

GenAI Conversation Starters for GTA Course Instruction

Context

Generative AI (GenAI) is increasingly impacting how courses are designed, facilitated, and assessed. **As a teaching assistant (TA), you will navigate GenAI in multiple ways in our teaching and learning spaces.** It is critical that you are fully aware of the expectations regarding the use of GenAI in the course you are serving as a TA.

This resource is intended to provide some ideas for starting **clear and constructive conversations** with your course instructor on how GenAI should or should not be used in your TA role.

Through practical tips, conversational prompts, and additional resources, this guide can help you navigate your responsibilities as a TA and support **transparency, integrity and alignment** in course facilitation and assessment at a time when GenAI is a core consideration in higher education.

Before Meeting with your Course Instructor: Tips and Strategies

- Reflect on your own **values and approaches** related to GenAI in teaching
- Review the **course syllabus and Brightspace page**, if available
- Prepare questions **in advance** of the meeting
- Consider **specific examples** relevant to your disciplinary and course contexts – e.g., AI-assisted grading

During the Meeting: Conversation Prompts

The following questions might be helpful prompts to clarify expectations, identify alignments or gaps in instructor and TA approaches to GenAI, and avoid unexpected questions / concerns later in the course. We recommend beginning with a question or two from the “starting the conversation” prompts and then moving into the more specific questions.

Starting the Conversation: General Questions about Instructor Approach to GenAI

- Are you considering the use of GenAI in the course? If yes, how are you planning to use it in your teaching?
- How do you see GenAI fitting (or not) into your course design or expectations?
- Are there particular concerns or approaches for the use of GenAI that you will be addressing with students?
- Are there specific GenAI tools you explicitly recommend or prohibit? If so, which ones?

- If you are using GenAI in the course, are there options for students who do not want to use GenAI? If so, what are those options?

Digging Deeper: Specific Questions about Student and TA Use of GenAI

- How do you expect students to disclose their use of GenAI?
- Will you be facilitating conversations or activities with students related to ethical or appropriate GenAI use in your course? If so, are there ways I can support or reinforce those learning moments?
- What do I do if I suspect a student has used GenAI inappropriately in their submitted assessment or an activity that I supervise?
- How should I respond if a student asks about GenAI use in the course or for specific assessments or activities?
- Do you want me to model GenAI use in my tutorials / labs / lectures, or would you like me to avoid it?
- Do you recommend using GenAI to develop lessons and activities for my tutorial, lab, or lecture? If so, how?
- Should I use GenAI to generate feedback for student assessments? If so, in what ways?
- Is it appropriate to use GenAI to grade assessments? If so, how?

Additional Resources

Academic Excellence. [Guidelines on the Use of Generative AI in Teaching and Learning](#). McMaster U.

Dilkes, Dani. (2025). [Domains of AI Awareness](#). Centre for Teaching and Learning, Western U. eCampus Ontario.

Student Success Centre. [Talking to Your Instructor about AI Use](#). U of Calgary.

Teaching Assistants' Training Program. [Teaching with GenAI: Considerations for Teaching Assistants](#). U of Toronto.