



**Book review: Beckingham, S., Lawrence, J., Powell, S. and Hartley, P. (eds) (2024) *Using generative AI effectively in higher education: sustainable and ethical practices for learning, teaching and assessment*. London: Routledge.**

***Embracing the future: ethical and sustainable application of generative AI in higher education***

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In the first two decades of the twenty-first century, higher education (HE) has advanced at a rapid pace. The increased use of digital devices such as laptops, smartphones, and tablets; the advancement of internet technologies; and the rise of online learning have changed the HE landscape both locally and globally. The latest addition to these developments is the use of generative artificial intelligence (GenAI), which is transforming the way teaching and learning are conducted (Francis et al., 2025). Alongside responding to challenges to conventional approaches to teaching and learning (Belkina et al., 2025), teachers in HE are now being confronted with the need to integrate GenAI technologies into their practice as education plays a critical role in making future workforces AI-ready (Pedro et al., 2019). It is important that the integration of these technologies is managed in an ethical, sustainable, and secure manner (Yusuf et al., 2024). This is because responding appropriately to the changes taking place in contemporary HE requires not only a change in institutional practices but also a long-term commitment to upholding ethical standards in education and the strengthening of accountability measures. It is in this context that *Using generative AI effectively in higher education* acts as a potential guidebook for those wishing to integrate GenAI into their practice.

This book focuses on how GenAI can be integrated effectively into HE. It is particularly insightful because it contextualises the use of AI in HE and addresses the need for its integration in a way that aligns with contemporary pedagogies. The editors also justify briefly, yet convincingly, the need to regulate the use of GenAI due to 'growing concerns about its long-term application and implications' (p.1). The editors draw the reader's attention to the fact that the use of GenAI can be problematic when questions are raised about the reliability, authenticity, and credibility of AI-generated content. However, given the potential benefits of using GenAI seemingly outweigh the negatives, the book's introduction reinforces the need to integrate GenAI into HE whilst ensuring its ethical and sustainable use by exploring the 'best ways to embed GenAI in teaching, learning, and assessment' (p.2).

The rest of the text (13 chapters in total) is divided into four parts: institutional strategies for building GenAI capability (Part A); developing GenAI literacies (Part B); curriculum design for a GenAI-enabled world (Part C); and assessment in a GenAI-enabled world (Part D). This quadripartite structure offers logical progression, starting with the need to build institutional capability to work with GenAI before considering how to develop appropriate levels of GenAI literacy amongst HE staff and students, then how to design HE curricula to accommodate the use of GenAI, and finally the application of GenAI for designing authentic assessments. The collective efforts of the contributors offer a closer examination of the integration of GenAI into HE, whilst creating a roadmap for upholding both institutionally and universally accepted ethical standards and sustainable practices when integrating GenAI into teaching, learning, and assessment.

The text is written in an accessible manner. It targets a range of stakeholders, including educational leaders, educational developers, learning developers, learning technologists, curriculum designers, quality assurance staff, and teachers active in contemporary HE. This collection of global scholarship, drawn from world-leading universities, presents evidence and experience from diverse educational contexts and disciplines, demonstrating how generative AI can be used effectively. Given the stigmas and genuine concerns still associated with the use of GenAI for educational purposes, the book can be considered a timely publication. The authors explore best practices in integrating GenAI into HE in tangible ways, which will be encouraging for those who are hesitant to embrace the technology. Chapters 6 and 13, for example, discuss the intersection of academic writing

and GenAI in relation to ‘plagiarism and academic misconduct’ (p.54) and how to guide students to maintain academic integrity by carefully observing how they integrate AI-generated content into their written assessments. These chapters emphasise how students must be taught to avoid an over-reliance on or the misuse of GenAI as it ‘hinders skills development, limits subject-specific understanding’ (p.115), and reduces capacity for creative thinking.

In terms of advice for learning developers, exploration of the concept of ‘prompt generation’ in Chapter 6 will be particularly useful. Prompt generation is the act of entering a question into an AI search engine to find information. The chapter’s authors discuss the potential of working with AI search queries to train learners to refine their prompts to obtain ‘relevant and reliable information’ (p.55). They consider this a core competency that twenty-first-century students learning with GenAI in technology-enhanced classrooms are required to develop as part of their academic skillsets.

Whilst this practical guide serves an exemplary role in encouraging educators to work effectively with GenAI, the inclusion of interactive elements such as reflection points, strategy-building questions, or explorative tasks, perhaps at the conclusion of each part, would have been helpful for the reader. Such material would support readers in continuing the discussion contained in the book by prompting them to relate it to their specific contexts. Including such material would not have compromised the expertise with which the collection has been authored; instead, it would have established a meaningful link between the text and the reader – acknowledging the reader as an active participant in the ongoing discussion. Given the confusion and anxieties that are likely to arise when integrating a sophisticated technology such as GenAI into HE, allocating some space for practical guidance on the use of GenAI in teaching, learning, and assessment would also have been useful. This information would support the reader in strengthening their own understanding before introducing GenAI into their educational setting.

In sum, this is a comprehensive, evidence-based, and ethically grounded text that encompasses global perspectives. It will be a valuable resource for educators committed to responsibly shaping the future of contemporary HE through the thoughtful integration of GenAI into their practice.

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