

COURSE SPECIFICATION DOCUMENT

Academic School / Department:	Science, Innovation & Technology
Programme:	MSc Artificial Intelligence MSc Applied Computer Science (Conversion)
FHEQ Level:	7
Course Title:	AI Ethics and Governance
Course Code:	COMP 7103
Total Hours:	200 (Lev 7) (4 US Credits)
Timetabled Hours:	39
Guided Learning Hours	21
Independent Learning Hours:	140
Credit	20 UK CATS credits 10 ECTS credits 4 US credits

Course Description:

This course provides a critical and interdisciplinary introduction to AI ethics and governance. Students critically analyse AI systems, outputs, and impacts using interdisciplinary methods from ethics, law, sociology, critical theory, and will explore industry standards such as ACM or IEEE ethical frameworks. They will examine developing legislation including the EU AI Act, UK regulatory approaches, GDPR, and major international governance standards. The course develops students' ability to assess risks, analyse AI outputs for accuracy and bias, and consider the broader societal and cultural impacts of AI systems.

Prerequisites:

None

Aims and Objectives:

- Equip students with a critical understanding of the professional computing bodies, and national and international legislation involved with ethical, and governance dimensions of AI systems;
- Further awareness of the societal, cultural, and organisational implications of AI;
- Provide knowledge of major AI governance structures and regulatory frameworks;
- Enable students to identify, interpret, and evaluate AI-related strengths and risks;
- Strengthen students' ability to critically analyse AI outputs and prompting strategies;
- Foster the ability to communicate AI strengths, risks and responsible practices to diverse audiences;
- Prepare students for ethical, reflective, and responsible AI practice.

Programme Outcomes:

A3, A5, B1, B3, C5, D2, D5.

A detailed list of the programme outcomes are found in the Programme Specification. This is located at the archive maintained by Registry and found at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

1. Critically explain professional, ethical, legal, social, and governance dimensions of AI literacy (A3, B1).
2. Identify and evaluate strengths and bias, discrimination, stereotyping, and risks in AI systems (A3, A5, B3, C5).
3. Analyse AI outputs using critical prompts and evaluation strategies (A5, B1, B3, C5).
4. Interpret and apply AI professional standards from the ACM, IEEE and governance frameworks, including the EU AI Act, UK regulation, GDPR, and NIST AI RMF (A3, C5).
5. Reflect on personal ethical positions, professional responsibilities, sustainability, and the societal role of AI practitioners (A3, D2, D5).

Indicative Content:

- An introduction to different ethical positions relevant to AI and computer science.
- Introduce the Ethical computing professional bodies: ACM & IEEE and their statutes and values.
- Historical bias, fairness, stereotyping, and discrimination in computing systems
- AI governance: EU AI Act, UK regulatory framework, GDPR compliance
- International governance: NIST AI RMF, OECD and UNESCO guidelines
- Societal impacts of AI: (positive – Medicine, Science; negative: surveillance, labour, inequality, misinformation.)
- Future perspectives on environmental and sustainability practices AI ecosystems

Assessment:

This course conforms to the Richmond University Standard Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board and are located at <https://www.richmond.ac.uk/university-policies/>

Teaching Methodology:

Teaching includes: lectures, interactive seminars, case-study workshops, AI output evaluation sessions, guided learning, structured debates, guided reading, and reflective learning activities and guest lectures.

Indicative Text(s):

- Beever, J., McDaniel, R. and Stanlick, N. (2019). *Understanding Digital Ethics*. Abingdon: Routledge.

- Bullock, J. (ed.) (2024). *The Oxford handbook of AI governance*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Pasquale, F. and Das, S. (2020). *The Oxford handbook of ethics of AI*. New York: Oxford University Press.

See syllabus for complete reading list.

Journals:

- *AI & Society*.
- *Digital Culture & Education*.

Websites:

- *ACM Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct*. Available at: <https://www.acm.org/code-of-ethics> (Accessed: December 2025)
- *IEEE Code of Ethics*. Available at: <https://www.ieee.org/about/corporate/governance/p7-8> (Accessed: December 2025).

Change Log for this CSD:

Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or AB)	Change Actioned by Registry Services
Guided Learning Hours menu updated	October 2025	
Total Hours Updated	October 2025	