

Instructor FAQs on Genio

What is Genio?

Genio is a note-taking software provided to eligible students with disabilities as an approved academic accommodation through the Centre for Accessibility (CfA).

This cloud-based software is designed to create equitable access to the notetaking process for students who require this as an approved accommodation. Genio integrates multiple note-taking technologies into a single tool, including recording and transcription technologies. It allows students to capture, organize, and refine notes, making them accessible.

Has Genio been vetted by UBC for privacy, storage and security purposes?

Genio has successfully passed a [Privacy Impact Assessment \(PIA\)](#) conducted by a UBC Information Security Risk Advisor to determine that it complies with the [Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act \(FIPPA\)](#), [Information Systems Policy \(SC14\)](#) and [UBC Information Security Standards \(ISS\)](#). Audio is encrypted in storage (at rest) and in transit, cannot be downloaded by students, and cannot be shared within the platform. The PIA specifically reviewed the question of UK-based data storage and found the arrangement compliant with all relevant UBC policies and the law.

What happened to peer notetakers?

Note-taking support for students with disabilities is not new. Historically, peer notetakers and/or cassette-based audio-recording were the only available options to address the access barrier presented by traditional notetaking.

Both models are outdated and no longer reflect contemporary best practices in the field of disability accommodation.

New advances in assistive technology remove reliance on non-disabled peers, address risks related to privacy and empower students with disabilities to manage, engage and format their notes as they require. UBC is obligated to afford a high degree of dignity and privacy to students with disabilities when reasonable options, like Genio, are available.

How are faculty notified that a student is using Genio?

Instructors are notified if a student has an accommodation to use Genio via an official Letter of Accommodation.

What agreements govern the student's use of Genio?

If used as an accommodation, Genio recordings and transcripts are strictly for personal study purposes only. Students are entitled to this accommodation under BC Human Rights law and UBC's LR7 policy. Students assigned this accommodation sign a Genio Agreement with the CfA.

It is important to note that thousands of students who are not registered with the Centre for Accessibility and who do not have formal accommodations or a disability might be using Genio, or other notetaking tools. The CfA has no oversight on how students are using these technologies outside the scope of formal accommodation.

What about the privacy of other students in the class?

We encourage instructors to add the following statement to all their course syllabi and Canvas:

During lectures, recordings may be made by students with note-taking accommodations for disability purposes, using Genio Notes. These recordings utilize the device's microphone and/or content displayed on the screen and are exclusively for the student's personal use to support their disability-related accommodation. This service is provided by UBC's Centre for Accessibility and has met all UBC privacy requirements. All users have signed agreements related to the appropriate use of recordings.

What about my own intellectual property?

This tool is only for personal study use (like a student's pen & paper notes); ownership of the content remains with the instructor and does not transfer to the user or to Genio. Please review [Genio's resources for faculty](#) to learn more.

Does Genio infringe on Copyright law?

No, Genio for Education does not infringe on copyright law. The recordings and transcriptions created by Genio for students with disabilities are permitted based on an exception in the [Canadian Copyright Act \(Section 32\)](#). This section allows individuals with disabilities to make copies of works (including recordings and transcriptions) for personal use, including for educational purposes as long as these copies are not for commercial distribution. This exception enables students with disabilities to use tools like Genio to access content in a manner that accommodates their needs.

How are the recordings and notes made on Genio stored?

Audio recordings and electronic notes are stored locally on the student's device in a Genio-readable format. Data is also uploaded to Genio's cloud storage, which is hosted across Amazon Web Services (AWS) and Google Cloud platforms in UK data centres.

Genio follows the rules of the [UK General Data Protection Regulations](#) (UK GDPR) for all personal data handled (including personal data handled in Canada).

Learn more about [Genio Data Security Policy](#) and [Genio Privacy Notice](#). You may also be interested in reading [Where and how are my Events Saved?](#) from the Genio user guide.

Storage and privacy considerations for personal study use differ significantly from institution-wide systems. Additionally, legal exceptions related to human rights and copyright exist for the purposes of disability accommodation.

How does Genio use AI?

Genio is careful and intentional about its use of AI and is designed with the post-secondary landscape in mind. While Genio utilizes the service of third-party processors to provide accurate and efficient transcription through Automatic Speech Recognition (ASR) technology (converting speech into text), the boundaries of the tool's AI features and agreements relating to AI are clearly explained on [their website](#).

Genio does not train models on recorded content — this is a firm contractual commitment.

I am concerned that the use of Genio will adversely impact the quality of class discussion. Who should I speak to about an exception?

An instructor may ask *all students* to refrain from notetaking during sensitive course content or discussion. If they do make this request, students using Genio for the purposes of accommodation would be expected to pause the recording. In this scenario, it is important that instructors do not assess students on the content of the course material during the 'no notetaking' discussion/ activity.

On rare occasions, the structure or format of a course may mean alternative notetaking support is appropriate. However, this is highly unusual and requires careful consideration by the student's Accessibility Advisor and the course instructor. Legal obligations to the student do not change based on the personal preferences of instructors.

Ultimately, the legal threshold for an exception to this accommodation would be rare and need to be discussed with the student's Accessibility Advisor.

I don't allow audio recording or any technology in my classes. Can I ask a student with accommodation not to use Genio?

Audio-recording and transcription are standard accommodations across post-secondary institutions, nationally and internationally. When used by students who have formal accommodations through a disability services office (Centre for Accessibility), the use of this technology is an exception that must be made to meet UBC's legal duty to accommodate. Please refer to LR7 to review instructor responsibilities in the accommodation process. For questions related to the legal obligations of accommodations, please reach out to UBC's Office of the University Counsel.

Can I require that students delete all course related recordings and notes after the term?

Students who are eligible for Genio as a disability accommodation utilize recordings, notes and transcripts in lieu of the ability to take notes via traditional pen/ paper format (or typing in a word processor). Therefore, asking them to delete these materials could be seen as discriminatory, unless an instructor asks all students to delete or destroy notes in any format. There is no effective way to enforce a course policy like this, but you are welcome

to ask students to delete recordings. Please see the [CfA Genio Agreement](#) for CfA student guidelines on this.

I am concerned about transcription accuracy in this tool. What happens if a student is not getting accurate transcripts?

Genio produces transcripts, not live captions. Transcripts involve additional processing time, which allows for meaningfully greater accuracy than real-time captions. Genio's accuracy benchmarks are ahead of Microsoft, OpenAI, Amazon, and ElevenLabs. Where a specific instructor's or students' speaking style causes persistent issues, we can work directly with Genio's technical team.

Genio brings together audio-recording, transcription and manual notetaking and annotation, which, when combined, are intended to empower students with disabilities to participate in and autonomously manage their own notetaking. It is not intended to replace all forms of course engagement or be used as a reliable transcription-only tool. If a student requires additional notetaking or transcription support, those will be discussed and determined via dialogue with their accessibility advisor and communicated to instructors via the Letter of Accommodation.