

AI: The Grad Student's Personal Assistant

To use this worksheet effectively, remember to consider the following Domains of AI Awareness for Education & others as discussed in (Dilkes, 2025):

- Values – *What are the top 3 things you value as a learner? Of all the possible outcomes of a graduate program, which one(s) align most closely with your values?*
 - Getting a Degree/Letters after Your Name
 - Learning Skills Development (Reading Academic Text, structuring information, critical reasoning, evidence based thinking, etc.)
 - Communication & Presentation Skills
 - Project Management Skills
 - Resilience, Grit, & Managing Setbacks
- Pedagogy/Learning Skills – *What do you gain from cognitively offloading these tasks? What do you lose?*
 - Cognitive Load Theory suggests that offloading frees up working memory, and that we should minimize extrinsic load, maximize germane load and manage/scaffold intrinsic load.
 - Strategic Learning Framework suggests that the skills, will, and self-regulation for learning are interconnected and can be improved. How might offloading this task affect your skill, will, or self-regulation for learning?
- Knowledge – *How does GenAI work? With this knowledge in mind, what tasks would it be successful with, and what might it struggle with?*
 - GenAI is a type of deep-learning artificial intelligence that is often a Large Language Model. It is programmed to go through pre-training, human refinement, prompts, and calculations to calculate probabilities based on patterns. At most, it can remember and understand with its algorithms, but the technology works based on the quality of the training data.
- Skills – *How should I interact with the AI? How should I prompt it for help?*
 - Be specific – give qualifiers – use personas and provide models.
 - Stop -Investigate source – Find better coverage – Trade claims

References

Dilkes, D. (2025). *Domains of AI Awareness for Education*. London, ON: Centre for Teaching and Learning, Western University.

You have been given access to unlimited funding to hire the most qualified (human) personal assistant.

What do you want to have them help you with?

What should you have them help you with? What shouldn't you have them help you with and why?

You have been given access to a GenAI that complies with all ethical considerations. What could you use it to help you with? What would you use it help you with?