

**Higher Education Development & Support (HEDS) Institute**

# What is GenAI?

Generative AI (GenAI) is a technique in artificial intelligence in which outputs such as text, images, code, music, and video are generated by software. This is done based on prompts it receives. These prompts may be given by a human user or other software systems.

GenAI systems are trained on very large datasets from the web, social media channels, databases, books, and journals. In some cases, the sources used are not published. The outputs from GenAI may appear original but are just various combinations of its training data.

GenAI can appear very powerful, but may also make simple factual errors, can invent statements that are untrue or reference sources that seem realistic but do not actually exist. Outputs from GenAI should always be reviewed and fact-checked before use.

GenAI tools also raise complex issues around data privacy, copyright and intellectual property, and ethics and sustainability. It can exhibit a range of biases that reflect the biases contained within its training data.

We encourage our community to engage with GenAI in a critical and thoughtful way. The GenAI hub will give you all you need to understand more about GenAI and its use at UCL.