MAYNOOTH UNIVERSITY
CENTRE FOR TEACHING & LEARNING
GEN AI SERIES 2024
KEY MESSAGES

Context

In March and April 2024, the Centre for Teaching and Learning ran a series of collaborative professional learning sessions on Generative AI (GenAI) applications from the perspective of teaching, learning and assessment. The sessions were:

• Exploring Pedagogical Possibilities with GenAI
• GenAI – Current Status and Developments
• Sharing practice Part 1: Open Mic! How I use GenAI in teaching, learning and assessment
• Sharing practice Part 2: Presentations from Strand 1 GenAI T&L Fellows 2023-24
• GenAI, Writing and Assessment

Some key messages from across the sessions are recorded here.

Gen AI Current Trends

- GenAI is changing rapidly; daily there are new applications and greater integration of AI across a range of platforms.
- Updates on GenAI developments can be monitored across the internet and social media for example at All Trends AI.
- GenAI and GenAI related topics, including recognising, understanding and using GenAI, will likely be incorporated into education to support students and workers.
- GenAI applications are not immune to biases and errors.
- As with traditional sources, GenAI material will need to be critically considered and evaluative judgement will be essential.

Pedagogical Considerations

- The rapid rate of development brings with it pedagogical opportunities and challenges.
- How we interact with GenAI is changing in teaching, learning and assessment because of how GenAI applications can process our requests, for instance, text prompts, using an image, using a photograph.
- GenAI may offer efficiencies to experienced educators (who already have both foundational knowledge and sophisticated understanding of their discipline) including around generating first drafts of material, for instance, sample learning outcomes, or the ability to modify and enhance material.
- Educators can use GenAI to improve the accessibility of learning materials for students, for example by using applications to rework text to make it more accessible or to generate images to accompany text.
- Educators need to address GenAI with their students and establish boundaries regarding classwork.
- As GenAI becomes more advanced, educators will need to design assessments that require students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills in non-traditional ways including through more authentic assessment. This may involve a move towards more meaningful tasks and assignments that not only consider what students know and can do, but also who they are.
- The affective domain associated with GenAI has received less attention than other elements but is nonetheless important. For instance, how is the lecturer-student relationship impacted where feedback is generated by an application rather than by the teacher?

Gen AI and Academic Integrity

- The rapid changes in GenAI have implications for academic integrity policies and supporting students in their ethical fulfilment of assessments.
- Students may be familiar with many more GenAI applications than educators and will need guidance in terms of understanding what is and what is not acceptable.
- Detection of the use of GenAI applications continues to be unreliable and students have legitimate concerns around missteps and misunderstandings regarding the use of GenAI applications.

- Academic integrity is a term students may first encounter in the university, and the commitment to values such as honesty, trust, fairness and responsibility as part of the fulfilment of their university work, needs to be explained to students both conceptually and regarding enactment.
- When students are confident about the assignment and clear about the expectations, they are motivated to fulfil the assignment requirements and where appropriate to use GenAI in an ethical and informed manner.
- Ongoing conversations with students and a partnership approach between staff and students is essential regarding the maintenance of academic integrity and avoiding academic misconduct regarding GenAI and more broadly.

How to cite this document: Centre for Teaching and Learning (2024).
'Key Messages from the Maynooth University GenAI Series 2024',
Maynooth: Centre for Teaching and Learning,
Maynooth University.

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