

GENERATIVE AI RESHAPES HOW CIVICA STUDENTS SEARCH, TRUST AND USE INFORMATION

Between efficiency and fragility



Methodology : This infographic is based on the 1st CIVICA Student Information Literacy Barometer, an online survey conducted between November and December 2025 among 2,294 students across 10 CIVICA universities.

STUDENTS OPERATE UNDER CONSTANT TIME PRESSURE

74%

say their workload prevents deep and critical reading

65%

mostly read summaries rather than full books or papers

65%

prefer digital over print when given the choice



Time constraints structurally reshape learning behaviours, privileging speed over depth.

WHERE STUDENTS SEARCH

General-purpose tools dominate entry points

Use does not equal academic trust



Internet search engines

88%

used

most useful

56%



Generative AI

61%

Master 63%
PhD 35%

35%

Bachelor 38%



Teacher reading lists

59%

36%



Library search systems/online catalogues

38%

PhD 72%

22%

PhD 45%

General-purpose digital tools dominate entry points, while academic gateways strengthen only at higher levels of study.

Perceived usefulness favours convenience, revealing a gap between academic trust and everyday practice.

WIDESPREAD AI ADOPTION, STRONG RISK AWARENESS

AI is widely integrated into academic work

64%

turn to AI when they are stuck

50%

use AI frequently or all the time

But risks are clearly identified

98%

perceive at least one AI-related risk

TOP RISKS

Inaccurate information 70%

Unintentional plagiarism 65%

Uniformity of ideas 61%



Students are aware of AI's risks: the challenge is guidance, not prohibition.

GENERATIVE AI – USE VS RELIABILITY

Trusted for productivity, not for validation



Main academic uses

73%

Understanding a complex text or concept

PhD 35%

72%

Summarising content

61%

Suggesting additional ideas

Bachelor 67%
Master 57%

52%

Suggesting sources

Bachelor 48%
Master 58%

35%

Generating relevant references

Bachelor 40%
Master 30%



Perceived as reliable for

86%

Translation

71%

Summarising

36%

Generating relevant references

32%

Suggesting sources

Bachelor 38%
Master 26%

Students rely on AI for cognitive support and productivity, but trust drops sharply when academic sourcing and referencing are at stake.

KNOWING QUALITY IS NOT THE SAME AS CHECKING IT



High trust in academic sources

94%

trust university databases

79%

trust government/institutional websites

Yet: 78% believe some digital content can be as reliable as academic sources



And only:

31%

verify reliability all the time

Knowing quality criteria does not automatically translate into systematic verification practices.

INFORMATION LITERACY SNAPSHOT

Overall literacy is solid but uneven

Information Literacy Index (0-100)*

14%

Very high >90

37%

High 76-90

45%

Mid 50-75

3%

Low <50

Only: 24%

feel very comfortable evaluating information reliability

27%

feel very comfortable citing sources correctly

* Composite score summarising students' self-reported ability to find, evaluate and use academic information, based on 7 skill items.

Information literacy is solid overall, but unevenly distributed, with significant gaps between Bachelor and PhD students.

WHAT LIBRARIES SHOULD DO

Libraries are trusted and expected to evolve

75%

value study space as most useful service

25%

remain outside the library ecosystem

60%

see library staff and resources as true learning partners

TOP PRIORITIES

Improve physical access 53%

Facilitate access to reliable academic content 45%

Want training on responsible AI use 52%

Libraries are trusted infrastructures, but must reposition from study spaces to active academic navigators in the AI era.

