TRUSTED
DATA AND TECHNOLOGY
INSTITUTE

Generative AI Fundamentals 101

Course guide

A free course for people who work in public agencies

7 modules · 35 short video segments · about 1 hour 40 minutes of video
A short quiz after Modules 1 to 6, a 12-question final quiz, and a certificate

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About the course

Generative AI Fundamentals 101 is a free, self-paced video course from the Trusted Data and Technology Institute (TDTI). It teaches public employees how to use generative AI tools such as ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot safely and well at work: what the tools are, how to write a clear prompt, how to use them for everyday tasks, how to check what they produce, and how to protect the information you handle.

Who it is for

People who work in any public agency: city, county and state offices, schools, courts, health and social services, libraries and more. No technical background is needed. The course says "the people you serve" rather than assuming one kind of agency, and every example names its setting.

At a glance

Cost	Free for staff of approved public agencies
Format	Narrated video with slides and captions. Seven modules of five short segments each, watched at your own pace.
Length	About 1 hour 40 minutes of video, plus quizzes. Modules run 9:34 to 17:34; segments run about 1 to 5 minutes.
Assessment	A 5-question quiz after each of Modules 1 to 6 (4 of 5 to pass), and a 12-question final quiz in Module 7 (10 of 12 to pass). Each module quiz has a separate retake set.
Completion	Pass the final quiz to receive a TDTI certificate showing your name, dates and the course version, then take a short course survey.

What you will be able to do

By the end of the course you will be able to:

- Explain what generative AI is: it produces plausible text, not verified truth
- Tell common tools apart, and know that being able to open a tool is not approval to use it for work
- Write a prompt that reads like a clear brief, and improve a draft in rounds
- Use AI for summaries, emails, plain-language rewrites and meeting notes, while you stay the judge
- Check facts, numbers, sources, bias and tone with one routine: verify, then trust
- Decide what is safe to paste, handle AI chats as possible public records, and say when AI helped
- Start with one task, measure the time saved, and share what works

How your agency gets access

Step	What happens
1	Your department head, or another leader who can approve staff training, requests the training through the online form on the TDTI website or by email to **info@trusteddti.com**.
2	TDTI reviews and approves the request. The training is free for your staff.
3	Staff enroll with their agency email.
4	Staff learn at their own pace and take the final quiz.

Setup is easy and takes a few minutes. A short introduction video (1:24) walks through these steps.

Course map

Each module has five segments. In Modules 1 to 6, the fifth segment reviews five questions with their answers, and the module quiz follows the video. Module 7 ends with the final quiz.

#	Title	Segments	Video	Assessment
1	**What AI is and is not**	What AI is and is not, AI, machine learning, and generative AI, Why AI can sound confident and still be wrong, What AI cannot know, review	16:02	5-question quiz (4 of 5)
2	**The tools you will use**	Three tools you will hear about, Why your account matters, Finding out what your agency allows, Matching tools to tasks, review	14:15	5-question quiz (4 of 5)
3	**Prompting fundamentals**	What a prompt is, and why it matters, The building blocks of a clear prompt, Examples, and letting the tool ask questions, Improving a draft in rounds, review	14:02	5-question quiz (4 of 5)
4	**Everyday work tasks**	Summarizing long documents, Drafting emails and letters, Rewriting in plain language, Meeting notes, and Copilot in your work apps, review	12:52	5-question quiz (4 of 5)
5	**Checking AI output**	Checking facts and numbers, Invented sources and links, Bias and tone, Verify, then trust, review	15:35	5-question quiz (4 of 5)
6	**Safe and responsible use**	Decide before you paste, Personal and confidential information, Public records and retention, Disclosure and mistakes, review	17:34	5-question quiz (4 of 5)
7	**Action plan and final quiz**	Start small, Write your action plan, Measure and share what works, Course recap, Final quiz and what's next	9:34	12-question final quiz (10 of 12)
	Course introduction	What the course covers and how your agency gets access	1:24	None
	Total		**1:39:53**	

Video lengths are measured from the current course videos and include the title cards between segments. The total does not include the introduction video or time spent on quizzes.

MODULE 1

What AI is and is not

16:02 of video · five segments · 5-question quiz after the video

Learners get a plain-language picture of generative AI: what tools such as ChatGPT and Copilot do, how they relate to AI and machine learning, why they can sound confident and still be wrong, and what they cannot know about your agency.

What you will learn

- Explain what generative AI does, in plain language
- Explain why it can sound confident and still be wrong
- Recognize where it helps, and where it does not

Segments

#	Segment	Length
1.1	**What AI is and is not** Who the course is for, what ChatGPT and Copilot are, and what AI is not. **Key points:** Useful assistant: drafts, summaries, ideas · You stay responsible for the result	2:47
1.2	**AI, machine learning, and generative AI** How AI, machine learning and generative AI fit inside one another, and what a large language model is. **Key points:** AI is the broad field; generative AI is one part of it · Generative AI creates new content from learned patterns	2:56
1.3	**Why AI can sound confident and still be wrong** Why fluent answers can be false (confabulation), with a real example and what the makers say. **Key points:** Confident is not the same as correct · Check facts, numbers, names, and citations	3:08
1.4	**What AI cannot know** Knowledge cut-off dates, why the tool does not know your agency, and what changes when it is connected to your files. **Key points:** It knows patterns, not your agency's facts · Recent changes may be missing	2:29
1.5	**Review and knowledge check** Five review questions with answers, then the module quiz.	4:30

MODULE 2

The tools you will use

14:15 of video · five segments · 5-question quiz after the video

Learners tell three common tools apart, see why the type of account changes the rules, and learn how to find out what their agency allows before they use any tool for work.

What you will learn

- Tell three common tools apart
- Know why your account type matters
- Pick the right approved tool for a task

Segments

#	Segment	Length
2.1	**Three tools you will hear about** ChatGPT, Copilot Chat and Microsoft 365 Copilot, and why not every tool is approved for work. **Key points:** Similar names, different tools · Copilot Chat is not the full Microsoft 365 Copilot	2:29
2.2	**Why your account matters** Personal accounts, organization accounts and work-account Copilot: same prompt, different rules. **Key points:** Same prompt, different rules · Safe in one tool, a violation in another	2:22
2.3	**Finding out what your agency allows** Where to find your agency's AI policy, what to look for, and what to do when it is silent. **Key points:** Know your agency's rules before you use AI · Silence is not approval	1:37
2.4	**Matching tools to tasks** Choosing a tool by the information involved, worked through three sample tasks. **Key points:** Choose by the information, not by habit · Approved tool, work account, allowed data	2:26
2.5	**Review and knowledge check** Five review questions with answers, then the module quiz.	5:10

MODULE 3

Prompting fundamentals

14:02 of video · five segments · 5-question quiz after the video

Learners write prompts that read like a clear brief, use examples and let the tool ask questions, and improve a draft over several rounds instead of starting over.

What you will learn

- The building blocks of a clear prompt
- How examples and questions help
- How to improve a draft in rounds

Segments

#	Segment	Length
3.1	**What a prompt is, and why it matters** What a prompt is, a weak prompt beside a strong one, and briefing the tool like a new colleague. **Key points:** A good prompt reads like a clear brief · A goal is the minimum; details help	2:12
3.2	**The building blocks of a clear prompt** Five building blocks: task, context, audience, format and constraints. **Key points:** Task, context, audience, format, constraints · Precise beats vague	2:40
3.3	**Examples, and letting the tool ask questions** Showing an example of good output, and asking the tool to ask you questions first. **Key points:** Show an example when you know what good looks like · Let the tool ask questions when you are unsure	2:18
3.4	**Improving a draft in rounds** Improving a draft over three rounds, with a quick safety check each time. **Key points:** Talk back to the tool instead of starting over · Check each round for accuracy and safety	2:24
3.5	**Review and knowledge check** Five review questions with answers, then the module quiz.	4:15

MODULE 4

Everyday work tasks

12:52 of video · five segments · 5-question quiz after the video

Learners apply AI to four common public-sector tasks: summaries, emails and letters, plain-language rewrites, and meeting notes. Each task ends with a check against the original.

What you will learn

- Summarize long documents
- Draft emails and letters
- Rewrite in plain language
- Turn meeting notes into action items

Segments

#	Segment	Length
4.1	**Summarizing long documents** Summaries that say who they are for and what to focus on, checked against the source. **Key points:** Say who it is for, how long, and what to focus on · Check the summary against the original	2:10
4.2	**Drafting emails and letters** Drafting a reply about a delayed permit, and drafting in Outlook with Copilot. **Key points:** Give it the purpose, facts, reader and tone · Read and fix every draft before sending	1:59
4.3	**Rewriting in plain language** Plain-language rewrites, a before-and-after example, and checking the meaning did not change. **Key points:** Ask for plain language, and keep every fact · Check that the meaning did not change	2:09
4.4	**Meeting notes, and Copilot in your work apps** Turning notes into action items, and Copilot in Teams, Word and Outlook. **Key points:** Ask for who, what and by when · Copilot sees what you can see	2:04
4.5	**Review and knowledge check** Five review questions with answers, then the module quiz.	4:17

MODULE 5

Checking AI output

15:35 of video · five segments · 5-question quiz after the video

Learners check facts and numbers, spot invented sources, review bias and tone, and use one routine for every output: verify, then trust.

What you will learn

- Check facts and numbers
- Spot invented sources and links
- Review bias and tone
- Use a routine: verify, then trust

Segments

#	Segment	Length
5.1	**Checking facts and numbers** Why output needs checking, a summary with a wrong number, and how to check facts. **Key points:** AI can be wrong in a confident voice · Check every fact and number against the source	2:49
5.2	**Invented sources and links** Invented sources and links, the Mata v. Avianca case (2023), and how to check a source. **Key points:** A tool can invent sources that look real · Open and read every source before you use it	2:40
5.3	**Bias and tone** Where bias comes from, what to look for, fixing tone, and getting a second read. **Key points:** Tools can repeat bias and strike the wrong tone · Read every draft as your reader would	2:37
5.4	**Verify, then trust** The verify, then trust routine, matching the check to the stakes, and a find-three-errors practice. **Key points:** Verify, then trust: facts, sources, bias, reader · Match the check to the stakes	2:36
5.5	**Review and knowledge check** Five review questions with answers, then the module quiz.	4:41

MODULE 6

Safe and responsible use

17:34 of video · five segments · 5-question quiz after the video

Learners decide what is safe to paste, protect personal and confidential details, treat AI chats as possible public records, say when AI helped, and know what to do after a mistake.

What you will learn

- Sort information by how sensitive it is
- Protect personal and confidential details
- Treat AI chats as possible public records
- Say when AI helped, and act fast on mistakes

Segments

#	Segment	Length
6.1	**Decide before you paste** Two questions before you paste, four levels of information, and why the tool matters. **Key points:** Know the level, know the tool · If you would not post it publicly, don't paste it into an unapproved tool	3:22
6.2	**Personal and confidential information** What counts as personal information, using placeholders, and a paste-or-not practice. **Key points:** Personal details identify or link to a person · Take them out, or use placeholders	3:40
6.3	**Public records and retention** AI chats as public records, what can count as a record, and keeping records the right way. **Key points:** AI chats can be public records · Follow your retention schedule; never delete to hide	2:45
6.4	**Disclosure and mistakes** Saying when AI helped, a sample disclosure line, and what to do if you pasted something you should not have. **Key points:** Say when AI helped · Report mistakes right away	2:58
6.5	**Review and knowledge check** Five review questions with answers, then the module quiz.	4:37

MODULE 7

Action plan and final quiz

9:34 of video · five segments · 12-question final quiz

Learners pick one task to start with, write a one-page action plan, learn how to measure and share results, review the whole course, and take the 12-question final quiz for the certificate.

What you will do

- Pick one task to start with
- Write your action plan
- Measure the time saved, and share what works
- Take the final quiz

Segments

#	Segment	Length
7.1	**Start small** Picking one low-risk first task, with good first tasks by setting and tasks to leave for later. **Key points:** Start with one task · Low risk, done often, easy to check	2:05
7.2	**Write your action plan** Writing a plan with one task, one tool and one check, with a city permit office example. **Key points:** One task, one tool, one check · Write it down	2:02
7.3	**Measure and share what works** Measuring the time saved, being honest about results, and sharing what works. **Key points:** Start small · Measure the time saved · Share what works	1:53
7.4	**Course recap** The whole course in six lines. **Key points:** You know what AI is, and where it fails · You can use it safely, and check it	0:56
7.5	**Final quiz and what's next** How the final quiz and certificate work, a thank-you, and a look ahead to AI agents.	2:26

Coming next from TDTI

Module 7 closes with a look ahead: today you ask and the tool answers, while AI agents plan steps and take actions for you, with new benefits and new risks to manage. TDTI's next course covers how agents work, where they help, and how to keep them safe.

Quizzes and certificate

Module quizzes (Modules 1 to 6)

- Each module ends with five review questions in the video. Each question is shown, read aloud and answered, using true or false or four choices.
- After the video comes a 5-question quiz on the module. Score 4 of 5 (80%) to move on.
- If you do not pass, review the module and take the retake set, a separate group of five questions.

Final quiz (Module 7)

- 12 questions drawn from all six content modules.
- Score 10 of 12 (80%) to pass. 9 of 12 is 75% and does not pass.
- Not yet? Review and try again.

Certificate

- Pass the final quiz to receive your TDTI certificate.
- It shows your name, your dates and the course version.
- Then take the short course survey.

Your action plan

In Module 7 you write a short plan with one task, one tool and one check. Keep it. It is the first step in using AI at work, and you can measure the time it saves.

Sources

The course content is checked against the published sources below. Each slide in the course files lists the sources it relies on, and the course files hold the exact passages quoted. Access dates are in October 2026.

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Course policies (pass marks, the access process, the audience wording and the action plan design) were set by TDTI and are recorded in the course blueprint.