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AI Tools in Education: Faculty Brief

What kinds of AI tools are students using?

ESSENTIAL TAKEAWAY

Short answer: Most students now use AI, and not only to write. They also use it to summarize readings, edit, translate, transcribe and more.

Use it today: When you set AI rules for an assignment, name the kinds of use you allow (such as editing or summarizing), not just the tools, since tool names change quickly.

How US students use AI

A 2026 national survey of 3,801 US college students found:

- **57% use AI for coursework at least weekly** (21% daily, 36% weekly).
- **13% never use it.**

WHAT US STUDENTS WHO USE AI USE IT FOR	DAILY OR WEEKLY
Getting help with coursework they don't understand	**64%**
Checking answers on homework or assignments	**60%**
Editing or improving their writing	**54%**
Summarizing lectures or notes	**54%**
Generating new ideas	**49%**
Doing research for papers	**45%**

Source: Lumina Foundation and Gallup (2026). Uses are among students who use AI for schoolwork at least occasionally.

Elsewhere: In the UK, 95% of undergraduates used AI in at least one way (HEPI, 2026). Among Canadian students who used AI for coursework, the most common assistants were ChatGPT (85%), Gemini (32%) and Copilot (20%) (Academica Group, 2026).

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Five terms worth knowing

- **Artificial intelligence (AI):** computer systems that can perform complex tasks such as learning, problem-solving and decision making.
- **Generative AI:** AI that produces new content, such as text, images or audio, by recognizing patterns in existing examples.
- **Large language model (LLM):** a type of generative AI that produces human-like text, learned from very large collections of text. It's the technology inside AI assistants.
- **AI assistant (chatbot):** a program that holds a conversation with you, such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot or Claude.
- **Hallucination:** when AI produces information that sounds plausible but is wrong, which is why its output needs fact-checking.

Definitions adapted from Bowdoin College's AI glossary (2025), with one added note on LLMs.

AI built into tools you already use

- **Campus-provided assistants.** In a 2026 survey of 130 campus technology leaders, 61% said their institution gives students access to generative AI tools through an institution-wide license, up from 27% the year before (Palmer, 2026). In the UK, 38% of students say their institution provides AI tools, most often ChatGPT or Microsoft Copilot (HEPI, 2026).
- **Your learning management system.** Canvas now offers optional AI features, such as summarizing discussions and translating announcements. Each institution decides whether to turn them on (University of Colorado Boulder OIT, 2026).

Types of AI tools students use (UK data)

Students use AI for much more than writing. Here are the main types, from the most common to the least.

TYPE OF TOOL	WHAT IT DOES	EXAMPLES	UK STUDENTS USING IT
AI assistants that generate text	Draft, explain and answer questions in a conversation	ChatGPT, Gemini, Copilot, Claude	**56%**
Summarizing, note-taking and quizzing	Condense readings, make notes, flashcards or practice questions	Kortext, NotebookLM	**38%**
Editing and improving writing	Suggest changes to grammar, clarity and tone	Grammarly	**37%**
Translation and language support	Translate text or support work in a second language	Google Translate	**31%**
Images, audio and video	Create pictures, sound or video from a prompt	DALL-E	**22%**
Speech-to-text transcription	Turn speech into text, such as captions	Automatic captions on YouTube	**18%**
Coding and data analysis	Write code, or analyze and present data	GitHub Copilot, Julius AI	**17% each**

Share of 1,054 UK full-time undergraduates who used AI this way during the 2025–26 academic year, for any purpose, including their studies (HEPI, 2026, Figure 1). Students could choose more than one, so the figures add up to more than 100%.

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AI use disclosure

HOW I MADE THIS

Tools: Claude (Anthropic), October 2026

What AI did: Found and summarized sources, drafted the text and built the layout.

What I did: Reviewed key sources, selected what to include and revised wording over multiple rounds.

What did I check or change in the AI's answer?
One example: Claude suggested a tip asking faculty to survey students about their AI use. I changed it because students might worry their answers would count against them.

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