

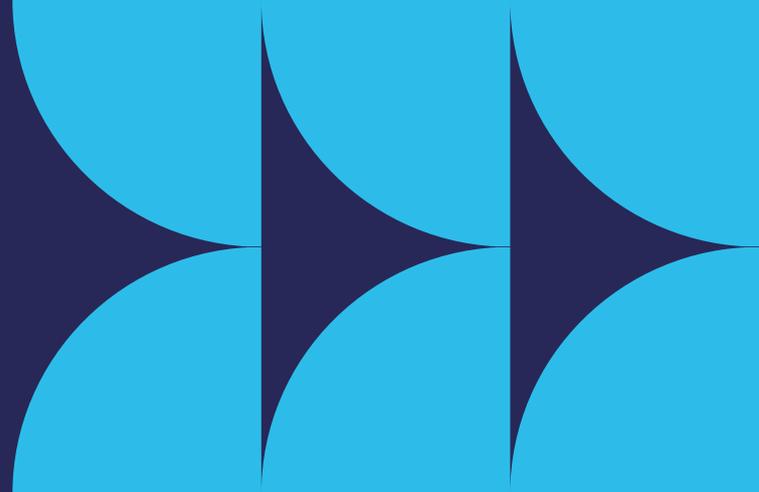
# AI Literacy in the Legal and Advice Sector

How the legal and advice sector can support staff, volunteers and students with the knowledge and skills to use generative AI tools responsibly.

Dr Francine Ryan, Professor Kim Barker and Lorraine Hayman



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# 01 Introduction

## Widespread AI adoption

As Artificial Intelligence (AI) becomes increasingly embedded in everyday life, from personalised recommendations to decision-making in law, health, finance, and education, the ability of individuals to understand and critically engage with AI technologies has never been more vital (Department for Science, Innovation & Technology, 2025).

When people refer to using AI in everyday life, they often mean Generative AI: a type of artificial intelligence, such as ChatGPT or Perplexity, that can create new content, including text, images/videos, audio, and code, in response to prompts. Generative AI works “by analysing input data in their context and recognising patterns, which causes them to generate outputs” (Council of Bars and Law Societies of Europe, 2025, p. 8). It is this generation of content that differentiates Generative AI from other AI systems.

Legal, advice, and charitable organisations are rapidly adopting Generative AI, in particular. This growing reliance on AI highlights an urgent need for broad-based AI Literacy. AI Ireland (2024) explains:



**We stand at a pivotal moment in technological evolution. [AI] is no longer a distant concept but an immediate reality reshaping every aspect of our personal and professional lives. In this landscape, AI Literacy has emerged as a critical skill – not just for technologists, but for everyone (para. 2).**



# 02 AI Literacy

## What is AI Literacy?

AI literacy refers to the set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to comprehend, utilise, and critically evaluate AI in everyday life, work, and learning (IBM, n.d.). Someone who is AI literate has *“a comprehensive ability to engage with [AI] critically: comprehending its mechanisms, evaluating its implications, recognising its potential and limitations, and applying it ethically and effectively”* (AI Ireland, 2024, para. 2).

## Why does AI Literacy matter?

As people encounter AI more frequently at home and in the workplace, an understanding of how these systems function and their potential ethical implications is essential.

Law firms, charities, and advice organisations need to ensure that their staff and volunteers have a sufficient level of AI Literacy to support them in their jobs. Without AI Literacy, people lack the confidence and skills to effectively use Generative AI tools and assess the risks and benefits of using them.

The UK Government’s Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (2025) increasingly views AI Literacy as a critical skill for the 21st century and explains that *“generative [AI] presents exciting opportunities to improve people’s lives, including by making our public services better”* (para. 1).



# 03 AI Literacy training

## Why is training in AI literacy critical?

Individuals and organisations need to ensure that they have a basic understanding of what Generative AI can do and how it works, so they can make informed decisions about when to use and when not to use AI tools.

AI already shapes decisions about our news, work, money, health, and education, and people need the skills to navigate this influence. Without basic AI Literacy, individuals and organisations risk misusing AI and making poor

or unsafe decisions due to a misunderstanding of its capabilities.

There are great benefits to using Generative AI, such as, streamlining work processes and advancing efficiency. However, there are also risks that organisations and individuals using Generative AI need to evaluate, like content hallucinations and privacy concerns. AI Literacy supports in evaluating these benefits and risks, supporting the ethical and responsible use of AI.

## What free training can I access?

The AI Law and Legal Training series is a collection of eight free courses funded by *UKRI and Responsible AI*, and in partnership with *Citizens Advice* and academics at *The Open University* and the *University of Lincoln*. The courses have also been developed with the support of lawyers from *Fieldfisher*, *Mishcon de Reya*, and *Browne Jacobson*.

## What can I study?

The learning pathway is flexible and non-sequential, so you can pick and choose which of the eight free courses you want to complete, depending on your role, upskilling needs, and interests. We do, however, recommend that everyone start with *Course 1: Understanding Generative AI*.

On the following pages, you can see details of each course and find a QR Code and web address that will take you directly to that course.



## Course 1

### Understanding Generative AI

This introductory course takes approximately one hour to complete. It explores what Generative AI is, focusing on Large Language Models (LLMs) like ChatGPT, how to control outputs from LLMs, as well as some of the issues surrounding LLMs use for legal information.



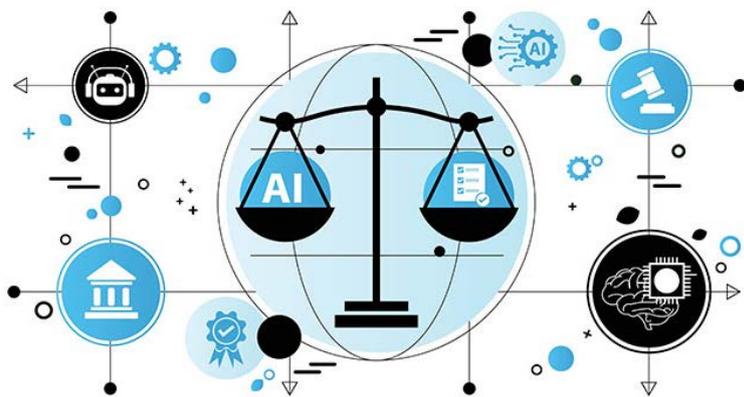
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## Course 2

### Skills and strategies for using Generative AI

This course covers prompting LLMs and how to evaluate responses from LLMs for correctness, bias, suitability, and quality.



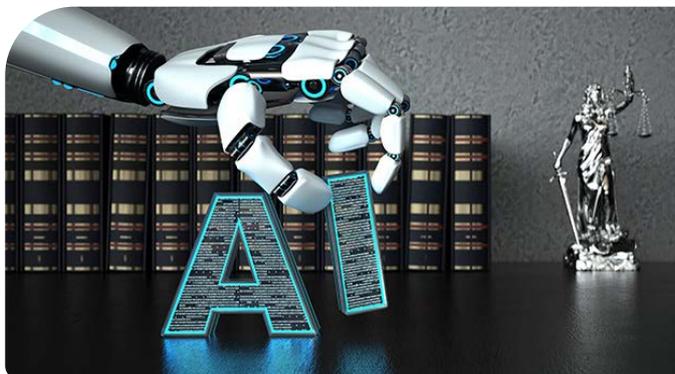
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## Course 3

### Key considerations for successful Generative AI adoption

This course considers various topics like strategy, objectives and use cases for Generative AI, as well as model selection, data management, deployment and integration, monitoring and evaluation, risk management, and future-proofing. It is designed to be practical, suggesting some of the questions organisations should ask and things to consider when using AI tools.



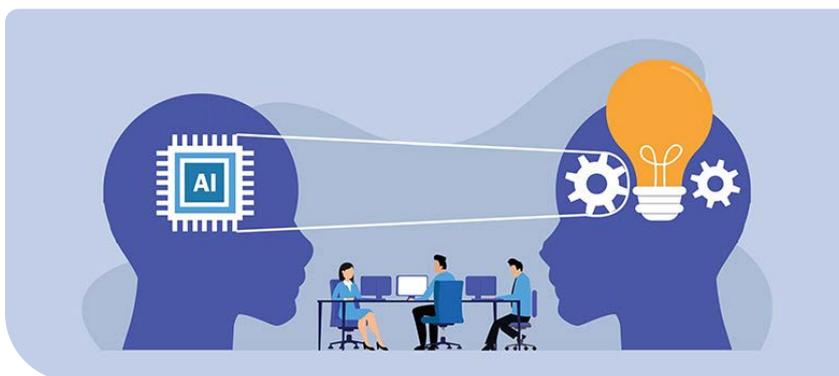
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## Course 4

### Use cases for Generative AI

This course provides practical examples of how Generative AI tools are being used in the advice and the legal sector.



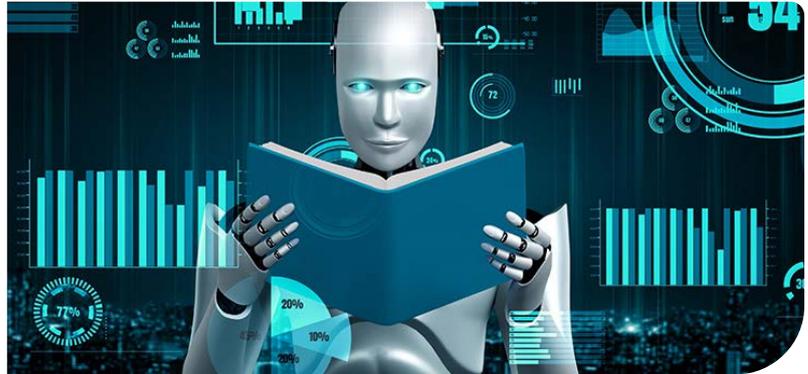
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## Course 5

### Ethical and responsible use of Generative AI

This course is divided into three parts. Part 1 considers key concerns when using Generative AI, such as hallucinations, data privacy, and explainability. Part 2 explores bias, societal concerns, and environmental impacts of Generative AI. Part 3 discusses how to use AI tools ethically and responsibly.



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## Course 6

### Navigating risk management

This course focuses on supporting managers of organisations in identifying the risks associated with using Generative AI tools and equipping them with the knowledge to navigate those risks.



Microvone | Dreamstime.com





## Why should I study these courses?

The AI Law and Legal Training courses have been designed to provide practical introductory training that supports the responsible and ethical use of Generative AI tools in advisory and legal contexts.

Upon completing each free course, learners who pass the final short quiz will receive a certificate of participation and a digital badge, making the courses ideal for professional development.

Importantly, all of the courses were developed in partnership with the legal and advisory sector, meaning they are closely aligned with real-world practice and the needs of practitioners.



I found the 'AI Law and Legal Training' courses helpful in providing me with an overview of the history and development of AI up to the current day. The course content enabled me to clearly see the opportunities and challenges of using AI tools within my advice-giving role at Citizen Advice. The practical examples allowed me to explore different "real-life" scenarios I may face within my current role. I would definitely recommend having a look at these courses and learning more about Generative AI, as it is integral to the future of our business and everyday life.

**Advisor, Citizens Advice SORT**



We have designed these courses for volunteers, advisers, managers, and trustees in charities and free advice organisations, as well as legal professionals and law students.

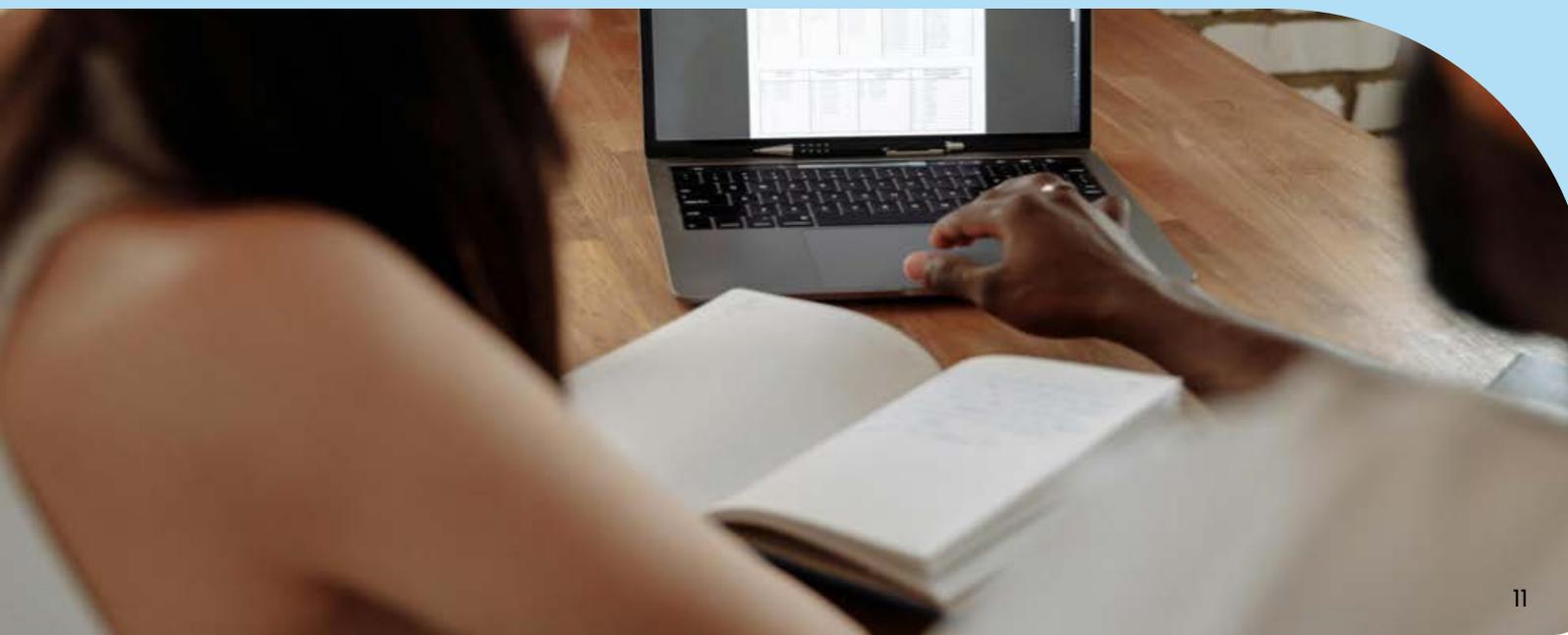


I have completed the 'AI Law and Legal Training' course collection, and have been happy to recommend it to both colleagues and students at The City Law School.

The discipline-specific context of these resources makes a valuable contribution to knowledge and understanding around responsible and ethical use of Generative AI tools in legal advice settings.

The recommended pathways effectively signpost relevant topics to specific users, and the learning materials are really engaging and importantly, don't assume any prior technical knowledge.

**Academic, at The City Law School**



# 04 Generative AI best practice

## What Generative AI best practices will I learn?

### **When to use Generative AI:**

- Use AI for low-risk, non-confidential tasks (e.g., drafting ideas, summarising public information, creating templates).
- Do not use AI for anything involving confidential, sensitive, or client-identifying details.
- Use your risk assessment checklist before starting a new AI use case.
- Create an AI use policy and set a review period, as it should be an iterative process to reflect the fast-paced changes in AI.

### **Keep information safe:**

- Never put confidential, personal, or client information into public AI tools.
- Check the terms of any AI tool to ensure that data is protected and not reused for training the AI (i.e., it remains private).
- Remove or anonymise any personal data before using AI.
- Ensure that any AI tools and workflows you use comply with data protection laws.

### **Build skills across your organisation:**

- Everyone must complete basic AI Literacy training to ensure the responsible use of AI across your organisation.
- Focus on:
  - What Generative AI can and cannot do,
  - How to write safe prompts,
  - How to check and challenge AI outputs.
- Keep a record of who has completed the training and when training updates are needed.

### **Be open, transparent, and ethical:**

- Tell clients or partners when AI is used in your work.
- Check the background, reliability, and risks of AI tools before adopting.
- Follow all relevant professional, regulatory, and organisational rules for AI use.
- Read any practice rules/guidelines on the use of Generative AI relevant to your (a) organisation and (b) use case.

### **Keep humans in charge:**

- Always review, fact-check, and sense-check Generative AI outputs.
- AI can support work but must not replace professional judgement.
- Keep a simple log of AI use so the organisation can monitor risks and improve practice.
- Review the log when you review your AI use policy.

# 05 Conclusion

AI is already transforming the way we work. To keep pace, organisations must build strong AI capabilities. This involves providing AI Literacy training for all staff and volunteers, as well as creating a clear plan for effectively upskilling them. After all, developing AI Literacy is a shared responsibility across organisations.



An awareness of legal AI is essential for all lawyers whether or not they themselves choose to use it. Many of the parties they encounter daily, be they clients, lawyers or other stakeholders, will use it with all the benefits and challenges that brings.

I am currently viewing the 'AI Law and Legal Training' series of free online courses provided by The Open University and the University of Lincoln and I am finding them to be an excellent resource.

**Partner, at a Law Firm**



# 06 About

## The Open University Law School and Open Justice Centre

The AI Law and Legal Training series featured in this document is funded by the UKRI and Responsible AI initiative and developed in partnership with Citizens Advice and academics: Francine Ryan, Liz Hardie, Daniel Gooch and Kevin Waugh from The Open University and Kim Barker from the University of Lincoln.

The Law School at The Open University is a leader in flexible learning for over 25 years and offers world renowned and innovative legal education. More than 60,000 people have already studied with the Law School, and our undergraduate law degree is the most popular in the UK.

Situated in the Law School, the vision and strategy of The Open Justice Centre is to empower law students to deliver the social justice mission of The Open University by inculcating a commitment to public service. The Centre develops innovative pedagogy that provides students with the opportunity to enhance their skills and experiences to support them in the changing employment market. This is underpinned by pioneering cutting edge research that informs the curriculum and showcases technology enhanced experiential learning.



**Find out more at**

**[law-school.open.ac.uk](http://law-school.open.ac.uk)**

**[university.open.ac.uk/open-justice](http://university.open.ac.uk/open-justice)**

If you have any questions, please contact:

**Dr Francine Ryan**, Senior Lecturer in Law,

Director Open Justice Centre, The OU Law School:

**[francine.ryan@open.ac.uk](mailto:francine.ryan@open.ac.uk)**

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