



### IMPORTANT!

Before using generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) in any of your class work or assignments, ask your professor if they permit AI to be used in their course and to what extent.

## What is generative artificial intelligence?

You probably use artificial intelligence (AI) every day but may not realize it! When you unlock your phone with facial recognition or ask Siri or Alexa to search for something or start a timer, that is AI. So are the spelling and grammar editors that help with your writing in your word processing application and the chatbot you interact with when looking for information from a website.

Generative AI (GenAI), which includes tools such as ChatGPT, BingChat, or GrammarlyGo, is a branch of AI that broadly defines computer applications that are capable of generating text, images or other types of content from written or verbal prompts. It is programmed (or trained) to learn patterns and context from the data it retrieves in order to perform better and generate more specific responses each time it is used.

## Can I use GenAI in my courses to complete assignments?

The use of GenAI in your course will be determined by your professor and is highly dependent on the subject area, the course learning outcomes, and required assessments. Some professors may allow you to use GenAI for some assignments or specific tasks, and others may not permit it at all.

If you are unsure if you are allowed to use GenAI for an assignment or activity, ask your professor because using it when you are not permitted is a breach of academic integrity and could result in repercussions!

To learn more about academic integrity at Durham College, read the [Academic Integrity policy and procedure](#).

## Why do I need my professor's permission to use GenAI in my courses?

You are responsible for completing your studies in an open, honest, and responsible manner. This means completing and submitting your own work, using your own words, and citing sources appropriately. Because GenAI creates seemingly original content compiled from content already on the internet, using it without permission or in an inappropriate way would not represent your own work because the GenAI created it for you. This also applies to properly citing the GenAI you used. If you do not cite it, you are falsely accepting credit for work you did not create or complete.

To find out how to properly cite GenAI in your work, visit the [Durham College Library's citation guides](#) or the Academic Success Toolkit for quick reference guides for APA and MLA citation formats.

## Is using GenAI when I'm not supposed to considered cheating?

Yes, using GenAI if your professor has not *explicitly said that you can*, or if you use it when they said you were not allowed to, is considered to be a breach of academic integrity. This can result in some pretty serious consequences! Always be sure to ask your professor if you can use GenAI before you use it.

## Can I trust everything that GenAI tells me?

It's very important to have a critical and evaluative approach to text that is generated by GenAI. It may demonstrate biases, present inaccurate information, make up responses (called "hallucinating") and sometimes even invent resources such as journal articles and authors. You are responsible for its accuracy when you submit your work, so always take the time to check the facts. Consider, is what the GenAI produced accurate and unbiased? Are the sources valid and reliable? Developing critical digital literacy is an important part of using GenAI appropriately and ethically.

## What should I consider when using GenAI?

First, always ensure you have your professor’s permission to use GenAI for your intended purpose and that you know how to cite your use GenAI. Following the ORBIT framework (adapted from Hervieux & Wheatley, 2020) will help you to ensure you are using an appropriate tool and receiving reliable results:

<b>O</b>	<b>Objective</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is your purpose for using the GenAI tool?</li> <li>• What role are you hoping it will fulfill in your academic work?</li> <li>• How are you going to use it?</li> </ul>
<b>R</b>	<b>Reliability</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What sources is the GenAI tool drawing from?</li> <li>• Are they known to be vetted and reliable?</li> <li>• Is the content produced accurate?</li> <li>• Is the information complete or does it appear to be selective?</li> </ul>
<b>B</b>	<b>Bias</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What could produce bias in this GenAI tool?</li> <li>• How will you check to determine if the information presented, the output, contains bias?</li> <li>• Are there any ethical considerations to be mindful of when using this tool?</li> </ul>
<b>I</b>	<b>Information</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who will have access to the information you put into the GenAI tool?</li> <li>• How is your personal information managed in this tool?</li> <li>• Does it have a secure login process, or open source?</li> <li>• Where is the information you’ve input stored or used?</li> </ul>
<b>T</b>	<b>Type</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What type of GenAI are you looking for (e.g., text, image, sound, etc.)?</li> <li>• Does this tool meet your needs for this work (e.g., draft text, image generation, information analysis, etc.)?</li> </ul>

## What are Some Ideas for Using GenAI Ethically?

It is important to be sure that you are permitted to use GenAI for any academic work, so ask your professor about their parameters for using it. Some ways you may consider using it include:

- Breakdown concepts into steps or smaller parts
- Generate an explanation or obtain clarification to support understanding
- Draft an email template
- Develop sample test questions for self-quizzing
- Brainstorm assignment topics
- Obtain feedback on your writing
- Request prompts to start writing from

- Check your work for grammar, spelling and proper formatting
- Generate incorrect information to practice fact checking

## What Are the Do's and Don'ts of Using GenAI?

### Do's

- Follow your professor's instructions for using a GenAI tool
- Consider using generative AI to brainstorm ideas or topics
- Check the output for accuracy and bias
- Consider your personal data privacy and security
- Use multiple sources to validate and supplement the output produced by the GenAI tool
- Cite your GenAI source appropriately (please see the Academic Success Toolkit for Quick Reference guides for APA and MLA citation for GenAI).
- Use GenAI to translate information into a language or degree of complexity you can easily understand

### Don'ts

- Do NOT use GenAI if your professor has indicated that you are not permitted to
- Do NOT use GenAI to complete your assignments or write your papers for you
- Do NOT input any personal details, confidential information, or your own work into a GenAI tool
- Do NOT post assignments into a GenAI tool

## How Do I Get GenAI to Produce Exactly What I Want it To?

It's all about the prompt that you put in. Prompt writing, referred to as prompt generation, is actually more difficult than it looks! The following prompt formula is an effective way to generate high-quality outputs:

**[Context] + [Specific Information] + [Intent/Goal] + [Response Format (if needed)]**

Visit the Academic Success Toolkit for a Quick Reference Guide to Writing GenAI Prompts and some sample prompts that use this formula.

## What are Some Ways I Can Use GenAI in my Life Outside of School?

There are lots of really helpful ways that GenAI can be used outside of school. Think of it as your own personal assistant! Here are some ideas:

- Make a weekly or study schedule
- Make a meal plan and related grocery list
- Develop a weekly or monthly budget
- Write a birthday greeting or social media post
- Design a customized workout plan
- Develop floorplans for decorating your living spaces

\*Please note that these are interim guidelines and are subject to change at any time.

Photo by [Rodion Kutsaiev](#) on [Unsplash](#)