

Checklist for teachers: AI safety

1. Data privacy and security

- Before using a GenAI tool, read the privacy policy to confirm what data is collected and how it's used.
- Check whether the tool asks for personal information (names, emails, photos, etc.) and whether consent is optional.
- Verify compliance with GDPR, COPPA or local data laws.
- Ensure the tool doesn't sell or share data for advertising or analytics.
- Where possible, choose tools that allow teacher-managed or anonymous learner access.

2. Content safety

- Test the tool for inappropriate, biased or violent language/images.
- Confirm that the platform has built-in filters to block harmful or explicit content.
- Look for preview features that allow you to view or approve content before learners see it.

3. Bias, fairness and representation

- Evaluate images or text outputs for stereotypes or lack of diversity.
- Try diverse names, accents or cultural examples to see whether the AI responds fairly and respectfully.
- Ensure the AI doesn't by default promote specific political, religious or social views.

4. Transparency and control

- Check the settings to ensure learners can control their privacy, limit the use of the AI input for training and delete the interaction history.
- Prefer tools that explain how results are generated, e.g. AI summary tools that cite sources.
- Check if you can limit features, control learner access or disable chat or upload functions.
- Ensure you can delete or stop an AI interaction if something inappropriate happens.

- Evaluate ownership rights and limitations of AI outputs.

5. Access and inclusion

- Check accessibility for learners with disabilities (screen readers, captions, etc.).
- Check if there's support for learners' language levels or local languages.
- Avoid tools that might pressure learners to pay for upgrades or expose them to advertising.

6. Accountability and support

- The company should have a visible contact page or support email.
- Check that the tool is maintained and updated regularly.
- Make sure it's on your institution's approved software list (if applicable).
- Have a classroom protocol for reporting or addressing inappropriate AI outputs or misuse.

Testing tips

Before classroom use, test the tool yourself.

- Use it with fictional data (e.g. a made-up learner name).
- Try a few unusual or sensitive prompts to see how it responds.
- Screenshot or record any unexpected outputs for future reference or discussion.