



5 things students need to know before using GenAI

1. GenAI output is not your own work

While AI responds to your prompt and provides an output – the text it generates is not your own. You did not research or investigate the topic or write an outline or paragraphs – you asked a machine to do it for you. This does not show your depth of knowledge on the topic or demonstrate your competencies or skills.

Any work you submit must be your own, it must be original, and you must reference or cite any work that is not yours. If you use GenAI to assist you – you should reference or cite its use otherwise this could be considered plagiarism (this is determined by your instructor’s expectations around the use of GenAI).

2. AI is not reliable

To put it simply, AI makes things up. If it can’t find an answer or is asked to complete a task that it doesn’t understand, it will bluff. These are often referred to as “hallucinations”. Be aware that GenAI will add references or citations or quote research that looks legitimate, but it often mixes things up and is incorrect. As a user of these tools, you are responsible for checking the validity of the content and making sure the content you submit is accurate and real.

3. Machines don’t always do things better than people

AI is fast. It can scan, search, and produce content at incredible speeds. It’s also great at grammar and sentence structure - but that’s it.

There’s more to intelligence than speed and knowing how to string a sentence together. AI lacks consciousness. Therefore, it has zero understanding of any of the material it creates - it cannot readily evaluate, make connections, empathize, or think critically. It does not function like or add real human element.

4. AI has no voice

AI writing is easily spotted because it all sounds the same. It’s sterile and, well, robotic. Every human being has their writing voice, which means we each have a distinct personality and style that comes through when we write.

Our writing shares with the reader our perspectives, our opinions, and our experiences relevant to important subjects. Machines cannot replicate human inflection instead they replace it with generic content that lacks personality or nuance.

5. AI can be used responsibly

There are countless tasks that AI can do to make life easier. This technology is also embedded in parts of our daily lives, and its uses will continue to grow. However, the use of such tools must be done ethically and responsibly. GenAI tools should be used transparently, particularly due to privacy issues as it is not well known what these platforms do with the information they are fed. There are also copyright and intellectual property concerns – some of which will be tackled before the courts which will be groundbreaking and precedent setting.

Therefore, as a user, you are responsible for using these tools ethically and not in instances where it has been forbidden. It is up to you to ensure that you are not breaking any rules.

Overall, remember that GenAI can never replicate the extraordinary complexity of the human voice, mind, or spirit.

Source: This content borrows and builds on the work of Victoria Fedden, June 21, 2023 [Artificial Intelligence: 7 Things College Students Need to Know Before Using AI \(grownandflown.com\)](https://grownandflown.com)

