

Course outline

AI Essentials for Governance Professionals



**Governance
Academy**

AI Essentials for Governance Professionals – course details

Mode of study	Online, on-demand	Virtual	Face-to-Face
Method of study	Independent, self-paced online study	Facilitated, within a virtual setting	Facilitated, in-person
Time commitment	6 hours of flexible online study including completion of assessments.	A 3.5 hour facilitated session followed by 2.5 hours of online study including completion of assessments.	
Access period	<p>A short course and aligned assessments must be completed within the entitlement period provided. Entitlement periods apply as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any stand-alone short course registration - 30 days • Certificate registration (3 short courses bundled) - 90 days 		
Course prerequisites	Short courses are open entry. There is no prerequisite study.		
Assessment	<p>A short course is assessed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A final quiz (multiple choice, achieve 75% to pass, unlimited attempts). • A short case study written response (suggested answers are revealed for reflection). • Knowledge checks and interactive AI conversations are included as you progress through the course material (these are not assessed). • See the Assessment Rules for further information. 		
CPD Hours	6 CPD Hours		

Course description

Artificial intelligence (AI) is already present in Australian organisations across finance, health, government, professional services, and the not-for-profit sector. In many cases, it is influencing decisions, risk and stakeholder outcomes without explicit board approval, without governance visibility and without a clear accountability framework. Boards and governance professionals need to approve AI strategies, accept AI-related risk reports and support oversight of AI initiatives, and approach these aspects of AI with genuine confidence.

The aim of this course is to establish the foundational understanding of artificial intelligence that governance professionals need to engage with AI as a governance matter: what AI is, how it works at the level relevant to oversight and accountability, the core concepts of bias, data, transparency and opacity that are central to governance risk, and

why the distinctive characteristics of AI create challenges for conventional governance frameworks in Australian organisations.

Learning objectives

- Explain what artificial intelligence is and the distinction between AI and conventional software. Understand the difference between narrow AI, general-purpose AI and agentic AI, at the level of understanding required to evaluate information presented to the board.
- Describe how AI systems are built and how they produce outputs, including the role of training data, how models learn patterns, why outputs cannot always be explained by their developers, and why the character of training data directly affects the reliability and fairness of outputs.
- Identify the five key risks AI introduces - hallucination, bias, overconfidence, data privacy and the regulatory gap - explain the theoretical basis for each, and recognise the signals that indicate one or more of these risks may be present in an AI system operating within the organisation.
- Apply understanding of how AI works and what can go wrong to the practical situations directors encounter - recognising how AI is used across sectors and inside organisations, identifying when organisational use of AI is creating risk exposure, and engaging critically with primary material on AI-related failures to identify what better AI literacy at board level would have changed.

Course structure

Section A – Governance Principles

- What AI is and what it's not – practical starting point, definitions, misconceptions, examples, narrow versus general purpose AI defined and explained through the governance lens.
- How AI works – training data and its role, models, the black box problem and the governance consequences.
- Risks – risk concepts explained with examples; hallucination, model drift, and bias.
- Types of AI: from narrow models to agentic systems – Large Language Models (LLMs), Vision Language Models (VLMs), Small Language Models (SLMs), Masked Language Models (MLMs), Mixture of Experts Models (MoE), Agentic AI.
- Practical scenarios – explore interactive governance scenarios using AI conversation tools in the Learning Management System.

Section B – Professional Practices

- How AI is used inside organisations – three broad categories of AI use cases explained with examples, shadow AI and formal governance structures.

- Hallucination, model drift and overconfidence – what they look like in practice, organisational implications.
- Bias and organisational risk – how to manage these risks, the dimensions these risks operate across, the questions governance professionals should ask management, collaborating and influencing decision-making.
- Practical scenarios – explore interactive governance scenarios using AI conversation tools in the Learning Management System.

Section C – Personal Thinking

Examines a concrete example of how organisations should govern the use of an emerging and rapidly developing technology when regulatory frameworks have not kept pace with the rate of change. In considering the specific facts of the case, to the governance principles it demonstrates, build understanding of how those principles apply to your own organisational context.

Case study: Hallucination in a government contract – the Deloitte/DEWR matter.

Governance capabilities

Governance Institute short courses address capabilities at the emerging level of our Governance Capability Framework, offering practical learning supported by professional qualifications and experience.

Governance professionals at the emerging level are continuing to learn to support performance in their role. They seek guidance and support on a case-by-case basis from peers and line managers. As they develop their knowledge through study and practice, they increasingly work autonomously and gain confidence in their abilities. As their knowledge increases, they may take the lead on specific initiatives and, in larger teams, may have some responsibility for the activities of others.

Capabilities addressed in this course

- Governance & Oversight
- Risk Governance
- Digital & Data
- Collaborating & Influencing
- Critical & Independent Thinking
- Reflection & Learning

Course author

Katriel Healy, Cofounder of EthicAI.

How will my achievement be recognised?

A [My eQuals](#) digital badge is awarded by the Governance Institute of Australia upon successful completion of the course and assessments.

This badge can be shared across your online platforms.



Certificate in AI Governance graduates (three short courses bundled) become eligible for Affiliated Membership of Governance Institute of Australia.