

Common AI Terms Explained Simply

AI – Artificial Intelligence – computers that do things which normally require a human, such as understanding language, learning from experience, solving problems, or making decisions. AI is not conscious or human.

Accessibility – Making sure AI systems and content can be used by everyone, including people with disabilities or different needs.

Accountability – Having clear responsibility for AI decisions, with people (not just machines) overseeing and taking ownership of outcomes.

Agentic AI – AI that can act independently to achieve goals, make decisions or take actions on its own.

Agentic Web – Internet websites designed to be used by AI assistants rather than humans.

AI Assistant – A smart digital helper, like Microsoft's Copilot, that can do many tasks and have conversations with you. AI assistants are flexible and interactive.

AI Bot – An automated programme that does one specific job, like answering FAQs or moderating comments. AI bots are focused and limited to one main task.

AI Co-workers/Teams – The concept of people working alongside AI agents as part of a team, with both humans and AI contributing.

AI Ethics – The moral principles and values that guide how AI is used, making sure it is fair, honest, transparent, and respects people’s rights.

AI Governance – The rules, oversight, and structures put in place to manage AI systems safely and responsibly within an organisation.

AI Note Taker – An AI tool that records, transcribes, and summarises meetings, making it easier to review decisions and actions, while following data protection rules.

AI Slop – Low-quality, repetitive, or irrelevant AI-generated content that can clutter communications and reduce trust.

Bias – When AI outputs are unfair or reflect stereotypes, often because of the data used, or bias by those who train a system to use it; identifying and reducing bias is essential.

Content credentials (or credentialling): Data embedded into digital content, which cannot be removed, to show origin, ownership, copyright and other relevant data.

Contestability – The right for people to challenge or question decisions made by AI, especially if those decisions affect them.

Confidence Thresholds – Set limits that trigger human review of AI outputs, especially for higher-risk decisions.

Cyber Security – Protecting systems and data from threats, including those created or amplified by AI, such as bot attacks or scams.

Deepfake – Fake images, audio, or video created by AI to look or sound real, which can be used to mislead or cause harm.

Disinformation – False information created or spread by AI with the intention to deceive people.

Explainability – Making sure people can understand how AI systems work and how decisions are made.

Follow-on Prompt – A further instruction or question you give to AI to refine, improve, or continue the conversation.

Generative AI: A type of AI based on large language machine learning that can create new content, including text, pictures, sounds, video, and computer code.

Guardrails – Rules and limits built into AI tools to keep their use safe, ethical, and responsible.

Hallucination – When AI makes up information or gives incorrect answers that sound convincing; always check important facts.

Human Agency – Ensuring people keep control and decision-making power when using AI, rather than relying on AI alone.

Human Intelligence – skills that AI doesn't have, such as reasoning, creativity, insight, and understanding nuance and context.

Human Oversight – Having people review and approve AI decisions, especially for important or sensitive matters.

Identic AI – an AI assistant tailored specifically for an individual that learns your preferences, style, and needs to act as a highly personalised digital helper. A potential future development of AI.

Inclusion – Making sure AI systems do not exclude or harm any group and are fair to everyone.

Large Language Model (LLM) – A type of AI trained on large amounts of text that can understand and generate human-like language, powering tools such as ChatGPT.

Misinformation – Incorrect information, sometimes spread by AI, that can mislead people even if not intended to deceive.

Predictive AI: Using AI to analyse data to identify patterns, trends and make predictions, also sometimes known as predictive analytics.

Premium AI – Paid versions of AI tools that offer extra features or better performance.

Prompt – An instruction or question you give to an AI system to get help, information, or ideas.

Responsible AI – Using AI in ways that are ethical, safe, and in line with organisational values and the law and regulation.

Retention Controls – Setting rules for how long AI-generated data, such as meeting recordings, is kept before being deleted.

Reviewing – the need for a human to check AI drafts for accuracy, tone and relevance.

Shadow AI – Using unapproved or unofficial AI tools at work, which can create risks for data protection and compliance.

Transparency – Making AI decisions and processes clear and understandable to everyone affected.

Work Slop – Poor-quality AI content that has not been reviewed by a human, creating risks of errors, inefficiency, and damage to reputation.



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