



The usage of AI in vocational and pre-vocational training at the Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Center

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About us

- ▶ Astangu Vocational Rehabilitation Centre is a unique center in Estonia with more than 20 years of experience in providing services for people with special needs.
- ▶ Astangu Center develops the Estonian rehabilitation area and shares its experience with other service providers.

About us

- ▶ The main services we provide are rehabilitation services, job and capacity assessment, learning opportunities, job opportunities, employment and work placement support.
- ▶ The common goal of these services is to prepare people for working life through the development of work skills and capabilities.

Our target group

Our target group is working age (16-64 years) people with:

- ▶ learning difficulties
- ▶ intellectual disabilities from mild to moderate
- ▶ congenital and/or chronic health impairments
- ▶ hearing loss or deaf people
- ▶ acquired physical disabilities and traumatic brain injury
- ▶ mental health conditions, including people with autism

Studying

- ▶ Astangu's learning opportunities can be divided into 3 - adaptation courses, job training and state vocational training.
- ▶ The purpose of the adaptation courses is to provide people with special needs with support for adaptation, opportunities to study, work and other activities, including support for acquiring and practicing the skills necessary for independent living, studying and working.

Studying

- ▶ The purpose of work-study courses is to offer people with special needs the opportunity to acquire work skills in the chosen field.
- ▶ Vocational education courses make it possible to acquire vocational secondary education. At the end of each course, the learner is encouraged to find suitable and capable future activities, such as further learning or moving to work.

IT studies at Astangu

- ▶ Every curriculum we have contains Computer lessons to some extent
- ▶ The main goal of Computer lessons is to teach Basic Computer skills and tie it together with the chosen field of study
- ▶ It is also common for studies in other classes to be put into practice during the Computer classes
- ▶ We value integrating lessons between themselves

Usage of AI in adoption courses

- ▶ Mental health related exercises and presentations:
 - ▶ How can i keep my mental health?
 - ▶ How can i improve it?
 - ▶ What actions have a negative effect on it?
- ▶ Emotions into art:
 - ▶ How am i feeling today?
 - ▶ Using AI to draw a Picture of how i am feeling
 - ▶ Describing what i see in the created Picture to others

Usage of AI in adaptation courses

- ▶ It is important to teach the students to treat AI as just another tool in my toolbox.
- ▶ Something that can help me but i can not rely on it to do the job for me
- ▶ I must always verify the information given to me by AI. ChatGPT for example
- ▶ We have had students create two presentations on the same subject. One with conventional means and one relying on AI and comparing the two.

Usage of AI in vocational courses

- ▶ Similarly to the adaptation courses we have used AI in vocational studies
- ▶ The IT students are much more adept at using it
- ▶ In vocational studies we mostly use it to gather information:
 - ▶ Finding recipes with the chef students
 - ▶ Finding how a certain dish is made
 - ▶ Finding information about tools and materials with the woodworkers
- ▶ The same rules apply regarding the use of AI(it is a tool and verify what you find)

Usage of AI in IT studies

- ▶ IT students are using AI more often than other students
- ▶ We do not restrict them using it as it is a tool used in a work situation aswell
- ▶ They use it to get help with their programming and scripting lessons
- ▶ The same rules apply as with other courses

- ▶ It is important to stress that i can use AI to help me with a problem. But i also have to understand the solution presented to me.
- ▶ The big fear that students will cheat using AI is overblown

Conclusion

- ▶ The usage of AI is not something to be feared or discarded
- ▶ It is our job to prepare the students for the labor market and we have to teach them what tools are out there for them to use
- ▶ It is important to set up rules in regards to using AI as a tool
- ▶ It is important to teach the students that AI is not a machine without faults and i must use critical thinking and verification on it constantly
- ▶ AI is here to stay in its current form and we must understand it. Not fear it

Conclusion according to ChatGPT

- ▶ **Bias and Fairness:**

- ▶ AI systems can inherit and perpetuate biases present in their training data. Teaching students about AI without addressing issues of bias and fairness may unintentionally reinforce or propagate these biases.

- ▶ **Dependency on Technology:**

- ▶ Overreliance on AI solutions can lead to a dependency on technology. Students need to understand the importance of balancing AI with critical thinking and problem-solving skills.

