



Generative AI and Assessment toolkit v2

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Generative AI and Assessment

Using the toolkit v2

This toolkit aims to provide some practical strategies for creating or adapting your assessment strategies. There is no such thing as an 'AI-proof' assessment and the approaches do not attempt to prevent AI use. Instead, task design requires students to demonstrate thinking that AI cannot easily, whilst simultaneously encouraging students to develop the skills they need to operate in an AI world. Assessment design should assume students have access to powerful GenAI tools. The focus shifts from prevention and detection to designing tasks that prioritise reasoning, judgement, process and critical AI literacy.

GenAI performs well at:

- Explaining core concepts clearly
- Summarising established arguments
- Rephrasing and clarifying ideas
- Producing fluent, plausible but generic responses

When reviewing an assessment, ask: What are we actually assessing – knowledge recall, reasoning, judgement or writing fluency? Does the task require evidence selection and justification? Does it make students' thinking visible?

How to use this toolkit

In the initial release of this toolkit in 2024, the following strategies were considered:

- Focus on module-specific content
- Encourage reflection
- Develop critical thinking skills
- Foster human skills
- Provide authentic assessment opportunities

As advances in AI continue at pace, the above strategies are no longer sufficient. It is now wise to use a combination of strategies and also consider:

- Design for process, not product
- Assess critical AI literacy

Now, review your assessments:

For each strategy:

- Identify where opportunities already exist
- Consider where further strengthening is possible
- Add ideas under 'Further design considerations'

As you create or evaluate your assessments, use the areas below, with or without completing the checklists, to align the strategies with your module content. Each checklist offers specific ideas, but depending on your module's context, there may be additional strategies available for integration. You can add those in the 'Further design considerations' sections of each checklist.

For each strategy checklist, you can either indicate the opportunities you are currently using or make notes on potential ideas to enhance the robustness of your assessments in light of GenAI.

For the authentic assessment checklist, note down what opportunities are currently offered or possible according to each factor on the list. This will help you to spot if there are any areas where you could consider integrating authentic assessment or adapting your approach.

Practical strategies

Design for process, not product

GenAI is highly effective at producing polished final products. It is less effective at demonstrating the reasoning and decision-making processes behind those products. When assessment focuses only on the final output, it becomes difficult to distinguish between surface fluency and genuine understanding. Shifting the focus to process strengthens academic integrity and supports deeper learning.

When designing or adapting assessment, consider incorporating one or more of the following:

Make reasoning explicit

- Ask students to justify assumptions, definitions and interpretive choices.
- Ask for explanation of why one interpretation was chosen over another.

- Include prompts such as: *Why this example? Why this source? Why this conceptual framing?*

Build in staged submissions

- Plan → draft paragraph → commentary
- Outline → feedback → revised section
- Checkpoint quiz or proposal before full submission

This allows tutors to see development over time and assess improvement as well as outcome.

Require evidence selection decisions

- Ask students to explain why a particular source, data extract or case study was selected.
- Ask for comparison between two possible sources and justification.

Incorporate reasoned judgement

- Ask students to evaluate strengths and limitations using explicit criteria.
- Ask for identification of what is simplified, contested or missing in their explanation.

Add short process commentaries

- Support development of critical judgement and disciplinary reasoning by asking for a brief reflective note explaining how the argument developed.

- Ask students to describe how feedback was used to refine their work.

Design for epistemic transparency

- Make the assessment criteria explicitly reward clarity of reasoning, not just fluency of writing.
- Align marking guidance with evaluation of judgement, coherence and evidence use.

Assess critical AI literacy explicitly

Students need to understand how AI systems generate outputs and how to evaluate them critically.

Assessment can explicitly evaluate students' ability to:

- Analyse AI-generated output
- Identify assumptions and omissions
- Recognise dominant or missing perspectives
- Evaluate credibility and fabricated references
- Understand that AI outputs are pattern-based, not understanding-based

Example structure

Part A: Analyse an AI-generated explanation

Part B: Cross-reference with module sources

Part C: Reflect on one limitation of the AI output

Focus on module-specific content

GenAI can generate fluent general explanations. It performs less well when required to engage deeply with specific module materials, recent examples, contextual data, or student-generated material. Assessment tasks that anchor students in disciplinary knowledge and module sources are more robust and more meaningful. GenAI can misinterpret data, leading to flawed arguments.

Design considerations:

- Create specific scenarios that require students to solve a problem.
- Require explicit use of named module sources or concepts.
- Ask students to interpret information using module frameworks.
- Use very recent or contemporary examples.
- Incorporate local, Global South or contextualised material.
- Use student-generated data where appropriate.
- Require cross-referencing between AI output (if used) and module materials.
- Apply EDIA principles to analysis where relevant.

Encourage reflection

Reflective elements make it more difficult for AI to generate meaningful, personalised responses and support deeper learning. Reflection should go beyond personal opinion and link to disciplinary learning. The more iterative

processes required by an assessment, the more challenging it is for GenAI to produce reliable outputs.

Design considerations:

- Create questions which include reflective elements, particularly ones which are relevant to students' own lived experiences or elements of the module content. Thresholds and weightings may need to be adapted to take account of the reflection element.
- Encourage students to evaluate their learning process. Showcasing skills learned as part of the journey is just as important as the final assessment. Peer evaluations and reflections on feedback given and received can form a part of the assessed work.
- Encourage opportunities for iterative assessments by asking students to submit work in progress/drafts for feedback. Rather than only marking the final assessment, tutors could review iterations at strategic points to assess improvements.

Develop critical thinking skills

GenAI can simulate critical language but often struggles with context-sensitive judgement, comparing plausible alternatives, and identifying conceptual limits. Assessment should reward disciplinary reasoning rather than surface critique. GenAI fares less well when asked, for example, to weigh up the different sides of a debate.

Design considerations:

- Ask students to explain the rationale for their thinking.
- Compare two plausible interpretations and defend one.
- Evaluate an argument's strengths and limits using explicit criteria (e.g. power, inequality, agency, evidence quality).
- Ask students to identify assumptions or missing perspectives.
- Encourage application of knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts.
- Make questions more complex, e.g. hypothetical questions that do not have one straightforward answer.
- Consider ideas such as asking students to: critique material (or GenAI output); engage with logical arguments to foster reasoning skills; create a concept map to demonstrate understanding of material.

Foster human skills

Although GenAI can generate ideas, it does not possess lived experience, moral responsibility or intrinsic motivation. It lacks the human qualities of emotional intelligence, empathy and common sense. GenAI can use data to make decisions but will struggle with ethical or moral judgements.

Design considerations:

- Create opportunities for students to demonstrate creative, original thinking.
- Factor in emotional intelligence and ask students to make value judgements about situations.
- Draw on students' own lived experience and judgement and allow them to contextualise ideas in a wider ethical sense.
- Include real-world interaction or application.
- Encourage values-based reasoning grounded in disciplinary frameworks.

Provide authentic assessment opportunities

Authentic assessment allows students to relate tasks to their identity, values and beliefs, and to grasp the relevance of the knowledge they are gaining, both personally and professionally. Here are some steps you can take to embed authentic assessment-style design in your modules:

- Identify students' goals
- Consider relevant professional or social environments
- Identify relevant tasks
- Integrate reflection
- Manage the risks

Consider dialogic assessment

Dialogic assessment encourages students to articulate and defend their thinking through interaction. This can make reasoning more visible and support deeper learning. Dialogue does not necessarily require formal oral exams. It can take place through tutorials, structured discussion, peer questioning, viva-style discussions or short recorded explanations. When students must clarify ideas, respond to questions or justify choices, it becomes easier to evaluate their understanding and disciplinary reasoning.

Design considerations:

- Encourage explanation through questioning, so ask students to explain how they arrived at a conclusion or interpretation.
- Include short oral or recorded explanations where students could briefly explain the reasoning behind their work.
- Design activities where students debate ideas or apply concepts to a scenario.
- Encourage peer questioning and critique so students can ask questions about each other's interpretations or reasoning.
- Ask students to justify choices so invite explanation of why particular sources, examples or frameworks were used.
- Incorporate dialogue around feedback so students can discuss how it informs revisions to their work.

The AI and Assessment checklists

Design for process, not product

- Makes reasoning steps visible
- Invites justification of assumptions and conceptual framing
- Encourages comparison of alternative interpretations
- Prompts explanation of evidence selection
- Includes evaluation of strengths and limitations
- Builds in staged submission (e.g. plan, draft, commentary)
- Includes brief process commentary on development

Assess Critical AI Literacy Explicitly

- Includes analysis of AI-generated output
- Encourages comparison between AI output and module sources
- Prompts identification of assumptions or omissions in AI responses
- Invites discussion of bias, perspective or representation
- Encourages evaluation of credibility and referencing
- Includes reflection on limitations of AI-generated knowledge
- Develops awareness of responsible and appropriate AI use

Focus on module-specific content

- Draws explicitly on named module concepts
- Anchors responses in module sources or materials
- Integrates recent or contemporary examples
- Incorporates local, contextual or Global South perspectives
- Uses student-generated data where appropriate
- Applies disciplinary or EDIA-informed frameworks
- Encourages contextualised application rather than generic explanation

Encourage reflection

- Includes reflective elements linked to module learning
- Encourages evaluation of the learning process
- Builds in reflection on feedback and revision
- Includes commentary on development between draft and final submission
- Invites identification of strengths and limitations
- Encourages thoughtful discussion of AI use where appropriate

Develop Critical Thinking Skills

- Invites explanation of rationale and reasoning
- Encourages comparison of plausible interpretations
- Prompts defence of a chosen interpretation
- Includes evaluation of strengths and limits using criteria
- Encourages identification of assumptions or missing perspectives

- Applies knowledge to new or unfamiliar contexts
- Moves beyond summary towards reasoned judgement

Foster Human Skills

- Encourages creative or original thinking
- Invites ethical or moral judgement with justification
- Incorporates empathy or contextual reasoning
- Connects learning to lived experience where appropriate
- Engages with real-world or professional contexts
- Encourages values-based reasoning grounded in the discipline

Provide Authentic Assessment Opportunities

Authentic assessment factor:

- Students' potential goals
- Relevant environments
- Relevant tasks
- Reflection opportunities
- Potential risks
- AI awareness and appropriate use
- Alignment with employability or professional practice

Consider Dialogic Assessment

- Requires students to explain their reasoning or interpretation
- Encourages students to respond to questions or challenges
- Includes opportunities for structured discussion or dialogue
- Invites peer questioning, critique or debate
- Incorporates short oral, audio or video explanations where appropriate
- Encourages students to justify evidence selection or conceptual framing
- Includes dialogue around feedback or revision
- Assesses clarity of reasoning rather than fluency alone

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For further information, please get in touch and ask for your request to be forwarded to the AI team.

We would love to know more about what strategies you are adopting to create or adapt assessments in the light of GenAI. Please get in touch if you are happy to share examples.

