

Guardrails and Gains

Where are we now with AI
in Education?

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Context

- Generative AI is no longer “emerging.” The question we ask ourselves is no longer “should we use AI” but **“how do we govern, enable and scale AI responsibly?”**
- The speed of adoption has outpaced policy, capability, process, and infrastructure.
- This means universities are simultaneously managing opportunities and risks.

Early responses to AI across the sector showed that:

- **Initial approaches were precautionary**, with many universities adopting restrictive or prohibitive positions to AI usage
- **Decision-making was often decentralised**, varying by discipline, faculty or individual academic judgement
- **The dominant early driver was assessment integrity**, rather than capability building or workforce enablement
- **A shared language and framing for AI use had not yet developed** across education, research, and professional staff domains

What we've learnt:

- Bans and blanket rules were unsustainable
- Staff and students adopted tools regardless of institutional position
- Inconsistency created confusion and risk
- Assessment design mattered more than detection
- Governance without enablement drove shadow use

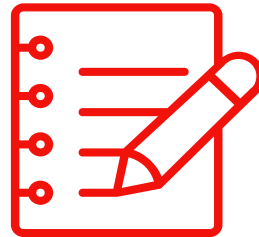
Recognition that AI is not an edtech issue, it is an institutional capability issue.

Gen AI now intersects across:



Learning and Teaching

Assessment design,
feedback, learning
design, integrity



Research

Literature reviews,
synthesis, productivity,
ethics



Capability

Administration, service
delivery, decision
support

The State of AI Integration

Leaders and educators differ in how they view the current state of AI integration and literacy, but students¹ are clear that knowing how to use AI is essential.

Global

Is AI currently integrated into your school's or district's curriculum?



82% of leaders agree



54% of educators agree

Global

I view AI literacy as an essential component of basic education for every student.



76% of leaders agree



54% of educators agree

Global

I feel confident in my ability to use AI effectively and responsibly.



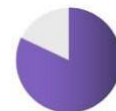
95% of leaders agree



78% of educators agree

US

Knowing how to use AI effectively and responsibly is important for my future.



82% of students agree

A Changing Job Market

According to LinkedIn's "[AI and the Global Economy: Unlocking Growth and Reshaping Work](#)" report, the job market also reflects the need for AI skills.

- By 2030, 70% of the skills used most in jobs will change—with AI as the primary catalyst for the change.
- In 2024, hiring for AI technical talent grew 30% faster than overall talent.
- The percentage of jobs on LinkedIn listing an AI literacy skill increased more than six times in the past year.
- 66% of leaders say they wouldn't hire someone without AI literacy skills.
- In the past year, the number of AI literacy skills added by LinkedIn members increased by 177%.

Journey to the Frontier Firm

Every organization's AI transformation will look different, but here's how we see it playing out over time.

Phase 1

Human with assistant



Every employee has an AI assistant that helps them work better and faster

Phase 2

Human-agent teams



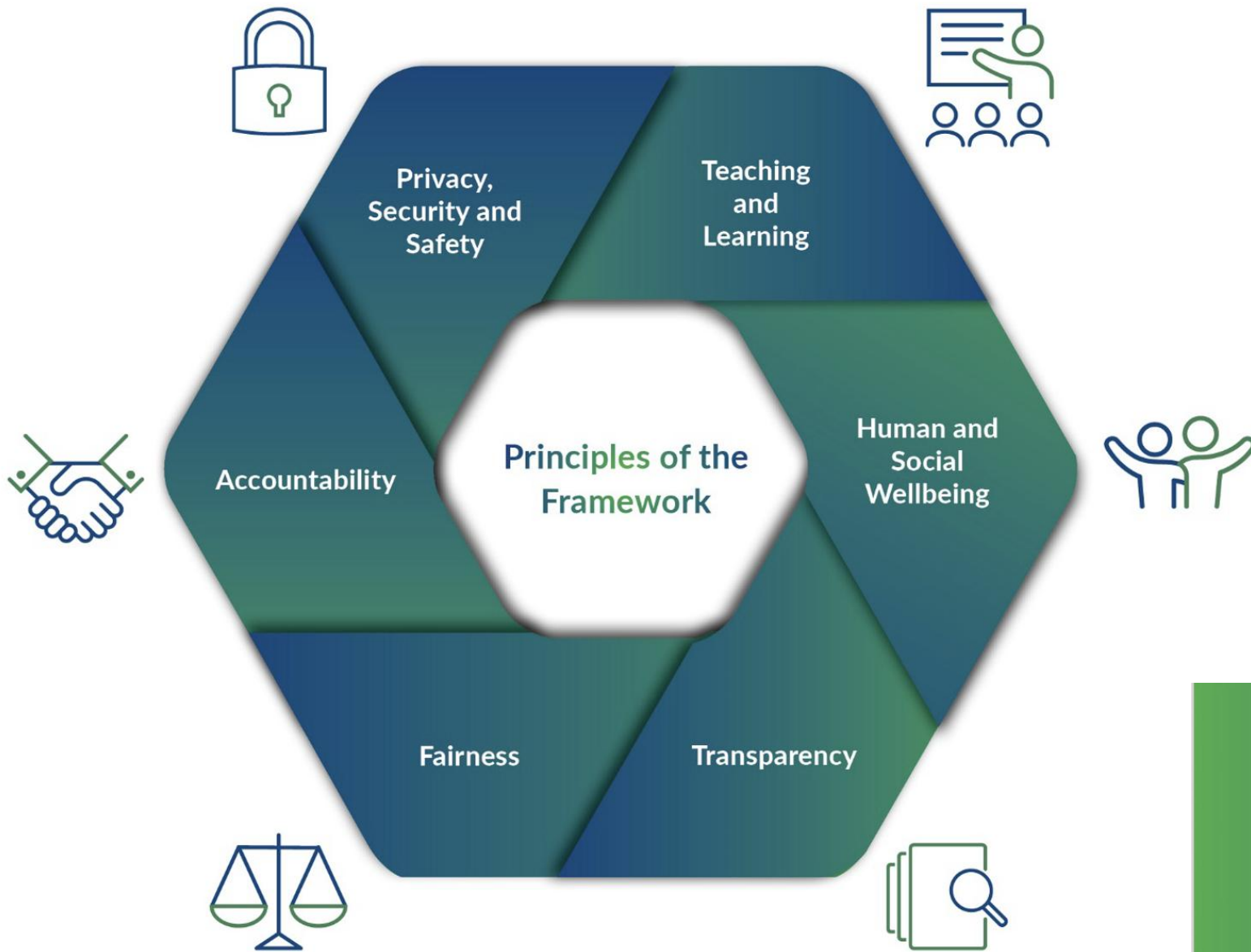
Agents join teams as "digital colleagues," taking on specific tasks at human direction

Phase 3

Human-led, agent-operated



Humans set direction and agents execute business processes and workflows, checking in as needed

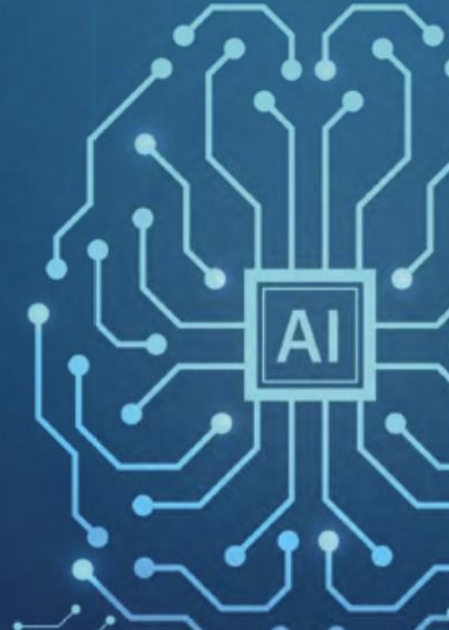


2023

Australian Framework
for Generative Artificial
Intelligence in Schools

Figure 1: Visualisation of Australian Framework for Generative AI in Schools

“ Any use of AI requires ongoing, critical discussion within institutions and across the sector regarding the environmental, moral, ethical, and intellectual property implications of these technologies. Despite the apparent opportunities that AI may bring to higher education, concerns persist about various aspects of the development, governance, and use of AI. A case can and has been made that AI (particularly generative AI) has no place in education (for example, see Bender, 2025), and there may be some validity to this argument. These technologies were not developed for educational purposes and, in many ways, conflict with the values and purpose of higher education. The appropriateness of these technologies for learning, teaching, research, or administration must remain a primary and ongoing topic of utmost concern. ”



2025

Australian Framework for Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education

Seven Principles of Education

Human-Centred Approach

Education prioritises learners' well-being and personal growth, supporting holistic development and emotional health.

Ethical Decision-Making

Teaching practices are guided by ethical principles, promoting integrity and responsible actions among learners.

Indigenous Knowledges

The Framework affirms Indigenous Peoples' rights to maintain control over their cultural heritage and knowledges, including how these are represented in AI systems.

Inclusive Implementation

All learners are valued and supported, with strategies that accommodate diverse backgrounds, abilities, and needs.

Ethical Development and Deployment

The development, procurement and deployment of AI in higher education must adhere to robust ethical standards.

Fostering Adaptive Skills for AI Integration

Learners develop adaptive skills for a changing world, with evidence-informed innovation driving continuous improvement.

Evidence informed Innovation

Implementation of AI in HE should be guided by rigorous evidence while encouraging responsible innovation.

Future directions: Emerging areas for development

The Framework identifies several areas requiring further development as AI technologies evolve:

AI governance and institutional policy

The rapid and often fragmented adoption of AI tools across institutions presents significant governance challenges. Future work should focus on establishing clear, transparent, and agile governance frameworks. These frameworks must address key principles such as accountability, data privacy, ethical procurement, and the responsible use of AI by both staff and students, ensuring a cohesive and principled institutional approach.

AI and work-integrated learning

As AI transforms workplace practices across industries, work-integrated learning approaches must evolve to prepare students for AI-enhanced professional environments. Institutions should collaborate with industry partners to identify emerging AI proficiencies required in different fields and develop appropriate learning experiences. For an overview, see Dean *et al.*, (2025).

AI in academic integrity systems

While significant attention has been paid to the challenges AI poses to academic integrity, less focus has been given to how AI might strengthen academic integrity systems. Future development should explore how AI can support educational approaches to academic integrity, including early identification of students requiring additional support.

AI ethics in curriculum

As AI becomes increasingly embedded in professional practice across disciplines, ethics education must evolve to address emerging challenges. Future development should focus on how discipline-specific ethical frameworks can be adapted to address AI-specific concerns.

AI at ACU

Whole of university governance through an AI Council established in 2024.

The role of the AI Council:

- **Provide strategic oversight** of ACU's generative AI agenda, aligned to mission and strategy
- **Monitor effectiveness and impact** of AI initiatives, including progress, resourcing and emerging issues
- **Set and promote ethical principles** for AI use grounded in human dignity, wisdom and the common good
- **Identify and manage institutional risks**, including academic, legal, privacy, regulatory and reputational risks
- **Guide responsible adoption** of AI across teaching, research and university operations
- **Oversee and evaluate** AI pilots and innovation activities, including the AI Incubator
- **Safeguard assessment integrity** in response to AI-enabled change
- **Ensure transparent reporting and accountability** to Academic Board, VCMC and Senate
- **Foster a culture** of continuous improvement, learning and innovation across the university

Principles for Use of Artificial Intelligence in Teaching, Research and Research Training Policy

Core Principles

- (7) **Respect for Human Dignity and the Common Good:** Artificial Intelligence related activities are to be developed, implemented and applied in ways that respect the fundamental rights of individuals, protect human dignity and contribute towards the common good, in particular the welfare of those in greatest need or at greatest risk.
- (8) **Promotion of Human Flourishing:** Artificial Intelligence technologies are to be used so as to promote human flourishing by enhancing individual well-being, fostering personal and academic growth, cultivating our sense of meaning and purpose, building character and supporting excellent social connections.
- (9) **Integration with the Search for Knowledge and Wisdom:** Artificial Intelligence technologies are to support and not undermine the human search for knowledge, and to increase and not diminish individuals' growth in wisdom and truthfulness.
- (10) **Responsibility and Accountability:** The use of Artificial Intelligence technologies is to be transparent, including disclosure over who is accountable for specific input and impact of Artificial Intelligence, as well as regular evaluation and assessment of the performance, compliance, safety and security of Artificial Intelligence systems.
- (11) **Transparency and Explainability:** Artificial Intelligence technologies are to be developed and used in a transparent and understandable manner. Artificial Intelligence methodologies, algorithms and decision-making processes are to be communicated clearly, easily accessible and readily understood by both technical and non-technical audiences.
- (12) **Equitable Access:** The University is to promote, and where appropriate provide, fair and equitable access to Artificial Intelligence technologies and the benefits of Artificial Intelligence.
- (13) **Human Decision-Making:** Human decision-making is the focus for trust and culture, and Artificial Intelligence must only be used as a tool to supplement human decision-making rather than replace it. Humans retain active responsibility for decisions made with Artificial Intelligence support.
- (14) **Confidentiality and Privacy:** The respect for privacy is to be upheld in all Artificial Intelligence related activities at ACU and integrated into the design and development of Artificial Intelligence systems as a core component of the system architecture and functionality, ensuring privacy risks are assessed and mitigated appropriately prior to and during use. ACU will ensure informed consent is secured for the use of personal data, it is transparent about its usage and considerate of the risk to individuals.

HOW IS AI USED?

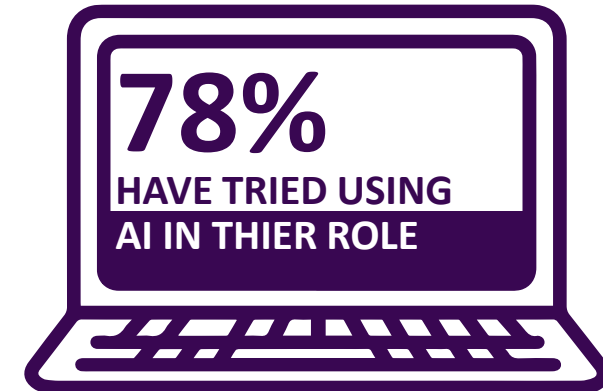


30%

HAVE NEVER USED
AI FOR ASSESSMENTS

84%
Of staff have
attempted AI Use
for Lesson Planning

78% OF STAFF have TRIED AI
use FOR Admin Tasks





Cogniti

Cogniti is an AI assistant developed by Professor Danny Liu of University of Sydney. It allows teachers to create highly customised AI agents that can be steered with instructions and subject-specific information.

How ACU is using Cogniti:

- Staff design their own AI agents
- Cogniti Bootcamps
- Staff-led experimentation
- Purpose-built, educator-controlled AI

Partnership with Microsoft – Agile Insights

Using AI to identify potential duplication between units, particularly by:

- Analysing learning outcomes and unit-level documentation
- Surfacing similar or overlapping content patterns across units
- Flagging areas where units may be substantially similar and warrant review
- Recognition of prior learning (RPL) decisions, along with rules and guidelines to guide future RPL outcomes





Commonwealth Practicum Payments

The Commonwealth Prac Payment (CPP) is a targeted financial support initiative introduced by the Australian Government to assist students undertaking mandatory placements in teaching, nursing, midwifery, and social work.

All supported process:

- Streamline application and evaluation process
- Improve turnaround and consistency



AI use in Research to support:

- Initial literature scanning
- Thematic clustering
- Draft synthesis (with human verification)

Internal guardrails emphasise:

- Methodological transparency
- Human validation
- Alignment with research ethics expectations

From experimentation to transformation

What we are still grappling with:

- Capability gaps across staff cohorts
- Scaling AI use while maintaining consistency
- Aligning policy, training and practice
- Determining what not to automate

The shift ahead – real gains with AI will come from:

- Intentional design – humans in the loop
- Capability building
- Strong governance



AI is already transforming universities.

The real question is whether we will shape what comes next in ways that benefit our students learning, capabilities and futures.

Thank you

**Questions and
Discussions?**

What is keeping you awake at night?