Copilot Chat and Microsoft 365 Copilot: what's the difference?

Copilot Chat and Microsoft 365 Copilot are related Microsoft AI services, but they are not the same. The main difference is the information they can work with and how deeply they are integrated into Microsoft 365.

In simple terms

Copilot Chat
Already available through your University account. An AI chat experience that works with public web information and information you provide.

Licensed Microsoft 365 Copilot
Adds deeper integration with Microsoft 365 and can work across University emails, files, chats and meetings that you already have permission to access.

Compare the two services

Question	Copilot Chat	Licensed Microsoft 365 Copilot
What can it use?	Public web information and text or files you provide.	Public web information, plus permitted University emails, files, chats and meetings.
Can it find University information for me?	You generally find and provide the information yourself. Outlook can help with your inbox and calendar.	It can search across Microsoft 365 information you already have permission to access.
How does it work with Microsoft 365 apps?	Limited help with the file open in Word, Excel, PowerPoint or OneNote; some Outlook support.	Deeper, app-specific support in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote and Teams.
Can it work with Teams meetings and conversations?	Chat in Teams uses web information, rather than your Teams conversations or meetings.	It can work with meetings, calls, chats and channels, subject to meeting and transcription settings.
Can it access information I could not normally see?	No. It does not give you extra access permissions.	No. It only works within the permissions you already have.

What does licensed Microsoft 365 Copilot add?

It provides deeper, app-specific capability in Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Outlook, OneNote and Teams. It can bring together relevant Microsoft 365 information you have permission to access, without you having to manually find and upload everything.

For example: “What did we agree in our group project meeting last week?”

Licensed Microsoft 365 Copilot can use permitted emails, meeting transcripts, documents and notes to help answer this. Meeting information depends on the meeting and transcription settings.

What can I access as a student?

- You already have access to Copilot Chat. Sign in with your University account to use it.
- You do not need a Microsoft 365 Copilot licence to use Copilot Chat.

Security and data protection

- Enterprise Data Protection applies when using Copilot while signed in with a University account.
- Microsoft 365 Copilot works within your existing permissions. It cannot give you access to a file, mailbox or site you could not already access.
- Prompts, responses and data used by Copilot are not used to train the underlying foundation models.
- You remain responsible for checking AI-generated outputs.

What does not change?

- University responsible-use guidance still applies.
- You remain responsible for checking outputs.
- Existing Microsoft 365 permissions still apply.
- For your studies, follow the AI in Teaching and Learning Policy and the instructions for each assessment.
- Having access to Copilot does not mean AI use is required. Follow any requirements in your assessment instructions.

For assessment questions, check your assessment brief and Canvas first. If you are still unsure, ask your Unit Lead or teaching team.

Find out more

Student Copilot Support

AI in Teaching and Learning Policy