

# USING GENERATIVE AI: INFORMATION FOR UOP STAFF

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<https://policies.docstore.port.ac.uk/policy-293.pdf>

# Summary

## What is this document about?

This document provides information for university staff to support the adoption of generative AI into day-to-day working practice, including:

- An explanation of what generative AI is including environmental and EDI considerations
- How to use generative AI appropriately and responsibly
- Sources of further information and support

## Who is this for?

All University of Portsmouth Staff.

## How does the University check this is followed?

This is information for guidance only. It is the responsibility of each member of staff to apply the guidance appropriately and feedback will be taken into consideration in its review.

## Who can you contact if you have any queries about this document?

Library and Information Services, via Self Service, for the attention of Jenna Fuller.

## Executive summary

Generative AI has the potential to significantly improve how staff at the University of Portsmouth work, study, and conduct research. This guidance introduces the basic concept of generative AI and explains how staff can use it to help reduce repetitive tasks, improve efficiency, and support creativity. It emphasises the importance of using AI responsibly; being transparent, checking facts, protecting data, and avoiding its use in critical decisions. The document also highlights the need to consider equity, diversity, and inclusion when using AI, ensuring accessibility and fairness for all staff and students. Staff are encouraged to explore the university central AI tool, Copilot Chat, and to seek further support and training if needed.

# Introduction

Generative AI has the potential to transform how we study, research and work. In order to harness its full potential, we must understand what it is, how to use it effectively and responsibly, while also being mindful of its limitations. This document provides a source of initial information for university staff to support adoption of generative AI into day-to-day working practice. More detailed guidance or policy is planned, to further support staff in responsible use, along with the opportunity for further internal training. The University has already developed guidance for the use of generative AI in teaching, assessment and feedback which can be found in the Document Warehouse.

## What is Generative AI?

**Generative AI\*** is a type of artificial intelligence (AI) that can create new content such as text, images and videos based on a specific question asked or command given in natural language. Unlike traditional AI, which mainly recognises patterns and makes decisions, generative AI produces content, making it a fantastic tool for innovation and creativity. Here are some examples how AI can support more adaptable ways of working that are less manual and time consuming:

- Reducing meeting times by analysing schedules and proposing alternatives that allow more time for high-priority tasks.
- Managing email overload by filtering and prioritising important messages, enabling time to be spent on the work that really adds value.
- Drafting and organising content, saving time in the process of writing, editing and refining documents.
- Improving search results, through faster and more accurate retrieval of information for staff & students.
- Helping to reduce repetitive tasks, providing the opportunity for individuals to dedicate more time to meaningful work and developing new skills.

Essentially, AI acts as a helpful assistant, taking care of the manual and mundane, so individuals can focus on the bigger picture.

*\*Examples of generative AI tools include Microsoft 365 Copilot, ChatGPT, Google Gemini & DALL-E.*

## The Secret to Using AI Well: The Prompt

The clearer and more specific the question (or prompt) provided to an AI tool, the more detailed and relevant the response it will provide. This is also referred to as 'prompt engineering'. Writing prompts well is a skill that can be learned. Here are some simple prompt guidance resources that will help:

[Prompts overview | Microsoft Learn](#)

[Create effective prompts for generative AI training tools](#)

# Environmental Sustainability of AI

AI has the potential to significantly impact sustainability efforts. It can optimise resource use, reduce waste and enhance energy efficiency. For example, AI can help monitor environmental changes, predict natural disasters and improve the efficiency of renewable energy sources. However, it's important to consider the environmental footprint of AI itself, such as the energy consumption of data centres and the need for sustainable practices in AI development and deployment. UoP is committed to sustainable practices and will select technology and companies with responsible environmental policies and will establish clear guidelines and training relating to standards and practices in the use of AI, to ensure transparency, fairness, and accountability.

## Using Generative AI Responsibly

While generative AI offers powerful capabilities, it is important to understand its [limitations](#) and use responsible methods to avoid bias, misinformation, and privacy issues. Some ways to achieve this include:

- ✓ **Be transparent:** maintain professional integrity by disclosing when content is AI-generated.
- ✓ **Check facts:** even with the best prompt, AI can make mistakes; verify AI-generated content and linked sources, ensuring it reflects reality and avoids '[hallucination](#)'.
- ✓ **Evaluate language and tone:** ensure responses are free from language or assumption that could marginalise any group and use individual judgement to review appropriateness for work.
- ✓ **Maintain data privacy:** do not upload personally identifiable information or sensitive data (eg: financial or confidential) into generative AI tools.
- ✓ **Keep data secure:** when using generative AI tools for work, ensure that university business information and data are not placed into the public domain. For example, [Copilot](#) is a tool that will not allow data to move outside of UoP infrastructure.
- ✓ **Avoid AI for critical decision-making:** AI should not be used for making decisions that significantly impact people, such as recruitment, promotion, or disciplinary action.
- ✓ **Maintain IP oversight:** ensure human oversight and refinement of AI produced content to track and verify source provenance and meet copyright requirements
- ✓ **Use appropriately:** Use generative AI for tasks where it adds value and is truly needed. For simpler queries, a search engine will suffice.

Remember you are always in control, you decide what to use, what modifications to make and what to discard.

# EDI Considerations

When integrating generative AI into teaching, assessment, and feedback practices, it is essential to uphold our commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. This involves recognising and embedding inclusive practices throughout the delivery of AI-informed activities. AI-generated material including assessments, should use plain language, be inclusive and accommodate the needs of staff and students with disabilities, ethnically diverse and/or who are neurodivergent, applying inclusive design and delivery principles and encouraging critical engagement with AI-generated outputs. This will reduce the risk of reinforcing bias or stereotypes, recognising and respecting the cultural diversity, linguistic, and educational backgrounds of our community in both AI-generated content and its application. We must ensure staff and students can access generative AI tools and receive appropriate guidance, regardless of background or digital literacy, considering reasonable adjustment where generative AI may create barriers to participation or achievement.

## Explore AI Today

AI is here to help. Used well, it saves time, cuts down on mundane work, and allows staff to focus on what really matters. The key is getting used to using it and learning how to use it most effectively and ethically. This step-by-step journey starts with experimentation, so staff are encouraged to try it out using our secure, Microsoft AI tool, [Copilot](#).

## Further Support

For details on training or any questions about using Copilot or generative AI, please visit this [Copilot Chat article](#) or get in touch with the [Digital Skills](#) team.

