

Supporting Higher Education Readiness for Generative AI in Teaching and Learning

Higher Education Authority

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning

HEA

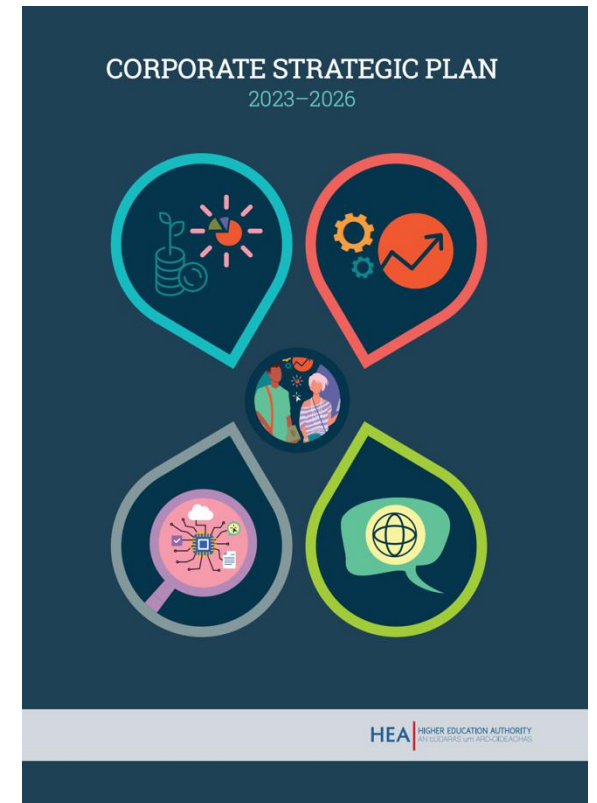
An tÚdarás um Ard-Oideachas
The Higher Education Authority

EDEN Annual Conference
16 June 2026

Higher Education Authority

The Higher Education Authority (HEA) is the statutory funding, planning, regulatory and development body for higher education and research in Ireland.

The organisation's vision is to work with institutions to deliver a higher education and research system that is consistently achieving world-class standards of teaching, learning, and research, demonstrating the values of excellence, academic freedom and integrity, inclusivity, and social and environmental responsibility, to serving the needs of the people and economy of Ireland.



<https://bit.ly/4eerCvb>

National Forum for the Enhancement of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education

Lead

Fund

Collaborate

Consult

Recognise

Develop

HEA Strategy for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Strategic Priorities

<https://bit.ly/4rxm2uM>

Mission

To lead the enhancement of teaching and learning in partnership with students, staff and leaders in Irish higher education to develop an inclusive, collaborative and innovative culture that maximises learning impact for the success of all students

<https://bit.ly/3Bre5li>

HEA Act 2022

The HEA has a responsibility to “promote the attainment and maintenance of excellence in teaching, learning, research in a high quality higher education system”.

FUND: SATLE Funding

- **Strategic Alignment of Teaching & Learning Enhancement (SATLE):** HEA mechanism for teaching and learning innovation & capacity building. €28.8M invested since 2022.
- Provides funding stability for multi-annual initiatives, allowing institutions to experiment, scale good practice, and share sector-wide.
- **Thematic priorities:** Digital transformation, academic integrity, education for sustainable development.
- Supports AI-related pilots, staff capacity-building, assessment redesign, and sector-wide sharing + OER creation (a requirement).



<https://bit.ly/4nh2Qih>

COLLABORATE: Capacity Building & Open Courses

- Equipping staff and students with practical, critical, and ethical AI skills. Free under Open Licence.
- Open Course (2024): “GenAI for Teaching and Learning” — 25-hour self-paced course, digital badge on completion. Covers GenAI concepts, ethical use, integration into curriculum, and assessment design. Led by TCD, DCU, UL.
- “AI Fluency: Frameworks & Foundations” — introduces GenAI basics, ethics, and critical evaluation; co-developed with UCC, Ringling and Anthropic. 950,000+ enrolments globally.
- Academic Integrity for Staff/Students; Led by TUS, SETU under NTUTORR.

<https://opencourses.ie/>



Self-Study

Teaching AI Fluency

🕒 6 hours 🏆 Digital Badge



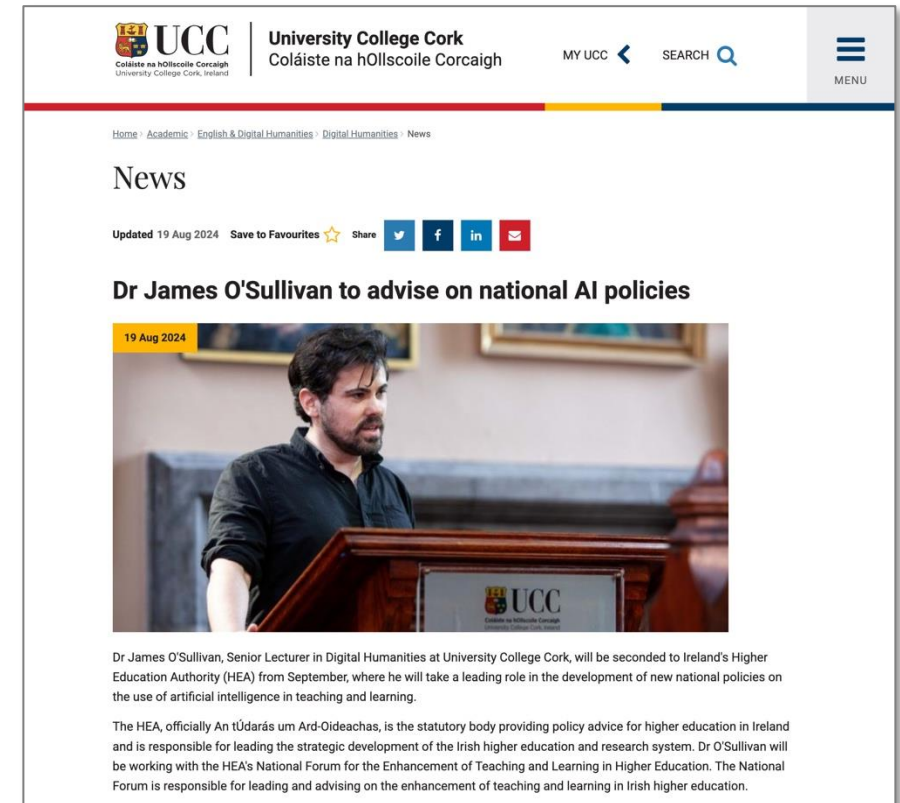
Self-Study

AI Fluency for Students

🕒 3 hours 🏆 Digital Badge

Policy Development

- **Dedicated Role:** 18-month secondment of HEI staff to the HEA (Sep 2024 – Feb 2026) to lead a values-led, sector-wide AI policy programme.
- **Fielding the sector (desk + scan):** Rapid review of Ireland's National AI Strategy & 2024 Refresh, EU AI Act/Trustworthy AI, UNESCO AI/AI comp frameworks, and international HE policies; mapping existing Irish institutional positions.
- **Structured engagement:** Targeted conversations with key stakeholder groups plus an associates network to broaden reach.
- **National AI Advisory Group:** Cross-functional membership
- **Initial guidance:** Triangulated insights from review into a draft “**Ten Considerations for GenAI Adoption**” as a common language and decision framework (Feb 2025).



<https://bit.ly/4lYnEKq>

AI LITERACY

Understanding, evaluating, and using AI responsibly, effectively, and in alignment with disciplinary values.

ALLOWABLE AI

Distinguishing acceptable AI uses in education while maintaining academic integrity and disciplinary norms.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Reinforcing originality, critical engagement, and ethical AI use to prioritise student learning over AI dependency.

SECOND-DEGREE PLAGIARISM

Addressing risks of academic dishonesty from AI-generated content lacking transparency in intellectual property.

EQUITABLE ACCESS

Addressing barriers to AI adoption so all staff and students benefit equally from its educational potential.

AI SOVEREIGNTY

Developing localised, open AI models to enhance transparency, privacy, and ethical alignment

Ten Considerations for Generative AI Adoption

CRITICAL AI

Critically evaluating AI-generated outputs to identify biases and promote responsible, socially aware AI engagement.

PRIVACY

Ensuring transparency and accountability in AI data handling to protect staff and student privacy and maintain trust.

SUSTAINABILITY

Adopting energy-efficient AI technologies and institutional commitments to minimise environmental impact.

ENHANCEMENT

Generative AI can personalise learning, boost engagement, improve efficiency, and ensure equity in higher education.



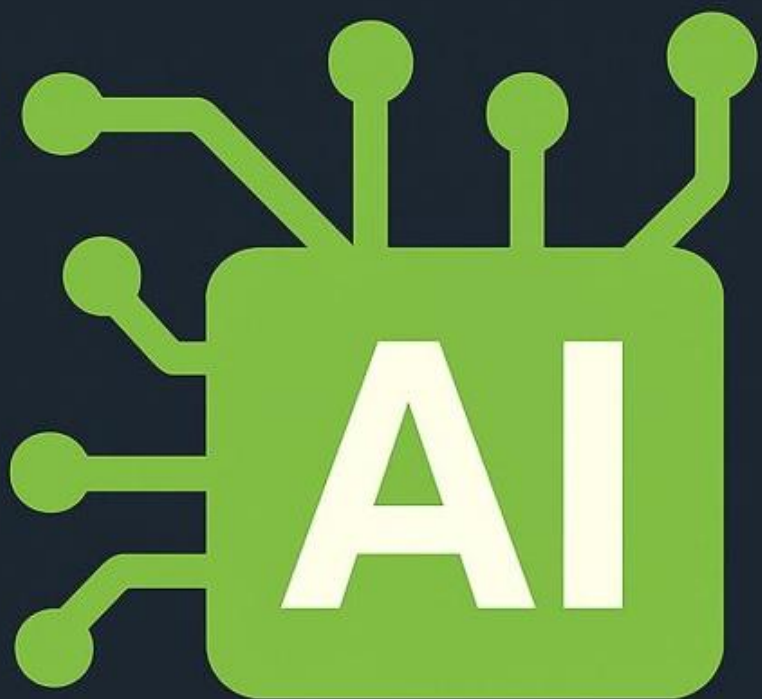
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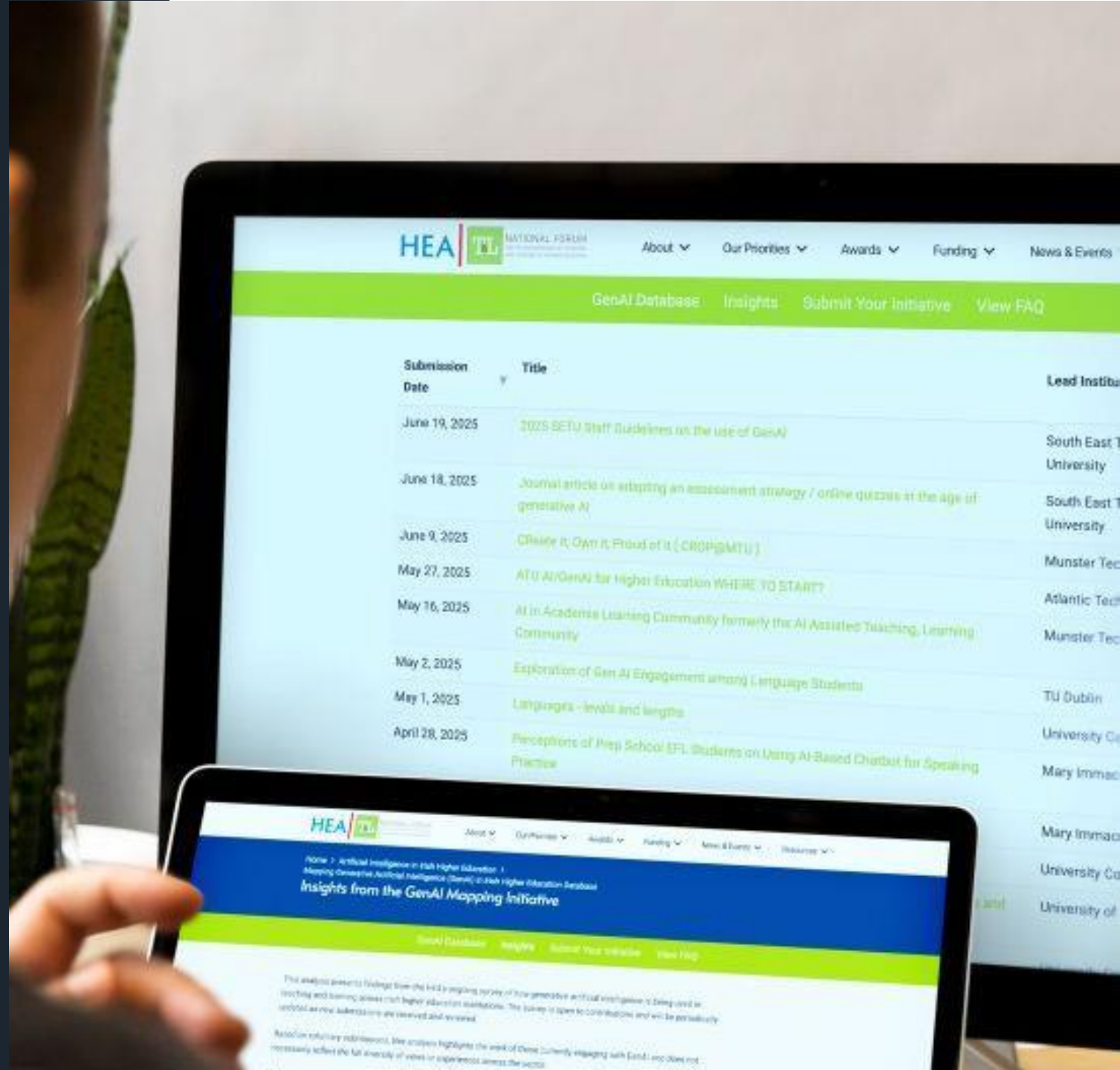
HEA



NATIONAL FORUM
FOR THE ENHANCEMENT OF TEACHING
AND LEARNING IN HIGHER EDUCATION



bit.ly/mappingai



Focus Groups

76 stakeholders

Higher Education Institutions

AI Advisory Council to the Government

QQI

HEAnet

IUA

AHEAD

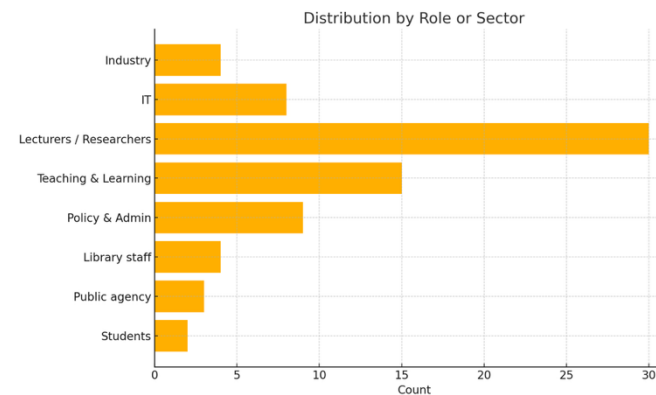
DFHERIS

AMLE

IBEC

Microsoft

1. Teaching enhancement
2. Assessment
3. Skills Degradation
4. AI Literacy
5. Ethical AI
6. Academic Integrity
7. Writing
8. Inclusion Practices
9. Infrastructure
10. Student Engagement



3 June, 2025

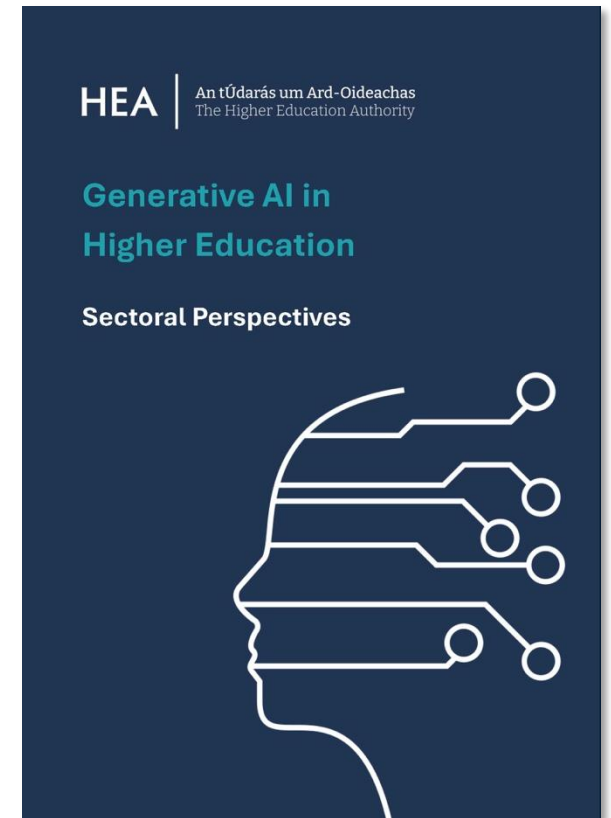
Higher Education Authority gathers leaders and experts to shape national response to generative AI in teaching and learning

[Read Article](#)

<https://bit.ly/3JHaSCy>

Sectoral Perspectives

- “I’m not sure if what I’m doing is encouraged, ignored, or discouraged, no one’s talking about it.”
- “They’re submitting perfect-looking assignments, but when you talk to them, the thinking just isn’t there.”
- “AI can give them a plausible answer, but not a critical one, and they don’t always know the difference.”
- “We don’t want students who can prompt well, we want students who can think about what the prompt is doing.”
- “I want to teach students how to think critically about AI, but I’m still figuring that out too.”
- “By 2030, every graduate in Ireland could be entering a workforce transformed by AI.”



Sep 2025

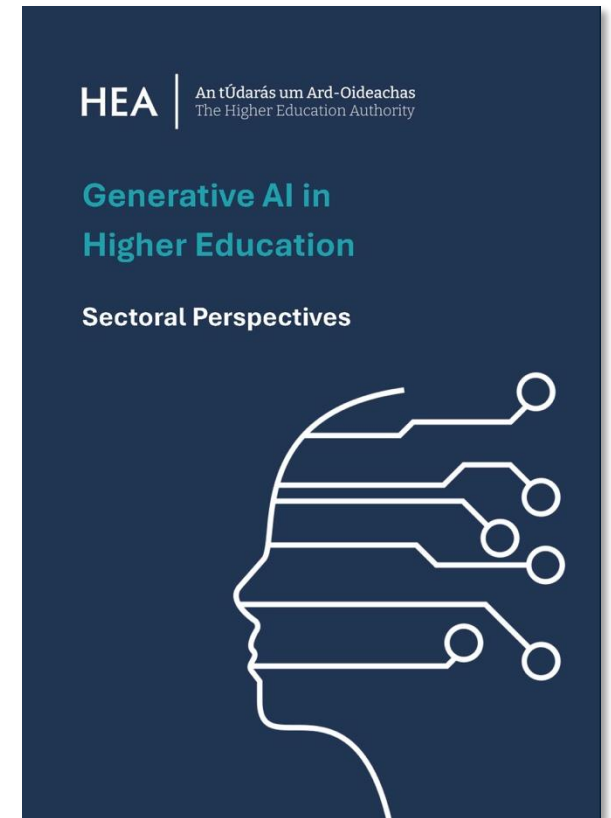
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Emerging Themes

- Need for coordinated national strategy;
- Re-examination of educational purpose, authorship, and integrity;
- Inclusion must be designed, not assumed;
- Assessment reform away from detection toward authentic, process-based approaches;
- Structured staff and student support required;
- Governance and infrastructure need to be holistic, not tool-focused;
- Leadership must actively shape direction, not just manage risks.

Policy Implications

- Reframe educational purpose in the age of AI;
- Support assessment redesign and pedagogical innovation;
- Invest in staff/student capacity, AI literacy, and partnerships;
- Embed inclusion and accessibility in AI strategies;
- Strengthen governance, infrastructure, and procurement ethics;
- Balance national coherence with institutional diversity;
- Ensure agility and foresight in policy responses.



Sep 2025

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Generative AI in Irish Higher Education Teaching & Learning (December 2025)

- **Generative AI in Higher Education Teaching & Learning: Policy Framework**
- **Generative AI in Higher Education Teaching & Learning: Principles for Ethical AI Adoption**

Supporting Instruments

- Annex 1. Evidence for the Policy Framework
- Annex 2. Compliance with the EU AI Act
- Annex 3. AI Literacy Training
- Annex 4. Assessment practices
- Annex 5. Vendor & Procurement Governance
- Roles & Responsibilities: Institutional leadership and senior administration
- Roles & Responsibilities: Faculty and teaching staff
- Roles & Responsibilities: Students
- Roles & Responsibilities: Academic support units
- Roles & Responsibilities: IT Services and Data Protection Officers

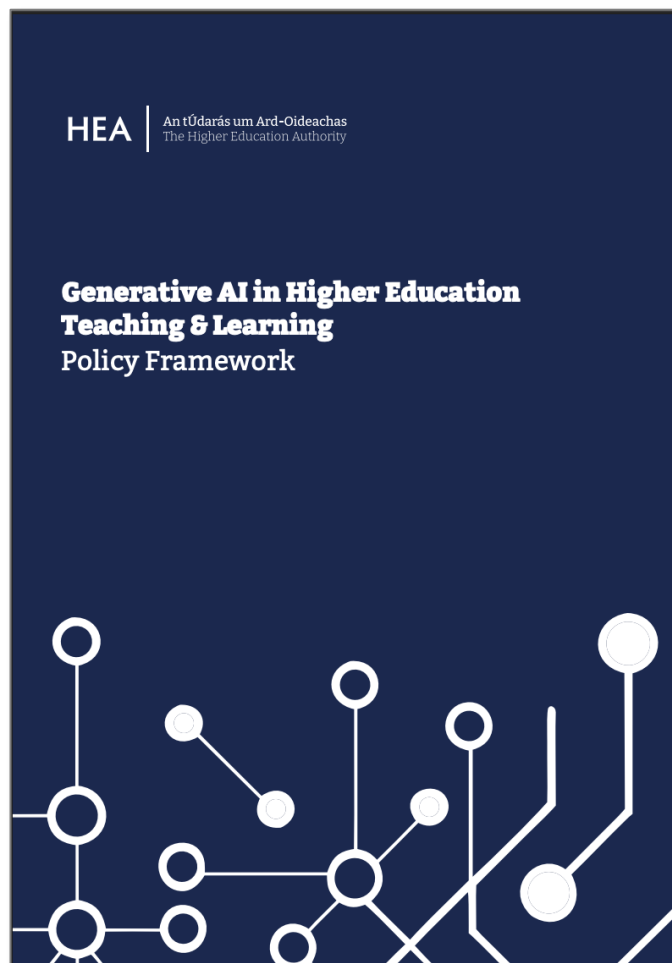


[DOI: 10.82110/px37-mp48](https://doi.org/10.82110/px37-mp48)

Generative AI in Higher Education Teaching & Learning: Policy Framework

- Principle 1: Academic Integrity, Transparency, and Accountability
- Principle 2: Equity & Inclusion
- **Principle 3: Critical Engagement, Human Oversight, & AI Literacy**
- Principle 4: Privacy & Data Governance
- Principle 5: Sustainable Pedagogy

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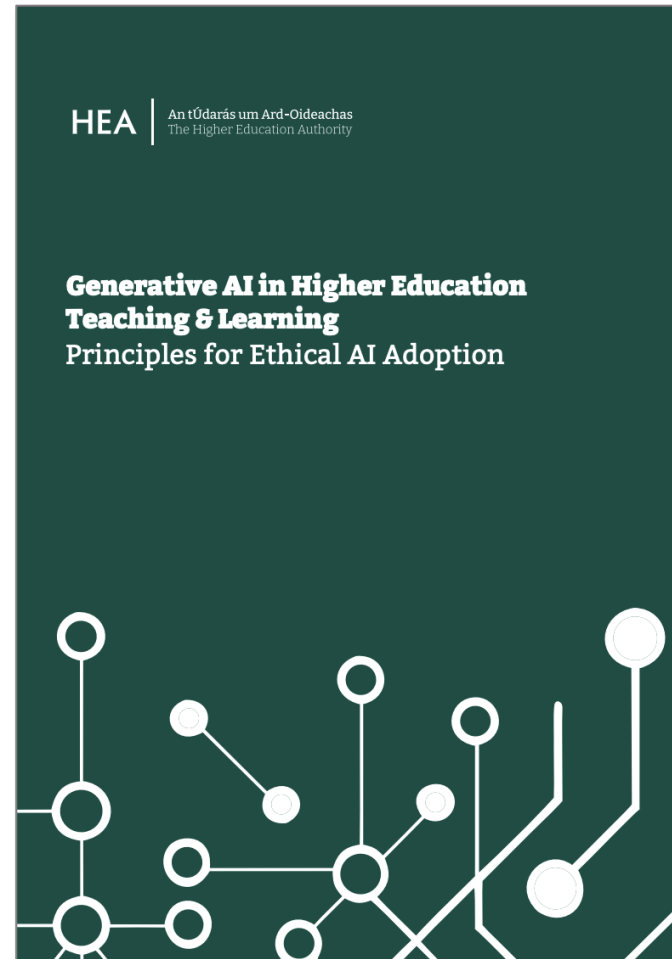


Generative AI in Higher Education Teaching & Learning: Principles for Ethical AI Adoption

2.3 Principle 3: Critical Engagement, Human Oversight, and AI Literacy

- 2.3.1 Embedding AI literacy as core competency
- 2.3.2 Human oversight in pedagogical processes
- 2.3.3 Developing critical AI engagement
- 2.3.4 Student Development Pathways
- 2.3.5 Institutional infrastructure for AI literacy
- 2.3.6 Evaluation of AI Literacy
- 2.3.7 Governance and Accountability
- 2.3.8 Summary of Recommendations

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Principles for Ethical AI Adoption

HEA | Generative AI in Higher Education in Teaching & Learning

Sustainability requires strategic planning and reliable provision of core supports. Institutions should plan for long-term investment in infrastructure, staffing, licensed tool access, and professional development. Efficiency can be achieved through shared services, scalable delivery of foundational content, and peer learning networks, provided that quality and equity are maintained. Enduring impact will depend on combining clear leadership, distributed responsibility, continuous evaluation, and sustainable planning within a coherent institutional framework.

2.3.8 Summary of Recommendations

- (1) Recognise AI literacy as a core graduate attribute in all programmes.
- (2) Define programme-specific learning outcomes covering technical foundations, disciplinary applications, critical evaluation, ethics, and practical workflow skills.
- (3) Map a scaffolded progression from introductory awareness to advanced critical application across stages of study, with assessment aligned to outcomes.
- (4) Provide discipline-specific professional development opportunities so educators can teach and assess AI literacy with confidence and credibility.
- (5) Embed interdisciplinary perspectives through seminars or modules linking technical, social, ethical, and cultural perspectives.
- (6) Codify human oversight so that academic staff retain final authority over assessment, grading, feedback, and curriculum decisions. Institutions should also ensure that students achieve programme-level AI-literacy outcomes even where specific modules restrict AI use.
- (7) Implement oversight protocols ensuring that all machine outputs require human review before action.
- (8) Monitor adaptive and personalised systems to prevent curricular 'filter bubbles', comparing algorithmic recommendations with programme outcomes.
- (9) Establish or designate an institutional oversight committee empowered to request documentation, commission bias testing, pause deployment, and discontinue non-compliant tools.
- (10) Identify unit-level AI-education coordinators to advise colleagues, monitor local use, and escalate concerns.
- (11) Include oversight requirements in procurement, covering human-in-the-loop capability, intervention and override functions, logging, declarations of fitness for purpose, and known limitations.
- (12) Develop student development pathways that provide foundational induction for all learners and optional advanced tracks, projects, and credentials for specialisation.
- (13) Differentiate entry points and ensure accessibility for varied prior experience, disabilities, and language needs.
- (14) Provide central coordination for AI-literacy resources, exemplars, and responsive support for staff and students.

Generative AI in Higher Education Teaching & Learning:

Principles for Ethical AI Adoption (2.3.8 Summary of Recommendations)

- Recognise AI literacy as a core graduate attribute in all programmes
- Define programme-specific learning outcomes covering technical foundations, disciplinary applications, critical evaluation, ethics, and practical workflow skills.
- Map a scaffolded progression from introductory awareness to advanced critical application across stages of study, with assessment aligned to outcomes.
- Provide discipline-specific professional development opportunities so educators can teach and assess AI literacy with confidence and credibility.
- Assess AI literacy authentically using portfolios, case-based tasks, and collaborative projects aligned with disciplinary contexts.
- Measure and report progress on implementation, quality, and risk through annual internal and public reporting that includes student perspectives.

Purpose

- Critical engagement, human oversight, and AI literacy form the pedagogical and intellectual foundation for responsible AI integration in higher education.
- This principle recognises that the transformative potential of generative AI can only be realised through cultivated discernment rather than passive adoption or reflexive rejection.

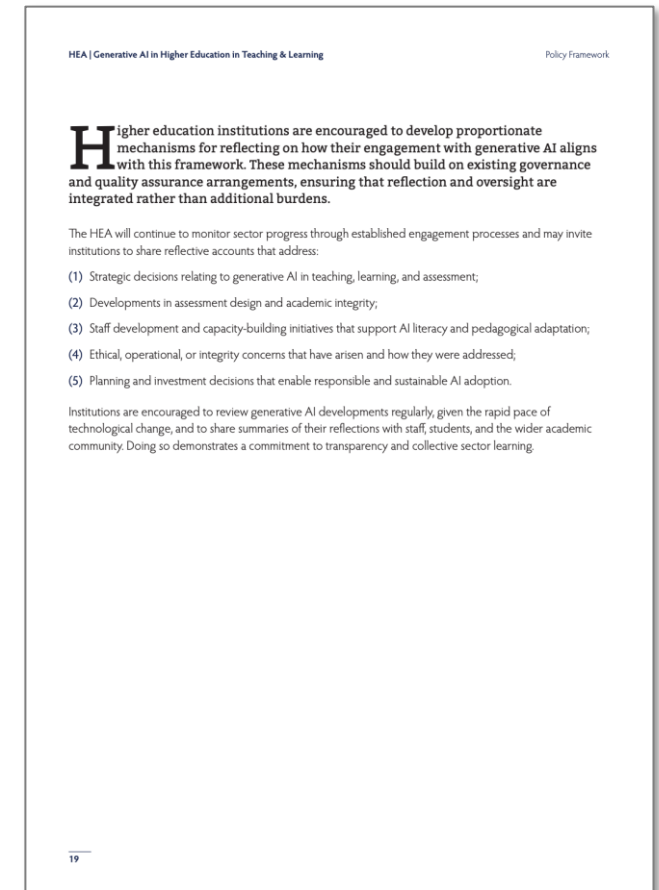
Stewardship of the public mission

- No new audit apparatus (reduce downstream burden).
- The framework sets out to leverage existing governance structures.

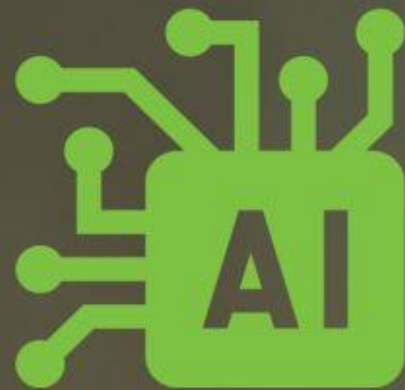
The HEA will continue to monitor sector progress through established engagement processes and may invite institutions to share reflective accounts that address:

- Strategic decisions relating to AI in teaching and assessment
- Assessment redesign developments
- Staff development and AI literacy initiatives
- Integrity issues arising and how they were addressed
- Investment and infrastructure decisions

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Thank You!



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<https://bit.ly/irelandgenai>

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