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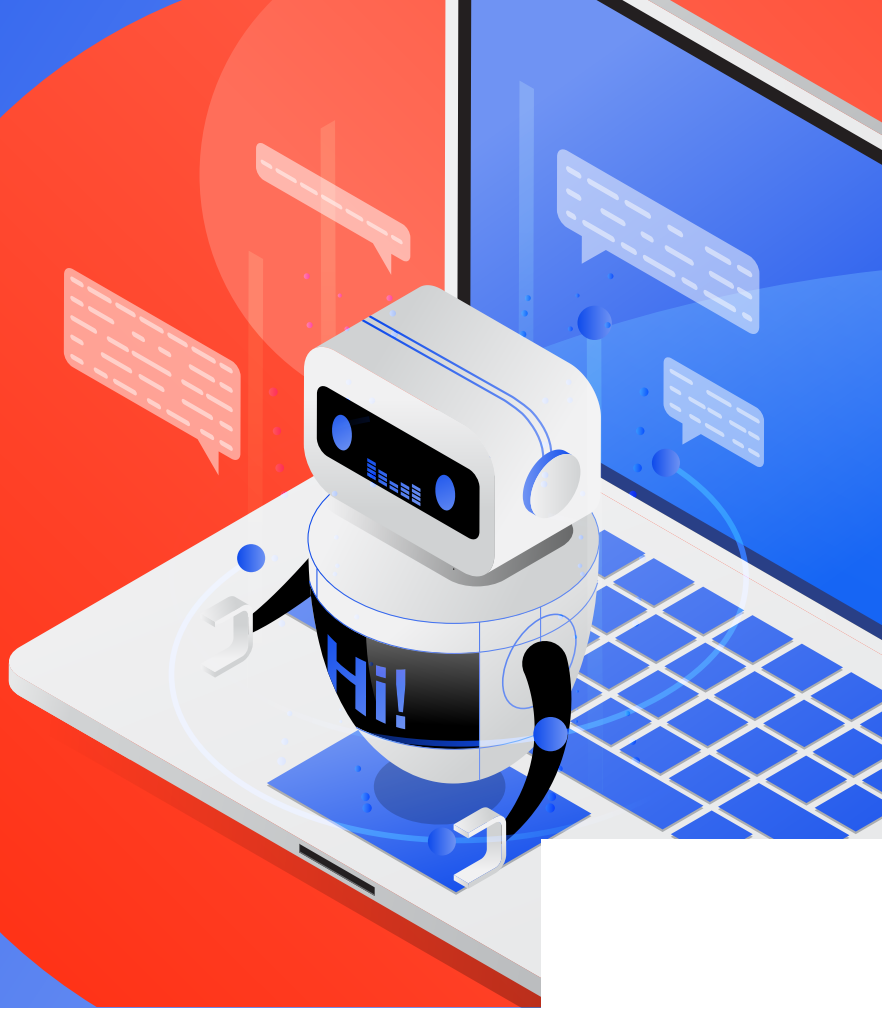
The UTS College approach to GenerativeAI

A guide for teachers



New GenerativeAI (GenAI) tools and functionality are being developed faster than we can keep up with. Its impact is far reaching in the education sector generally, and on how students are using or misusing GenAI for their studies, assignments and exams.

From August to October 2024, 8028 students from four Australian universities (including UTS) participated in the AI in Higher Education (AIinHE.org) survey. The survey uncovered some interesting, though not surprising, insights, including:

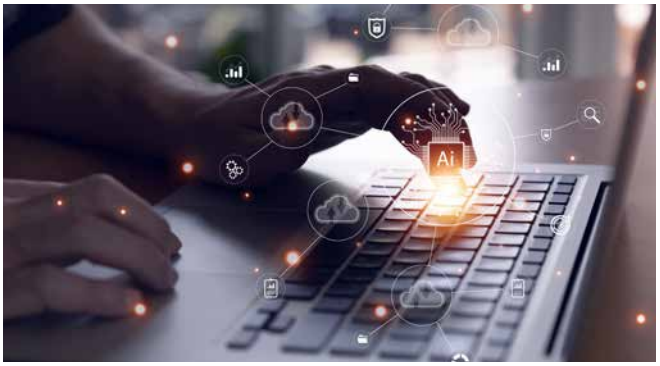
- how and why students use GenAI.
- how they feel about its use.
- whether they believe they are given enough guidance from their education provider on its use in their studies – and only 32 percent believe they do.

For full survey results, see the online summary

UTS College also surveyed 466 students in 2024 on their use of GenAI, with similar results:

- more than 50 per cent of students regularly used GenAI for checking ideas, getting vocabulary, and editing written work.
- a smaller number of students also reported using GenAI to translate their written work, generate code, generate images and generate whole or partial texts for assessment submission.

UTS College responded to these findings by developing and clearly communicating a new approach to appropriate GenAI use for students.



What is GenAI and how does it differ from other AI?

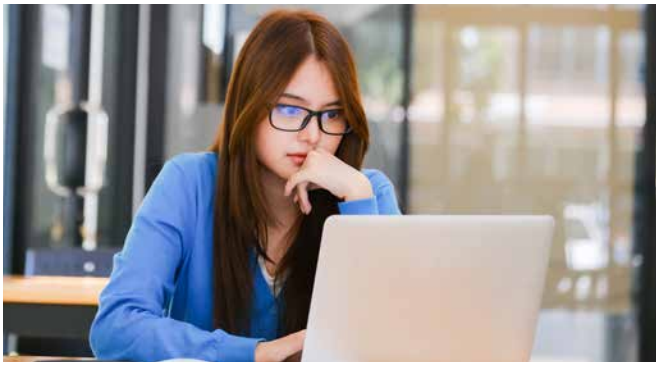
Generative AI (GenAI) is a form of Artificial Intelligence (AI) that has been 'fed' large databases of information and trained to find patterns in that information to recreate human-like text, speech, images, music, code and more. It does this by predicting 'what comes next' using patterns, context, and the prompts that we give it. Compared to other AI, GenAI can be said to be 'creative' because it produces novel output, whereas traditional AI only identifies patterns.

How UTS College approaches GenAI use in teaching and learning

Rather than framing GenAI use only in terms of misconduct or misuse, UTS College has taken a collaborative approach with students, to inform and educate them on the effective and ineffective use of GenAI for study, assignments and exam preparation. This approach:

- educates students to think critically about GenAI.
- models where and how it can be applied.
- informs about where its application is detrimental to learning and skills development.

This approach provides guidance and clarity to students and enhances their understanding.



What is effective GenAI use?

Students are taught that effective GenAI use can build knowledge and enhance retention (as a study aid). Effective GenAI use may include:

- exploring more about topics being studied
- simplifying complex concepts
- generating and checking ideas
- conducting research*
- creating quizzes to check knowledge
- unpacking assignment questions and briefs
- creating study and revision plans
- creating word lists and mind maps to assist memory
- organising study notes
- recommending essay structure.

*Students are informed that GenAI may not be a credible research source.

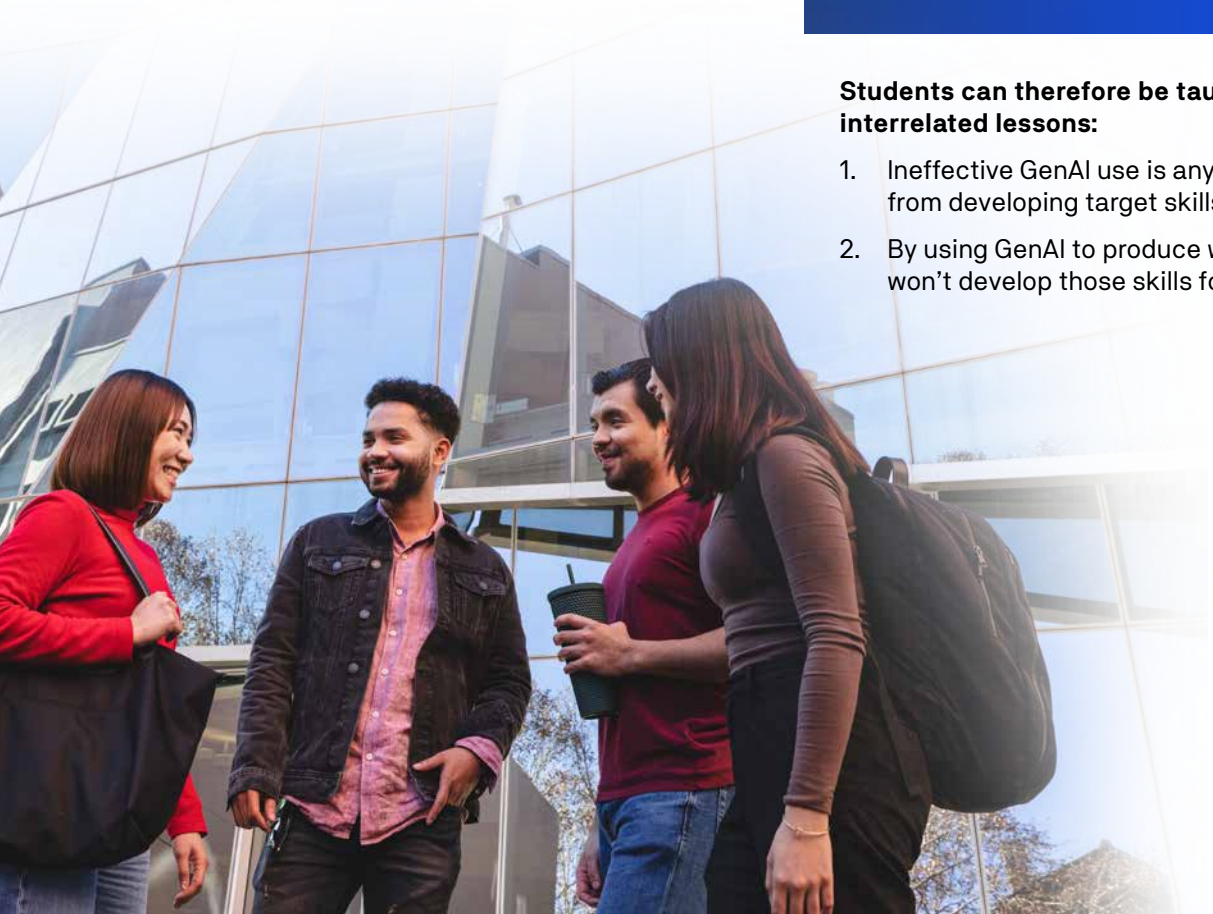
What is ineffective GenAI use?

Guidance on ineffective usage is based on this premise: Knowing how to do something is not the same as being able to do it.

Students are shown the link between types of GenAI use, and the specific skills each type of use prevents them from developing. This is outlined in the following table and communicated to UTS College students:

The skills you miss out on developing when you use GenAI to produce work:

If you	You will not develop the skills of
Generate text	Academic writing, English language and critical thinking
Generate images	Software design, design thinking, evaluative thinking
Generate code	Coding software, active coding, problem solving
Summarise text	Advanced reading, synthesising texts, analytical thinking
Translate text	Academic writing, English language, evaluative thinking



Students can therefore be taught two valuable, interrelated lessons:

1. Ineffective GenAI use is any use that inhibits them from developing target skills.
2. By using GenAI to produce work for them, students won't develop those skills for themselves.

How to communicate responsible GenAI use to students

We know students can and will use GenAI (UTS College provides MS CoPilot), and we know that GenAI can be used in ways that may not help students learn what we want them to learn. Therefore, it is the educators' responsibility to ***communicate, model and monitor*** appropriate and effective GenAI use.

Responsible GenAI use

Responsible use includes:

- ensuring students understand ineffective use and avoid academic misconduct.
- ensuring students know what the ethical issues of GenAI use are (e.g. copyright, privacy, bias, equity, unreliability).

Our approach makes it clear what GenAI-related academic misconduct is and helps students build awareness of ethical issues in GenAI use by applying the following framework considerations to all assessment tasks.

A flexible framework for GenAI usage in assessments

Using the following framework, teachers can make it clear to students:

- when and how GenAI could or should not be used for a task.
- when its use constitutes academic misconduct.
- how to acknowledge its use when used in an approved way.
- the educational (skills development) reasons for why it should not be used for a particular task.
- its limitations and how it impacts learning.

What	Clear expectations	Transparency	Educational reasons 1	Educational reason 2
How	• Define GenAI - related Academic misconduct. • Outline effective usage (knowledge building and retention).	• Request acknowledgement of any GenAI use in assessments. • Provide an easy method for students to do this, e.g via a dedicated section on assignment cover sheets or via a comments box.	• List the skills students will not develop if they use GenAI to produce the submission for them.	• Give specific examples of how GenAI performed when asked to produce the task response OR • Give general examples of GenAI limitations.
Why	• Provides clarity for both students and educators.	• Helps elevate GenAI to a non-cheating tool. • Helps students plan and reflect on use.	• Helps students realise why they should not use it for certain tasks and how doing so would impact their learning.	• Helps model evaluation, test susceptibility of assessment item and highlight its limitations.

The framework caters for discipline (and assessment item) differences while maintaining consistency of approach.

Helping your students understand the impact of GenAI use

By educating students on how and why GenAI use may either benefit or disadvantage them, students can begin to make decisions that enhance their learning based on a better understanding of the pros and cons of using GenAI. To get the most out of GenAI, students can use it as a tool for learning enhancement rather than a substitute for skill development and genuine engagement with their studies.

UTS College 10 key lessons

The ten points below are key lessons that can be applied in the classroom and to students:

1. Ask your students about their current uses and perceptions of GenAI.
2. Answer the key questions you have about using GenAI in education.
3. Move away from framing GenAI only in terms of academic misconduct.
4. Consider GenAI as helpful in the learning process and research available GenAI tools.
5. Develop a framework for communicating effective usage to students. The UTS College framework may work for you.
6. Provide clear examples of ways students **can use** GenAI effectively.
7. Provide clear educational reasons why **students should not** use GenAI for certain tasks or to produce work for them.
8. Reinforce your approach using in-class and self-paced activities.
9. Show students how to evaluate what GenAI produces (crucial for effective use), factoring in ethical considerations.
10. Give students an opportunity to plan how they might use GenAI in assessment-related work and a chance to reflect on that usage or non-usage.

Outcomes of implementing an educational approach to GenAI use

UTS College has found that by implementing the above approach, it provides:

- clarity for students early in their learning (during orientation workshops).
- clarity for teachers and educators.
- an easier way to identify misconduct if it is occurring.
- more open discussions about effective GenAI use.
- more consistency on GenAI use across subjects and assessments.
- a way to broach the topic that is constructive and positive (not just rules or misconduct).

What's next?

At UTS College, we're taking further steps to ensure students get the most out of their learning experience, including research on students' application of the approach, installing AI tutors to aid learning, and researching GenAI tools for teachers. Stay tuned for more to come on GenAI from UTS College!

To find out more about UTS College or to arrange a meeting, email:
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