

Data Collection Form — Sample Application

GOOD EXAMPLE

Research Title

The Effects of AI-Generated Feedback on University EFL Students' Academic Writing Performance and Engagement

1. Research Purpose and Scope

This study aims to investigate how AI-generated feedback influences university EFL students' academic writing performance and engagement during the revision process. Although AI tools are increasingly used in language education, further research is needed to understand how students interpret, evaluate, and incorporate AI-generated feedback into their writing.

The study addresses three research questions:

1. To what extent does AI-generated feedback influence students' academic writing performance?
2. How do students engage cognitively, behaviorally, and affectively with AI-generated feedback?

The findings are expected to inform effective and responsible practices for integrating AI feedback into university writing instruction.

2. Participants and Data Collection

The study will involve approximately 60 undergraduate EFL students, aged 18–22, enrolled in four academic writing classes in the CPS, SQU, in Oman. Participants will be recruited through an invitation distributed by a departmental coordinator who is not involved in grading their work. Participation will be entirely voluntary.

Data will be collected over eight weeks during the Spring 2027 semester using the following instruments:

- Writing tasks: Students will complete two comparable academic writing tasks, evaluated using an analytic rubric addressing content, organization, vocabulary, and grammar.
- Engagement questionnaire: A 20-item, five-point Likert-scale questionnaire will assess behavioral, cognitive, and affective engagement with AI-generated feedback.
- Semi-structured interviews: Approximately 12 consenting students will be invited to participate in interviews lasting 15–20 minutes.
- Draft analysis: Students' initial and revised drafts will be compared to investigate how they use feedback.

The questionnaire will be piloted with a small group of students outside the main sample. Writing tasks will be assessed by two trained raters, and inter-rater reliability will be examined.

3. Risks, Interventions, and Permissions

The study is considered minimal risk. Potential risks include mild discomfort when discussing writing difficulties, concerns about academic performance, and possible exposure of personal information through AI tools.

The following measures will minimize these risks:

- Students will not upload identifiable information to the AI platform.
- Participation or non-participation will have no effect on course grades.
- Students may decline to answer questionnaires or interview questions.
- Interviews will be scheduled outside assessed classroom activities.
- Any uploaded texts will be anonymized before processing.

The study will introduce a structured AI-feedback activity into selected writing lessons. This activity will supplement rather than replace normal teacher feedback and will not change course learning outcomes, grading criteria, or assessment requirements.

Required permissions: Written authorization will be requested from the CRC before recruitment or data collection. Approval to use the selected AI platform will also be confirmed with the CRC and the AI team in the CPS.

All permissions are currently pending. No recruitment, intervention, or data collection will begin until the necessary ethics clearance and institutional permissions have been obtained.

4. Consent and Participant Protection

All prospective participants will receive a Participant Information Sheet explaining the study's purpose, procedures, expected time commitment, potential risks, benefits, and their rights. Written informed consent will be obtained before data collection. Students will be informed that:

- Participation is voluntary.
- They may refuse or withdraw without academic or personal consequences.
- They may skip any questionnaire or interview question.
- They may request the removal of their identifiable data up to 14 days after collection, before the data are irreversibly anonymized and aggregated.
- Their participation will not influence their grades or relationship with their teachers.

To minimize perceived pressure, a researcher who is not responsible for participants' assessment will manage recruitment and consent. Teaching staff will not be informed of individual participation decisions until final grades have been submitted.

Separate consent will be obtained for audio-recording interviews. Students who decline recording may participate through written responses instead.

5. Confidentiality and Data Security

Each participant will be assigned a unique code (e.g., P001, P002). Names and student identification numbers will be removed from research datasets and replaced with these codes.

Data will be protected through the following arrangements:

- Electronic data will be stored in an encrypted, password-protected university-approved storage location.
- Consent forms and the participant code key will be stored separately from research data.
- Access will be restricted to the principal investigator and authorized research team members.
- Audio recordings will be deleted after verified transcription and anonymization.
- Research data will be retained for five years following publication, subject to institutional requirements, and subsequently securely deleted.
- Any paper records will be stored in a locked cabinet and securely shredded at the end of the retention period.

Only anonymized and aggregated findings will be included in publications, presentations, or reports. Interview quotations will be checked to ensure that individual participants cannot be identified.

6. Research Proposal and Supporting Materials

The following documents will accompany the ethics clearance application:

3. Full research proposal, including research background, theoretical framework, methodology, and references.
4. Participant Information Sheet.
5. Informed Consent Form.
6. Student Engagement Questionnaire.
7. Semi-structured Interview Protocol.
8. Academic Writing Tasks and Assessment Rubric.
9. Participant Recruitment Invitation.

The questionnaire will be developed based on established multidimensional models of student engagement, including Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004). Its content validity will be reviewed by three specialists in applied linguistics and language assessment.

The research team will provide final versions of all instruments and relevant permission documents before data collection.