreover, the proprietary nature of many detection algorithms limits transparency and accountability, making it difficult for educators to understand how classifications are generated or to challenge potentially erroneous outcomes. Eaton (2023) similarly warns that excessive dependence on detection technologies risks reducing academic integrity to a compliance-based exercise rather than fostering ethical scholarship and responsible learning practices.

In response to these concerns, researchers increasingly advocate for educational rather than punitive approaches to academic integrity in the GenAI era. Rather than relying exclusively on detection software, scholars recommend strengthening AI literacy, designing process-oriented assessments, incorporating reflective and authentic learning tasks, and providing explicit guidance on ethical AI use (Sejdiu et al., 2026). Such approaches encourage transparency, critical engagement, and learner accountability while reducing dependence on

imperfect technological solutions. Collectively, the literature suggests that although AI-detection tools may serve a supplementary role in academic integrity investigations, their limitations in reliability, fairness, transparency, and ethical accountability make them unsuitable as stand-alone mechanisms for determining academic misconduct.

### Professional Development and AI Literacy for Educators

The emergence of GenAI has also intensified debates regarding educator preparedness, institutional readiness, and the evolving nature of digital competence in higher education. While universities increasingly promote AI integration, recent scholarship suggests that many institutions remain insufficiently prepared to support educators in navigating the pedagogical and ethical implications of these technologies (Holmes et al., 2019). In many instances, institutional responses prioritize technological adoption over the development of coherent professional learning frameworks, resulting in uncertainty among educators regarding appropriate AI use, assessment redesign, and academic integrity enforcement.

Current literature conceptualizes AI literacy as extending beyond technological proficiency. Ng et al. (2021) argue that AI literacy encompasses critical understanding of algorithmic bias, ethical reasoning, data governance, and the broader societal implications of AI systems. However, much of the professional development currently offered within higher education remains narrowly technical and procedural. This creates a disconnect between institutional expectations and educators' actual preparedness to engage critically with AI-mediated teaching and learning environments. In Jamaica, for instance, many lecturers are expected to independently determine acceptable uses of AI without adequate pedagogical guidance or policy clarity (Madden et al., 2024). The literature further demonstrates that AI-related professional development is largely reactive. Cotton et al. (2024) contend that institutions have responded to GenAI primarily through academic misconduct discourse, often framing AI as a threat rather than a pedagogical tool requiring thoughtful integration. Consequently, educators frequently operate within environments characterized by anxiety, ambiguity, and inconsistent enforcement practices. This is particularly significant in EAP contexts, where AI-generated writing challenges traditional understandings of authorship, originality, and linguistic competence.

Critically, there is still more work to be done relating to ethical AI integration and academic misconduct management. Perkins (2023) states that although institutions emphasize academic integrity, educators are rarely trained to distinguish between ethical AI-assisted learning and misconduct. This lack of operational clarity contributes to inconsistent policy implementation and raises concerns regarding fairness and due process. Furthermore, studies examining AI-detection tools reveal that many educators possess limited understanding of the limitations and error margins associated with these systems, despite their growing use in academic integrity investigations (Perkins et al., 2023). Such dependence on imperfect technologies risks reinforcing surveillance-oriented educational cultures rather than fostering ethical digital citizenship.

The literature also emphasizes that meaningful AI professional development must be continuous, collaborative, and pedagogically grounded. Contemporary frameworks highlight the integration of artificial intelligence within educator competencies, highlighting critical, ethical, and context-aware pedagogical adaptation. For instance, UNESCO (2021) underscores the importance of developing AI-ready educators who can engage responsibly with emerging technologies. Similarly, Falloon (2020) and Holmes et al. (2019) underscore the need to integrate pedagogy, technology, and ethical awareness within digital competence frameworks. Despite these advances, many higher education institutions continue to rely on short-term workshops that inadequately address the complexity of AI-mediated teaching environments.

Overall, the literature indicates that higher education institutions remain underprepared for the long-term pedagogical implications of GenAI. There is, therefore, a clear need for sustained, context-sensitive professional development that equips educators to critically and ethically navigate AI integration while preserving academic integrity and pedagogical authenticity.

### Caribbean Higher Education and Contextual Realities

The integration of AI within Caribbean higher education must be examined through the region's distinctive sociolinguistic, technological, and postcolonial realities. Much of the global scholarship on AI in education is situated within Euro-American contexts, often overlooking the structural inequalities and linguistic complexities that shape educational experiences in Small Island Developing States (SIDS) (Madden et al., 2026). Consequently, universalized approaches to AI governance and academic integrity may inadequately address Caribbean educational realities.

One of the defining characteristics of Caribbean higher education is its complex Creolophone linguistic environment. Many students routinely navigate between creole languages and standard English within academic settings, particularly in EAP courses. Research on language and education in the Caribbean demonstrates that language use is closely connected to identity, social mobility, and the legacy of colonial educational systems (Devonish & Carpenter, 2007; Migge et al., 2010). These realities have important implications for the implementation of AI technologies in higher education. Large language models (LLMs) and AI-detection systems are primarily trained on standardized linguistic data and may inadequately account for the linguistic diversity found in Caribbean contexts. As Bender et al. (2021) suggest, AI systems often reproduce biases embedded within their training data, potentially disadvantaging users whose language practices diverge from dominant norms. Consequently, Caribbean students who draw upon Creolophone linguistic features in their writing may be disproportionately affected by automated assessments of academic writing and AI-generated content. This highlights the need for context-sensitive approaches to AI governance that recognize linguistic diversity rather than reinforcing existing educational inequities, aligning with the Caribbean contextualized Artificial Intelligence-Mediated (Carib-AIM) framework developed by Madden et al. (2026).

Technological inequality further complicates AI integration across the region. UNESCO (2021) notes that disparities in digital infrastructure continue to affect educational access and implementation in developing contexts. Within the Caribbean, uneven internet connectivity, limited institutional funding, and inconsistent access to digital resources contribute to unequal opportunities for both students and educators (Madden et al., 2025). These disparities challenge assumptions embedded within many AI policy frameworks, which often presume stable technological ecosystems and institutional capacity for rapid digital adaptation.

From a postcolonial perspective, the adoption of AI technologies also raises concerns regarding epistemic dominance and educational dependency. R'boul (2022) argues that higher education remains shaped by enduring colonial relations in which Northern ways of knowing dominate knowledge production and dissemination, while indigenous and Southern epistemologies remain underrepresented within academic institutions. In Caribbean higher education, this dynamic intersects with longstanding tensions surrounding language legitimacy, curriculum relevance, and colonial educational inheritance. AI technologies trained predominantly on Western linguistic and cultural datasets risk reinforcing hegemonic academic norms while undervaluing local linguistic identities and knowledge systems.

Another critical issue concerns policy development and institutional governance. Although concerns regarding AI and academic integrity are growing globally, Caribbean higher education institutions have been comparatively slow in developing contextually relevant AI policies.

This policy gap leaves lecturers to independently negotiate issues related to AI-assisted writing, assessment redesign, and academic misconduct management without consistent institutional support. As a result, educators become frontline interpreters of emerging AI ethics despite often lacking adequate training or policy guidance (Madden et al., 2026).

Importantly, the literature reveals a major absence of Caribbean-centered empirical research on AI in higher education. Existing scholarship frequently generalizes findings from technologically advanced institutions to contexts with fundamentally different infrastructural and sociolinguistic conditions. This demonstrates the importance of studies that foreground Caribbean educators' lived experiences and institutional realities. Contextually grounded research is therefore necessary to ensure that AI governance frameworks do not reproduce educational inequities or reinforce postcolonial hierarchies within Caribbean higher education.

## Methods

### Research Design

The study adopted a mixed-methods phenomenological approach, by combining both qualitative and quantitative data as part of the data collection procedure. Predominantly classified as a qualitative research strategy, phenomenological research seeks to examine and interpret humans' lived experiences to understand the meanings they attach to particular phenomena (Tavakol & Sandars, 2025). As the study is situated within the Anglophone Caribbean, which is unrepresented in the literature, the aim is to report the perceptions and realities of EAP lecturers rather than test hypotheses. Through this approach, the study is anticipated to contribute to the existing body of literature by offering fresh insights and generating additional pathways for phenomenological research across diverse cultural settings.

### Participants/Sampling

As summarized in Table 1, the participants in this study comprised 18 EAP lecturers from three Caribbean islands: Jamaica ( $n = 16$ , 88.9%), Barbados ( $n = 1$ , 1.5%), and Trinidad and Tobago ( $n = 1$ , 1.5%). The participants (11 female, 7 male) spanned different age groups, with the majority falling between 40–50 years ( $n = 6$ , 33.3%), followed by 31–40 years ( $n = 4$ , 22.2%). They also had varying years of teaching experience at the postsecondary level, with most ( $n = 6$ , 33.3%) accumulating 21 years and over, followed by 6–10 years ( $n = 5$ , 27.8%). The majority ( $n = 13$ , 72.2%) were full-time lecturers, and half ( $n = 9$ , 50%) taught at the university level, while the other significant majority ( $n = 8$ , 44.4%) taught within a teacher-training college. All the participants taught within a bachelor's degree program, while some equally taught at the master's and diploma levels ( $n = 13$ , 16.7%).

Participants were recruited using the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling is a commonly employed non-probability sampling method in qualitative and mixed-methods research because of its emphasis on obtaining rich, contextualized understanding. Defined as the deliberate selection of participants, cases, or events based on their relevance to the research objectives, purposive sampling allows researchers to generate in-depth insights into complex phenomena (Tajik et al., 2024). For this study, it was applied by disseminating the questionnaire link via institutionalized email addresses to EAP lecturers at different tertiary institutions across the Anglophone Caribbean. The questionnaire was open for two months to receive responses, and reminders were sent to the lecturers.

Although the sample size ( $N = 18$ ) is relatively small and does not support broad statistical generalization, its appropriateness must be considered within the exploratory, context-specific, and theory-generating nature of the study. As a pilot or feasibility investigation, the study prioritizes the identification of emerging patterns, the generation of preliminary insights, and the

**Table 1.** *Summary of EAP lecturers’ demographic information*

| Category                     | Subcategory           | n  | %    |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|----|------|
| Gender                       | Male                  | 7  | 38.9 |
|                              | Female                | 11 | 61.1 |
| Country                      | Jamaica               | 16 | 88.9 |
|                              | Barbados              | 1  | 1.5  |
|                              | Trinidad and Tobago   | 1  | 1.5  |
| Age                          | 21–30                 | 3  | 16.7 |
|                              | 31–41                 | 4  | 22.2 |
|                              | 41–50                 | 6  | 33.3 |
|                              | 51–60                 | 3  | 16.7 |
|                              | 61+                   | 3  | 16.7 |
| Institution type             | Community college     | 1  | 5.6  |
|                              | Teachers’ college     | 8  | 44.4 |
|                              | University            | 9  | 50   |
| Program taught               | Associate/Certificate | 2  | 11.1 |
|                              | Diploma               | 3  | 16.7 |
|                              | Bachelor              | 18 | 100  |
|                              | Master                | 3  | 16.7 |
| Years of teaching experience | 1–5                   | 3  | 16.7 |
|                              | 6–10                  | 5  | 27.8 |
|                              | 11–15                 | 2  | 11.1 |
|                              | 16–20                 | 2  | 11.1 |
|                              | 21+                   | 6  | 33.3 |
| Tenure status                | Full-time             | 13 | 72.2 |
|                              | Part-time/Adjunct     | 3  | 16.7 |
|                              | Retired contracted    | 2  | 11.1 |

refinement of conceptual understandings surrounding GenAI integration in Caribbean EAP education rather than making population-wide claims. Within such research designs, smaller samples are considered methodologically appropriate, particularly when the emphasis is placed on obtaining depth and richness of understanding instead of statistical representativeness (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, in qualitative and mixed-methods research, sample adequacy is more appropriately assessed through concepts such as information power (Malterud, 2016) and thematic richness rather than numerical quantity alone.

Significantly, the Caribbean higher education landscape demonstrates notable structural and pedagogical similarities, particularly through shared colonial histories, creole-influenced linguistic environments, comparable institutional systems, and similar technological limitations. This relative contextual consistency strengthens the analytical transferability of the findings across related settings, despite the modest sample size. Moreover, smaller and targeted samples are especially suitable in emerging fields such as GenAI in education, where scholarly inquiry remains in its developmental stages. Consequently, this study establishes an important preliminary evidence base that can inform future large-scale, comparative, or longitudinal research, while maintaining methodological rigor aligned with its exploratory scope.

### Instrument

A mixed-methods questionnaire was developed using *Google Forms* to explore EAP lecturers' perceptions of how GenAI is reshaping understandings of academic integrity, their experiences integrating GenAI into teaching and assessment practices, their views regarding the reliability of AI-detection technologies, and their professional development needs in navigating emerging AI-related challenges within higher education. The instrument comprised three sections. The first section collected demographic information to establish participants' professional profiles, including age range, gender, country or territory, instructional level taught, institutional type, and years of teaching experience. These variables provided contextual information for interpreting participants' responses and identifying patterns across different teaching contexts.

The second section consisted of ten Likert-scale items (see Table 2) designed to measure participants' perceptions across four key thematic domains identified in the literature on academic integrity and artificial intelligence in higher education. These domains included: (1) GenAI impact and pedagogical integration (Items 1 and 10), which explored perceptions of the influence of GenAI on academic writing practices and its role in EAP pedagogy; (2) Assessment and academic integrity (Items 2, 3, and 4), which examined confidence in distinguishing ethical AI use from academic misconduct and perceptions of AI-detection technologies; (3) AI literacy and professional preparedness (Items 5 and 8), which investigated lecturers' training experiences and self-perceived competence in addressing AI-related challenges; and (4) Institutional support and ethical governance (Items 6, 7, and 9), which focused on policy clarity, institutional support mechanisms, and the need for explicit guidance regarding ethical AI use.

The third section comprised five open-ended questions intended to elicit richer qualitative insights into lecturers' experiences, concerns, and recommendations regarding GenAI and academic integrity:

1. How do you define academic integrity in the context of GenAI?
2. What concerns do you have about the accuracy or fairness of AI-detection systems (e.g., Turnitin, iThenticate)?
3. What strategies have you developed to balance learning support and integrity enforcement?
4. What professional development would help you better navigate AI-related challenges?
5. Given the linguistic realities of your country or territory (e.g., English and Creole/Patois/Dialect), do you believe GenAI can support students' development of English language proficiency? Please explain.

Prior to administration, the questionnaire underwent a rigorous multi-stage validation process to enhance its content validity, clarity, and alignment with the study's research objectives. Initially, the lead researcher developed the instrument based on themes emerging from the literature on academic integrity, artificial intelligence, and EAP instruction. The draft instrument was subsequently reviewed by a panel of five experienced EAP lecturers who evaluated the relevance, clarity, comprehensiveness, and wording of the items using a structured review checklist. Their feedback informed several revisions to item phrasing, content coverage, and thematic alignment.

Following expert review, the revised instrument was piloted with five EAP lecturers from different higher education institutions. The pilot phase assessed question readability, clarity of instructions, estimated completion time, and technical functionality of the online platform. Feedback from the pilot participants resulted in minor refinements to improve question wording and user experience. To maintain methodological integrity, responses collected during the pilot phase were excluded from the final dataset.

Table 2. Illustrative coding framework for qualitative content analysis

| Question | Theme                                    | Code                      | Operational definition                                                            | Frequency<br>(n = 18) | Representative quote                                                                                                     |
|----------|------------------------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1        | Conceptualizations of Academic Integrity | Transparency & Disclosure | Academic integrity involves openly acknowledging AI use in academic work          | 12                    | “Producing work that is representative of your own thought processes where all tools have been identified and credited.” |
|          |                                          | Human Authorship          | AI should support rather than replace student thinking and writing                | 14                    | “Ensuring that your voice or point is clearly articulated and only supported rather than replaced by GenAI.”             |
|          |                                          | Ethical Use               | Using AI responsibly as a developmental aid rather than a substitute for learning | 10                    | “Not using it to replace one’s own thinking and writing but using it to generate or build on one’s ideas.”               |
|          |                                          | False Positives           | Fear that authentic student work may be incorrectly flagged as AI-generated       | 8                     | “My concern is the false positives.”                                                                                     |
| 3        | Concerns about AI Detection              | Linguistic Bias           | Detection systems may disadvantage second-language writers                        | 5                     | “Students who write in a more formal or second-language style are especially vulnerable.”                                |
|          |                                          | Reliability and Accuracy  | Doubts about consistency and validity of AI-detection software                    | 10                    | “They are not very accurate.”                                                                                            |
|          |                                          | AI Literacy Training      | Need for training on AI tools and their pedagogical applications                  | 15                    | “More hands-on workshops on the AI tools commonly used by students.”                                                     |
| 4        | Professional Development Needs           | Assessment Redesign       | Need for guidance on adapting assessments in the GenAI era                        | 11                    | “The most helpful professional development would focus on AI literacy, ethical use, assessment redesign.”                |
|          |                                          | Policy and Governance     | Need for institutional guidance and AI policies                                   | 9                     | “I would like the institution for which I work to provide guidelines.”                                                   |

Ethical considerations were carefully observed throughout the data collection process. To preserve participant anonymity and confidentiality, no personally identifiable information, such as names, email addresses, or institutional affiliations, was collected. The introductory section of the questionnaire outlined the purpose of the study, emphasized the voluntary nature of participation, and informed participants of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty. Participants were also required to provide informed consent before proceeding with the questionnaire. All data were securely stored and managed in accordance with institutional ethical guidelines and applicable national data protection regulations.

The questionnaire link was disseminated over a two-month period through the researchers' professional networks, including academic WhatsApp groups and email distribution lists targeting EAP practitioners across the Caribbean. Snowball sampling was subsequently employed to broaden participation, whereby respondents were encouraged to share the survey with eligible colleagues within their professional networks. As noted by Crouse and Lowe (2018), snowball sampling is particularly useful for accessing specialized populations through referrals from individuals who share characteristics relevant to the research focus. This recruitment strategy facilitated access to a wider pool of EAP lecturers with experience and interest in issues related to GenAI, academic integrity, and higher education pedagogy.

### **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted using both quantitative and qualitative procedures in keeping with the mixed-methods design adopted for this study. The quantitative data generated from the Likert-scale items were analyzed using descriptive statistics, while the qualitative responses to the open-ended questions were examined through qualitative content analysis. The integration of both datasets occurred during the interpretation phase, allowing for a more comprehensive understanding of EAP lecturers' perceptions of and experiences with GenAI.

The quantitative data collected through the ten Likert-scale items were exported from Google Forms into Microsoft Excel for cleaning and organization before analysis. Descriptive statistical procedures were employed to summarize participants' responses. Specifically, frequencies and percentages were calculated for each item to identify patterns, trends, and variations in lecturers' perceptions. Descriptive statistics were considered appropriate given the exploratory nature of the study and its aim to provide an overview of participants' views regarding the impact of GenAI on academic integrity and EAP teaching practices. The analysis enabled the researchers to determine the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with statements related to AI-assisted writing, academic misconduct, AI-detection technologies, institutional policies, professional preparedness, and pedagogical integration of GenAI. The findings were subsequently presented using tables and narrative descriptions to facilitate interpretation and comparison across thematic categories.

The qualitative data generated from the five open-ended questionnaire items were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Schreier, 2012; Mayring, 2014). This approach was selected because it provides a systematic and transparent method for identifying recurring patterns, themes, and meanings within textual data while remaining sensitive to participants' perspectives and contextual experiences.

The analysis was conducted using MAXQDA software, which facilitated data management, coding, categorization, retrieval, and comparison of responses across participants. The analytical process followed several iterative stages.

The first stage involved repeated reading of all qualitative responses to gain an overall understanding of participants' perspectives and experiences. During this phase, the researchers engaged in data immersion, making preliminary notes regarding recurrent ideas, concerns,

and concepts emerging from the dataset. This familiarization process allowed the researchers to develop an initial understanding of the breadth and depth of participants' responses before formal coding commenced.

A hybrid coding approach combining deductive and inductive procedures was then employed. Initially, a provisional coding framework was developed deductively from the study's research objectives, questionnaire themes, and the relevant literature of the study. Preliminary categories included concepts such as academic integrity definitions, concerns regarding AI-detection technologies, pedagogical uses of GenAI, institutional support, professional development needs, and language learning opportunities. Subsequently, an inductive coding process was undertaken to allow new themes and concepts to emerge directly from the data. As responses were examined line by line, additional codes were created to capture participants' unique experiences, concerns, and recommendations that were not fully represented within the initial coding framework. This iterative process ensured that the coding structure remained grounded in participants' perspectives while also reflecting existing theoretical understandings.

Following the development of the preliminary coding scheme, all qualitative responses were imported into MAXQDA and systematically coded. Segments of text were assigned descriptive labels that reflected their meaning and relevance to the research questions. Similar codes were subsequently grouped into broader categories and themes through a process of constant comparison (Miles et al., 2020). Throughout this stage, the researchers continually reviewed coded segments to ensure consistency and conceptual coherence. Categories were refined, merged, expanded, or reorganized where necessary to improve clarity and avoid redundancy. Memos and analytical notes were maintained throughout the process to document emerging interpretations and analytical decisions.

To enhance the trustworthiness and credibility of the qualitative analysis, inter-coder verification was conducted. A second researcher with expertise in EAP and qualitative research independently coded a subset of the qualitative dataset using the preliminary coding framework. Both researchers then compared their coding decisions and discussed areas of convergence and divergence. Discrepancies were examined through collaborative discussion and reference to the original data until consensus was reached regarding code definitions, category boundaries, and thematic interpretations. Where necessary, code descriptions were refined and examples were added to the codebook to improve clarity and consistency. This process contributed to strengthening the dependability of the analysis by reducing potential researcher bias and ensuring that interpretations were grounded in the data rather than individual assumptions.

Following the verification process, the revised coding framework was applied to the remaining dataset. Regular consultations between the researchers continued throughout the analysis to ensure consistency in coding practices and interpretation.

The final stage involved synthesizing categories into overarching themes that addressed the study's research objectives (see summary in Table 2). Themes were reviewed against the complete dataset to ensure that they accurately represented participants' experiences and perspectives. Attention was given to identifying patterns, similarities, differences, and tensions within the data. The themes were subsequently interpreted in relation to the existing literature on academic integrity, AI literacy, ethical AI use, assessment practices, and EAP instruction. Representative excerpts from participants' responses were selected to illustrate key findings and provide evidence for the interpretations presented in the results section.

Following the separate analysis of the quantitative and qualitative datasets, the findings were integrated during the interpretation stage to bolster the overall credibility, depth, and explanatory power of the study. Quantitative trends identified through descriptive statistics were compared with qualitative themes emerging from participants' written responses to identify

areas of convergence, complementarity, and divergence. This process enabled the researchers to develop a more nuanced understanding of lecturers' experiences with GenAI and academic integrity than either dataset could provide independently.

The integration of findings enhanced the overall validity of the study by allowing quantitative patterns to be contextualized and explained through participants' qualitative accounts, thereby providing richer insights into the opportunities and challenges associated with GenAI in EAP teaching and assessment.

## Findings and Interpretations

### RQ1: Lecturers' Definition of Academic Integrity

A qualitative content analysis of the 18 responses revealed that lecturers conceptualize academic integrity in the context of GenAI primarily through the interconnected principles of transparency, ethical AI use, authorship preservation, and the safeguarding of students' independent cognitive engagement. Across the dataset, participants consistently framed academic integrity not as the complete rejection of GenAI, but rather as the responsible and limited use of AI technologies in ways that preserve human authorship, originality, and intellectual accountability.

Four dominant themes emerged from the analysis: (1) transparency and disclosure, (2) AI as a supplementary rather than replacement tool, (3) preservation of authentic student voice and cognition, and (4) ethical and policy-guided AI engagement.

The most dominant theme was AI as a supplementary support tool rather than a replacement for human work, appearing in 12 of the 18 responses (66.7%). Participants repeatedly emphasized that GenAI should support brainstorming, proofreading, organization, or conceptual understanding, but should not generate the substantive intellectual content of assignments. One lecturer stated that academic integrity means *"using AI to brainstorm and not to use AI to do the entire task for you,"* while another argued that AI should *"assist with work, not do the work for them."* Similarly, Participant 17 stressed that AI tools should function as *"brainstorming or development aids and not operating as co-authors."* These findings suggest that lecturers largely perceive acceptable AI use through a human-centered pedagogical lens in which cognitive ownership must remain with the student.

The second most prominent theme concerned transparency, attribution, and disclosure, which emerged in 10 responses (55.6%). Participants stressed that students must openly acknowledge AI use and clearly indicate the extent and nature of assistance received. References to *"proper academic citations," "declaring the use of AI,"* and *"identifying and crediting all tools"* indicate that lecturers interpret academic integrity through established scholarly conventions of attribution and accountability. Participant 4 particularly highlighted that integrity depends on *"total transparency"* and observance of institutional policies governing AI use. This reflects an emerging shift in academic integrity discourse from simple plagiarism detection toward broader concerns about disclosure ethics and procedural honesty in AI-mediated writing.

A third major theme involved the preservation of authentic student voice, independent thinking, and intellectual ownership, identified in nine responses (50%). Lecturers frequently stressed that academic work must remain representative of the learner's own ideas, reasoning, and cognitive processes. Participant 16 emphasized *"ensuring that your voice or point is clearly articulated and only supported rather than replaced by Gen AI,"* while Participant 18 argued that AI should not *"replace one's own thinking and writing."* Participant 10 operationalized this principle quantitatively by suggesting that *"a minimum of 80%"* of the work should be attributable to the learner. Collectively, these responses indicate strong concern regarding the erosion of student agency and critical thinking in AI-supported academic environments.

The fourth theme centered on ethical, responsible, and policy-informed AI engagement, appearing in eight responses (44.4%). Participants framed academic integrity as a matter of ethical conduct, responsible digital literacy, and adherence to institutional expectations. Terms such as “honestly,” “responsibly,” “ethical practice,” and “proper guidance” appeared repeatedly across the dataset. Importantly, several responses also demonstrated uncertainty surrounding acceptable thresholds of AI use. Participant 13, for instance, acknowledged ambiguity concerning what constitutes “*a few grammatical errors*” when using AI-assisted editing. This finding highlights the absence of universally accepted institutional guidelines and suggests that lecturers are currently navigating evolving ethical boundaries with limited regulatory clarity.

Interestingly, only two participants (11.1%) adopted a more restrictive or near-prohibitionist stance toward AI use, advocating either independent production of all work or refraining from AI unless explicitly disclosed. This suggests that outright opposition to GenAI was relatively limited among respondents. Instead, the majority demonstrated pragmatic acceptance of AI technologies when used within ethically regulated boundaries.

Overall, the findings indicate that Caribbean EAP lecturers are not conceptualizing academic integrity through a binary framework of “AI versus no AI.” Rather, they are constructing a nuanced ethical model grounded in transparency, human intellectual primacy, and pedagogically responsible AI integration. The responses reveal an emerging reconceptualization of academic integrity in AI-mediated higher education, where the central concern is no longer merely whether AI is used, but how, why, and to what extent it shapes the production of academic knowledge. These findings align with recent scholarships arguing that academic integrity frameworks must evolve beyond plagiarism-centered paradigms toward models emphasizing ethical collaboration with AI technologies, disclosure practices, and preservation of learner agency in digital writing ecologies.

### **RQ2: Lecturers' Assessment of GenAI in their Teaching Experience**

Table 3 presents Caribbean EAP lecturers' perceptions of GenAI, academic integrity, institutional preparedness, and pedagogical integration within their teaching contexts. Responses from the 18 participants reveal an overall recognition that GenAI has substantially transformed academic writing practices while simultaneously creating new pedagogical and ethical challenges for educators.

A strong consensus emerged regarding the impact of GenAI on student writing practices. Fifteen participants (83.3%) either agreed or strongly agreed that GenAI tools have significantly altered students' academic writing in EAP courses, while only three respondents (16.7%) remained neutral. This finding suggests that AI-mediated writing has become a pervasive reality within Caribbean higher education and is reshaping traditional understandings of authorship, originality, and textual production.

Lecturers also expressed moderate confidence in distinguishing acceptable AI-assisted writing from academic misconduct. Twelve participants (66.7%) agreed or strongly agreed that they could differentiate ethical AI support from dishonest academic practices, although four participants (22.2%) were neutral and two (11.1%) disagreed. This indicates that while many lecturers feel somewhat capable of navigating AI-related integrity concerns, uncertainty persists among a notable minority.

The reliability of AI-detection systems emerged as a significant area of concern. Only six participants (33.3%) viewed AI-detection tools as reliable evidence for academic integrity decisions, whereas another six (33.3%) remained neutral, and six participants (33.3%) disagreed or strongly disagreed. Relatedly, 14 respondents (77.8%) expressed concern about false positives generated by AI-detection software. This finding reflects widespread skepticism toward

**Table 3.** Caribbean EAP lecturers' assessment of GenAI integration, AI detection, and academic integrity

| No. | Item                                                                                                  | Strongly agree | Agree | Neutral | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|-----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| 1   | Generative AI tools have significantly altered students' academic writing practices in my EAP courses | 4              | 11    | 3       | –        | –                 |
| 2   | I am confident in distinguishing between acceptable AI-assisted writing and academic misconduct       | 4              | 8     | 4       | 2        | –                 |
| 3   | AI-detection tools provide reliable evidence for making academic integrity decisions                  | 1              | 5     | 6       | 4        | 2                 |
| 4   | False positives from AI-detection tools concern me when assessing students' work                      | 6              | 8     | 3       | 1        | –                 |
| 5   | I have received sufficient training to manage AI-related integrity issues                             | 3              | 7     | 7       | 1        | –                 |
| 6   | Institutional policies on AI use in assessment are clear and practical                                | 5              | 7     | 5       | 1        | –                 |
| 7   | Students require explicit instructions on ethical AI use in academic writing                          | 14             | 3     | 1       | –        | –                 |
| 8   | My level of AI literacy influences how I assess students' work                                        | 3              | 12    | 2       | –        | –                 |
| 9   | I feel supported by my institution when dealing with AI-related misconduct cases                      | 1              | 4     | 11      | 1        | 1                 |
| 10  | AI should be integrated pedagogically rather than prohibited in EAP courses                           | 5              | 8     | 2       | 1        | 2                 |

the fairness and accuracy of current AI-detection technologies and suggests that lecturers are hesitant to rely solely on automated systems when adjudicating misconduct cases.

Institutional preparedness and professional support produced mixed responses. Ten participants (55.6%) believed they had received sufficient training to manage AI-related integrity issues, while seven (38.9%) were neutral and one participant (5.6%) disagreed. Similarly, 12 lecturers (66.7%) considered institutional AI policies to be relatively clear and practical, although five respondents (27.8%) remained neutral. These findings imply that although some institutional efforts have been made to address GenAI, many lecturers still perceive uncertainty or inadequacy in institutional guidance and training.

One of the strongest areas of consensus concerned the need for explicit instruction on ethical AI use. Seventeen respondents (94.4%) agreed or strongly agreed that students require direct guidance on responsible AI use in academic writing. This near-unanimous agreement underscores the perceived importance of AI literacy and ethical orientation within EAP pedagogy.

The findings also highlight the growing importance of lecturers' own AI competencies. Fifteen participants (83.3%) acknowledged that their level of AI literacy influences how they assess students' work, suggesting that assessment practices are increasingly mediated by lecturers' familiarity with GenAI technologies and their implications.

However, institutional support for handling AI-related misconduct appears less robust. Only five participants (27.8%) reported feeling adequately supported by their institutions, while the majority (61.1%) remained neutral and two participants (11.1%) expressed dissatisfaction. This neutrality may reflect uncertainty about institutional procedures, inconsistent implementation of policies, or a lack of confidence in existing support systems.

Finally, participants overwhelmingly favored pedagogical integration over prohibition. Thirteen lecturers (72.2%) agreed or strongly agreed that AI should be integrated pedagogically rather than banned in EAP courses, whereas only three respondents (16.7%) opposed such integration. This finding suggests that Caribbean EAP lecturers largely view GenAI as an educational reality that should be managed critically and ethically rather than excluded entirely from academic environments.

Collectively, these findings portray Caribbean EAP lecturers as cautiously adaptive towards GenAI. While participants recognize the transformative potential of AI in academic writing and support its pedagogical integration, they also express substantial concerns regarding AI-detection reliability, institutional preparedness, and the ethical management of AI-assisted learning.

### ***RQ3: Lecturers' Perceptions Regarding Accuracy of AI-Detection Software***

A qualitative content analysis of the 18 responses concerning lecturers' concerns about the accuracy and fairness of AI-detection systems revealed widespread skepticism toward the reliability, validity, and ethical implications of current detection technologies. Although one participant expressed moderate confidence in Turnitin, the overwhelming majority articulated concerns related to false positives, technological limitations, algorithmic inconsistency, student manipulation, and the broader uncertainty surrounding AI-detection systems in higher education contexts. Overall, the findings suggest that lecturers view AI-detection software as an unstable and supplementary mechanism rather than a definitive arbiter of academic misconduct.

Five dominant themes emerged from the analysis: (1) false positives and misclassification, (2) technological limitations and detection inaccuracy, (3) linguistic and disciplinary bias, (4) circumvention and student manipulation, and (5) uncertainty and lack of trust in AI-detection systems.

The most dominant theme concerned false positives and wrongful misclassification, which appeared in eight of the 18 responses (44.4%). Participants repeatedly expressed anxiety that authentic student writing could be incorrectly flagged as AI-generated. Participant 2 noted that *"our original writing has been flagged as AI-generated,"* while Participant 5 simply stated, *"My concern is the false positives."* Others, including Participant 3, described the systems as *"overly sensitive and punitive."* Importantly, lecturers highlighted how AI-generated probability percentages remain ambiguous and difficult to interpret with certainty. These findings indicate significant distrust in the evidentiary reliability of AI-detection scores and raise concerns regarding procedural fairness in academic misconduct investigations.

A second major theme involved technological limitations and detection inaccuracies, identified in seven responses (38.9%). Lecturers questioned the capacity of detection software to accurately identify evolving forms of AI-generated writing. Participants argued that detection systems are *"not very accurate," "range specific,"* and frequently inconsistent across platforms. Participant 13 reported that *"two different AI-detection apps"* produced contradictory evaluations of the same script, suggesting instability in algorithmic judgement. Others, such as Participant 15, emphasized that *"AI technology itself is outpacing their detection capabilities,"* particularly regarding newer and more sophisticated AI models. These findings suggest that lecturers perceive a widening technological gap between rapidly evolving generative AI tools and comparatively static detection software.

A third significant theme related to linguistic and disciplinary bias, which emerged in four responses (22.2%). Participants expressed concern that students who write in formal, clinical, or second-language styles may be disproportionately vulnerable to misclassification. Participant 6 observed that *"students who write in a more formal or second-language style are especially vulnerable,"* while Participant 17 noted that students in some disciplines naturally write in *"clinical (almost robotic ways)."* Additionally, lecturers indicated that AI-detection tools may rely heavily on particular *"expression or vocabulary"* patterns rather than authentic evidence of AI use. These concerns are particularly significant within Caribbean EAP contexts, where many students operate within multilingual, Creolophone, or second-language English environments. The findings therefore point to the possibility of algorithmic linguistic bias embedded within AI-detection systems.

Another important theme involved circumvention, manipulation, and the limitations of enforcement, appearing in three responses (16.7%). Lecturers expressed concern that students are increasingly able to bypass AI-detection systems using paraphrasing tools or evolving AI techniques. Participant 10 stated that *"AI tools are available to by-pass AI's influence,"* while Participant 12 argued that students *"are able to manipulate the system to their advantage."* Consequently, respondents emphasized the continuing importance of lecturer expertise and human judgement in identifying misconduct. These findings suggest that lecturers do not perceive AI-detection software as self-sufficient technologies, but rather as tools requiring pedagogical interpretation and contextual evaluation.

Finally, a broader theme of uncertainty and epistemic distrust emerged across five responses (27.8%). Lecturers repeatedly described AI detection as *"an unknown space"* and argued that such systems *"should not be the arbiter of AI use at the moment"* (Participant 16). Even the single relatively positive response was cautiously framed, noting only that Turnitin had *"rarely"* produced false positives. Collectively, these responses reveal a lack of institutional confidence in AI-detection technologies and suggest that lecturers remain unconvinced of their readiness for high-stakes academic integrity decisions.

Overall, the findings indicate that Caribbean EAP lecturers conceptualize AI-detection software as technologically unstable, ethically problematic, and insufficiently reliable for definitive

academic integrity enforcement. Rather than viewing AI detection as an objective technological solution, participants framed it as a contested and imperfect system requiring careful human oversight. The responses also demonstrate growing concern regarding linguistic inequities, algorithmic bias, and the rapid pace at which GenAI technologies are surpassing institutional detection mechanisms. These findings align with emerging international scholarship arguing that AI-detection systems remain probabilistic rather than evidentiary tools and should therefore be used cautiously within educational assessment and disciplinary processes.

#### **RQ4: EAP Lecturers' Professional Development Needs**

Qualitative content analysis revealed a strong consensus among participants that sustained, practical, and institutionally supported training is essential for navigating AI-related challenges in EAP contexts. Of the 18 responses, 15 participants (83.3%) explicitly requested workshops, seminars, or structured professional development initiatives, making this the dominant theme across the dataset. Participants consistently emphasized the need for recurring and hands-on training rather than one-time orientations. For instance, Participant 5 recommended “*professional AI development workshops every 3–6 months*”, while Participant 2 argued that workshops should occur “*perhaps twice per year*”. This indicates that lecturers perceive AI as a rapidly evolving phenomenon requiring continuous upskilling.

A second major concern related to AI literacy and pedagogical adaptation. Approximately 9 participants (50%) highlighted the need for guidance on ethical AI integration, classroom implementation, and assessment redesign. Participant 6 stated that professional development should focus on “*AI literacy, ethical use, assessment redesign, practical classroom applications, clear policy development, and collaborative problem-solving*,” while Participant 11 requested support in “*teaching me how to teach it*” and sharing “*various classroom AI policies*.” These responses suggest that lecturers are not only seeking technical knowledge but also pedagogical strategies for integrating AI responsibly into teaching and learning.

Another recurring theme involved AI detection and academic integrity management. Around seven participants (38.9%) requested training on AI-detection systems such as Turnitin, including how to identify unethical AI use and interpret detection reports accurately. Participant 14 specifically requested “*techniques for identifying innovative AI use designed to skirt detection*,” reflecting concerns that students may circumvent existing detection systems. Similarly, Participant 16 highlighted the need for “*incorporating Turnitin in[to] assessment marking*,” suggesting a desire for practical training embedded within assessment practices.

Finally, several responses underscored the importance of institutional guidance and supportive rather than punitive approaches to AI. Participant 3 urged institutions to provide “*more strategy*” and “*stop with the shaming*,” while Participant 13 stressed the need for universities to establish clear AI guidelines. Collectively, these findings indicate that lecturers desire a developmental and policy-driven response to GenAI rather than a solely surveillance-oriented approach.

## **Discussion**

The findings suggest that Caribbean EAP lecturers are neither rejecting nor uncritically embracing GenAI. Instead, they are actively negotiating its pedagogical possibilities, ethical challenges, and implications for academic integrity. Across all four research questions, a common thread emerges: participants favor human-centered, ethically informed, and educationally oriented approaches to AI integration. Both Virtue Ethics and Gilligan's (1982) Ethics of Care provide useful explanatory lenses, illustrating how lecturers prioritize character development, professional judgement, fairness, relational responsibility, and student wellbeing over purely technological

or surveillance-based solutions. The findings therefore support a shift from policing AI use toward fostering ethical AI literacy, responsible innovation, and supportive institutional cultures capable of responding to the complexities of higher education in the GenAI era.

For RQ1, the findings indicate that participants conceptualize academic integrity as extending beyond traditional concerns about plagiarism to encompass transparency, disclosure, authorship, and responsible AI use. Rather than viewing GenAI as inherently unethical, lecturers emphasized the importance of human accountability and intellectual ownership over submitted work. This supports recent scholarship suggesting that academic integrity in the GenAI era is shifting from a narrow focus on textual originality towards ethical engagement with knowledge construction and AI-assisted learning (Bozkurt, 2024; Maumbe et al., 2026). From a Virtue Ethics perspective, integrity is increasingly understood as the cultivation of honesty, responsibility, and intellectual courage rather than mere adherence to institutional rules. Simultaneously, the findings resonate with Gilligan's (1982) Ethics of Care, which prioritizes relational responsibility and moral decision-making within educational contexts. These findings suggest that Caribbean higher education institutions may need to revisit existing or create academic integrity policies to explicitly address transparency, attribution, and responsible AI use. EAP lecturers may also need to move beyond punitive discourses of misconduct towards pedagogical approaches that cultivate ethical reasoning and responsible digital scholarship.

Concerning RQ2, while participants acknowledged the transformative potential of GenAI, they also expressed concerns about its impact on learning, assessment, and student development. Lecturers identified several pedagogical benefits, including increased efficiency, content generation, feedback support, personalized learning, and enhanced engagement. These findings support previous research suggesting that AI technologies can facilitate instructional innovation and enrich language learning through adaptive and interactive experiences (Gümüş & Cengiz, 2025; Teng & Shen, 2025). Many lecturers viewed GenAI as a valuable aid for brainstorming, proofreading, idea generation, and formative feedback rather than as a substitute for student authorship. From a sociocultural perspective, these uses position GenAI as a mediating tool that can scaffold learning within learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) (Vygotsky, 1978), enabling students to accomplish tasks and develop academic literacy skills with appropriate support. In this sense, GenAI may function as a cognitive partner that assists learners in refining their thinking, language use, and writing processes while preserving meaningful human engagement.

However, simultaneously, lecturers expressed concerns about students' overreliance on AI, reduced critical engagement, and the erosion of independent academic skills. These findings align with Fan et al.'s (2024) concept of "cognitive laziness," whereby excessive dependence on AI may hinder the development of critical thinking, problem-solving, and academic writing competencies. Such concerns can also be interpreted through the lens of self-regulated learning theory, which emphasizes learners' capacity to plan, monitor, evaluate, and reflect on their learning processes (Zimmerman, 2002). Lecturers fear that when students rely uncritically on AI-generated outputs, they may bypass the metacognitive processes necessary for deep learning and academic growth. Consequently, GenAI has the potential either to strengthen or weaken academic literacy development depending on how students engage with the technology and the extent to which reflective and self-regulatory practices are encouraged.

The findings also position lecturers as active agents in AI integration. Consistent with Mphatsoane-Sesoane and Jita (2025), participants viewed themselves as frontline negotiators balancing innovation, academic integrity, and student learning needs. Similar to the findings of Saydazimova and Saydazimova (2025), many appeared comfortable as GenAI adopters and collaborators while remaining cautious about uncritical implementation. From a Virtue

Ethics perspective, these concerns reflect a commitment to preserving intellectual virtues such as diligence, independent judgement, and critical inquiry. Through the lens of Ethics of Care, lecturers' reservations centered less on policing behavior and more on safeguarding students' long-term educational development and intellectual flourishing. Their concerns therefore reflect a relational commitment to supporting learners in becoming responsible, reflective, and autonomous academic writers.

The findings suggest that institutions should move beyond restrictive approaches to AI governance and instead promote pedagogical models that encourage responsible AI use, self-regulated learning, and scaffolded academic development. Assessment designs that emphasise process, reflection, drafting, and critical engagement with AI-generated content may enable educators to harness the benefits of GenAI while preserving the cognitive and meta-cognitive skills essential for academic success. Such approaches are particularly important in EAP contexts, where language development and independent academic literacy remain central learning objectives.

Concerning RQ3, participants expressed significant concerns about the reliability, fairness, and evidentiary value of AI-detection systems, particularly regarding false positives and potential disadvantages for multilingual and Creolophone learners. These findings align with emerging research questioning the validity of AI-detection technologies and highlighting their susceptibility to linguistic bias against second-language writers (Giray, 2025; Giray et al., 2026). Participants appeared reluctant to treat detection reports as definitive evidence of misconduct, preferring contextualized judgement and human oversight. Such perspectives reflect both Virtue Ethics, which values prudence and professional judgement, and Ethics of Care, which emphasizes fairness, empathy, and due process when evaluating student work (Gilligan, 1982). The findings raise important equity concerns for EAP contexts in the Caribbean, where many students navigate between Creole and standard English. Institutions should therefore exercise caution when using AI-detection tools for disciplinary purposes and develop procedures that incorporate multiple forms of evidence before allegations of misconduct are made. Greater transparency regarding the limitations of AI-detection systems is also necessary to safeguard student rights and promote trust in assessment processes.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that lecturers increasingly favor developmental and educative approaches to academic integrity rather than exclusively punitive measures. Participants reported redesigning assessments, incorporating reflective and process-oriented writing tasks, requiring disclosure statements, and encouraging critical engagement with AI outputs. These strategies align with contemporary scholarship advocating authentic assessment and process-based learning as effective responses to GenAI-related challenges (Dang et al., 2026). Such approaches position lecturers as active mediators of AI integration who seek to balance innovation with accountability. Through a Virtue Ethics lens, these practices foster intellectual virtues such as honesty, critical thinking, and self-regulation, while an Ethics of Care perspective highlights lecturers' commitment to supporting student growth rather than simply policing misconduct. The findings suggest that assessment redesign may be more effective than prohibition in preserving academic integrity in EAP contexts. By emphasizing reflection, revision, and evidence of learning processes, lecturers can create assessment environments that encourage ethical AI use while simultaneously strengthening students' academic literacy and critical thinking skills.

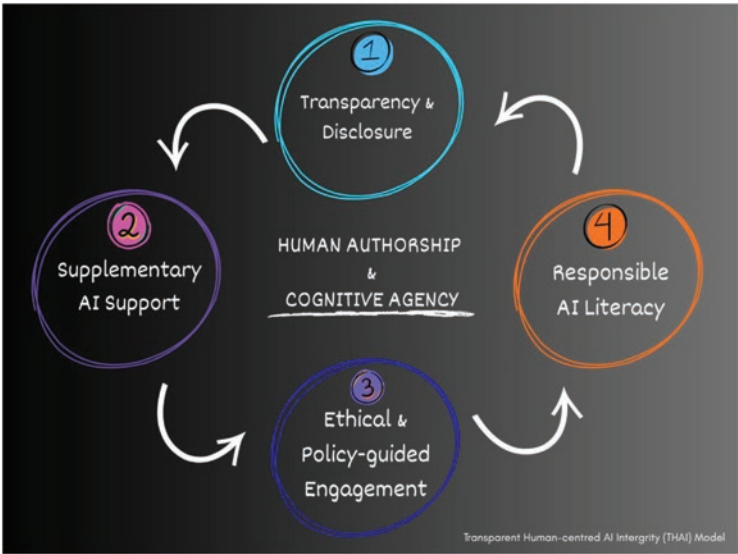
As regards RQ4, participants consistently highlighted the need for professional development, clearer institutional policies, and greater guidance regarding ethical AI integration. While many recognized the pedagogical potential of GenAI, they also acknowledged limitations in their own preparedness to address emerging integrity challenges. These findings corroborate previous

studies identifying AI literacy, institutional support, and policy clarity as critical determinants of educators’ confidence and willingness to integrate AI responsibly (Madden et al., 2024). The findings further suggest that lecturers are increasingly functioning as policy interpreters and frontline negotiators of AI integration rather than passive implementers of institutional directives. These findings point to the need for sustained professional learning initiatives that move beyond technical training to include ethical, pedagogical, and assessment-related dimensions of AI use. Institutions should establish clear and contextually relevant guidelines that support lecturers in making informed decisions about acceptable AI use while promoting consistency across programs and departments.

Broader implications include the need for Caribbean higher education institutions to rethink academic integrity frameworks in ways that acknowledge the realities of AI-assisted learning, the linguistic diversity of EAP classrooms, and the limitations of detection technologies. Future policy and practice should therefore prioritize AI literacy, transparent assessment design, and ethical engagement with GenAI, ensuring that integrity remains a developmental and educational construct rather than merely a mechanism of surveillance and compliance.

Conceptual Model

The findings from RQ1 gave birth to the Transparent Human-centered AI Integrity (THAI) Model, as captured in Figure 1. THAI positions academic integrity as the outcome of four interconnected dimensions that collectively regulate ethical AI engagement in higher education: transparency and disclosure, supplementary AI support, ethical and policy-guided engagement, and responsible AI literacy. This is an extension of TEP (Transparency-Ethics-Pedagogy)-AIED model by Hwang et al. (2026), which was developed to guide the design, implementation, and reporting of AIED research. The model emphasizes transparent disclosure of AI systems and human–AI interactions, ethical considerations such as equity, data governance, learner agency, and risk management, and strong pedagogical alignment through clearly defined learning objectives and theoretical foundations. Both THAI and TEP-AIED share



**Figure 1.** *Transparent Human-Centered AI Integrity (THAI) Model for understanding academic integrity in GenAI-mediated English for Academic Purposes contexts*

commonalities in areas of transparency, ethics, and pedagogy dimensions. However, while TEP-AIED informs transparent reporting of AI-supported learning processes, THAI focuses specifically on integrity-oriented decision-making in multilingual EAP settings.

At the center of the model is the preservation of human authorship and cognitive agency. This encapsulates the preservation of student voice, original thought, critical thinking, intellectual ownership, and independent meaning-making. This dimension acts as the core anchor of the model. Academic integrity is compromised when AI replaces rather than supports human cognition.

Dimension one – Transparency and Disclosure – represents the foundational ethical principle of openness concerning AI use. It includes acknowledging AI assistance, declaring the extent and nature of AI involvement, proper citation and attribution, and compliance with institutional AI policies (see example in Figure 2). Within the model, transparency functions as the accountability mechanism that legitimizes AI-assisted academic work.

Dimension two – AI as Supplementary Support – defines acceptable pedagogical boundaries for GenAI use (see Figure 3). AI is positioned as a brainstorming tool, a proofreading or organizational aid, a conceptual support mechanism, and a developmental assistant rather than a co-author (see redacted examples below). The model therefore rejects full cognitive outsourcing and frames AI as augmentative rather than substitutive.

## Student AI Disclosure Form<sup>1</sup>

**Name:** ALU Group 1

**Date:** December 6, 2025

Have any AI tools been used in the creation of this report/assignment?

☐ No☒ Yes

If no, please sign below

---

*Instructions: Select the appropriate tool(s) and use(s) of AI for your assignment. Note that you may only use AI as permitted, so please follow all the instructions provided by your instructor. Attach the completed form to your assignment. Contact your instructor if you have questions.*

**Tool(s) Used:** ☐ OpenAI ChatGPT☒ Microsoft Copilot☐ Google Gemini☐ Anthropic Claude☐ Perplexity☐ DALL-E 2☐ AI Art Generator☐  
☒ Other: Grammarly

*Indicate below the level of AI used in your assignment. Your instructor will specify which option(s) are permitted.*

|                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <p><b>No AI</b></p> <p>This lane ensures that your <b>work reflects your own understanding</b> and aligns with course outcomes <b>without the use of AI tools</b> (e.g., in-class discussions, written documents, quizzes, tests, and invigilated exams).</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No AI assistance</p> | <p><b>AI as a Study Tool (AI Used as a Study Companion or Tutor)</b></p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> No AI assistance</p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Minimal AI assistance (e.g., preparing review materials)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Moderate AI assistance (e.g., used as a supportive tutor or study companion)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Significant AI assistance (e.g., collaborated with other students to create study guides and personalized tutor sessions)</p> |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Figure 2. Screenshot of student AI-disclosure form in an EAP module

### AI as a proofreading partner

**Student's AI prompt:** Proofread my essay for grammar, sentence structure, punctuation, and clarity. Point out any repetitive language, tense shifts, or run-on sentences. Also, check that the tone and formatting are appropriate for a college-level creative nonfiction submission.

**AI response:** In terms of grammar and mechanics, your tone is appropriate for a college-level creative nonfiction assignment, and your writing voice is strong and expressive. There are a few run-on sentences and places where sentence structure could be tightened for clarity, particularly in sections where the emotional intensity leads to long descriptive passages. Additionally, some phrases and sentence starters are repeated, such as frequent use of "I felt...", which can be varied for smoother rhythm and engagement. Your reference section needs revising for proper APA formatting and to remove repeated links. Overall, your writing is clear and poignant, and with a few small edits to grammar and formatting, your essay will appear even more polished and professionally presented.

### AI as a content reviewer

**Student's AI prompt:** Please review my reflective essay titled "XXX." Evaluate whether I effectively show growth and personal insight throughout the narrative. Are there areas where I can expand on my feelings, experiences, or lessons learned to deepen and make my reflection more meaningful?

**AI response:** Your essay, "XXX," clearly demonstrates personal growth and emotional insight. You take the reader on a journey from uncertainty and depression to a renewed sense of purpose and success, including being placed on the Principal's Honor Roll, which reinforces your transformation and determination to rebuild your life exactly where you are meant to be. Throughout the narrative, you convey strong feelings of shame, fear, faith, and eventual confidence. However, there are a few major emotional turning points that could be expanded to strengthen the reflective depth—for example, the moment you finally applied to [name of institution] and what that decision felt like internally, or the pride and validation that came with your academic achievement. Adding vivid scenes or specific memories would allow the audience to more fully experience these breakthroughs with you, making your reflection even more powerful and meaningful.

Dimension three – Ethical and Policy-guided AI Engagement – reflects the institutional and moral ecosystem surrounding AI use (see Figure 3). It includes ethical digital literacy, responsible AI practices, institutional regulations, lecturer guidance, and professional judgement. This dimension emphasizes that academic integrity is socially and institutionally negotiated rather than purely technological.

Dimension four – Responsible AI Literacy – is a culmination of the other components. It is the ethical, transparent, and critically informed ability to use AI technologies in ways that preserve human agency, academic integrity, and accountability in knowledge production. It extends beyond technical competence to include ethical judgement, critical evaluation, and pedagogical awareness.

### AI as organizational aid

**Student's AI prompt:** Analyze the organization of my essay. Does each paragraph transition smoothly and support the overall story from leaving my job to finding purpose at [name of institution]? Suggest improvements if any sections feel repetitive, unclear, or out of order.

**AI response:** The organization of your essay is logical and easy to follow. You begin with the struggle and emotional decline that followed after leaving your job, then move into how isolation led to self-reflection, which eventually guided you to rediscover your passion for art and education at [name of institution]. Each paragraph connects well to the next, maintaining a coherent narrative flow from uncertainty to healing and purpose. One area to improve structure would be reducing some repetitive descriptions of your depression and self-doubt in the middle portion. While those emotions are important to the story, trimming some repetition would make space for more development of the positive shift in your journey, such as your first experiences at the college and how they impacted your confidence and identity. Strengthening the transition into your recovery phase would enhance the momentum of your story.

## 11. Artificial Intelligence (A.I.) Policy

While artificial intelligence (AI) can be a valuable learning aid, it must be used responsibly, ethically, and in line with the University's AI Policy. AI should support your understanding of course materials, but must never replace your original thinking, analysis, or writing.

- You may use basic tools (e.g., spell-check, grammar check) to polish your work.
- You may **not** use AI tools to draft, paraphrase, or rewrite your assignments unless your lecturer explicitly states otherwise for a specific task.
- Any unapproved use of AI constitutes academic dishonesty and will result in penalties as outlined in the University's Academic Integrity Policy.
- There may be opportunities for you to use AI tools in this class. Where they exist, your lecturer will clearly specify when and in what capacity it is permissible for you to use these tools.
- Using AI-generated content as your own work, including but not limited to essays, assignments, and exams, constitutes academic dishonesty. Any instances of academic dishonesty will be subject to disciplinary action.

**Figure 3.** Example of an AI policy used in an EAP module

The model conceptualizes academic integrity in GenAI contexts as a dynamic equilibrium between AI assistance and human intellectual ownership. The relationship may be interpreted as follows: transparency legitimizes AI use, supplementary AI use maintains pedagogical balance, human cognitive agency preserves authenticity, and ethical-policy regulation governs acceptable practice (see example of student reflection below). Together, these dimensions produce what may be termed Ethically-Mediated Academic Authorship (EMAA).

### Student reflection after AI assistance

When I first started using AI to review my work, I wanted to make sure the feedback actually connected to what my lecturer asked for... The feedback I received was helpful and honest. The AI pointed out that some of the emotions I expressed felt repetitive, especially in the earlier parts where I described my depression and isolation. I took that suggestion seriously and removed a few repetitive lines so the focus could shift sooner to my healing and growth. I also added more detail to the important turning points in my story, like what it felt like actually to apply to *[name of institution]* ... At the same time, I didn't take every suggestion. There were certain emotional details I kept because they showed exactly how lost I truly felt. Using the AI didn't replace my own judgment; it helped me think more critically about the choices I made as a writer. Looking at the final version of my essay compared to the first draft, I can see how much stronger and clearer my story has become.

The THAI Model contributes theoretically by moving beyond plagiarism-centered understandings of integrity; reconceptualizing academic integrity as negotiated ethical participation in AI-supported writing; positioning human cognition—not AI avoidance—as the central criterion of integrity; integrating pedagogical, ethical, and institutional dimensions into one framework; and providing a context-sensitive Caribbean perspective on GenAI governance in EAP education.

The model also aligns with sociocultural theories of writing, critical digital pedagogy, academic integrity theory, human-centered AI frameworks, and posthuman approaches to literacy and authorship.

The THAI Model is particularly valuable because it moves beyond the simplistic question of whether students use AI and instead focuses on how AI is used, why it is used, and whether human intellectual engagement remains central to the learning process. Practically, the model can serve as a decision-making framework for lecturers, students, institutions, and policymakers seeking to distinguish ethical AI-assisted learning from academic misconduct.

For EAP educators, the THAI Model provides a practical alternative to plagiarism-centered approaches that often struggle to accommodate AI-assisted writing. Instead of attempting to police all AI use, lecturers can evaluate assignments according to the four THAI dimensions: Was AI use disclosed? Was it supplementary rather than substitutive? Was it consistent with institutional guidelines? Does the work demonstrate human cognitive agency? This approach encourages authentic learning, critical thinking, and responsible AI engagement while recognizing the realities of contemporary academic writing. More broadly, the model offers a context-sensitive framework for higher education institutions—particularly within the Caribbean—to develop policies, assessment practices, and AI literacy initiatives that balance innovation with academic integrity.

### Conclusion

This study examined Caribbean EAP lecturers' perceptions of academic integrity in the era of GenAI, with particular attention to evolving definitions of integrity, the reliability of AI-detection software, strategies for balancing learning support and integrity enforcement, and professional development needs. The findings reveal that lecturers are moving beyond traditional plagiarism-centered understandings of academic integrity towards more nuanced conceptions

grounded in transparency, accountability, ethical AI use, and human intellectual contribution. At the same time, participants expressed considerable reservations about the reliability and fairness of AI-detection technologies, particularly their potential to generate false positives and disadvantage multilingual and Creolophone learners. Rather than advocating prohibition, lecturers favored pedagogical approaches that promote responsible AI use, authentic assessment, reflective practice, and academic literacy development.

Drawing on these findings, the study proposes the Transparent Human-Centered AI Integrity (THAI) Model, which positions transparency, ethical accountability, human agency, AI literacy, and institutional support as interconnected pillars for navigating academic integrity in GenAI-enhanced learning environments. Informed by Virtue Ethics and Gilligan's (1982). Ethics of Care, the model reframes academic integrity as a developmental and relational construct rather than a purely compliance-based mechanism. It emphasizes the cultivation of intellectual virtues, ethical decision-making, and supportive educational practices that enable students to engage critically and responsibly with AI technologies.

This study makes a timely contribution to the emerging AIED scholarship literature on GenAI and academic integrity by foregrounding the perspectives of Caribbean EAP lecturers—a population that remains significantly underrepresented in global scholarship. Rather than focusing solely on the technological capabilities of GenAI, the study examines how lecturers negotiate the tensions between pedagogical innovation and academic integrity within Caribbean EAP contexts, shaped by their own multilingual and postcolonial realities. In doing so, it responds directly to calls for more human-centred approaches to AIED research that recognize educators as active agents who interpret, regulate, and shape the implementation of AI in educational settings. Furthermore, by proposing the Transparent Human-centred AI Integrity (THAI) Model, the study extends current debates beyond detection and prohibition toward a framework that integrates transparency, ethical engagement, AI literacy, and human cognitive agency. The model therefore contributes to ongoing discussions about how AI-enhanced learning environments can remain pedagogically meaningful, ethically grounded, and socially responsible while preserving learner autonomy and authentic academic authorship, garnered through an examination of lecturers' perceptions within a region where issues of language, equity, and educational access intersect in unique ways. More broadly, the findings underscore the need for higher education institutions to develop contextually relevant AI policies, strengthen AI literacy initiatives, redesign assessments, and adopt more human-centered approaches to academic integrity.

Notwithstanding these contributions, several limitations should be acknowledged. The study was based on a relatively small sample of 18 lecturers, which limits the generalizability of the findings across the wider Caribbean higher education sector. The use of purposive and snowball sampling may also have resulted in the participation of individuals with a particular interest in GenAI and academic integrity, potentially introducing selection bias. Additionally, the study relied on self-reported perceptions rather than observations of actual classroom practices, and the cross-sectional design captured views at a single point in time within a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

Future research should therefore involve larger and more diverse samples across multiple Caribbean territories and institutional contexts. Comparative studies involving students, administrators, and policymakers could provide a more comprehensive understanding of AI-related integrity challenges. Longitudinal research is also needed to examine how perceptions and practices evolve as GenAI technologies and institutional policies mature. Finally, future studies should empirically test and refine the THAI Model to evaluate its applicability, effectiveness, and transferability across different disciplinary, linguistic, and cultural contexts.

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## Declarations

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