Working with AI-GUIDE

A practical guide for teachers and mentors

This guide turns the AI-GUIDE methodology into a set of practical steps and ready-to-use activities. It is intended for teachers and mentors who already have a basic understanding of generative AI and want to use it in study and career guidance.

How this guide fits in the toolkit Use Getting started with AI for basic AI knowledge and responsible use. Use this guide for the practical guidance cycle. ProCoach can be used later as one way of carrying out the same approach.

AI-GUIDE Toolkit

Smart Career Guidance with Responsible AI

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Use this guide as a working document The activities can be adapted to the length of a study block, internship period or guidance programme. The sequence matters more than the exact timing.

1. Before you start

AI-GUIDE is most useful when it becomes part of the guidance process that already exists. It does not require a separate subject or a new series of lessons. The key is to decide when students use AI for reflection, when the coach becomes involved and what is recorded afterwards.

Before the first cycle, agree on a few practical choices with the teaching or guidance team. Keep these agreements simple enough to use consistently.

Question	Practical decision
Who will use AI-GUIDE?	Choose the student group and the period in which the approach will be used.
Which AI tool can be used?	Use a tool that is available to students and permitted by the organisation.
When will students reflect?	Connect reflection to existing guidance moments, study blocks or internship periods.
What will students record?	Agree on a short reflection format or personal learning plan.
What is shared with the coach?	Ask students to share relevant insights, not full AI conversations.
Who needs extra support?	Identify students who may need help with prompting, reading or interpreting AI output.

Students should also know what the process is for. Introduce AI as a tool for asking questions, exploring experiences and preparing a conversation. Avoid presenting it as an expert that knows the student better than the student or coach.

A useful starting rule Students do not have to show complete AI conversations. They should be able to explain what they asked, what they found useful and what they decided to do with it.

2. The practical AI-GUIDE cycle

The practical cycle has three recurring moments. For longer periods, an optional check-in can be added between reflection and the final review.

Moment	What happens	Typical result
Start and set goals	Student and coach identify development goals and use AI together to make them more concrete.	Personal goals and first actions
Reflect regularly	Student uses AI independently to think through experiences, progress and obstacles.	Short reflection notes and next steps
Review and plan ahead	Student prepares with AI; student and coach discuss progress and agree on the next goals.	Updated learning plan or guidance agreement

3. Step 1 - Start and set goals

The first conversation sets the tone for the rest of the cycle. The aim is not to create a perfect development plan, but to identify a small number of goals that matter to the student and are concrete enough to revisit later.

How to run the activity

Stage	What to do
1. Look back	Ask the student what went well in the previous period and where they experienced difficulty.
2. Choose a focus	Select one to three areas that are relevant for the coming period: for example planning, independence, collaboration, confidence or career exploration.
3. Use AI together	Let AI ask follow-up questions. The coach models how to improve a prompt and how to question an AI suggestion.
4. Make choices	The student decides which goals and suggestions are useful. The coach checks that they are realistic and meaningful.
5. Record the result	Write down the goals, first actions and how progress will be recognised.

Example

A student says: “I want to become more independent during my internship.” Instead of asking AI to turn this directly into a SMART goal, ask AI to explore what independence means in practice. Which tasks does the student still avoid? When do they ask for help? What would a small change look like? The student and coach then formulate the goal themselves.

Keep the first AI use joint Using AI together at the start gives the coach an opportunity to model good practice. Students see that the purpose is to think more carefully, not to produce ready-made answers.

Useful prompts

"I am starting a new learning period. Ask me questions as a study coach so I can define one or two personal learning goals."

"I want to work more independently. Help me explore what that would look like in practice. Ask about situations, obstacles and small steps."

"I find it difficult to set priorities. Ask me questions that help me decide what I should focus on first."

A complete prompt bank is included in Appendix A. Appendix B provides a worksheet that can be used during this start conversation.

4. Step 2 - Reflect regularly

Reflection is where students gradually learn to use AI independently. The activity should stay short. A ten-minute conversation with AI followed by two or three notes is usually more useful than a long report that students complete only at the end of the period.

A short AI reflection

Step	Student action
Choose one experience	Select something that went well, was difficult or raised a question.
Talk it through	Ask AI to pose questions about what happened, what the student did and what influenced the outcome.
Select one insight	Identify the point that is most useful or surprising.
Decide on one action	Choose one thing to continue, change or try next time.
Record briefly	Write the insight and action in the reflection log or learning plan.

The reflection should not become a hidden writing assignment. Students do not need to document every interaction with AI. The value lies in the quality of their thinking and in whether they can connect an experience to a next step.

Questions that keep reflection concrete

What was I trying to achieve?

What actually happened?

What helped me?

What got in the way?

What did I learn about the way I work?

What will I try next?

Role of the coach

The coach does not need to check every AI conversation. Instead, use regular guidance moments to ask what the student has noticed and which actions they are trying. If a student remains very general, ask for one concrete

example. If AI appears to be doing the thinking or writing, return the responsibility to the student: “Do you recognise this? What would you say in your own words?”

Frequency Use a rhythm that fits the programme. Weekly or two-weekly reflection can work well, but the method does not depend on a fixed interval.

5. Optional check-in

For a longer block, internship or guidance period, a short check-in can prevent students from continuing with goals that no longer fit. It is also useful for students who need more support between the start and end of the cycle.

Keep the check-in brief. The student can complete the questions in Appendix D beforehand and bring two points to the conversation.

Check	Question
Progress	What has changed since the start?
Relevance	Are the original goals still important?
Obstacles	What is currently making progress difficult?
Support	What could the student do independently and where is support needed?
Adjustment	Should a goal, action or planning agreement be changed?

6. Step 3 - Review and plan ahead

At the end of the cycle, the student looks back and prepares for a conversation with the coach. AI can help the student gather examples and notice patterns, but the evaluation itself takes place between student and coach.

Before the meeting

Ask the student to prepare a short reflection. It should cover progress on the agreed goals, one or two concrete examples, a challenge, an important insight and a first idea for the next period. AI may be used to ask follow-up questions and organise these points.

During the meeting

Use the reflection as a starting point, not as a script. Ask for examples and discuss whether the student recognises the conclusions suggested by AI. The conversation should make the student’s own reasoning visible. End by agreeing on the next goals and the support needed.

Coach question	Why ask it?
“Can you give me a concrete example?”	Moves the discussion from general statements to actual behaviour.
“What makes you think this was progress?”	Helps the student explain the evidence behind a conclusion.
“Did AI suggest anything you disagreed with?”	Shows whether the student is evaluating AI output critically.

“What will you do differently next time?”	Turns reflection into action.
“What do you want to focus on next?”	Connects evaluation to the next cycle.

Appendix E provides a compact end-of-cycle reflection and planning format. It can replace a longer reflection report if the programme does not require one.

7. Bringing career guidance into the cycle

AI-GUIDE is not limited to study skills. The same cycle can be used to help students explore work, further study and their own preferences. Career guidance works best when these questions are connected to real experiences at school, in practical training or at work.

Moment	Career focus	Example question
Start	What does the student want to explore?	“Which types of work or further study would I like to understand better this period?”
Reflect	What do experiences reveal?	“Which tasks gave me energy, and what does that tell me about the type of work that suits me?”
Review	What has changed?	“Has this period changed my ideas about work or further study? Why?”
Plan ahead	What is the next exploration step?	“What could I try, ask or research next to test this direction?”

AI can be useful for generating questions, comparing options and helping a student prepare for an informational interview or career conversation. Factual information about qualifications, jobs, salaries, admission requirements or labour-market conditions should be checked against current, reliable sources.

Use experiences, not profiles

Avoid asking AI to tell a student “which career fits me” on the basis of a short chat or personality description. A better approach is to use actual experiences: tasks the student enjoyed, situations they handled well, feedback they received and choices they are considering. AI can then help the student explore patterns without turning them into a fixed label.

Career prompts that work well

- “Ask me about three experiences at school or work that I enjoyed. Help me identify what they had in common.”
- “I am considering two study or career directions. Ask me questions that help me compare them based on my interests, strengths and what I still need to find out.”
- “Help me prepare five questions I can ask someone who works in this field.”

Coach role Career choices remain personal decisions. Use AI to broaden or structure the conversation, not to make the decision for the student.

8. Keeping student ownership

The most common problem is not that students use AI, but that AI starts doing too much of the work. In AI-GUIDE, the student must still interpret experiences, make choices and explain what they have learned.

Instead of...	Encourage students to...
Ask AI to write the reflection	Ask AI to question their reflection and then write the conclusion themselves.
Copy the first answer	Check whether the answer fits their own experience and change it where needed.
Ask AI to decide the goal	Use AI to explore options and select the goal themselves.
Submit a full AI transcript	Share the relevant insight and explain why it mattered.
Treat AI advice as a fact	Check important information and discuss uncertain points.
Use polished AI language	Use their own words, including doubts or unfinished thinking.

What to listen for

Student ownership is usually visible in the conversation. A student can explain why a goal matters, give an example, disagree with an AI suggestion and describe the next action in their own words. If the student cannot do this, the reflection probably needs more work.

9. When AI is not enough

AI is useful for reflection and preparation, but it is not a replacement for professional judgement or personal support. The coach remains responsible for recognising situations that need a different response.

AI can help with	A human is needed when
Structuring thoughts and questions	A student is distressed, unsafe or needs personal support.
Exploring options and possible next steps	A decision has significant educational, legal or personal consequences.
Preparing a conversation	Information is sensitive, uncertain or needs professional interpretation.
Finding patterns in the student's own examples	The student cannot judge whether AI suggestions are appropriate.
Practising how to phrase a question	The situation requires contact with school staff, employers, counsellors or other professionals.

If a student shares sensitive personal information, follow the organisation's normal support and safeguarding procedures. Do not treat an AI conversation as assessment, diagnosis or professional advice.

10. Your first AI-GUIDE cycle

For a first implementation, keep the cycle small. One class or mentor group and one study block is enough to learn what works. Avoid adding new forms unless they replace something that already exists.

When	Teacher/mentor action	Student action
Before the cycle	Agree on tool, timing and boundaries. Introduce the purpose of AI-GUIDE.	Understand how AI will be used and what remains their own responsibility.
Start	Run the goal-setting activity together.	Choose personal goals and first actions.
During	Ask about progress at normal guidance moments.	Complete short AI-supported reflections.
Optional check-in	Review whether goals are still relevant.	Adjust goals or actions if necessary.
End	Discuss reflection and agree on the next cycle.	Bring examples, explain insights and formulate next goals.

After the first cycle

A short team review is usually enough. Ask which activities students actually used, whether the prompts led to useful reflection, where students became too dependent on AI and what the coach needed in order to guide the process. Adjust the timing or materials before the next cycle.

Keep what already works AI-GUIDE should strengthen existing guidance, not create a parallel system. If the programme already uses personal learning plans, progress meetings or internship reflection, connect the AI activities to those formats.

If ProCoach is used, the same cycle and responsibilities still apply. ProCoach provides a structured way of conducting the AI conversation; it does not replace the student's choices or the human guidance conversation.

The appendices below provide ready-to-use prompts and worksheets. They can be copied into a learning environment, printed or adapted to local formats.

Appendix A - Prompt bank

These prompts are starting points. Students may adapt the wording to their own situation. The key instruction is to ask AI to question and support the student rather than produce a finished reflection.

A1. Start and goal setting

General goals: I am starting a new learning period. Ask me questions as my study coach so I can define one or two personal learning goals. Do not formulate the goals for me until I have explained what I want to improve.

Independence: I want to work more independently at school or during practical training. Ask me about situations in which I still depend on others, what I already do independently, and what a realistic next step could be.

Priorities: I find it difficult to set priorities. Ask me questions that help me identify what is most important to work on in the coming period and why.

Possible obstacles: Ask me what could get in the way of my goal and help me think of ways to respond. Keep asking until I have at least two realistic strategies.

Success criteria: Help me think about how I will recognise progress on my goal. Ask for concrete examples rather than giving me a ready-made measure.

A2. Regular reflection

Progress: Act as my study coach. Ask me about how I have worked on my goal since the last reflection. Ask for concrete examples.

Success: Ask me about something that went well. Help me identify what I did that contributed to the result.

Challenge: Ask me about a situation where I felt stuck, uncertain or unmotivated. Help me explore what happened before suggesting possible actions.

Learning: Ask me what I learned about myself or the way I work. If my answer is vague, ask for an example.

Next step: Based on what I have told you, ask me questions that help me choose one realistic action for the next period. Do not choose it for me.

Appendix A - Prompt bank (continued)

A3. Preparing the review meeting

Whole-period reflection: Ask me in-depth questions about the learning period. I want to identify what I am proud of, what I learned, what remained difficult and what I want to change.

Evidence of progress: Ask me to give concrete examples of how I worked on my goals. Keep asking until I can explain what changed in my behaviour or approach.

Patterns: Help me compare my recent reflections. Point out possible patterns, but ask me whether I recognise them before drawing conclusions.

Prepare for the coach: Help me prepare three points for my meeting with my coach: one success, one challenge and one question or area where I need support.

Next goals: Ask me questions that help me decide which one or two goals should come next. Use what I have learned in this period, but leave the final choice to me.

A4. Career guidance

Interests from experience: Ask me about tasks or activities at school, during practical training or at work that I enjoyed. Help me explore what these experiences have in common.

Compare options: I am considering two study or career directions. Ask me questions that help me compare them based on my own interests, strengths, practical preferences and what I still need to find out.

Explore a profession: I want to learn more about a profession. First ask what I already know and what matters to me. Then help me make a list of reliable things I should investigate and people I could talk to.

Prepare an informational interview: Help me prepare five questions for someone who works in a field I am considering. The questions should help me understand the day-to-day work, required skills and possible challenges.

Next exploration step: Ask me what I still do not know about my study or career options and help me choose one concrete action to find out more.

For students If AI gives a polished answer too quickly, ask it to stop and question you instead: “Do not answer for me. Ask one question at a time so I can work this out myself.”

Appendix B - Start and goal-setting worksheet

Use this worksheet during the first planning conversation. The student can answer briefly; the aim is to create a useful conversation, not to complete every box in detail.

1. Looking back

What went well in the previous period? What was difficult?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Learning habits

Is there anything in your planning, concentration, organisation, collaboration or independence that you want to improve?

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Practical learning

What would you like to become better at during school, practical training or work?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Career exploration

Is there anything you would like to learn about your future study or work options?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Priorities

Which one to three areas matter most for the coming period?

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. Possible obstacles

What might make these goals difficult?

_____
_____
_____
_____

7. Progress

What would you notice if you were making progress?

_____
_____
_____
_____

My goals for this period

Goal	First action	How I will recognise progress

How AI helped

Write down one question or insight from the AI conversation that helped you think more clearly.

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix C - Short reflection log

Complete this after a relevant experience or at an agreed reflection moment. It should take about 10-15 minutes.

Reflection question	Notes
What was I trying to achieve?	
What went well?	
What was difficult or got in the way?	
What did I learn about myself or the way I work?	
Which AI question or suggestion was useful? Why?	
What is one thing I will do next?	

Optional AI prompt

Copy and adapt "Act as my study coach. Ask me one question at a time about what happened, what went well, what was difficult and what I can learn from it. Ask for examples when my answers are general. At the end, ask me to choose one next step."

For the next guidance conversation

One point I want to discuss with my teacher/mentor:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix D - Optional mid-cycle check-in

Use this format halfway through a longer cycle or when a student needs additional support. The student can prepare independently and bring the key points to a short coach conversation.

Question	Student notes
What progress have I made on my original goals?	
Which goal or action has worked best? Why?	
What difficulty keeps returning?	
What have I learned from this so far?	
Are my goals still relevant?	
What should I continue, change or stop doing?	
Where do I need support from my coach?	

Decision after the check-in

Keep	Change	Add
Goal/action:	Goal/action:	New support or action:

Optional AI prompt

Copy and adapt “Help me review my goals. Ask what I have done, what results I noticed, what got in the way and whether the goals still fit. Do not tell me what to change; help me decide.”

Appendix E - End-of-cycle reflection and planning

The student completes this before the review meeting. Answers should be short and supported by examples. AI may be used to ask follow-up questions, but the student writes the final reflection in their own words.

E1. Looking back

1. My goals

What were the goals I set at the start of the period?

_____
_____
_____
_____

2. Progress

What changed? Give at least one example that shows progress.

_____
_____
_____
_____

3. Success

What am I most satisfied with, and what did I do that helped?

_____
_____
_____
_____

4. Challenge

What remained difficult? How did I respond?

_____
_____
_____
_____

5. Learning

What did I learn about myself, my way of working or my development?

_____
_____
_____
_____

6. AI support

Which AI question, suggestion or conversation helped me most? Was there anything I rejected or disagreed with?

_____
_____
_____
_____

Appendix E - End-of-cycle reflection and planning (continued)

E2. Looking ahead

7. What I want to continue

Which habit, approach or strength should I keep using?

_____
_____
_____
_____

8. What I want to change

What will I do differently in the next period?

_____
_____
_____
_____

9. Career development

Did this period teach me anything about the kind of study or work that may suit me? What would I like to explore next?

_____
_____
_____
_____

10. Support

What help, feedback or opportunity do I need from my coach, teacher or workplace?

_____
_____
_____
_____

New goals

Goal for the next period	First action	How I will recognise progress

Points for the review meeting

One success I want to discuss: _____
One challenge I want to discuss: _____
One question I want to ask: _____

Appendix F - Teacher/mentor quick-reference card

This page can be used as a checklist during the first cycles.

Moment	Do	Avoid
Start	Use AI together. Ask for examples. Let the student choose the goals.	Turning the AI answer directly into the student's plan.
Reflection	Ask what the student noticed and what they will try next.	Checking every transcript or treating reflection as compliance.
Review	Discuss examples, challenge conclusions and agree on new goals.	Letting the written AI-supported reflection replace the conversation.
Career guidance	Connect questions to real experiences and information sources.	Asking AI to decide which career "fits" the student.
Responsible use	Check facts where needed and keep sensitive issues with humans.	Using AI output as professional judgement or diagnosis.

Useful coach questions

What happened in that situation?
Can you give me an example?
What did you do yourself?
What did AI add that you had not considered?
Did you disagree with anything AI suggested?
What did you decide to do with the advice?
How does this connect to your goal?
What will you try next?

Signs that AI is doing too much

The student cannot explain the reflection in their own words.
The language is polished but there are no concrete examples.
The student refers to AI as the reason for a choice rather than explaining their own reasoning.
Goals are generic and could apply to anyone.
The student accepts factual or career information without checking it.

Appendix G - Serbian pilot example

One partner tested the approach with students in a vocational transport programme. The pilot used ChatGPT as both a study-coaching aid and a career exploration tool. Students worked with a sequence of goal setting, short reflection, a mid-term review and an end-of-period reflection.

What was useful in the pilot

The practical strength of the Serbian approach was its regular rhythm. Students were not asked to use AI only once. They returned to their goals, looked at successes and obstacles and formulated next steps. The pilot also made the student's role explicit: AI should not complete assignments or provide answers without the student's own thinking.

Pilot element	How it is used in this toolkit
Pre-block questions	Adapted into Appendix B: Start and goal-setting worksheet.
Two-week reflection	Adapted into Appendix C: Short reflection log; timing is flexible.
Mid-term review	Retained as the optional check-in in Appendix D.
End-of-block report	Shortened and adapted into Appendix E.
Study coach / career advisor distinction	Integrated throughout the cycle, with a separate career guidance section.
Required AI transcript	Not retained; students share relevant insights rather than full conversations.

What the pilot suggested

In the partner evaluation, 18 students were surveyed; 11 had participated actively in the training activities. Most respondents reported a positive view of AI use in education. Students and teachers also reported benefits related to study organisation, digital confidence, reflection and career exploration. These findings are useful as implementation experience, but the small local sample does not provide evidence of effectiveness across other schools or student groups.

The partner also identified areas for further development: a stronger connection with real workplace practice, wider examples of AI use and continued face-to-face mentoring. The last point is particularly consistent with the AI-GUIDE approach: AI can support guidance, but meaningful reflection and decision-making remain part of the relationship between student and coach.

Use the pilot as an example, not a template Programmes can adapt the timing, forms and examples to their own context. The core cycle and the division of responsibility should remain recognisable.