



# From Resistance to Readiness



## GenAI in Regional Academic & Public Libraries A Practical Change Approach

Stephen Harris & Rena MacLeod

# Bundaberg, Queensland, Australia



**Stephen Harris**  
Information Services Manager  
Bundaberg Regional Library



**Rena MacLeod**  
Academic Communication Lecturer  
Bundaberg, Central Queensland University

# GenAI Collaboration...



Public Library Space...

University Student Support...

# Complex demographic



Low socio-economic  
High unemployment  
Poor digital literacy  
First Nations  
Migrants/Transient  
First-in-family  
Disability  
Learning challenges



**90% of cohort**

# Critical Digital/GenAI Literacy needs...

Rapidly growing digital divide...

Integrated into society...

Job displacement...

Integral to future employment...



(McKinsey Global Institute, 2017; World Economic Forum, 2023/2024)

# Barriers: Staff/Community fears...



**Ai will take our jobs...**

**Ai is not to be trusted...**

**Bias, privacy, credibility...**

**Erodes human creativity/thinking**

**People will cheat/become dumber...**

**We will all write/speak the same**

**Plagiarist**

**Fad/novelty**

Ethics and Information Technology (2024) 26:38  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-024-09775-5>



## ChatGPT is bullsh**xx**

Michael Townsen Hicks<sup>1</sup> · James Humphries<sup>1</sup> · Joe Slater<sup>1</sup>

## ChatSh\*t and Other Conversations (That We Should Be Having, But Mostly Are Not)

Jeremy Pitt

Department of Electrical and Electronic Engineering  
Imperial College London

[PDF] **ChatGPT: Bullsh**xx**spewer or the end of traditional assessments in higher education?**

[J Rudolph](#), [S Tan](#), [S Tan](#) - *Journal of applied learning and teaching*, 2023 - [journals.sfu.ca](https://journals.sfu.ca)

Ethics and Information Technology (2024) 26:67  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10676-024-09802-5>



## Large language models and their big bullsh**xx**potential

Sarah A. Fisher<sup>1</sup>

Computer Science > Computation



Cornell University

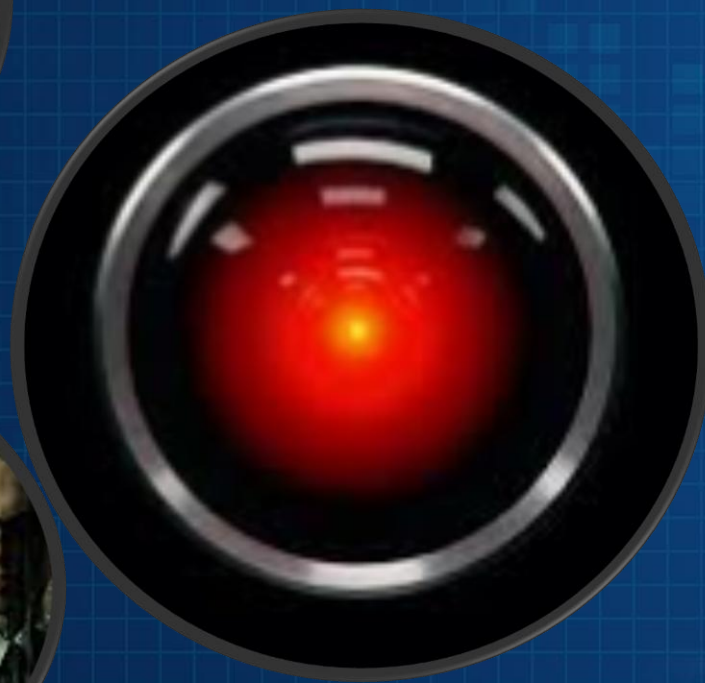
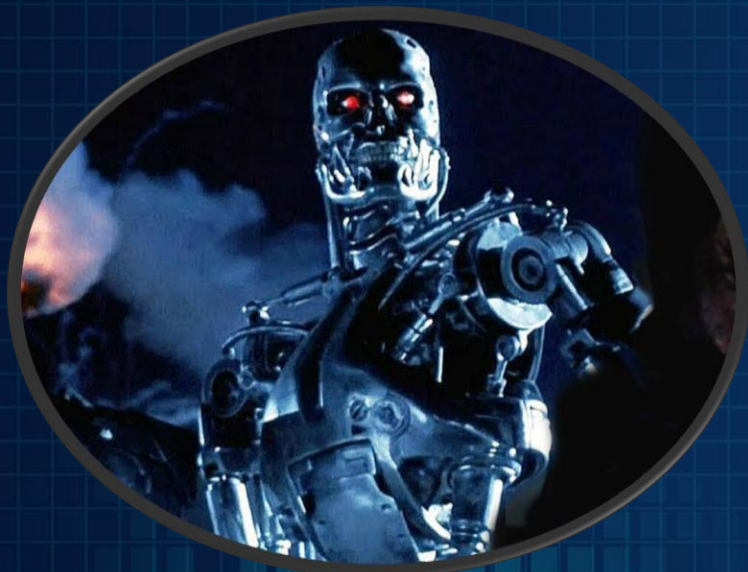
[Submitted on 8 Nov 2023]

## Large GPT-like Models are Bad Babies

[Julius Steuer](#), [Marius Mosbach](#), [Dietrich Klakow](#)

# Strong cultural influences...

## Will We Lose Control of AI? The Weekend Australian



# Less impactful narratives...



# Barriers: Highly contested environment...

## GenAI Resistance

Limiting access to essential information, learning, & support



## In academia

Unethical treatment of students...necessity to prepare them for jobs in an AI world...

# Other ethical complexities



- No clear policy...
- Punitive narrative...withdrawn degrees...
- Turn-it-in...course access...
- Diverse lecturer attitudes...
- No GenAI guidance around assessment tasks...
- Conscientious objectors...
- Mixed messaging – Library PDFs...

# Community-First AI Literacy...

- Expedient response ethically necessary...
- Ethics over-ruled waiting for internal consensus...
- Enough liberty to commence community workshops...

## Intellectual Virtues...

Courage, Risk-taking, Curiosity, Open-mindedness, Integrity

(Baehr, 2011, 2013; Molotkienė, 2019; Nowakowski, 2015)

# Community Workshops Strengthened & Protected by Cross-sector Collaboration



## **Be Connected**

Increasing the confidence, skills and online safety of older Australians.



## **Digital Sisters**

We're building a community of Digital Sisters to close the divide for women.



## **Get Online Week**

Our digital inclusion campaign held annually in October.



## **The Bridge Initiative**

We're working with people with disability to ensure everyone feels safe and confident in the digital world.



## **The LIFE Initiative**

Ensuring all families have the essential digital skills and access they need for life – work, school and fun.



## **Digital Communities**

We buddy up local organisations, create connections and run place-based programs to create holistic, community led solutions.



## **AI for Good**

Supporting people most at risk of being left behind to keep up with rapid tech changes.



## **Connecting communities**

We're connecting communities through our affordable devices and data initiatives and supporting people to make informed choices.

**E-Safety Commissioner – Australia  
Microsoft-Telstra- Bendigo Bank...**



# Community Workshop Designs



- Shared our enthusiasm for GenAI...
- Co-learning together...
- How to access LLMs + Prompting
- Discuss credibility, bias, privacy...
- Framing AI as optional and assistive...
- Provide hands-on, low-risk walk-throughs
- Emphasise critical thinking...

(MacLeod & Swanson, 2024, 2025)

**Shifting fear to *curiosity and empowerment***

# Community Workshop Designs



- Clarifying complex information (government, health)
- Drafting accessible communications...
- Language and translation support...
- Research and hobby interests, local history inquiry
- Creative experimentation (stories, poems, art...)

**Shifting fear to *curiosity and empowerment***

# Community Workshop Designs



- Clarifying complex course concepts...
- Unpacking assessment tasks/marking rubrics...
- Brainstorming assessment structure...
- Devising library search terms/databases...
- Clear plagiarism parameters...
- Negotiating library PDF copyright...
- Study buddy framing...
- Source of wellbeing advice...

**Shifting fear to *curiosity and empowerment***



# Relational/Respectful GenAI Discourse



- Doesn't always get it right, neither do we...
  - Its biases reflect the deep biases in humanity...
  - It's a LLM, not the 'fount of all knowledge'...
  - Perhaps its 'bad' response reflects the prompt...
- 
- How can GenAI support my growth and wellbeing?
  - How can GenAI support the wellbeing of others?
  - What are my ethical obligations...?

**Shifting fear to *curiosity and empowerment***

# What we've noticed...

- Higher engagement & community interest
- Reduced anxiety...
- Growing confidence using AI critically and creatively
- Embodying intellectual virtues: curiosity, open-mindedness...

“makes things seem less scary and stressful”

- Staff beginning to see value reflected back from community uptake

# Why this model works...

- Reduces resistance through rapport and sharing...
- Unpacks fears and anxieties...
- Creates shared, respectful language...
- Builds literacy & confidence through playful encounters...
- Validates AI as a tool for empowerment, not replacement...
  
- Bypasses internal stalemates through funding & co-collaboration...

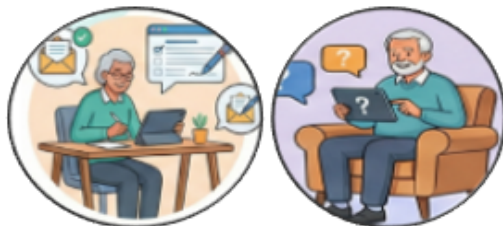
**Thus, shifting culture from fear to enthusiasm & readiness**

# Transferable Templates Seniors

Themes  
Workshop Workflow  
Co-learning Scripts  
GenAI Prompts  
Culturally Safe Learning  
Intellectual Virtues



## GenAI Workshop for Seniors Facilitator Handout



### Practical, confidence-building GenAI guidance for senior participants

This document provides a structured framework for teaching senior citizens how to interact with generative artificial intelligence. The following focuses on building digital confidence by applying technology to practical areas such as health, daily administration, and personal interests. The verbal guides are designed to encourage and maintain a supportive, shame-free environment that prioritises cultural safety and an enjoyable learning pace. The guide also emphasises critical evaluation, teaching participants to identify potential inaccuracies or biases in automated responses. Ultimately, these workshop ideas aim to empower older adults to use GenAI as an optional, safe tool for creative expression, personalised learning, and problem-solving.

### Workshop Themes

- Health & Wellbeing: explanations, exercise, stress support
- Everyday Tasks: emails, forms, government information
- Hobbies & Interests: cooking, DIY, nature activities
- Creative Writing: memoirs, letters, poetry, stories
- Family & Local History: genealogy, archives, local events
- Digital Skills: devices, scams, jargon, media literacy
- Community & Culture: share knowledge, language support
- Fun & Exploration: playful creativity, conversation
- Professional Skills: resumes, bios, internships

### Welcome to Workshop

- Co-Learning: "We're learning together – no experts here."
- AI as Optional: "Use as much or as little AI as you like."
- Shame-Free: "No silly questions; getting stuck is part of learning."
- Cultural Safety: "All backgrounds & ways of learning are welcome."
- Exploration & Empowerment: "We'll go step by step."
- Transparency/Ethics: "AI gets things right & wrong; we'll explore both."

### Warming-Up

- "Have you used Google/Siri/GenAI before?"
- "What made you curious to come today?"
- "Any concerns you'd like to share?"
- "If AI could help with one small thing, what would it be?"
- "Which device do you prefer using?"
- "What's one thing you'd like to get from today?"

### GenAI Walk-Throughs (Modelling & Exploring)

- Simple Questions: plain-language asking, step-by-step answers
- Clarifying Info: "explain this simply"
- Writing Help: emails, messages, polite wording, requests, complaints
- Creative Play: poems, memory prompts, cooking or gardening ideas
- Family History: interpreting phrases, summarising events
- Scam Safety: "Is this suspicious?" "Is this 'fake news'?"
- Translation: jargon into plain English
- Health Support: personalised routines, summarising info
- Smart Searching: use follow-up questions
- Multilingual Help: translations, bilingual texts
- Creating Together: bios, letters, travel plans, recipe cards
- Career Support: tailoring resumes, interview tips, networking tips

**Stephen Harris:** Bundaberg Regional Libraries  
[stephen.harris@bundaberg.qld.gov.au](mailto:stephen.harris@bundaberg.qld.gov.au)

**Rena MacLeod:** Central Queensland University  
[r.macleod@cqu.edu.au](mailto:r.macleod@cqu.edu.au)

Images created with Google NotebookLM

### Reassurance Check-In

- "Is the pace okay? Shall I repeat anything?"
- "Feeling comfortable to keep going?"
- "It's normal to feel confused. We'll work it out together."
- "Would you like another example?"

### Critical Evaluation Prompts

- "Does this match what I know?"
- "Should I double-check that?"
- "Could AI be mistaken here?"
- "Can you explain this more simply?"
- "Is this answering my question?"
- "Can you make this specific to Australia/my situation?"
- "Is anything biased or one-sided?"
- "What might an expert say? What's missing?"
- "What are the risks? Could this be outdated?"

### Reflection

- "What felt easier today?"
- "Where do you still feel unsure?"
- "What would you like to try next?"

### Wrap-Up

- "AI is always optional."
- "Use it only when it's helpful, safe, & comfortable."
- "Keep experimenting."
- "Go at your own pace & ask lots of questions."
- "You can always come to the library for further help."



# Transferable Templates

## Students

### Themes

### Workshop Workflow

### Co-learning Scripts

### GenAI Prompts

### Culturally Safe Learning

### Intellectual Virtues



## GenAI Workshop for Students

### Facilitator Handout



### Practical GenAI guidance for students

This document provides a practical framework for helping students use generative AI to support their learning. The workshop focuses on building confidence with GenAI tools by linking them to key academic tasks such as unpacking assessments, developing search strategies, evaluating sources, and improving writing. Guidance throughout encourages a reassuring, shame-free environment where diverse learning approaches are respected. Students are invited to think critically about GenAI outputs, identify inaccuracies or biases, and verify information using scholarly sources. Overall, the workshop aims to empower students to use GenAI ethically and effectively as an aid for developing independent thinking and academic skills.

### Workshop Themes

- Assessment Decoding: unpack tasks, key terms, rubrics
- Research Skills: search terms, databases, Boolean logic
- Source Evaluation: CRAP testing, verifying AI claims
- Reading & Analysis: summarising PDFs
- Academic Writing: outlining, paraphrasing, refining drafts
- Integrity & Safe Use: ethical AI, avoiding plagiarism
- Digital & AI Literacy: model limits, citation checking
- Professional Skills: resumes, bios, internships
- Collaboration: team projects, presentations
- Study Skills: task planning, workload clarity

### Welcome to Workshop

- Co-Learning: "We're learning together — no experts here."
- AI as Optional: "Use as much or as little AI as you like."
- Shame-Free: "No silly questions; getting stuck is part of learning."
- Cultural Safety: "All backgrounds & ways of learning are welcome."
- Exploration & Empowerment: "We'll go step by step."
- Transparency/Ethics: "AI gets things right & wrong; we'll explore both."

### Warming-Up

- "What's one thing you've already used AI for in your studies?"
- "What parts of academic work feel confusing/overwhelming?"
- "Do you have clarity about what's allowed in your courses?"
- "Which tools have you tried? (ChatGPT, Copilot, Perplexity, etc.)"
- "If AI could help you streamline one study task, what would it be?"

### GenAI Walk-Throughs (Modelling & Exploring)

- Assessment Unpacking: clarify task sheets, key verbs, expectations
- Rubrics: turn criteria into practical steps to meet/exceed standards
- Search Terms: generate keywords, synonyms, Boolean strings
- Databases: identify likely databases, then verify via the library
- Source Evaluation: quick CRAP checks + AI critique comparison
- PDF Analysis: summarise articles, extract arguments, map methods
- Academic Writing: outline, paraphrase ethically, refine drafts
- Citation Checking: detect fabricated references; verify via databases
- Integrity-Safe Use: prompts for thinking, understanding, structuring
- Study Workflow: break tasks into steps, create timelines and plans
- Career Materials: develop professional language, tailor to opportunities

**Stephen Harris:** Bundaberg Regional Libraries  
[stephen.harris@bundaberg.qld.gov.au](mailto:stephen.harris@bundaberg.qld.gov.au)

**Rena MacLeod:** Central Queensland University  
[rmacleod@cqu.edu.au](mailto:rmacleod@cqu.edu.au)

Images created with Google NotebookLM

### Reassurance Check-In

- "Is the pace okay? Shall I repeat anything?"
- "Feeling comfortable to keep going?"
- "It's normal to feel confused. We'll work it out together."
- "Would you like another discipline example?"

### Critical Evaluation Prompts

- "What evidence supports this?"
- "Does this align with the rubric/discipline expectations?"
- "Which claims should I verify using scholarly sources?"
- "What keywords/concepts are guiding my data search?"
- "Is anything missing, biased, or oversimplified?"
- "Has the AI invented citations or details?"
- "How would an expert respond or critique this?"
- "Is this up-to-date, and how can I cross-check that?"
- "How would I explain this to a peer?"
- "Can I write about this on my own?"

### Reflection

- "Has my searching/evaluating of sources changed?"
- "What's clearer about my assessment or topic?"
- "Which AI strategies were most useful?"
- "Where do I still feel unsure? What's my next step?"

### Wrap-Up

- Use GenAI to support your learning, not as a shortcut.
- Verify GenAI content with reliable sources.
- Keep experimenting.
- Library/staff support is always here.



# We've also noticed...

Higher GenAI uptake in Academia...



Lagging uptake in Australian Public Library Sector

Context necessitates a critical response...

**GenAI**  
**LinkedIn**  
**CoP**

Easily side-stepped in community programming. Low staff digital literacy...

# Where to from here...

- Keeping current with GenAI evolutions...
- Trusting instincts on trialling new workshops...
- Listening deeply to community needs...
- Cultivating GenAI exploration & play...
- Growing the LinkedIn CoP...



[gen.ai.libraries.australia@gmail.com](mailto:gen.ai.libraries.australia@gmail.com)

# Concluding Thoughts...

- Regional contexts offer deep insights into issues of equitable GenAI practice.
- GenAI resistance is often relational, not technological.
- Community-first literacy provides a practical/ethical pathway from resistance to readiness.

BEYOND BOUNDARIES:  
New Modes of Access and Accessibility through Emerging Technologies Symposium

# Thank You!

Organised by:



# References

Baehr, J. (2013). Educating for intellectual virtues: From theory to practice. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, 47(2), 248-262.

Baehr, J. (2011). *The inquiring mind: On intellectual virtues and virtue epistemology*. OUP Oxford.

MacLeod, R., & Swanson, D. (2024). Encouraging ethical engagement and cognitive learning with LLMs: A framework and methodology. In K. Enomoto, R. Warner & C. Nygaard. (Eds.), *Generative artificial intelligence in higher education*. Libri Publishing Ltd.

MacLeod, R., & Swanson, D. (2025). Cultivating Strong Minds: Leveraging GenAI for Academic Growth and Personal Wellbeing. In K. Enomoto, R. Warner & C. Nygaard. (Eds.), *Compassionate pedagogy in higher education*. Libri Publishing Ltd.

McKinsey Global Institute. (2017). Jobs lost, jobs gained: Workforce transitions in a time of automation.

Molotkienè, E. (2019). Rethinking Radical Imagination: Ethics of Artificial Intelligence. *Baltic Journal of Modern Computing*, 7(3), 444-453.

World Economic Forum (2024). AI - artificial intelligence - at Davos 2024: What to know.

World Economic Forum. (2023). Closing the AI confidence gap will help us harness its full potential.

Organised by:





# From Resistance to Readiness



## GenAI in Regional Academic & Public Libraries A Practical Change Approach

Stephen Harris & Rena MacLeod