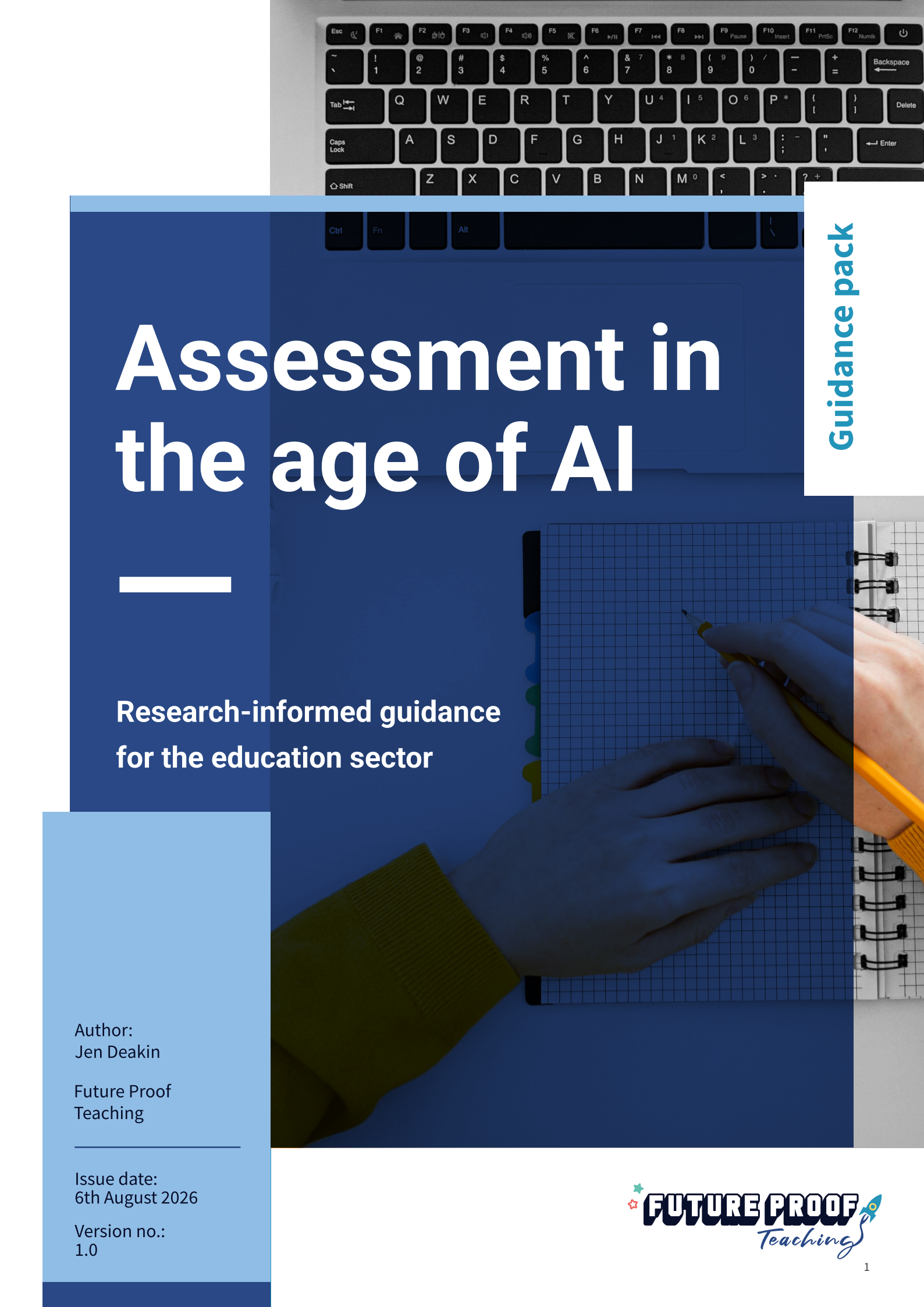




Assessment in the age of AI

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**Research-informed guidance
for the education sector**

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Future Proof
Teaching

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Guidance pack



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Author statement

This guidance has been developed by Jen Deakin, Doctoral Researcher in Education and Lecturer in Digital Transformative Education at Leeds Beckett University. Jen's research explores generative AI, assessment integrity and assessment redesign across Further and Higher Education, with a particular focus on how institutions can protect valid evidence of learning while supporting ethical and transparent AI use.

The rationale for creating this guidance emerged directly from Jen's PhD research and from the growing pressure facing the education sector as generative AI continues to develop at pace. Recognising the need to translate emerging research into practical support, Jen wanted to make the learning and insights generated through her doctoral study accessible and useful to educators. The pack has therefore been created in the hope that it can help the sector respond to the challenges and opportunities presented by AI in an informed and educationally meaningful way.

The guidance is informed by Jen's ongoing PhD research, including a systematic literature review alongside empirical data collection with educators across Further and Higher Education. It also draws on Jen's professional experience of working across both sectors. Therefore, this pack has been designed as a research-informed and practical guide for education stakeholders. It is intended to support reflection, discussion and action across schools, colleges, further education, skills, higher education and related settings.

It is not a formal policy document. Institutions will need to interpret the guidance in line with their own regulations, awarding body requirements, professional standards, quality processes and student support arrangements. The pack should therefore be used as a flexible resource to support educators in developing assessment approaches that are responsive to the realities of an AI age.

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About this guidance

Acknowledgements

This guidance has been developed through a synthesis of current literature, emerging findings from ongoing doctoral research and wider collaborative work across schools, further education, skills and higher education.

It draws on sector guidance, research and professional debate from a range of national and international organisations, including awarding and regulatory bodies, higher education sector agencies and assessment researchers. It is intended to support constructive discussion and practical action, rather than provide a fixed or universal solution (QAA, 2023a; Lodge et al., 2023; Ofqual, 2026a).

Note on evolving practice

Generative AI is developing rapidly. As tools, regulations, institutional policies and pedagogical practices continue to change, guidance on AI and assessment will also need to evolve (Russell Group, 2023; QAA, 2023a; Lodge et al., 2023). This pack should therefore be treated as a living resource. Future versions may be updated as new evidence and examples of practice emerge.

In this pack, “AI” refers primarily to generative AI unless otherwise specified.

Accessing the resource bank

The downloadable resource bank includes editable templates, checklists, policy wording, student-facing materials, staff development resources and practical examples that can be adapted by institutions. You can access the resources via this QR code.



Contribute to the sector

Sector colleagues are invited to share examples of practice, reflections and questions. This will help ensure the guidance remains grounded in the realities of classrooms, lecture halls, online learning environments and assessment practice. Feedback on the guidance pack is also welcome. Get in touch via this QR code.



Executive summary and purpose

For	All stakeholders
Purpose	Understand why the pack is needed and choose a reading route
Estimated time	10 minutes

This guidance explains why assessment practice needs to be reviewed in response to generative AI. It summarises the main pressures facing the education sector and introduces the need for assessment approaches that protect integrity, support learning and prepare students for future study and employment. This guidance therefore encourages a balanced and evidence-informed response.

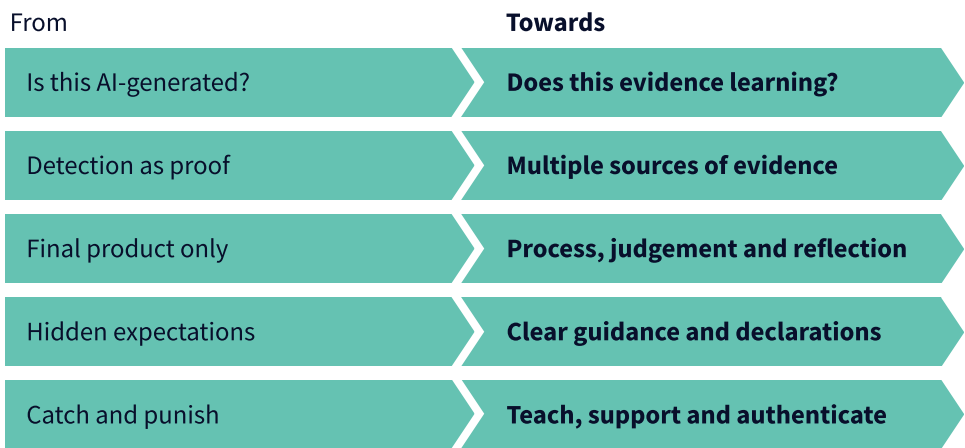
1.1 Why this pack is needed

Generative artificial intelligence has changed the conditions in which assessment takes place. Tools that can generate text, images, code, summaries, plans and feedback are now widely available. Recent student survey evidence suggests that AI use is now a normal part of many students’ study practices, including assessment preparation (Stephenson and Armstrong, 2026). This creates new questions for schools, colleges, universities and training providers about authorship, academic integrity, assessment validity and the role of human judgement.

Many of these questions are not entirely new. Assessment has always needed to consider plagiarism, outsourcing, collusion, authenticity and fairness. However, generative AI has increased the scale, speed and accessibility of these issues. It has also made visible some long-standing vulnerabilities in assessment tasks that rely heavily on final written products without sufficient evidence of process, reasoning or individual understanding (QAA, 2023b; Jisc, 2023; Lodge et al., 2023).

Educators are now asking if students are using AI in assessment. However, a more important question is whether assessment still provides valid evidence of the intended learning. This pack therefore supports a move away from reactive or detection-led responses and towards assessment practices that are more transparent, resilient and educationally purposeful (Russell Group, 2023; JCQ, 2025; Ofqual, 2026a).

A shift in focus:



Future-authentic assessment recognises that students may use AI in employment, professional practice and lifelong learning, and therefore need to develop the critical and ethical judgement to use it well.

The guidance is intended to support institutions, course teams and educators to:

- clarify expectations around AI use
- review assessment risk and vulnerability
- redesign assessment where appropriate
- teach ethical and critical AI use
- respond fairly to misconduct concerns
- align policy, pedagogy and practice
- support students to evidence their own learning with confidence

1.2 A convergence of pressures

Generative AI has intensified a series of existing pressures around authorship, plagiarism, outsourcing, authenticity, assessment validity and fairness. The result is a “perfect storm” for assessment: students have access to powerful tools, while staff, institutions, awarding organisations and professional bodies are working to interpret what these tools mean for assessment design, academic integrity, qualification standards and future professional practice (QAA, 2023a; QAA, 2023b; Lodge et al., 2023; Ofqual, 2026a).

The aim of this framing is to show why simple responses are unlikely to be sufficient. Banning AI, relying only on detection or placing responsibility solely on individual teachers does not address the wider system. A sustainable response needs to consider assessment design, policy, teaching, student support, staff development and quality assurance together.

The perfect storm: why assessment needs a new response

Pressure	What this means for assessment
Rapid student access to generative AI tools	Students can use AI at any stage of the learning and assessment process
Uneven staff confidence and AI literacy	Staff may feel unsure how to guide students, redesign tasks or respond to concerns
Vulnerable assessment tasks	Generic or final-product assessments may be easier to complete with substantial AI support
Uncertainty around acceptable use	Students and staff may interpret the rules differently
Limitations of AI detection tools	Detection cannot provide a complete or definitive solution
Workload and resource pressures	Assessment redesign needs to be practical and sustainable
Professional body requirements	Some assessments must meet external standards or demonstrate specific competencies
Policy lag	Institutional policies may develop more slowly than AI tools and student practices
Student concerns about fairness	Students may fear inconsistent rules, wrongful accusations and also unequal access to tools
Institutional concerns about integrity and reputation	Providers need to protect qualification standards and public trust

1.3 We have been here before, but not quite like this

Generative AI is not the first technology to challenge established ideas about teaching, learning and assessment.

Calculators raised concerns about whether students would still develop mathematical fluency. Word processors changed how written work was produced and revised. The internet transformed access to information, while personal devices extended learning beyond the classroom and timetable.

Each development prompted similar questions: Will learners still develop the underlying knowledge and skills? What should they now be expected to do independently? How can assessment provide credible evidence of learning?

Education has adapted to technological change before. However, generative AI differs in its speed, scale and ability to intervene across almost every stage of the learning and assessment process.

A brief timeline of technology and assessment

Pens/handwritten work

c. 3000 BCE onwards

Writing made learning visible through handwriting, drafts and corrections, although these never guaranteed authorship.



Typewriters

Late 1800s onwards

Uniform typed work reduced the visibility of handwriting and who had physically produced the document.



Personal computers

1980s onwards

Digital tools expanded how work could be produced, requiring assessment to separate tool use from disciplinary capability.



Internet and World Wide Web

1990s onwards

Rapid access to information increased the importance of source evaluation, synthesis and critical thinking.



One-to-one and cloud-connected devices

Mid-2000s onwards

Continuous access to resources and collaboration blurred the boundaries between independent work and external support.



Printing press

c. 1450 onwards

Mass-produced texts and papers enabled wider access to knowledge and more standardised assessment.



Calculators

1970s onwards

Fast, accurate calculation shifted assessment towards method selection, understanding and interpretation.



Word processors

1980s–1990s

Easy editing and polishing removed many visible traces of drafting and support.



Virtual learning environments

Late 1990s–2000s

Online teaching and submission created useful digital records but made the conditions of production less visible.



Generative AI

2022 onwards

AI can support or produce almost every stage of a task, meaning the final product may reveal little about the learner's own knowledge, judgement or process.



AI access and adoption have differed significantly across countries, sectors, institutions and subjects. Some learners moved gradually from shared computers to personal devices. Others encountered smartphones and generative AI without ever having reliable access to a computer.

The history of educational technology can also be understood as a gradual change in the visibility of the learning process.

Handwritten work often showed corrections, notes and variation between drafts. Word processing produced a cleaner final artefact but concealed many stages of revision. The internet made it easier to locate, copy and adapt existing material. Digital technologies also supported the growth of contract cheating, where work was produced by another person and submitted by the student (Clarke and Lancaster, 2006; QAA, 2022).

Generative AI extends this challenge further as it can support or replace activity across the **full assessment process**:



For example, AI may explain the assignment brief, suggest a topic, create an outline, summarise information, construct an argument, generate text or images, simulate feedback or rewrite the final response.

The concern is that AI can create distance between the learner and the entire process through which the assessed work is produced.

This does not mean that all AI-supported work is inauthentic. AI may support accessibility, provide practice, generate feedback or help learners explore alternatives. However, teachers need to know if AI supported the intended learning or substituted for it?

Previous technological change offers several important lessons:

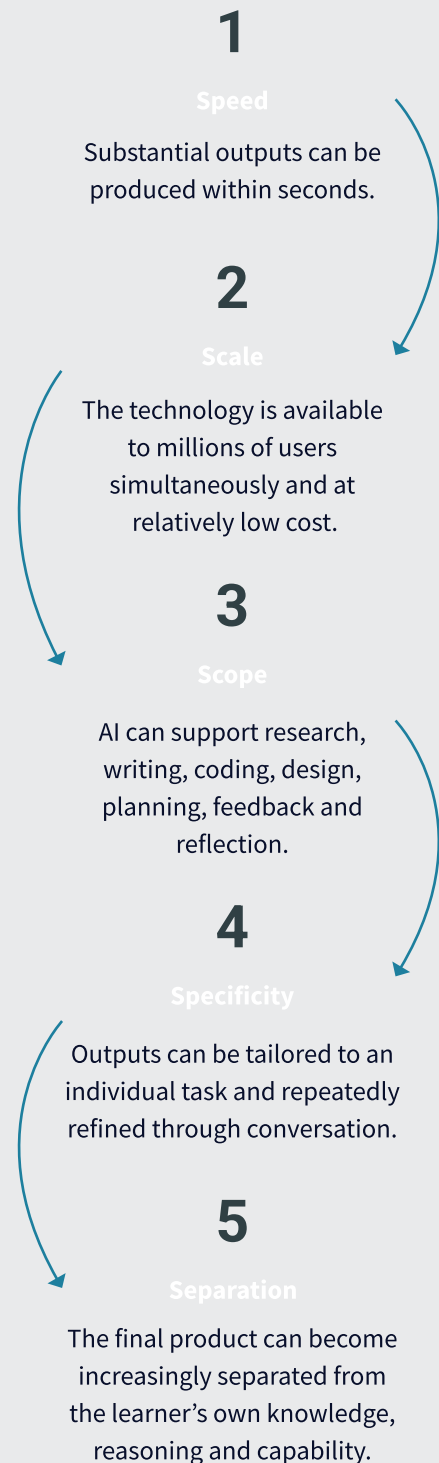
1. Foundational knowledge still matters
2. Assessment priorities may need to change
3. New technology exposes existing weaknesses
4. Restriction alone is not enough

The response to generative AI should be to design assessment that reconnects the learner, the learning process and the final product.

Why generative AI is different

Earlier technologies often automated a particular process. A calculator performs calculations. A word processor supports writing and editing. A search engine helps users locate information.

Generative AI can operate across all of these areas. There are 5 distinct ways that we can summarise the assessment challenge:



1.4 The shifting goal: from AI-proof to AI-resilient and future-authentic assessment

In the early stages of the sector response to generative AI, some discussions focused on making assessments “AI-proof”. While secure or restricted assessment is necessary in some contexts, the idea of fully AI-proof assessment is limited because AI tools are developing quickly and attempts to remove all possible AI use may create unintended consequences (QAA, 2023a; Lodge et al., 2023; Ofqual, 2026a).

This guidance therefore uses two more helpful ideas: AI-resilient assessment and future-authentic assessment.

AI-resilient assessment does not assume that AI can be kept completely outside the assessment process. It aims to protect validity by making learning, thinking, process and judgement more visible.

Future-authentic assessment recognises that students are likely to encounter AI in future workplaces, further study and professional contexts. Across a programme or curriculum, students should therefore have opportunities to learn when AI use is appropriate, when it is not and how to use it critically, ethically and transparently.

Defensive response	Transitional response	Developmental response
AI-proof	AI-resilient	Future-authentic
Try to prevent all AI use	Protect validity and make learning visible	Teach responsible AI use where appropriate
Focus on restriction	Focus on evidence and design	Focus on judgement, ethics and future practice

1.5 How to use this pack

This pack can be read from start to finish, but it has also been designed so that different stakeholders can move directly to the sections most relevant to their role.

If you are a...	You may want to start with...	Why
Senior leader	Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 10, 11 and the Final Section	To understand the strategic case, responsibilities and implementation priorities
Programme or course leader	Sections 3, 4, 5, 6, 10 and 11	To review assessment design, programme-level risk and shared expectations
Teacher, lecturer or assessor	Sections 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9	To access practical guidance on assessment risk, redesign, acceptable use, AI literacy and misconduct
Quality team member	Sections 4, 5, 9, 10 and 11	To consider policy alignment, academic integrity, quality assurance and sector expectations
Student support, library or study skills colleague	Sections 7 and 8	To support students with AI literacy, acknowledgement, academic practice and responsible use
Student	Student-facing mini-guide in Section 8 and the checklist before submission	To understand what is allowed, how to declare AI use and how to use AI responsibly

Alternatively, you can take **two reading routes**:

10 minute route

For readers who need the central message and an immediate starting point.

Section 1 (executive summary);
section 3 (ten core principles); section
4 (stakeholder responsibilities);
Section 11 (from guidance to action).

Full development route

For teams undertaking assessment review, policy development or institutional implementation.

Sections 1–11 in sequence.

The case for change: Evidence and educational purpose

For	Senior leaders, programme teams, educators and quality colleagues
Purpose	Understand the evidence and implications for practice
Estimated time	20-minute scan or 60-minute deep dive

Part A: What the evidence tells us

A strategic evidence route for leaders, quality teams and course teams.

2.1 What the research tells us in 10 key points

Current literature and sector guidance suggest that generative AI is no longer a marginal issue for education. It is increasingly part of how students access information, structure ideas, seek feedback and prepare assessed work. The following ten points summarise the key messages from the current evidence base.

1. AI use in education is already widespread	The HEPI/Kortext Student Generative AI Survey 2026 found that 95% of students reported using AI in at least one way, while 94% reported using generative AI to help with assessed work (Stephenson and Armstrong, 2026).
2. Student use is often ahead of institutional guidance	Students may already be using AI for study support, planning, feedback and assessment preparation, while assessment-level guidance may still be developing.
3. Detection tools cannot carry the burden of assessment integrity	Detection tools raise concerns around reliability, false positives and bias, and should not be treated as definitive proof of misconduct (Liang et al., 2023; QAA, 2023b; Ofqual, 2026a).
4. Assessment validity matters more than simply catching cheating	The key question is whether assessment still provides valid evidence of the intended learning outcomes (QAA, 2023b; Lodge et al., 2023).
5. Clear expectations reduce confusion and inconsistent practice	Students need to know what is permitted, prohibited and required before they begin assessment (Russell Group, 2023; JCQ, 2025).
6. Ethical AI use needs to be taught, not assumed	Students need explicit opportunities to learn how to check outputs, recognise bias, protect privacy and acknowledge use (Russell Group, 2023; UCL, 2023).
7. Final-product assessment can be vulnerable	Written assessments can remain valuable, but some tasks may need process evidence, dialogue, clearer rules or redesign (QAA, 2023b; UCL, 2023).
8. Process evidence, dialogue and reflection can strengthen trust	These approaches can make learning visible and support fair judgement (QAA, 2023b; Lodge et al., 2023).
9. Policy, pedagogy and assessment design need to align	Policy should be translated into teaching, assessment briefs, declarations, marking guidance and fair procedures (JCQ, 2025; Ofqual, 2026a).
10. AI-responsive assessment is not only about risk	Assessment should protect integrity while helping students develop critical and ethical judgement for future practice (Russell Group, 2023; Lodge et al., 2023).

2.2 The literacy gap

One of the clearest themes in the evidence base is the gap between the rapid adoption of AI tools and the confidence, consistency and readiness of institutions to respond. This is not simply a student knowledge gap. It is also a staff development, policy, curriculum and assessment design issue.

The HEPI/Kortext 2026 survey suggests that students are already using AI for study-related purposes such as explaining concepts, summarising material and structuring ideas (Stephenson and Armstrong, 2026). These practices may support learning when they are critically evaluated and used appropriately, but they also create risks where students misunderstand the limitations of AI or the rules of a particular assessment.

The literacy gap can be seen across the following areas:

1. Student AI use: students are already using AI in study and assessment preparation.
2. Staff confidence: staff vary in their knowledge of AI tools, risks and teaching possibilities.
3. Institutional policy: policies may exist but may not yet be translated consistently into practice.
4. Student understanding: students may not know what is acceptable in each assessment.
5. Assessment redesign: some tasks remain vulnerable because redesign requires time, confidence and resource.

A concise definition of AI literacy

AI literacy is more than the ability to operate a tool or write an effective prompt. It combines the knowledge and judgement needed to understand AI, question its outputs, use it appropriately and retain responsibility for decisions. Drawing on Long and Magerko (2020), Ng et al. (2021) and UNESCO's competency frameworks, this guidance uses six connected dimensions:

FUNCTIONAL



Understanding what AI can and cannot do and using tools purposefully.

CRITICAL



Evaluating accuracy, reasoning, limitations and assumptions.

INFORMATION



Tracing claims, checking sources and distinguishing generated content from verified evidence.

ETHICAL



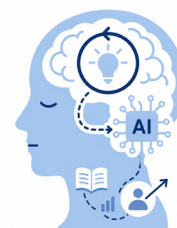
Considering transparency, privacy, fairness, authorship and accountability.

DISCIPLINARY



Applying subject, professional and assessment-specific expectations.

METACOGNITIVE



Recognising how AI affects one's own thinking, learning and independence.

2.3 The detection crisis

AI detection tools have been widely discussed as a response to generative AI, but they cannot carry the burden of assessment integrity alone. Detection may appear to offer certainty, but current evidence suggests that AI-generated text can be difficult to identify reliably and that detection tools can produce false or uncertain results.

A study at the University of Reading submitted AI-generated exam answers into a real university assessment system. The AI-generated submissions went undetected in 94% of cases and, on average, achieved higher grades than real student submissions (Scarfe et al., 2024). There are also concerns about fairness. Liang et al. (2023) found that GPT detectors frequently misclassified non-native English writing as AI-generated.

For these reasons, detection scores should not be treated as proof of misconduct. Where detection tools are used, they should form only one part of a wider process that includes human judgement, assessment context, student explanation, process evidence and institutional procedures.

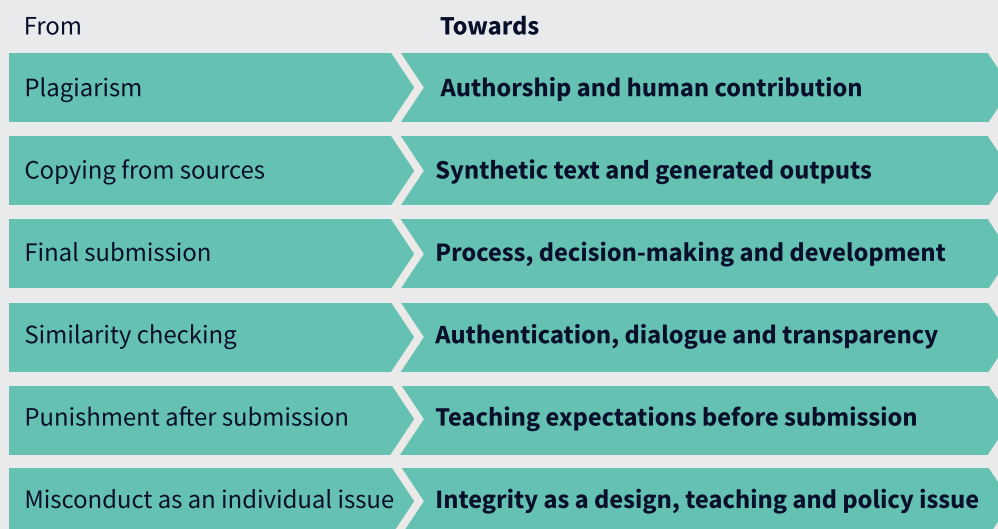
2.4 The assessment integrity problem has changed

Academic integrity has traditionally been associated with plagiarism, collusion, copying and unauthorised assistance. These concerns remain important. However, generative AI changes the nature of the integrity challenge because the issue is not always a direct match between student work and an existing source.

Generative AI can produce new text, images, code, summaries and other outputs. This means that assessment integrity increasingly involves questions of authorship, contribution, transparency and human judgement.

The shift from plagiarism to authorship does not remove the importance of academic integrity. Instead, it extends it. Students still need to understand referencing, acknowledgement, independent work and honesty. They also need to understand how to work transparently with tools that can assist, reshape or generate aspects of academic work.

A shift in focus:



2.5 From policing to practice

The evidence points towards a move away from responses that focus only on policing misuse. Bans, warnings and detection tools may sometimes be necessary, especially where assessments must be secure. However, they are not sufficient on their own.

A practice-focused response asks how assessment can be designed, explained, taught and reviewed so that students understand expectations and can demonstrate their own learning. This does not mean reducing standards. It means protecting standards through better alignment between policy, pedagogy and assessment design.

2.6 Sector pressures

Institutions are responding to generative AI within a wider context of resource, regulatory and quality pressures. Assessment redesign is important, but it requires time, staffing, confidence and institutional support. This section summarises the pressures briefly; implementation is developed in more detail in Section 11.



Regulation and professional standards

AI-related assessment practices must still meet external requirements. Map guidance and assessment decisions against awarding-body expectations and those of professional, statutory and regulatory bodies (PSRBs)



Digital inequality

Unequal access to devices and AI tools can disadvantage some students. Clearly explain approved tools, available access and suitable alternatives.



Quality assurance

Without oversight, practice may become inconsistent across teams and programmes. Build AI review into existing programme and quality assurance processes.

Accessibility and inclusion

AI may create both opportunities and barriers for learners. Consider language, support needs and reasonable adjustments when designing assessment and guidance.

Data protection and privacy

Personal or sensitive information may be shared or handled inappropriately. Provide clear guidance on approved tools, data protection and safe use.



Student uncertainty

Unclear expectations can increase anxiety and reduce trust. Use simple assessment-level statements explaining what AI use is permitted, restricted or prohibited.

Workload

Staff can quickly become overwhelmed by rapid change. Focus on proportionate adjustments and use shared templates to reduce duplication.

2.7 Emerging findings from doctoral research

This guidance pack is also informed by emerging survey findings from doctoral research exploring generative AI, assessment integrity and assessment redesign across further education and higher education.

In this study, a questionnaire was completed by 272 educators working across Further and Higher Education. These findings are presented as preliminary descriptive findings, not as final doctoral analysis. They are included to show how the evidence gathered so far supports the need for practical, sector-facing guidance on AI-responsive assessment.

About the research	
Data collection	April to June 2026.
Recruitment	Voluntary recruitment through professional and sector networks and online calls for participation.
Total responses	272 educators working across further education, skills, higher education and HE in FE contexts.
Sample	A non-probability purposive sampling strategy was used, supported by convenience and snowball recruitment methods. Participation was voluntary, meaning that the final sample also involved an element of self-selection. Findings are preliminary and are not statistically representative of the whole sector.
Valid responses	Valid responses vary by question because respondents could omit individual items.
Further reporting	Full methodology and final analysis will be reported in the doctoral thesis and future publications.

2.7.1 Who responded?

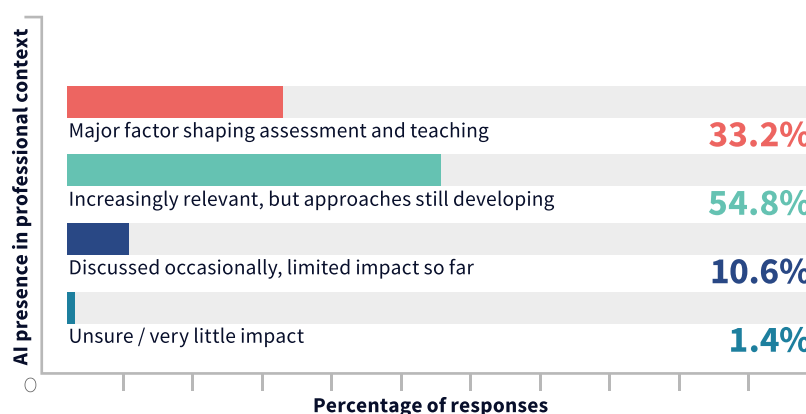
53.0% of participants work in Further Education, 37% in Higher Education and 10.0% work in Higher Education delivered within Further Education settings. Percentages are calculated from valid responses to this item, and denominators may therefore vary across the questionnaire.

2.7.2 Ten emerging survey insights

The findings below suggest that respondents identified a more complex set of concerns around authenticity, valid evidence of learning, unclear boundaries, student guidance, staff confidence and institutional readiness.

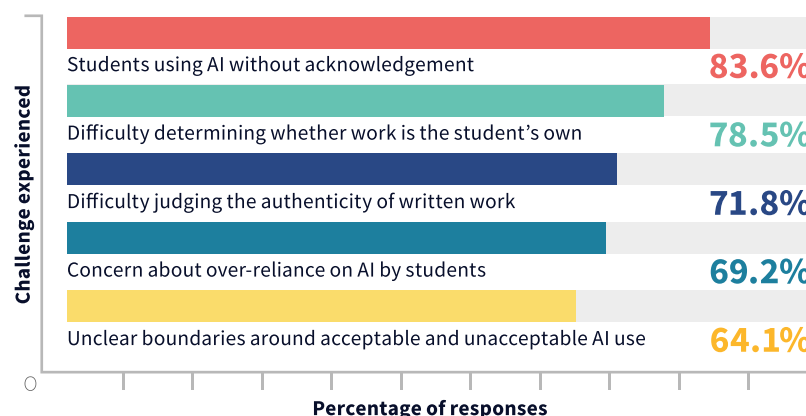
1 AI is already influencing assessment across FE and HE

Among respondents who answered the question about AI's presence in their professional context, 88.0% said generative AI was either "increasingly relevant" or "a major factor shaping assessment and teaching".



2 Authenticity, authorship and undeclared use are the strongest concerns

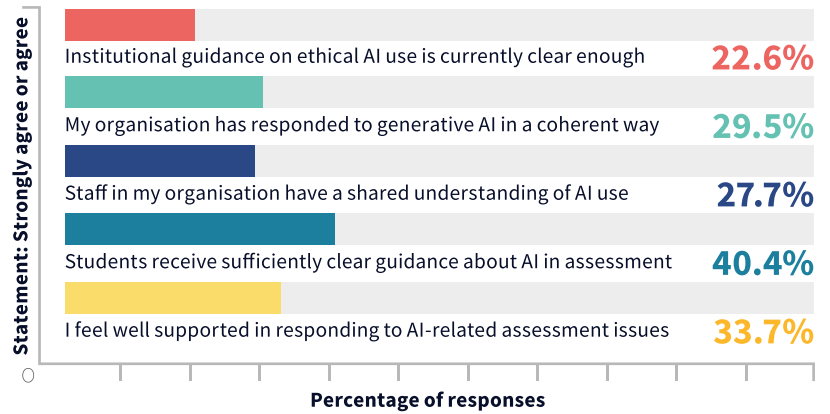
The most frequently reported assessment integrity challenges were students using AI without acknowledgement, difficulty determining whether work is the student's own and difficulty judging the authenticity of written work.



3

Staff uncertainty and inconsistent institutional practice are major themes

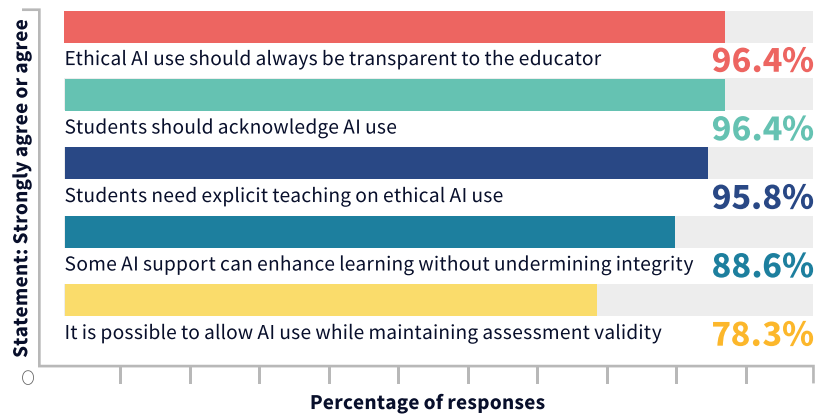
Several findings suggest a gap between AI use and organisational readiness. Only 22.6% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that institutional guidance on ethical AI use is currently clear enough. We need a shared language, confidence, support and consistency.



4

Educators support ethical AI use, but want transparency and teaching

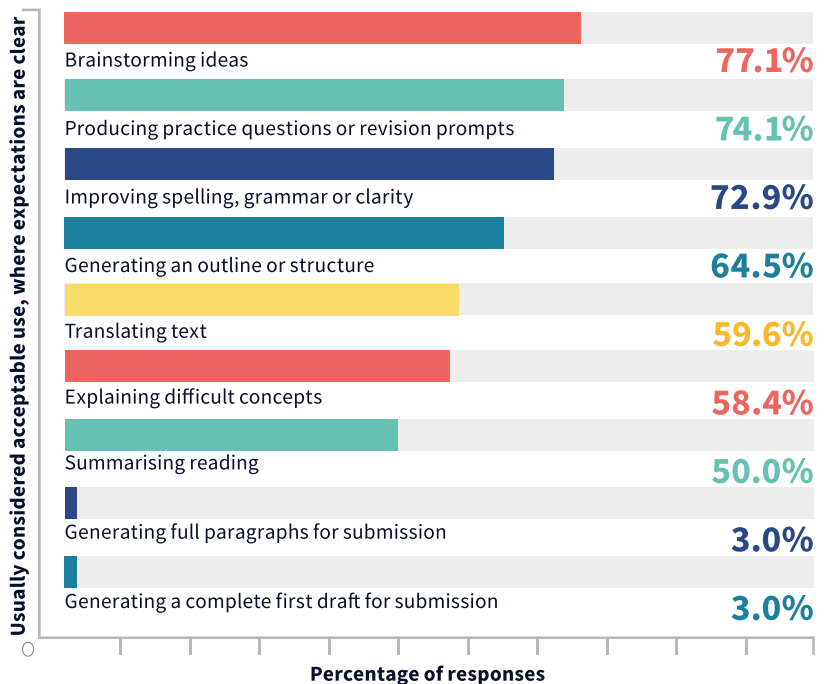
Respondents were not simply calling for blanket prohibition. The findings suggest support for a conditional, transparent and educational approach, where AI use is clearly explained, acknowledged and aligned with assessment purpose.



5

Supportive uses are viewed differently from substitution

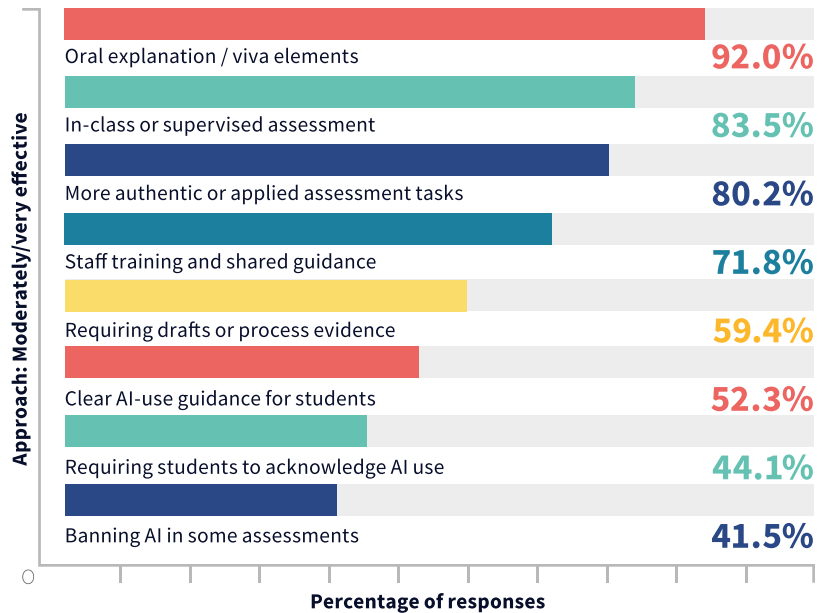
Respondents were more likely to view AI use as acceptable when it supported learning, planning, revision or clarity. They were much less likely to view AI-generated assessed content as acceptable. This supports the need for clear acceptable-use categories rather than a single "AI allowed" or "AI banned" position.



6

Redesign, oral explanation and authentic assessment are favoured responses

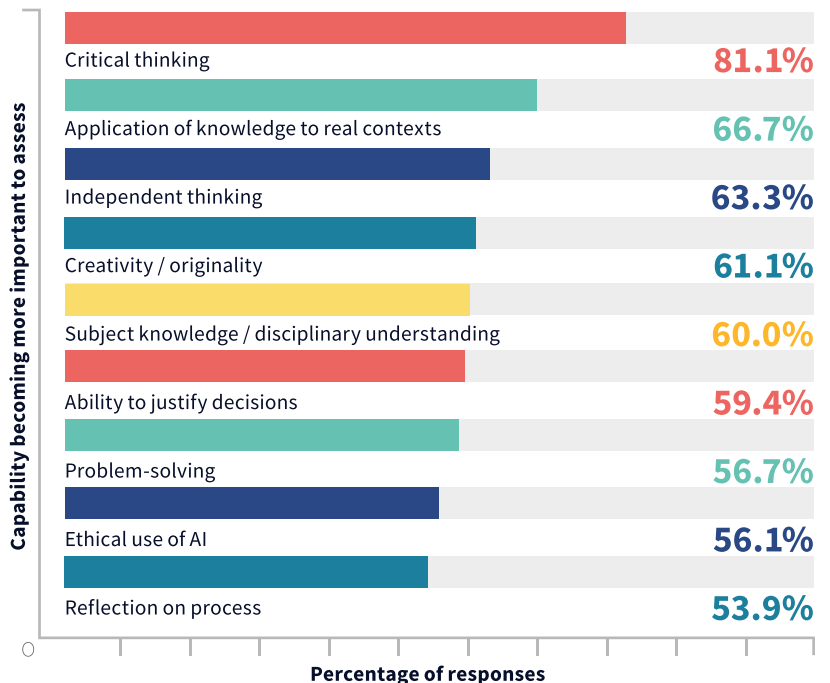
When asked about approaches for maintaining assessment validity while allowing appropriate AI use, respondents rated oral explanation, supervised assessment and authentic or applied assessment tasks highly. This supports the move away from detection-led responses towards richer evidence of student understanding.



7

Critical thinking, application and judgement are becoming more important

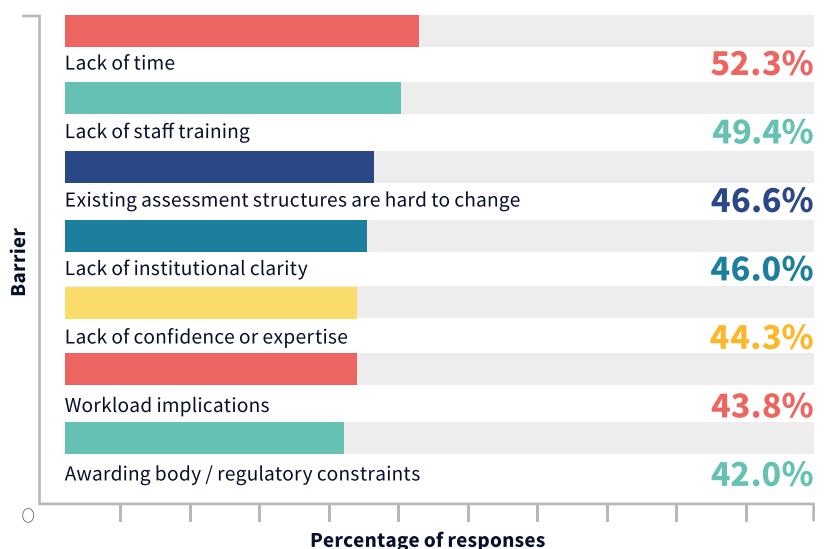
Respondents identified critical thinking, application of knowledge and independent thinking as key capabilities to assess in an AI-rich context. This is what students most need to demonstrate when AI can produce fluent outputs.



8

The main barriers are time, training, confidence and existing structures

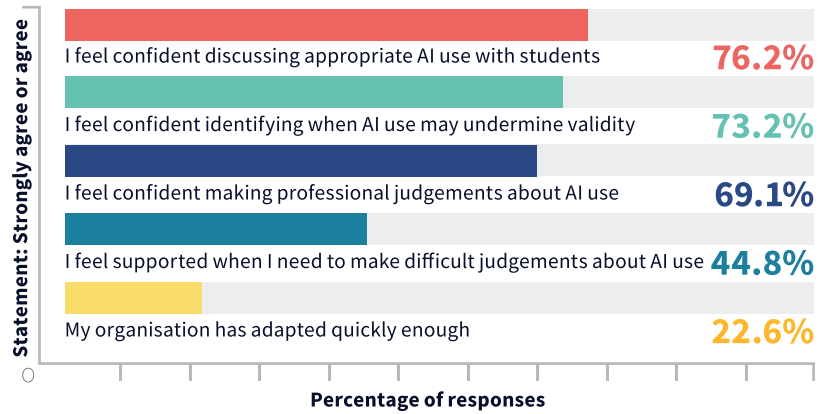
The most frequently identified barriers to adapting assessment were lack of time, lack of staff training, difficulty changing existing assessment structures, lack of institutional clarity and lack of confidence or expertise.



9

Individual confidence appears stronger than organisational support

There appears to be a gap between individual professional confidence and organisational infrastructure. Educators may be developing their own judgement, but many do not yet feel sufficiently supported by institutional guidance, shared procedures or coherent implementation.



10

Integrity and validity are the dominant priorities

When respondents were asked to rank possible priorities, protecting assessment integrity and maintaining assessment validity came first. However, the wider findings suggest that ethical student use, clearer guidance, staff support and workload planning are part of how those priorities can be achieved.

Priority	Mean rank	Ranked 1st	Ranked in top 3
Protecting assessment integrity	1.91	75	142
Maintaining assessment validity	2.48	34	133
Supporting ethical student use of AI	3.40	18	81
Creating clearer institutional guidance	3.99	26	65
Improving student AI literacy	4.37	5	41
Reducing staff workload	4.86	4	24



2.7.3 Emerging qualitative themes

Open-text responses were reviewed through thematic analysis. The themes presented here should be treated as emerging qualitative patterns rather than final findings, as the mixed-methods integration and joint display for the PhD study are not yet complete.

Theme 1: “Is this really the student’s work?”

Many responses focused on uncertainty about whether submitted work genuinely reflects the student’s own understanding. Respondents referred to authenticity, proof, student ownership, denial, undeclared use and difficulty judging what had been produced independently.

Theme 2: Unclear boundaries create anxiety for staff and students

Respondents frequently described confusion around what is acceptable, what should be declared and how consistently staff should respond. This aligns with the quantitative finding that only a minority felt institutional guidance was clear enough.

Theme 3: Assessment type matters

Open responses often linked AI risk to assessment format, particularly generic written coursework, essays, reports and final-product assessment. Some respondents suggested that written tasks may need redesign, contextualisation, dialogue or process evidence to remain valid.

Theme 4: There is tension between restriction and future relevance

Some respondents argued for controlled, handwritten or supervised assessment. Others argued that students need to learn how to use AI because they will encounter it in future work. This tension supports the need for a balanced approach across a programme.

Theme 5: Educators want practical models, not just policy

Open responses suggest that policy alone is not enough. Respondents wanted examples, shared standards, staff training, practical guidance and support for assessment redesign.

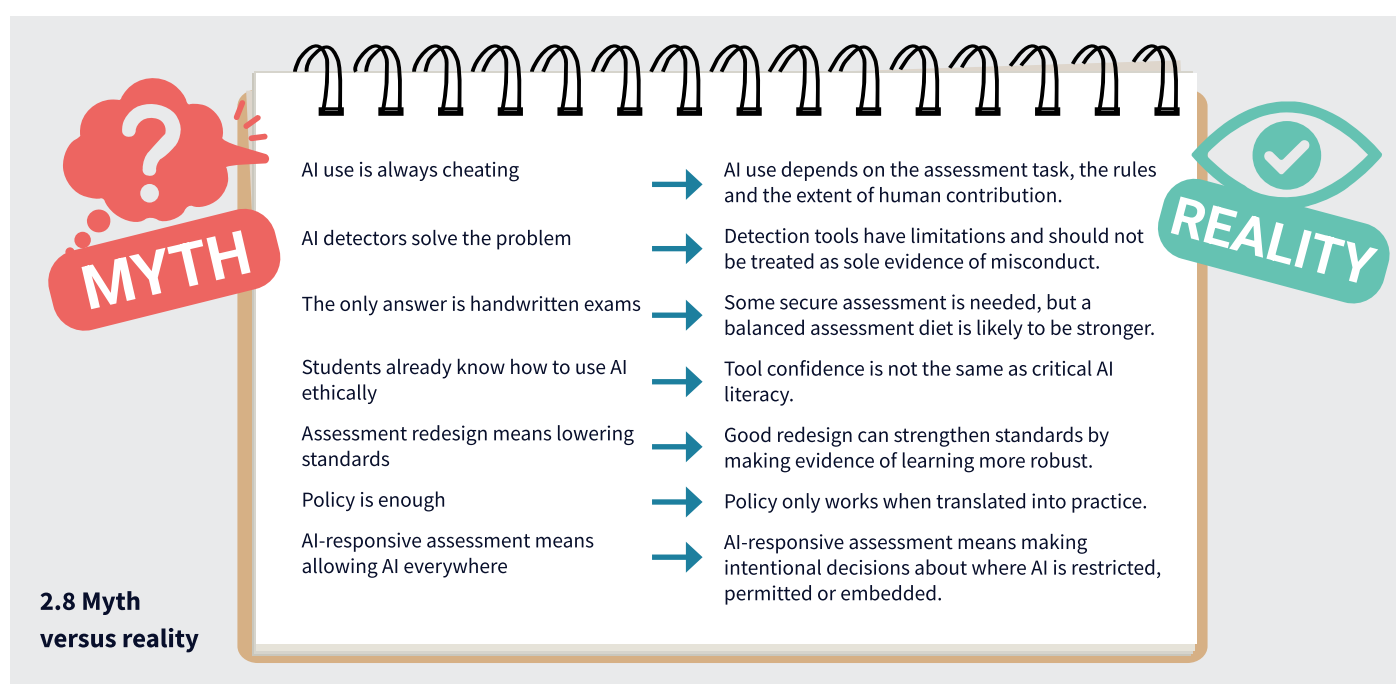
Theme 6: Ethical AI use is transparent, limited and human-led

Ethical AI use was often described as support for planning, understanding, feedback, clarity or revision, rather than as a replacement for student thinking. Many responses emphasised that students should remain responsible for checking, adapting and explaining their work.

Theme 7: FE and HE share concerns, but context matters

Respondents across FE and HE reported concerns around authenticity, clarity and validity. However, context matters. Different qualification types, professional requirements, awarding body rules, institutional cultures and assessment formats shape how AI-responsive assessment can be implemented.

These findings support an approach to AI and assessment that focuses on human contribution and evidence of learning, instead of focusing on whether AI has been used. The emerging findings reinforce the need for clear and consistent communication through shared wording, AI-use scales and assignment brief examples, alongside practical tools. They recognise that some assessments require secure conditions while others can support guided, declared or critical AI use. More broadly, they support the practical orientation of this guidance pack and emphasise the importance of shared principles that can be adapted flexibly to local contexts.



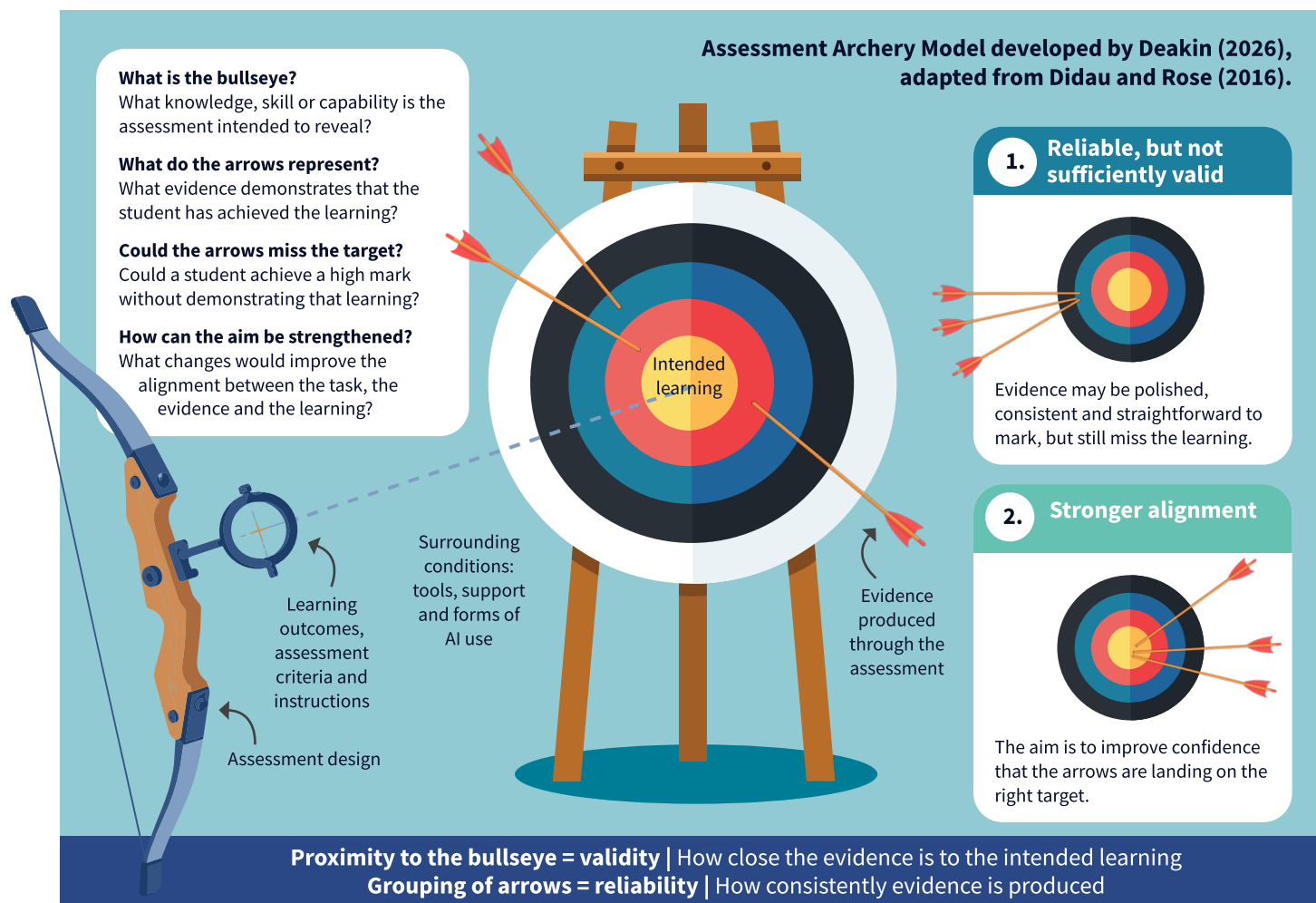
Part B: What assessment should value

2.9 The validity dilemma

The rise of generative AI shifts the central assessment question. It is not enough to ask “Did the student use AI?”. Educators should now be asking “Does this assessment still provide valid evidence of the intended learning?”

This reflects the argument made by Dawson et al. (2024), who suggest that assessment validity is a more important and productive concern than cheating alone. From this perspective, the central issue is whether the evidence submitted genuinely represents the student’s knowledge, skills, judgement and capabilities.

This is the validity dilemma. If a student can achieve a high mark without demonstrating the knowledge, skill, judgement or process that the assessment is intended to measure, the assessment may no longer be providing sufficiently valid evidence of learning.



An assessment may produce work that is polished, consistent and straightforward to mark, with the arrows landing closely together. However, if that evidence does not demonstrate the intended learning, the arrows may be tightly grouped but still miss the bullseye. The assessment may therefore be reliable, but not sufficiently valid.

Generative AI can make this problem more visible. For example, a student may submit a fluent and professionally presented response without personally demonstrating the analysis, decision-making or subject knowledge that the task was intended to assess. The final product may appear successful while the evidence misses the learning target.

However, AI use does not automatically make assessment evidence invalid. As Dawson et al. (2024) explain, AI use should be considered as one of the conditions affecting

assessment validity rather than being treated automatically as cheating. Where students use AI within clearly defined boundaries and are still required to apply knowledge, exercise judgement, explain their process, evaluate outputs and defend their decisions, the evidence may remain closely aligned with the intended learning.

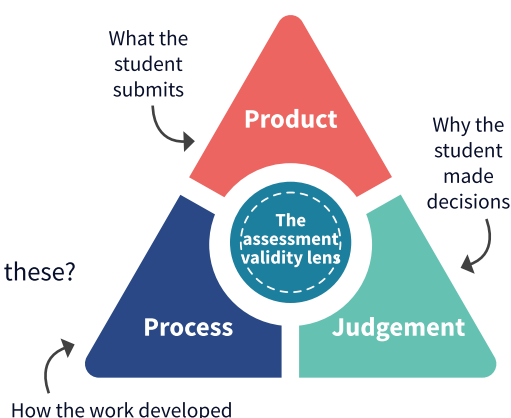
The purpose of assessment review is therefore not simply to remove AI or written work. It is to improve confidence that the arrows are landing on the right target.

Writing remains an important way for students to develop and demonstrate their thinking. However, some written tasks may need clearer expectations, process evidence, reflection, oral explanation, contextualised prompts or more authentic forms of application.

The assessment validity lens

Course teams can use the following questions to review assessment tasks:

- What knowledge, skill or judgement is this task meant to assess?
- Can the submitted artefact still evidence that learning?
- Is the student's own thinking visible?
- Could a high mark be achieved through cognitive offloading?
- Does the task reward output, process, judgement or a combination of these?
- What evidence would help us trust that learning has taken place?
- Is the role of AI clear to students and staff?
- Does the task need to be secure, open or redesigned?



2.10 What should assessment value in the age of AI?

Generative AI does not only create a challenge for academic integrity. It raises a more fundamental educational question:

What forms of knowledge, capability and human judgement should assessment seek to develop and evidence?

Education has never been concerned solely with the reproduction of information. Learners are expected to understand ideas, apply knowledge, develop practical capability, make decisions and exercise judgement. However, assessment practices do not always capture this full range. In some contexts, a relatively polished written product has become a proxy for learning, even when the task provides limited insight into how the student reached the final response.

Generative AI exposes this weakness because it can rapidly produce fluent explanations, summaries, reports, plans, examples and arguments. A coherent final product may therefore provide less reliable evidence of what a student independently knows, understands or can do than it did previously.

This does not make knowledge less important. Students cannot think critically, solve problems or exercise judgement without substantive disciplinary knowledge. However, it does mean that assessment should not stop at asking learners to reproduce information or produce an apparently competent artefact. It should also explore whether they can:

- explain and connect ideas
- apply knowledge in context
- demonstrate practical and procedural capability
- recognise uncertainty and limitations
- justify choices
- adapt their approach
- evaluate the quality of evidence
- respond to feedback
- reflect on their reasoning
- exercise ethical and professional judgement.

A human-centred approach to AI in education should protect human agency rather than treating efficiency or automation as the primary goal. UNESCO similarly argues that the educational use of generative AI should be designed around human agency, ethical validation and pedagogical purpose (UNESCO, 2023).

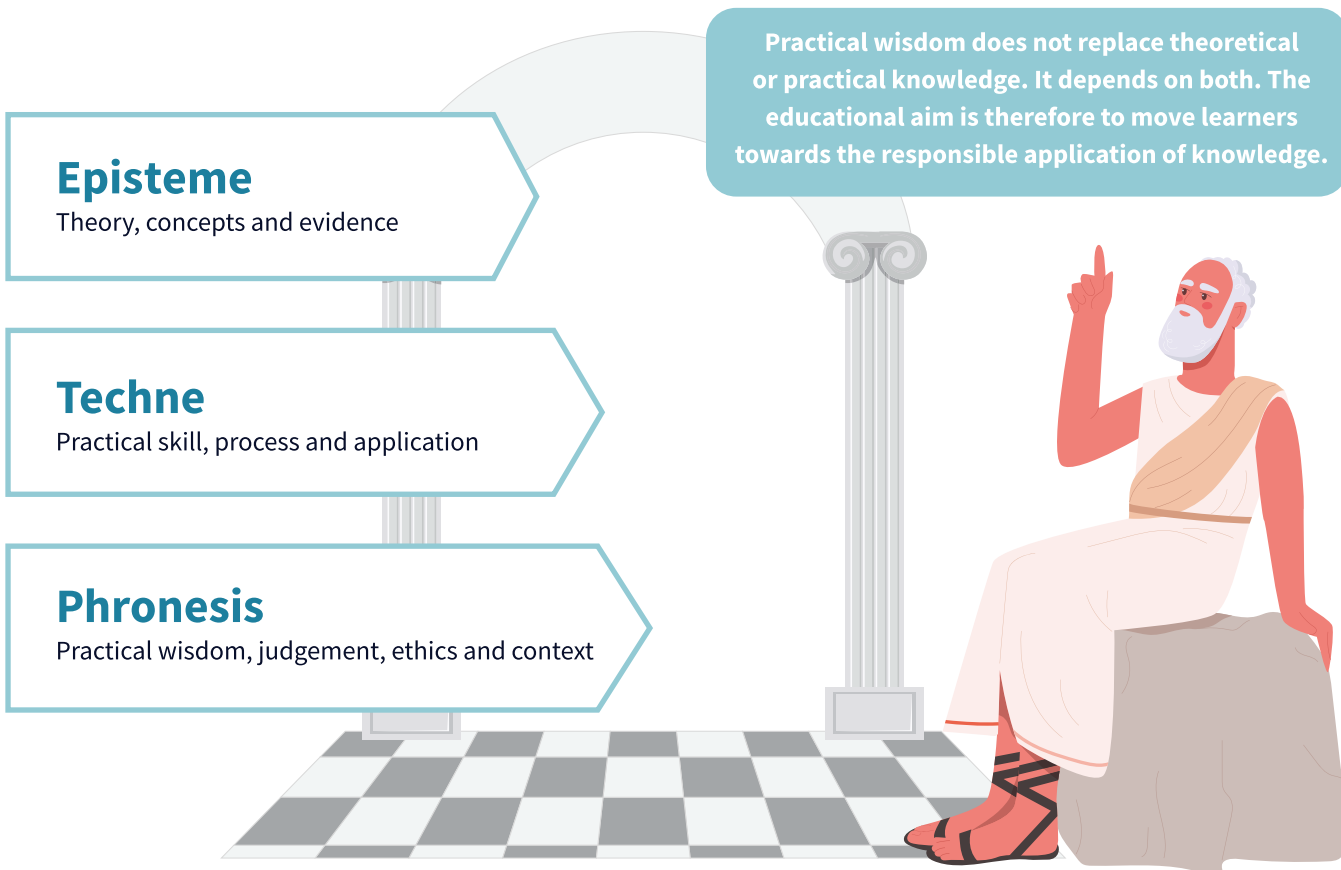


2.11 From knowledge to practical wisdom

Aristotle's forms of knowledge

Aristotle's account of intellectual virtue provides a useful starting point for reconsidering what education should value. In *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle distinguishes between different forms of knowing, including episteme, techne and phronesis (Aristotle, 2009).

Although these concepts originated in a very different historical context, they offer a helpful lens for thinking about assessment in an age of increasingly capable technologies.



Episteme: knowing that

Episteme refers to theoretical knowledge, including concepts, principles, disciplinary language and evidence. This knowledge remains essential because learners need it to question AI-generated information, identify errors and make informed decisions.

However, assessments based only on summarising or explaining information may provide limited evidence of understanding when AI can produce similar responses. Assessment should therefore ask learners to compare ideas, apply knowledge to unfamiliar contexts, select relevant evidence or challenge an AI-generated interpretation.

Techne: knowing how

Techne refers to practical skill, craft and the ability to produce or perform something through a reasoned process. This may include designing an artefact, conducting an experiment, teaching a lesson, completing a professional procedure or applying a technical method.

AI may support planning, feedback and production, but a successful output does not necessarily demonstrate that the learner possesses the underlying skill. Assessment should therefore consider both the final outcome and the process behind it, using evidence such as demonstrations, observed practice, prototypes, drafts, process logs, annotations and explanations of technique.

Phronesis: knowing when, why and whether

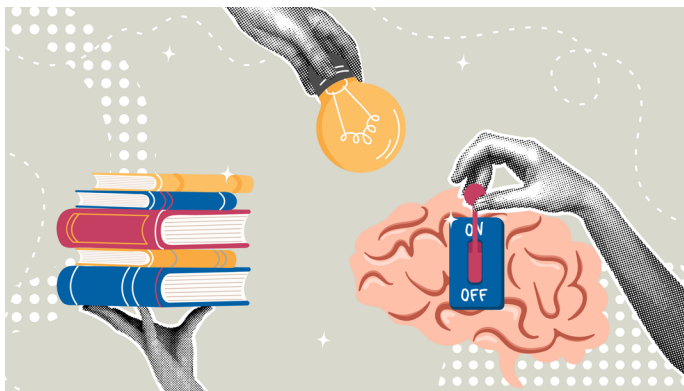
Phronesis is practical wisdom: the ability to decide what should be done in a particular situation. It requires learners to consider context, consequences, values, uncertainty and the needs of others. This is especially important in professional and vocational education, where rules and technical knowledge rarely provide a complete answer. Learners must interpret evidence and justify decisions.

Generative AI may help explore options, but it cannot assume moral or professional responsibility. The learner remains accountable for deciding whether an AI-supported recommendation is appropriate, fair, safe and contextually defensible.

2.12 Knowledge is more than what can be written down

Assessment often privileges knowledge that can be expressed in a polished written response. However, knowledge also includes practical understanding, experience, judgement and awareness that may be difficult to articulate fully.

Explicit and tacit knowledge



Explicit knowledge can be recorded and communicated through language, symbols, diagrams or instructions. It includes facts, theories, formulae, policies, procedures and research findings (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

Because explicit knowledge can be represented in text and structured data, it is also the form most easily retrieved, reorganised and reproduced by generative AI. Assessments that ask learners only to summarise or explain information may therefore reveal more about their ability to generate or curate text than the depth of their understanding.

Explicit knowledge remains essential. Learners need a secure knowledge base to judge whether AI-generated information is accurate, relevant and credible. The aim is not to reduce its importance, but to assess how students interpret, apply and question it.

Tacit knowledge is developed through experience and often revealed through action. Polanyi's observation that people can know more than they can fully explain captures this idea (Polanyi, 1966).

Tacit knowledge may be demonstrated through:

- recognising when a situation requires a different approach
- selecting an appropriate tone in a sensitive conversation
- noticing that a learner, patient or client is uncomfortable
- adapting a professional or practical procedure
- anticipating a likely problem
- recognising when a design or outcome is not working

A learner may write convincingly about a procedure without being able to perform it. Equally, a learner may demonstrate considerable expertise but struggle to explain every judgement involved. Valid assessment should therefore gather evidence of both understanding and performance.

Knowledge develops through interaction

Tacit and explicit knowledge are closely connected. Nonaka's SECI model describes knowledge development as movement between four processes: socialisation, externalisation, combination and internalisation (Nonaka, 1994; Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

Learners develop knowledge by observing others, expressing what they have noticed, connecting it with formal knowledge, practising and reflecting on feedback. Knowledge therefore develops through continuing interaction rather than appearing only in a final product. A written assignment may capture what a learner can articulate, but not necessarily what they can notice, perform, adapt or judge.

Different dimensions of knowledge

The revised taxonomy developed by Anderson and Krathwohl identifies four knowledge dimensions:

1. Factual knowledge: essential details, terminology and information
 2. Conceptual knowledge: relationships, principles, theories and structures
 3. Procedural knowledge: methods, techniques and knowing how to perform a task
 4. Metacognitive knowledge: awareness of one's own thinking, understanding and limitations
- (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001; Krathwohl, 2002)

Metacognitive knowledge is particularly important when learners use AI. Students need to recognise whether they understand a generated response, when information requires verification and when reliance on the tool may be replacing rather than supporting learning.

Why this matters for assessment

Understanding different forms of knowledge helps educators identify whether an assessment is collecting the right evidence. A polished written response may demonstrate explicit knowledge, but it may not reveal practical capability, tacit understanding, critical thinking or professional judgement.

Assessment may therefore need to combine written explanation with other forms of evidence.

2.13 From learning outcomes to human capability

Before deciding where AI should be used, educators need to identify the human capability an assessment is intended to develop and evidence.

Learning outcomes often use verbs such as describe, analyse, evaluate, design or demonstrate. However, an apparently successful AI-generated response does not necessarily show that the learner possesses the intended knowledge or skill.

Constructive alignment connects learning outcomes, teaching and assessment (Biggs, 1996). Generative AI adds a further question: Which parts of this capability must belong to the learner?

Four dimensions can help clarify this:

Dimension	Central question
Knowledge	What must the learner know and understand?
Application	What must they be able to apply in context?
Performance	What must they be able to demonstrate or carry out?
Judgement	What decisions must they justify and take responsibility for?

Miller's model of competence distinguishes between knowing, knowing how, showing how and performing in practice (Miller, 1990). This reminds us that explaining a process is not the same as being able to perform it effectively.

A learner may describe good classroom questioning without using it responsively, explain a design process without making defensible design decisions or reproduce an ethical framework without applying it when priorities conflict.

Deciding the role of AI

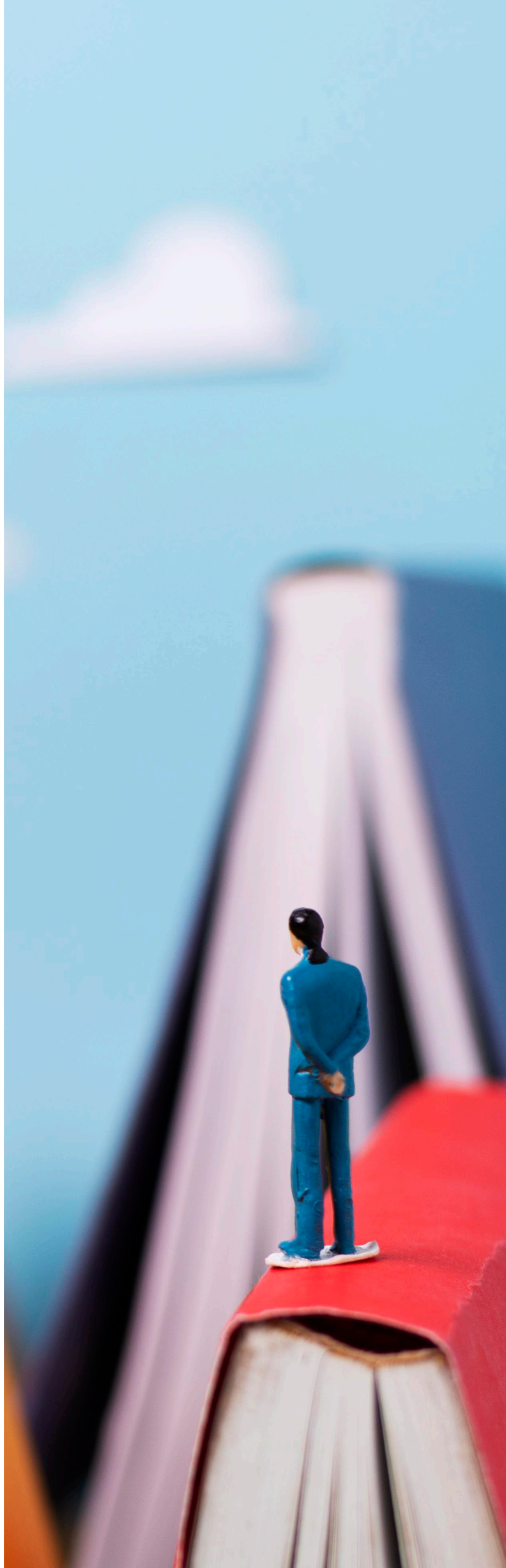
Once the intended capability is clear, educators can decide how AI should relate to it.

Independent capability: The learner must demonstrate the capability without AI. This may be necessary for foundational knowledge, personal fluency, professional safety, regulatory requirements or situations where technology may not be available.

AI-supported capability: AI may support planning, practice, feedback, language development or the organisation of information. The learner must still understand the task, evaluate the AI contribution and explain the decisions made.

AI-integrated professional capability: Responsible AI use is part of the intended learning. Learners may need to select appropriate tools, evaluate outputs, identify risks, document their use and retain responsibility for the final outcome.

These categories are not a hierarchy. A single assessment may require independent knowledge, permit AI-supported processes and assess responsible AI use as a professional capability.



Part C: What this means for practice

A practical route for educators and course teams focused on teaching, relationships and formative evidence.

2.14 Teaching must change alongside assessment

Assessment redesign alone is not enough. If learners are expected to use AI critically, ethically and effectively, teaching practice must provide opportunities to develop these capabilities. Students cannot be expected to demonstrate responsible AI use in assessment if their preparation has consisted only of a policy document or list of prohibited behaviours.

Constructive alignment requires learning outcomes, teaching activities and assessment to work together (Biggs, 1996). AI should therefore not be addressed only at the point of submission. It must also be considered within curriculum planning, classroom activity, feedback and subject teaching.

UNESCO's competency frameworks similarly present AI capability as a combination of knowledge, skills, values, ethical understanding and critical judgement. The framework for teachers identifies AI pedagogy as a distinct area of professional competence rather than simply an aspect of technical proficiency (Miao and Cukurova, 2024).

Access does not equal competence

Students may already use generative AI regularly, but frequency of use should not be confused with literacy.

A student may be able to produce a polished response while being unable to:

- explain how the system produced it
- recognise factual inaccuracies
- distinguish evidence from plausible language
- identify bias or missing perspectives
- judge whether AI is appropriate for the task
- use the tool without weakening their own learning
- document its contribution transparently.

Teachers do not need to become technical specialists in machine learning. They do, however, need sufficient understanding to make sound pedagogical decisions, model critical practice and challenge unreliable or inappropriate uses.

From restriction to supported responsibility

Some assessments will continue to require independent work without AI. Clear restrictions remain appropriate where AI use would invalidate the assessment or prevent learners from developing an essential capability.

However, deterrence alone cannot prepare learners for a world in which AI may form part of future study, employment and professional practice.

Teaching should help learners understand:

- when AI can support learning
- when it may substitute for learning
- how to evaluate what it produces
- where its use creates ethical or professional risks
- what responsibilities remain with the human user
- when it should not be used.

A shift in focus:

From

Towards

Telling students whether AI is allowed

Teaching why, when and how it may be used

Focusing mainly on prohibited behaviour

Modelling responsible disciplinary practice

Assuming students understand AI

Explicitly developing AI literacy

Assessing only the final product

Observing reasoning, practice and development

Treating AI as a separate digital topic

Integrating it into subject teaching

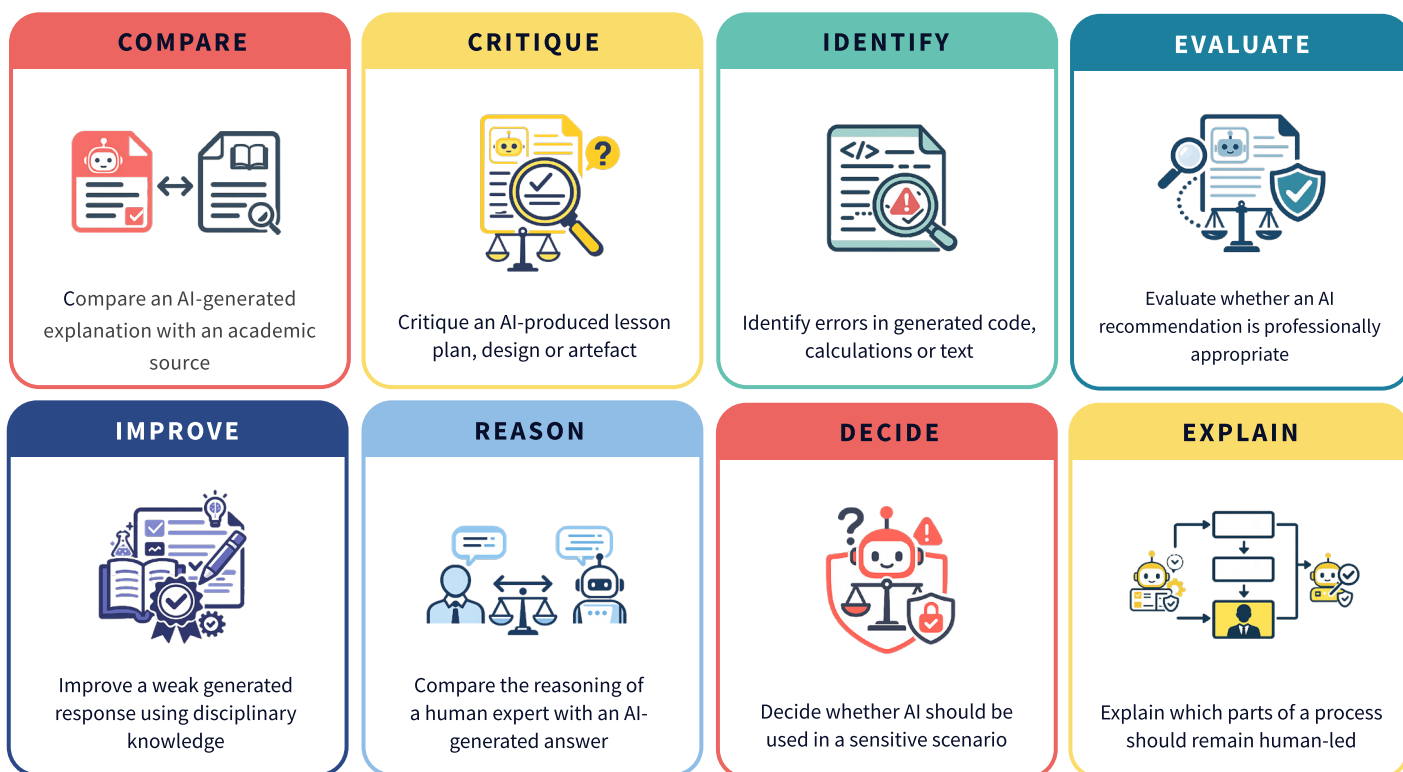
Asking students to trust or reject it

Teaching them to evaluate it critically

Teaching through authentic examples

AI teaching is most useful when connected to genuine disciplinary activity.

Students might:



This is more complex than generic prompting activities. It helps learners understand how the opportunities and risks of AI vary between disciplines, tasks and professional settings.

Teaching, dialogue and formative assessment

Changes to teaching practice can also strengthen assessment validity. Class discussions, demonstrations, role play, critique and formative activities allow educators to encounter learners' developing knowledge and reasoning. They also give students opportunities to practise AI use before it becomes part of a high-stakes assessment.

Teaching and assessment should therefore operate as connected parts of the same process (see the flowchart below). Changing how we assess without changing how we teach risks addressing the final product while leaving the learning process unchanged.

Capability develops through teaching, practice, visible reasoning and feedback before it is assessed.



2.15 Knowing the learner

Questions about AI use and authorship often arise only when work is submitted. By then, the final assignment may be the only substantial evidence available.

A stronger approach begins earlier: assessment starts with knowing the learner and developing an evolving understanding of how they explain and apply ideas, approach problems, respond to feedback, overcome misconceptions, develop their thinking, work independently and use support.

This understanding grows through regular teaching, dialogue and observation. Everyday activities such as questioning, discussion, demonstrations, practical work, tutorials, critiques, problem-solving, quizzes and feedback conversations make learning visible.

Knowing the learner is not the same as checking authorship. Classroom dialogue should support learning, not make students feel continually suspected or tested. Its primary purposes are to build understanding, confidence, reflection, participation and intellectual challenge. However, regular interaction also creates a stronger evidence base. When educators are familiar with a learner's thinking and development, they are better placed to recognise when part of a submission requires further discussion.

The response can then be proportionate:

“This section uses ideas that we have not previously discussed. Could you talk me through how you developed this argument?”

In practice: Activities that reveal different forms of knowledge



To reveal theoretical and conceptual knowledge

- Ask students to explain a concept without notes.
- Ask for an example and a counterexample.
- Ask students to compare two theories.
- Present a misconception for them to correct.
- Ask them to draw connections between ideas.
- Use concept maps or one-minute explanations.



To reveal procedural and practical knowledge

- Observe a demonstration.
- Ask students to narrate a process as they complete it.
- Introduce an unexpected problem.
- Ask learners to diagnose an error.
- Compare two possible methods.
- Request an annotated prototype or draft.



To reveal tacit knowledge

- Use role play and simulation.
- Compare novice and expert performances.
- Pause an activity and ask what they would do next.
- Ask learners to demonstrate rather than describe.
- Use video playback to support reflection on action.

Tacit knowledge may not become fully explicit, but carefully structured discussion can help learners articulate some of the cues and judgements guiding their actions.



To reveal practical wisdom

- Present a scenario with competing priorities.
- Ask students to identify affected stakeholders.
- Remove a key piece of information and ask what is needed.
- Change the context and ask whether their decision changes.
- Require justification rather than a single correct answer.
- Ask when they would seek help or escalate a concern.
- Compare the student's judgement with an AI-generated recommendation.



To reveal metacognitive knowledge

- Ask students to rate their confidence and explain why.
- Ask what they found most difficult.
- Ask which strategy they selected and why.
- Ask what they would do differently next time.
- Ask where AI was useful and where it was unreliable.
- Ask which parts of the task they could now complete independently.

2.16 Rebalancing formative and summative assessment

When most assessment evidence comes from a single final submission, that submission must carry almost the entire burden of proving learning. Generative AI makes this more fragile because the finished product may reveal little about who completed the thinking, writing or decision-making behind it. The aim now should be to make learning visible across the assessment journey.

Formative assessment uses evidence of learning to shape what happens next. It helps educators identify gaps, adapt teaching and support improvement, while helping learners understand quality and act on feedback (Sadler, 1989; Black and Wiliam, 1998a; Black and Wiliam, 1998b).

In an AI age formative assessment can reveal thinking, misconceptions and progress, place greater value on process as well as the final product and develop learners' evaluative judgement. This also supports timely feedback and intervention and reduces dependence on AI detection. Rebalancing formative assessment also creates opportunities to teach critical and ethical AI use.

In practice: Practical formative strategies	
Retrieval and explanation	Ask learners to retrieve and explain key knowledge through: • short quizzes • one-minute explanations • concept maps • partner explanations • misconception checks.
Worked examples and error analysis	Use strong, weak or AI-generated examples. Ask learners to identify: • what is effective • what is inaccurate or missing • what should be improved • what evidence supports their judgement.
Drafts and checkpoints	Build a small number of purposeful checkpoints into longer tasks, such as: • a proposal or research question • an outline or annotated source • an early prototype or partial draft • a progress conversation • a decision log.
Peer and self-assessment	Use criteria and exemplars to help learners recognise quality, give specific feedback and improve their work. Peer assessment is most effective when criteria are clear, examples are modelled and learners have time to act on the feedback.
Hinge questions	Ask carefully chosen questions at key points to decide whether learners are ready to move forward or whether teaching needs to be adapted.
Think-aloud activities	Ask learners to verbalise their reasoning while completing a task. This can reveal: • selected strategies • misconceptions • uncertainty • use of prior knowledge • important decision points.
Oral progress conversations	Brief, focused conversations can make learning visible without becoming formal vivas. Useful questions include: • what has changed since your first idea? • which part is proving most difficult? • what feedback have you acted on? • where have you used AI and what have you checked independently?
Reflective comparison	Ask learners to compare: • an early and final response • their work with an exemplar • their answer with an AI-generated answer

Formative assessment with AI

AI can support formative activity by generating:

- practice questions
- alternative scenarios
- preliminary feedback
- flawed examples
- counterarguments
- simulated clients or stakeholders
- adapted explanations.

The educational value comes from evaluating the output.

For example: “Generate an answer using an approved AI tool. Identify three strengths, three limitations and one potentially misleading claim. Rewrite the response using appropriate disciplinary evidence”. OR “Ask AI to propose a solution to a scenario. Decide whether you would follow its recommendation and explain which contextual, ethical or professional factors it has overlooked”.

Avoiding formative overload

More formative assessment does not have to mean more marking. Evidence can be gathered through:

- whole-class questioning
- peer dialogue
- self-assessment
- live demonstrations
- low-stakes quizzes
- sampling drafts
- verbal feedback
- observation
- group critique
- exit prompts.

Consider: What evidence do I need now to decide what the learner should do next? This prevents formative activities from becoming a series of miniature summative assessments.

Creating a visible learning journey



2.17 A human-centred model of assessment

The ideas in this section can be brought together through a single organising framework. This framework moves from possession of knowledge towards its responsible application. It can be used to review an assessment brief.

An assessment that includes all five dimensions is more likely to provide a rich and credible picture of learning.

THE KNOWS FRAMEWORK		
Assessment should gather evidence that the learner KNOWS		
Dimension	Description	Review question
K Knows	Can draw upon relevant factual, conceptual and disciplinary knowledge.	What substantive knowledge must the learner understand and use?
N Navigates	Can interpret context, uncertainty, complexity and competing information.	What complexity, uncertainty or contextual variation must they address?
O Operates	Can apply methods, processes, practical skills and technical knowledge.	What practical or procedural capability must they demonstrate?
W Weighs	Can evaluate alternatives, evidence, risks, values and consequences.	What decisions, consequences or ethical considerations must they evaluate?
S Shows	Can make their thinking, development and decision-making visible through dialogue, practice, reflection and performance.	What evidence will make their thinking and development visible?



Key principles for AI-responsive assessment

For	Leaders, programme teams and quality colleagues
Purpose	Apply shared principles and understand how the main models connect
Estimated time	10 minutes

3.1 Ten core principles for AI-responsive assessment

These ten principles have been developed through a synthesis of current research, sector guidance and emerging findings from the author's ongoing doctoral research. Together, they provide a practical foundation for AI-responsive assessment that protects validity and integrity while supporting transparency, equity, critical AI literacy and human judgement.

1. Validity before surveillance	Assessment should provide meaningful evidence of learning, not only attempt to monitor or detect misuse.
2. Transparency before suspicion	Students should know what is allowed, what is not allowed and how AI use should be acknowledged before they begin.
3. Design before detection	Assessment design should reduce unnecessary vulnerability and make student thinking more visible.
4. Education before enforcement	Students need to be taught how to use AI ethically and critically, rather than only warned about misuse.
5. Dialogue before judgement	Where concerns arise, conversation and evidence should come before assumptions.
6. Consistency with flexibility	Institutions need shared principles, but departments need space to respond to context.
7. Equity and inclusion	AI guidance should consider accessibility, digital poverty, language, support needs and potential bias.
8. Human judgement remains central	Students should be able to explain, defend and reflect on their work. Staff should also use human judgement in assessment decisions.
9. Assessment should prepare students for future practice	Some assessment must remain secure, but students also need opportunities to learn responsible AI use where relevant.
10. Policy must connect to practice	Policies only work when translated into briefs, teaching, declarations, feedback and procedures.

Putting the principles into practice requires alignment across three connected areas: governance and standards, learning and assessment, and institutional capability and support.

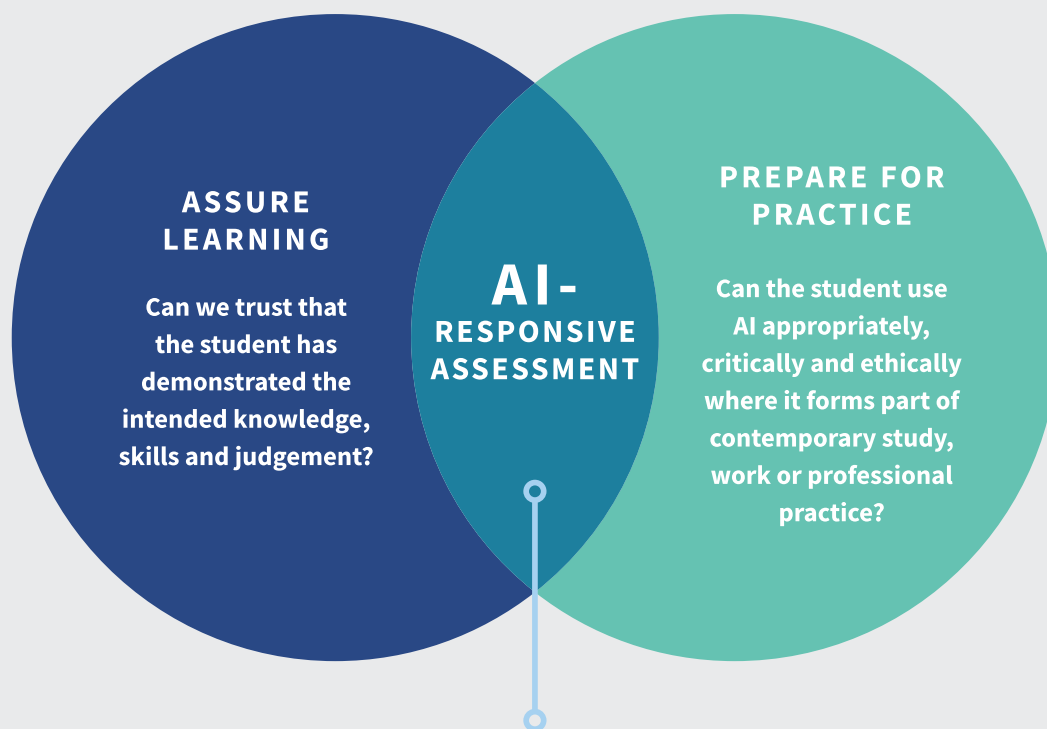
3.2 The dual responsibility of AI-responsive assessment

AI-responsive assessment has two connected responsibilities: to provide trustworthy evidence that students have achieved the intended learning, and to prepare them to work effectively in contexts where AI is part of study, employment and professional practice. This reflects a growing direction in the literature away from simply trying to control AI use and towards assessment approaches that both assure learning and develop capability (Lodge et al., 2023; Lodge et al., 2026).

Responsibility 1: Assure learning. Assessment must continue to provide valid evidence of the knowledge, skills and judgement that students are expected to demonstrate. Where generative AI can produce or substantially shape an assessed output, the final product alone may provide less evidence of what the student can independently understand or do. This makes it increasingly important to consider where independent performance needs to be demonstrated and what additional evidence, such as process, dialogue, application or reflection, might strengthen confidence in the judgement. Current regulatory thinking similarly emphasises validity, fairness, security and appropriate human judgement rather than reliance on technological solutions (Ofqual, 2026b).

Responsibility 2: Prepare for practice. At the same time, removing AI from assessment altogether risks overlooking capabilities students may need beyond education. Students need opportunities to learn how to question AI outputs, recognise limitations, make informed decisions and remain accountable for the work they produce. Bearman et al. (2024), for example, argue that evaluative judgement becomes particularly important when students work with generative AI, while more recent work on authentic assessment highlights the value of purposeful and transparent human-AI interaction rather than treating authenticity as synonymous with the absence of technology (Su et al., 2026).

The balance will not be the same for every assessment. Some learning outcomes may require students to demonstrate capability without AI or other assistance, while others may appropriately permit, guide or explicitly assess AI use. Educators should ask “What combination of human capability and AI use provides the most valid evidence of learning while preparing students for future practice?” Approaches such as the AI Assessment Scale similarly recognise the need for different levels of AI use according to the purpose and context of assessment rather than a single institution-wide rule (Furze et al., 2024).



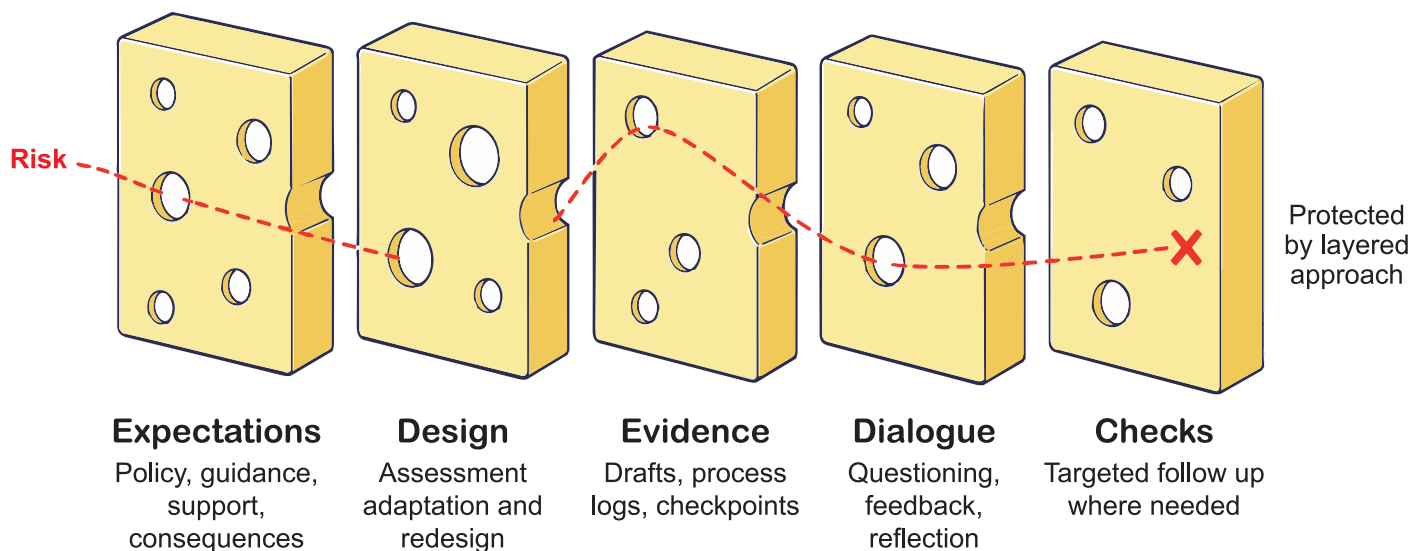
AI-responsive assessment has two connected responsibilities:

- 1. It must provide trustworthy evidence that students have achieved the intended learning.**
- 2. It must prepare them to work critically, ethically and effectively in contexts where AI may be available.**

This means neither attempting to remove AI from all assessment nor embedding it everywhere. The appropriate balance depends on what is being assessed, the level of study, professional expectations and the extent to which independent performance needs to be assured.

3.3 The AI and Assessment Swiss Cheese Model

The Swiss Cheese Model translates the key principles for AI-responsive assessment into a practical, layered approach to protecting assessment integrity. Rather than relying on a single intervention, each layer contributes a different form of protection. Expectations come first: students need clear guidance on permitted AI use, acknowledgement and consequences. Design then reduces avoidable vulnerability, for example through more authentic tasks, contextualised prompts or requirements that make student thinking visible. Evidence adds further assurance through drafts, process logs, checkpoints or other indications of how the work developed. Dialogue provides opportunities to test understanding through feedback conversations, reflection, questioning or short oral explanations. Finally, checks can be used proportionately where concerns remain, such as reviewing sources, comparing work with previous performance or following institutional procedures. No layer is perfect, and gaps will always exist. The strength of the model lies in combining them: if risk passes through one layer, another may still identify, reduce or respond to it, making assessment less dependent on any single tool, process or judgement.



Developed by Deakin (2026), adapted from Reason (1990) and informed by Rundle et al., (2020).

3.4 Think beyond the individual assessment

“ CAN WE SECURE EVERY ASSESSMENT? ”

“ ACROSS THE LEARNER JOURNEY, WHERE AND HOW DO WE BUILD CONVINCING EVIDENCE OF LEARNING? ”

AI-responsive assessment requires us to look beyond the vulnerability of a single task. A stronger question is whether, across a programme, course or qualification, there is sufficient evidence to be confident that learners have achieved the intended knowledge, skills and judgement. Recent assessment reform literature increasingly advocates this more systemic approach. Lodge et al. (2025) describe programme-level assessment as a connected system in which

evidence is deliberately gathered across time, contexts and assessment types, rather than relying on isolated tasks to demonstrate achievement.

This means that not every assessment needs to do everything. Some tasks may prioritise learning, experimentation, feedback or authentic AI-supported practice, while other points may provide stronger assurance of independent capability. What matters is the pattern of evidence across the learner journey. Multiple, contextualised sources of evidence can create more trustworthy judgements than expecting one final submission to carry the full burden of proving learning (Lodge et al., 2023; Lodge et al., 2025).

A programme-level view can also help institutions identify unnecessary duplication, gaps in assurance and places where assessment needs greater security. It encourages teams to ask where key capabilities are introduced, developed and ultimately demonstrated. This aligns with recent calls for structural rather than purely procedural responses to generative AI: validity needs to be built into the architecture of assessment, rather than relying only on instructions about what students should or should not do (Corbin, Dawson and Liu, 2025).

3.5 A quick check for AI-responsive assessment

There is no single assessment format that will remain permanently “AI-proof”. AI capabilities, professional practices and patterns of student use will continue to develop. AI-responsive assessment therefore requires ongoing review rather than one-off redesign. Recent guidance recommends keeping intended learning at the centre, mapping AI expectations across programmes, ensuring equitable access and regularly reviewing assessment criteria as AI capabilities change (McGrath, 2026).

Before finalising or reviewing an assessment, ask:

☐

1. What learning must be demonstrated?

Start with the intended learning rather than the technology. What knowledge, skill, capability or judgement should successful completion provide evidence of?

☐

2. What must the learner be able to do themselves?

Identify the capabilities for which independent performance matters. This may include foundational knowledge, professional judgement, practical competence or other outcomes that need to be demonstrated without inappropriate assistance.

☐

3. Where does AI appropriately belong?

Decide whether AI should be restricted, permitted, supported or deliberately embedded. AI use should be assessed when it is itself part of the intended learning, rather than simply because the technology is available (McGrath, 2026).

☐

4. What evidence will make the learning visible?

Consider whether the final product is enough. Drafts, checkpoints, practical application, questioning, reflection, explanation or process evidence can provide complementary insight into how the learner reached the outcome.

☐

5. Is the assessment fair, clear and proportionate?

Check that students understand what is expected, have appropriate access to required tools and are not disadvantaged by unnecessary technological requirements.

☐

6. When will we review it again?

AI-responsive assessment is not finished once a brief has been rewritten. Build assessment review into normal programme, moderation or quality processes and consider what evidence would indicate that the task, criteria or AI expectations need to change.

Stakeholder guidance: who needs to do what?

For	All stakeholder groups
Purpose	Clarify responsibility at institutional, programme, classroom and student levels
Estimated time	5 minutes

Assessment reform in the age of generative AI requires a coordinated response across institutional leadership, quality systems, programme teams, teaching staff, support services and students. AI-responsive assessment is strongest when decisions are aligned across the whole system, and the aim of this section is to help each group understand its role.

4.1 Macro level: institutional and senior leadership



For:

- senior leadership
- governors
- university executives
- academic boards
- quality committees
- digital strategy leads
- heads of learning and teaching
- academic integrity leads

At the macro level, the focus is on creating the conditions for effective and sustainable change. Leaders do not need to make detailed decisions about every individual assessment task, but they do need to set direction, resource development and ensure that staff and students are supported.

Responsibility	What this means
Set institutional principles	Agree clear, principles-based expectations for AI and assessment
Resource staff development	Provide time, continuing professional development (CPD) and practical templates and practical templates
Support programme-level review	Enable teams to review assessment diets and high-risk tasks
Consider procurement, privacy and data protection	Clarify approved tools, safe use and access
Communicate clearly	Ensure students and staff receive consistent messages
Monitor impact	Review unintended consequences, workload, equity and integrity cases
Engage with PSRBs and awarding bodies	Ensure external requirements are mapped and communicated



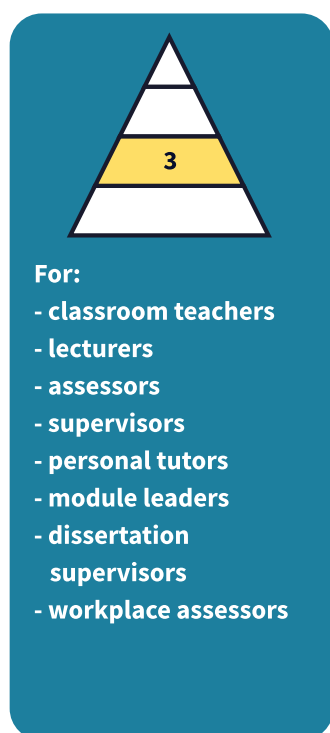
4.2 Meso level: departments, schools, faculties and programmes



The meso level is where institutional principles become a coherent student experience. Students experience assessment across modules and programmes, not as isolated tasks. This level is therefore crucial for reducing inconsistency.

Responsibility	What this means
Review the programme assessment diet	Map where secure and open assessment is needed
Identify high-risk assessments	Use the risk matrix, vulnerability audit and PASS AI checklist
Agree shared AI wording	Use common labels, scales or declaration wording across modules where possible
Consider disciplinary differences	Apply institutional principles to subject and professional contexts
Use layered integrity	Apply the Swiss Cheese model across a programme
Build progression	Move from restricted use towards critical use where appropriate
Calibrate marking and responses	Use moderation, scenario cards and shared procedures

4.3 Micro level: teachers, lecturers and assessors



The micro level is where students experience AI guidance most directly. Students may not remember an institutional policy document, but they will notice what their teacher says, what the assessment brief requires and how uncertainty is handled.

Do	Don't
- clarify AI expectations in each assessment brief - discuss AI use before students begin the task - design opportunities for process evidence where appropriate - ask students to explain their decisions - teach students how to check AI outputs - use dialogue where concerns arise - keep records of concerns and evidence - seek advice before escalating - model transparency about your own AI use where appropriate - align task-level guidance with programme and institutional policy	- rely on AI detector scores as proof - assume all polished work is AI-generated - create hidden rules that are not in the assessment brief - ban AI without explaining why - redesign assessment alone without course-level discussion - treat misunderstanding and deliberate misconduct as the same thing - make accusations without evidence - ignore accessibility, language or support considerations - leave students uncertain about declaration requirements

4.4 Student voice and partnership



Students are not only the audience for AI guidance. They are also important partners in shaping how guidance is understood, communicated and improved. Student partnership can also support trust by making the reasons behind assessment rules more transparent.

Practical partnership approaches
- involving students in developing guidance - asking students what confuses them about AI rules - using student feedback to improve assignment wording - co-creating examples of acceptable and unacceptable use - including student panels or “what students need to know” boxes - discussing fairness and access openly

5

Understanding assessment risk

For	Programme leaders, module leaders, assessors and quality teams
Purpose	Identify risk, diagnose vulnerability and choose a proportionate response
Estimated time	15 minutes

This section helps institutions and course teams identify where assessment may be vulnerable in an AI-rich context and decide what level of response is needed. It provides diagnostic tools that can be used to review individual assessment tasks, programme assessment diets and areas where students may need clearer guidance or support.

Understanding assessment risk does not mean assuming that students will misuse AI. It means asking whether the current assessment design, rules and evidence base are strong enough for the intended learning outcomes.

From risk to response:

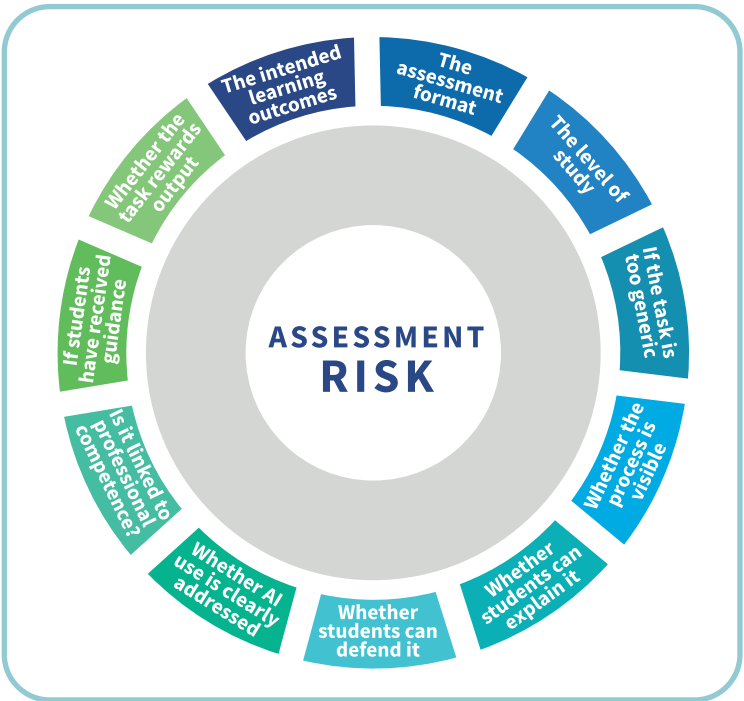
If the task is...	The response may be...
Clear, authentic and process-rich	Keep and clarify AI expectations
Partly vulnerable	Adapt with process evidence, dialogue or clearer rules
Highly vulnerable	Redesign the task or move to secure conditions
Relevant to future AI use	Consider guided, declared or critical AI integration

5.1 Assessment risk is not the same as AI use

Assessment risk is not determined simply by whether AI is used. Some AI use may be acceptable, educationally useful or appropriate to the learning outcomes. Other AI use may undermine the validity of the assessment. The difference depends on the task, the rules, the intended learning and the extent of the student's own contribution.

Assessment risk is better understood as a question of task design, context and evidence. Does the task show what the student knows, understands or can do? Is the student's own judgement visible? Are the AI rules clear? Is there an opportunity for the student to explain their decisions?

The assessment risk factors wheel illustrates what factors can influence assessment risk.



A three-stage route through the tools:

Stage	Purpose	Tools
1. Triage: Map risk	Identify programme-level priorities quickly	AI assessment risk matrix and programme heatmap
2. Diagnose: Review the task	Examine a particular assessment in greater depth	Assessment vulnerability audit, scoring system and PASS AI
3. Decide: Choose the response	Select a proportionate action	Keep, adapt or redesign decision tree

STAGE 1: TRIAGE – MAP RISK

5.2 AI assessment risk matrix

The following matrix can help course teams classify assessment tasks as low, medium or high risk. The categories are not intended to label assessments as good or bad. They are designed to support discussion about what level of response is needed.

Risk level	Key characteristics	Possible assessment examples	Possible response
Low risk	The task requires personal, local, practical or contextual evidence. The process is visible. The student must explain decisions. AI use is limited, declared or critically evaluated.	Practical demonstration, viva, observed performance, in-class supervised task, process portfolio, workplace evidence, artefact with rationale.	Keep the task, clarify AI expectations and ensure evidence is recorded appropriately.
Medium risk	AI could support aspects of the task, but human judgement remains visible. Some process evidence exists. The assessment brief gives clear AI guidance. Follow-up questioning is possible if needed.	Scenario-based report, annotated bibliography, portfolio with reflection, presentation with Q&A, literature review with search strategy, project with design log.	Adapt the task by strengthening process evidence, declaration, contextualisation or opportunity for explanation.
High risk	The task is generic or final-product only. There is no process evidence. AI rules are unclear or missing. AI could produce a plausible answer with limited student input. There is no opportunity for authentication.	Generic take-home essay, uninvigilated online multiple-choice question (MCQ) assessment, final-product-only report, generic literature review, predictable short-answer task.	Redesign the task, add process or dialogue, clarify AI rules or consider secure assessment conditions.

Creating a heatmap that shows all assessments across a programme provides a top-level view to help teams decide where to focus redesign effort first.

Module	Assessment 1	Assessment 2	Assessment 3	Overall risk
Module A	Medium	Low	Medium	Amber
Module B	High	Medium	High	Red
Module C	Low	Medium	Low	Green



STAGE 2: DIAGNOSE — REVIEW THE TASK

5.3 Assessment vulnerability audit

An assessment vulnerability audit helps course teams examine how well a task evidences student learning in an AI-rich context. It can be used during programme review, module review, annual monitoring, assessment redesign workshops or staff development sessions.

Audit question	Current evidence	Action needed
What is this task intended to assess?		
Could AI produce a convincing response?		
Would the marker know whether the student understands the work?		
Is the task generic or context-specific?		
Is there evidence of process?		
Are there checkpoints?		
Is there an opportunity for discussion or defence?		
Are AI rules clearly stated?		
Is the task still valid?		
Does the task assess knowledge, process, judgement, application or reflection?		

This audit could also be turned into a scoring tool. For example, each question could be rated:

0 = not evident

1 = partly evident

2 = clearly evident

Score	Suggested interpretation
0-6	High vulnerability: redesign likely needed
7-13	Medium vulnerability: adaptation likely needed
14-20	Lower vulnerability: keep but clarify expectations

*This scoring system should be used as a guide, not a rigid rule.
Professional judgement remains important.

5.4 The PASS AI checklist

The PASS AI checklist is a practical diagnostic tool that staff can use when designing or reviewing assessment tasks. It can be used for individual assessments or as part of a programme-level review. PASS AI helps staff move their focus from “Can AI do this?” to “Does this task still evidence learning clearly, fairly and transparently?”

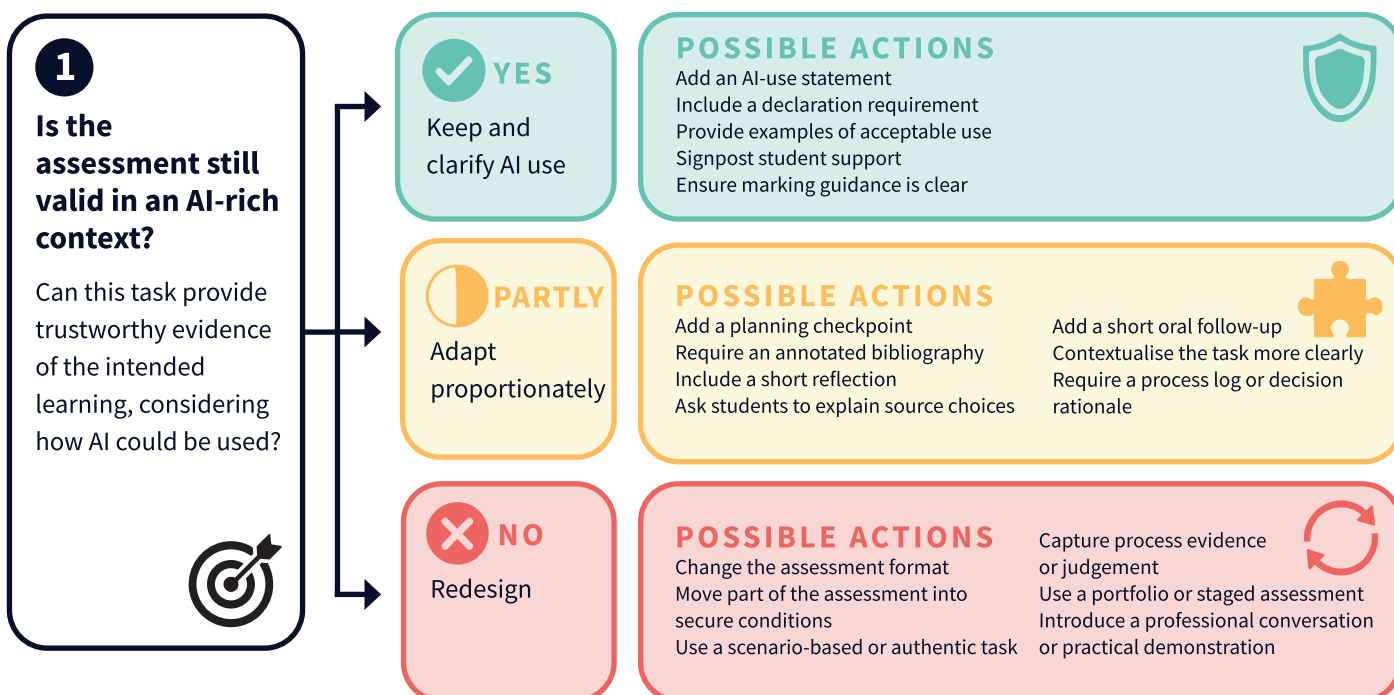
PASS AI Checklist		
Item	Questions to ask	Answer / Action needed
P Purpose What is the assessment really trying to evidence?	- What learning outcomes does the task assess? - Is the task still a valid way to evidence those outcomes? - Does the task require the student to demonstrate their own knowledge, skill or judgement? - Would the assessment still be meaningful if AI contributed to part of the process? - Does the task assess product, process, judgement or a combination?	
A Authenticity Does the task reflect meaningful disciplinary, professional or applied practice?	- Does the task require students to apply knowledge to a meaningful context? - Is the scenario specific enough to require student judgement? - Could the task include local, current, practical or professional evidence? - Does the task reflect how knowledge is used in the discipline or profession? - If AI is relevant in future practice, is there a reason to teach or assess responsible use?	
S Student thinking Is the student's own reasoning, judgement or decision-making visible?	- Can the student explain the choices they made? - Is there evidence of planning, drafting, feedback or revision? - Does the task require justification, critique or reflection? - Can the marker see the student's reasoning? - Is there an opportunity for oral explanation, tutorial discussion or professional conversation?	
S Support and transparency Have students been taught what is expected and how AI may or may not be used?	- Does the assessment brief clearly state the AI rules? - Have examples of acceptable and unacceptable use been provided? - Have students been shown how to declare AI use? - Has responsible AI use been discussed in teaching? - Do students know who to ask if they are unsure?	
AI AI use clarity Is the permitted level of AI use clearly defined, declared and assessable where relevant?	- Is AI use prohibited, limited, permitted or embedded? - Is the permitted level of AI use clearly labelled? - Is a declaration required? - Does the task explain how AI use will be considered in marking? - If AI is part of the task, are students assessed on how critically and ethically they use it?	

STAGE 3: DECIDE – CHOOSE THE RESPONSE

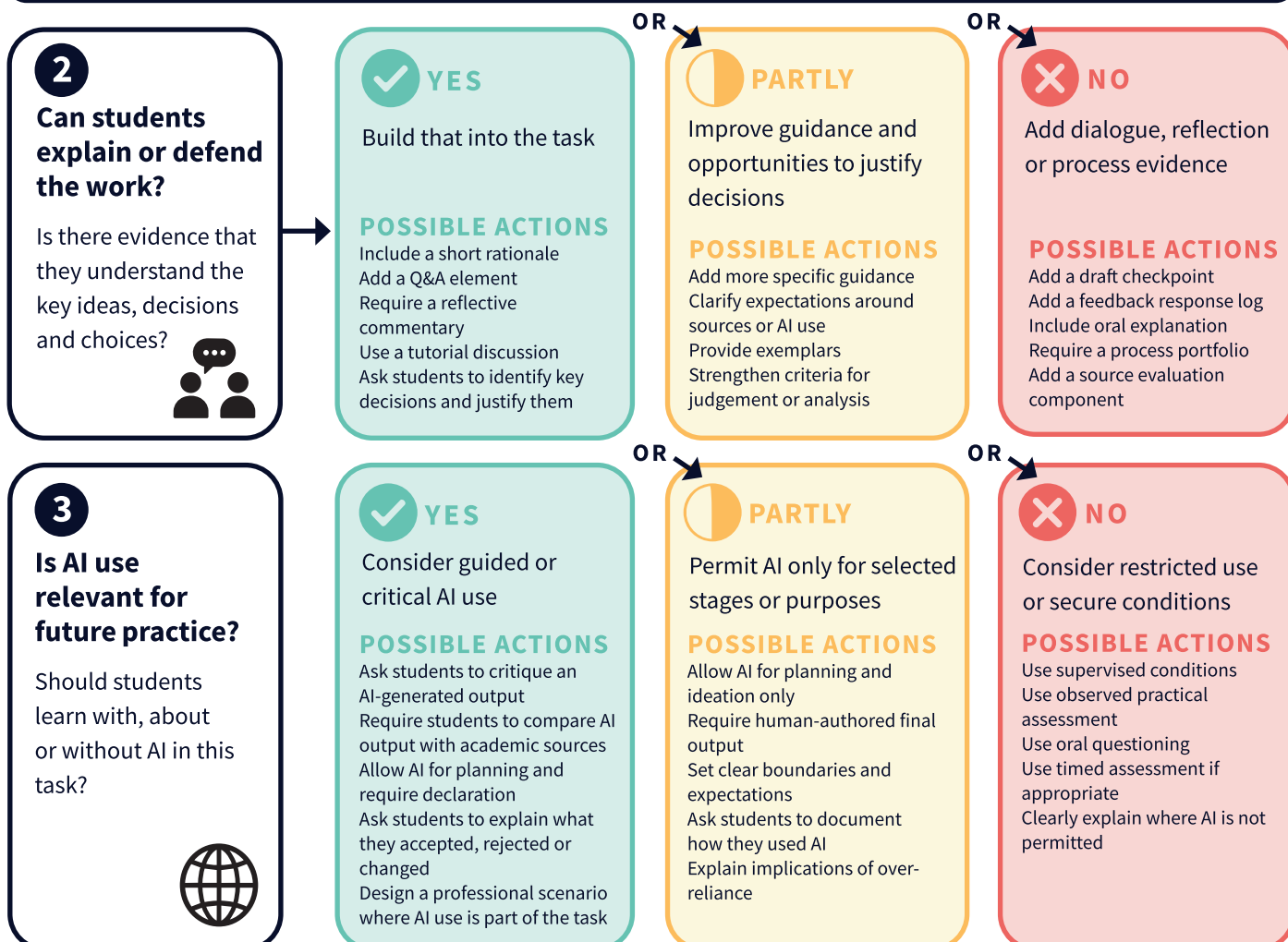
5.5 Assessment redesign decision tree

Once a task has been reviewed using the vulnerability audit or PASS AI checklist, course teams need to decide what to do next. Not every task will require full redesign. In many cases, a proportionate change may be enough.

STEP 1: CHOOSE THE LEVEL OF RESPONSE To determine the scale of change needed



STEP 2: SHAPE THE RESPONSE These questions help you decide how to shape the response



Reimagining assessment for integrity and learning

For	Programme teams, course leaders and educators
Purpose	Redesign assessment without losing educational value or authentic practice
Estimated time	20 minutes

This section provides practical guidance for reviewing and redesigning assessment in response to generative AI. It moves beyond the idea of simply making assessment “AI-proof” and instead focuses on designing assessment that remains valid, educationally meaningful and appropriate to its purpose.

Assessment redesign should not be framed only as a defensive response to misconduct. It can also strengthen learning, make student thinking more visible and prepare students for future study, employment and professional practice. Sector guidance increasingly encourages educators to review assessment design, clarify AI expectations and consider approaches that support authenticity, process evidence and responsible AI use (QAA, 2023b; Jisc, 2023; UCL, 2023; Lodge et al., 2023).

This section can be used by individual teachers, lecturers and assessors, but it is most powerful when course teams review the assessment diet across a module, programme or qualification. An assessment diet is the planned combination of assessment purposes, formats, conditions and evidence experienced by learners over time. A balanced diet may include formative and summative assessment, secure demonstrations of independent capability, authentic or practical tasks, process evidence, dialogue and appropriate opportunities for guided AI use. The aim is not for every task to do everything, but for the overall pattern of assessment to provide varied and proportionate evidence of learning.



6.1 Design goal: assessment for integrity and learning

The goal of assessment redesign is to protect the integrity of assessment while supporting meaningful learning. A well-designed assessment should help students demonstrate what they know, understand and can do. It should also provide markers with credible evidence of student learning, rather than relying only on a final polished product.

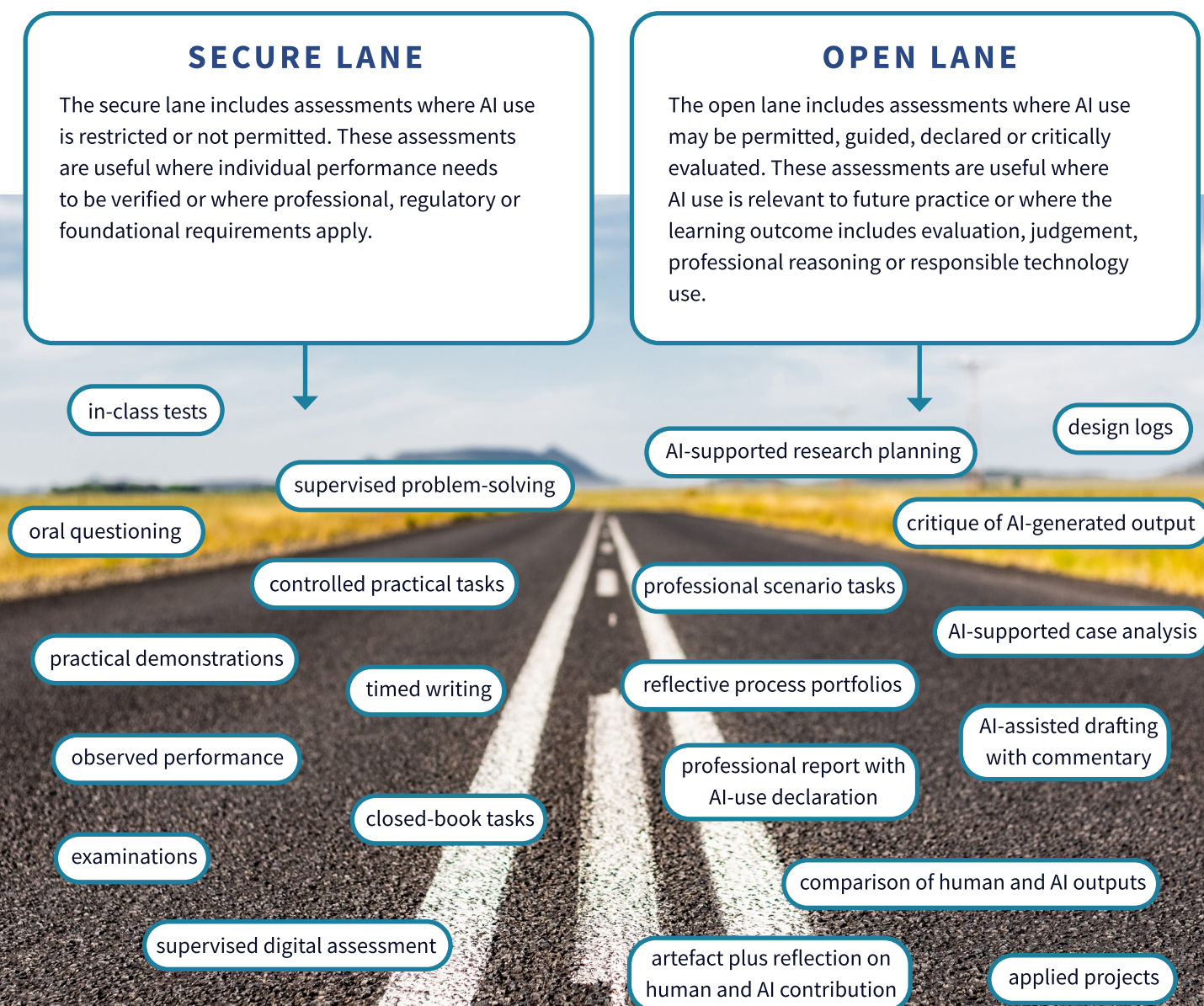
This does not mean that every assessment must become a portfolio, viva or practical task. It means that the design should match the learning outcomes, level of study, disciplinary context and the role AI may or may not play.

The Assessment Validity Lens introduced in Section 2 provides a useful starting point for redesign. Educators can consider whether an assessment captures evidence of the student's final product, the process through which it was developed and the judgement demonstrated along the way. AI-responsive assessment does not always require the final product to be removed or replaced. Instead, it often strengthens the evidence around it, making the student's thinking, decisions and contribution more visible.

6.2 The Two-Lane Approach: Secure and Open Assessment

Developed by Liu and Bridgeman (2023), the Two-Lane Approach distinguishes between secure assessments that provide trustworthy evidence of individual learning and open assessments that support learning in contexts where AI and other tools may be available. The model helps course teams decide where AI use needs to be controlled and where it may be guided, declared or deliberately embedded.

Some assessments need to verify independent knowledge, skill or competence. Others can prepare students to use AI critically and responsibly in academic, professional and workplace contexts. A strong assessment diet is therefore likely to include a purposeful balance of both lanes.



6.3 AI-enhanced scaffolding and reverse scaffolding

Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development, or ZPD, describes the space between what a learner can already do independently and what they could achieve with appropriate guidance from a teacher or more capable peer (Vygotsky, 1978). A common classroom representation identifies three areas:

1. What the learner can do independently: knowledge and skills they have already developed
2. What the learner can do with support: the Zone of Proximal Development, where guidance enables progress
3. What the learner cannot yet do, even with support: learning that is currently beyond their reach

The aim of scaffolding is to support the development of knowledge and capability so that something first achieved with assistance can eventually be achieved independently.

Although scaffolding is often associated with Vygotsky, the term was introduced later by Wood, Bruner and Ross (1976). Scaffolding involves providing temporary and responsive support, such as modelling, prompts, questions, examples or feedback, before gradually reducing that support as the learner becomes more capable.

Generative AI adds a new form of support within the ZPD, but its presence does not automatically make an activity scaffolded. AI can help learners climb towards greater independence, or it can provide a shortcut that bypasses the learning. There are therefore two possible ladders through an AI-enhanced ZPD.

Ladder 1: AI as a scaffold

On the productive route, AI supports the learner's thinking without replacing it. The learner attempts the task, identifies difficulties and uses AI for carefully bounded support. AI might:

- ask guiding questions
- explain an unfamiliar concept
- provide a hint or partial example
- give feedback on an attempt
- identify a gap or misconception
- suggest questions for further investigation

The student must still think, decide, explain, apply and revise. As their understanding develops, the support should be reduced so that they can demonstrate the capability independently.

This is the healthier route because AI helps the learner to climb; it does not carry them to the top!

Ladder 2: AI as a crutch

On the substitution route, AI performs the central intellectual work before the learner has developed the knowledge or skill for themselves. The learner may ask AI to generate the answer, solution, analysis or argument and then make only superficial changes.

The final output may appear more sophisticated, but it provides little evidence that the learner's own capability has developed. Immediate performance can therefore be mistaken for learning.

This distinction is supported by a large field experiment involving nearly 1,000 secondary mathematics students. Access to a standard GPT interface improved performance on supported practice questions by 48%, while a specially designed GPT tutor with learning safeguards improved practice performance by 127%. However, when students later completed an examination without AI, those who had used the unrestricted version performed 17% worse than students who had not used AI. The negative effect was largely removed for students who had used the scaffolded tutor, although they did not significantly outperform the control group on the independent examination (Bastani et al., 2025).

The study illustrates an important difference between performing with AI and learning through AI. AI can produce impressive short-term results on both ladders. The real test is whether the learner becomes more capable when the support is removed.



Reverse scaffolding: demonstrate first, automate later

Reverse scaffolding offers a further option once capability has been established. Rather than technology supporting learners to do something they cannot yet do, technology takes over or accelerates a process they have already learned.

The concept was originally developed by Chase and Abrahamson (2015) in mathematics education. In their model, students first discovered and understood an important process. The technology then automated that process, freeing them to address the next level of complexity. In a quasi-experimental study involving 40 pupils in Grades 4 and 9, students following the reverse-scaffolding sequence outperformed those for whom the technological support was available from the beginning. The findings were promising, although the small and highly specific study means that the wider evidence base remains limited (Chase and Abrahamson, 2015).

Dawson (2020) applies this principle to assessment through the concept of cognitive offloading. He argues that programmes should allow students to offload lower-order processes once they have demonstrated sufficient mastery, rather than repeatedly assessing the same capability. This requires assessment to be considered across a programme: students may initially need to perform a process independently, but later assessments can permit technology to support or automate it while attention shifts towards more complex application, judgement or evaluation.

Although Dawson's work was published before the widespread availability of generative AI, the principle is directly relevant. Students should first develop and demonstrate the foundational knowledge or skill that AI might otherwise replace. Once that capability has been established, AI can be used to improve efficiency, explore alternatives or support more advanced work. Dawson also emphasises that students must develop the evaluative judgement needed to assess the quality of anything produced through cognitive offloading (Dawson, 2020).

An example: writing a trip letter

An experienced teacher is likely to know how to write a clear letter to parents and carers about a trip. They understand the information that must be included, the appropriate tone and the importance of accuracy, accessibility, safeguarding and consent. The teacher could provide AI with verified information about the trip and ask it to produce an initial draft. They would then use their professional knowledge to check and adapt:

- dates, times, locations and costs
- consent and payment arrangements
- safeguarding and emergency information
- accessibility and additional support
- alignment with institutional policies
- clarity, inclusion and tone

In this context, AI is not replacing a capability the teacher still needs to develop. It is accelerating a familiar routine and freeing the teacher to focus on higher-value work, such as planning the learning experience and ensuring that individual pupils can participate safely. This is a practical example of cognitive offloading through reverse scaffolding.

The same AI use could be inappropriate in a different context. If a trainee teacher were being assessed on their ability to communicate professionally with families, asking AI to generate the entire letter could conceal the capability the assessment was intended to evidence. The trainee might produce a polished letter without demonstrating that they understand what information to include, how to communicate it appropriately or how to identify omissions and risks.

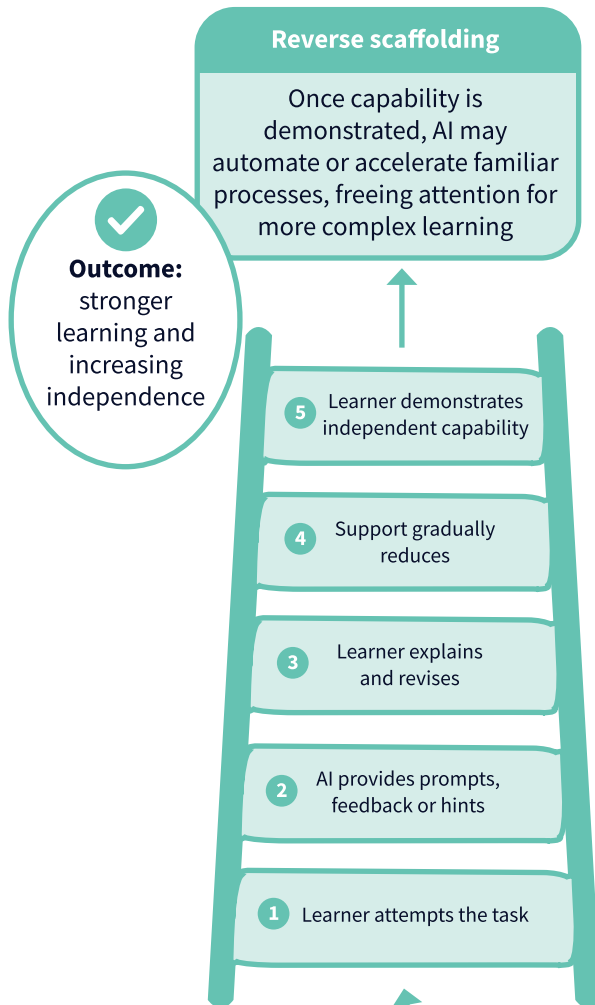
Reverse scaffolding would therefore involve the trainee first producing and justifying a suitable communication independently. AI could be introduced in a later task, once the capability had been established.



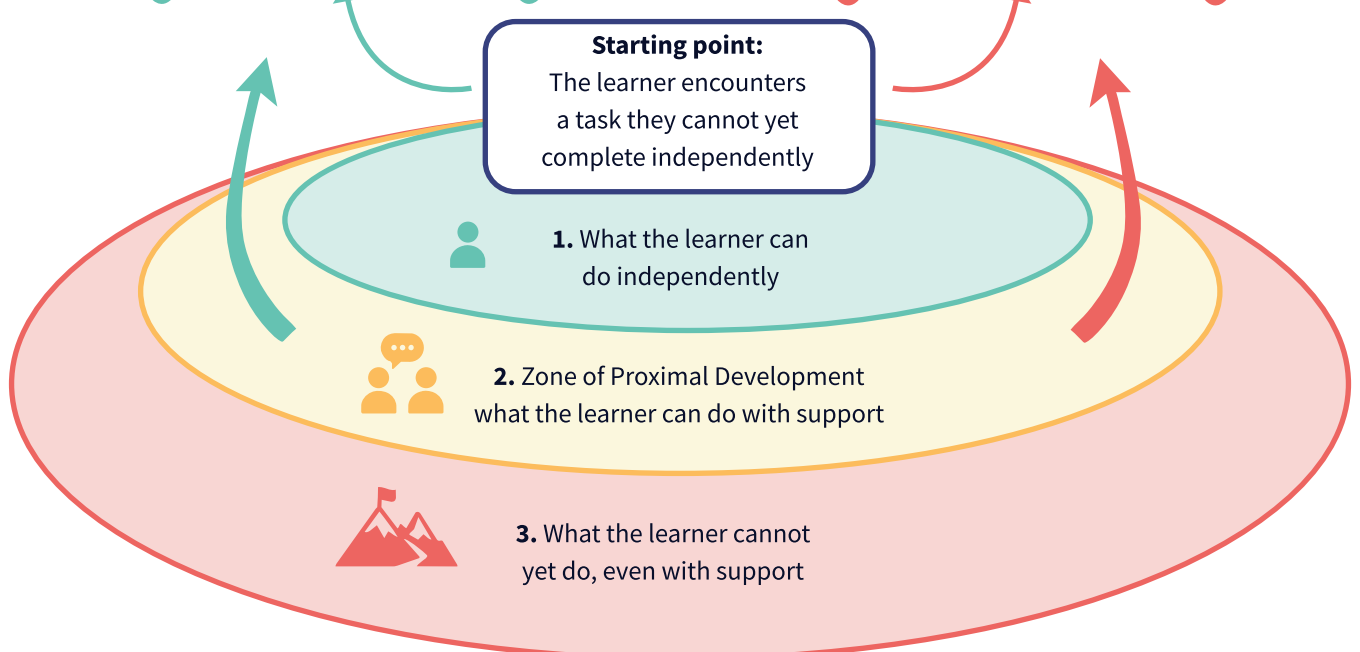
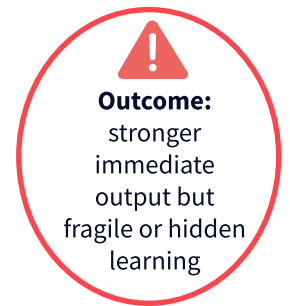
AI-ENHANCED ZPD MODEL

There are two possible routes when AI enters the learning process

The productive route AI as a scaffold



The substitution route AI as a crutch



AI can provide a ladder towards independent capability or a crutch that creates the appearance of progress. The difference lies in whether AI supports or substitutes for the thinking through which learning develops.

6.4 Process-focused assessment

Process-focused assessment makes the development of work visible. It asks students to show how they planned, researched, drafted, revised, responded to feedback and made decisions. This approach can strengthen assessment integrity because it reduces over-reliance on the final product. It can also support learning because students are encouraged to reflect on how their understanding develops.

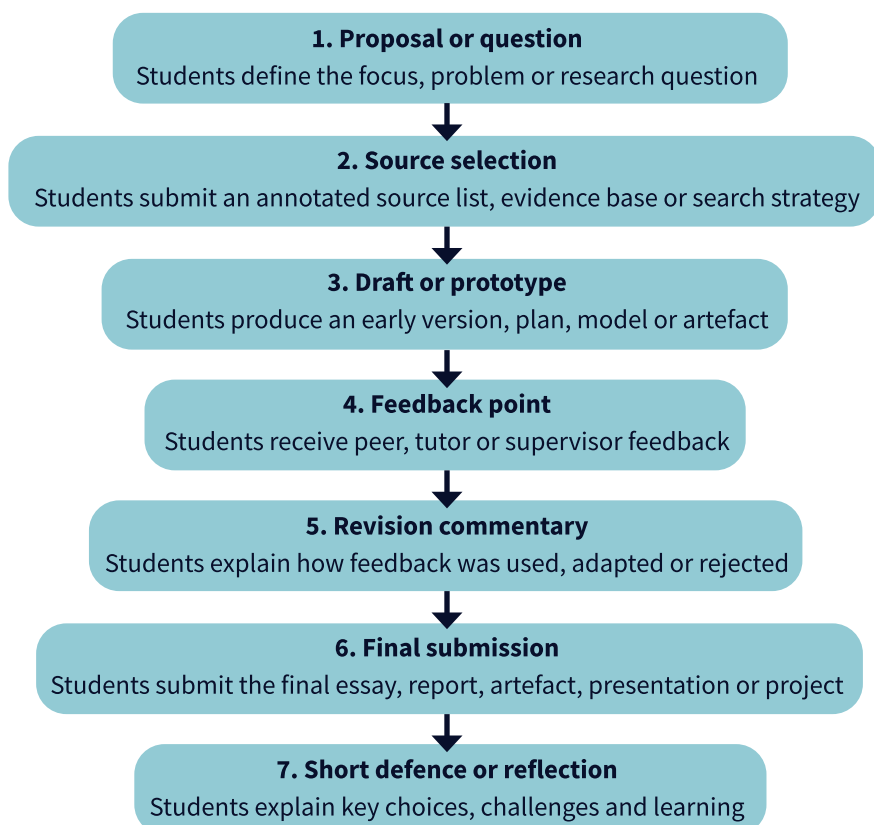
Process evidence should be purposeful. It should not simply add workload for staff or students. The aim is to select evidence that helps demonstrate learning, judgement and development.

EXAMPLES OF PROCESS EVIDENCE	
Process evidence	What it can show
Processfolio	How an assignment developed through drafts, notes, feedback and revisions
Design log	How decisions were made and why alternatives were accepted or rejected
Draft submission	How ideas, structure or analysis developed over time
Annotated planning document	How the learner approached the task and organised thinking
Search strategy record	How sources were identified, selected and evaluated
Feedback response log	How the learner acted on feedback
Learning journal	How understanding developed across a topic or project
Version history	How the work changed during drafting
Decision commentary	Why particular choices were made
Reflective rationale	How the learner understands their own process and outcome
Supervision or tutorial notes	How ideas were discussed and developed
Checkpoint submission	How progress was evidenced before final submission

6.5 Nested tasks and iterative feedback loops

Nested tasks break a larger assessment into smaller connected stages. This can make learning more visible and help students build towards the final submission over time. Nested assessment can also support feedback. Instead of receiving comments only at the end, students can receive feedback during the development process and show how they have acted on it.

Example staged structure



Nested tasks should be manageable. If every stage is formally marked in detail, workload may become excessive.

6.6 Authenticity by design

Authentic assessment asks learners to apply knowledge, skills and judgement in meaningful contexts. This might include professional, disciplinary, community, workplace or real-world scenarios.

Authenticity does not always mean working with an external employer or live client. It can also mean using realistic scenarios, role-based tasks, case studies, professional audiences, applied problems or discipline-specific artefacts.

EXAMPLES OF AUTHENTIC ASSESSMENT	
Authentic approach	Description
Scenario-based task	Learners respond to a realistic problem, case or situation
Simulation	Learners act within a professional or disciplinary scenario
Workplace problem	Learners apply knowledge to a workplace-relevant challenge
Live brief	Learners respond to a real client, community or employer need
Client-style task	Learners produce work for a defined audience or stakeholder
Case study	Learners analyse a specific situation using evidence and judgement
Professional report	Learners produce a report in a format used beyond education
Practical demonstration	Learners show competence through performance or application
Applied problem-solving	Learners use knowledge to address a specific challenge
Community or employer-linked task	Learners engage with a real or simulated external context
Discipline-specific artefact	Learners produce something meaningful within their field
Role-based assessment	Learners take on a professional role and justify decisions

6.7 Menu of assessment approaches

The following menu provides examples of assessment approaches that may support AI-resilient or future-authentic assessment. These approaches can be used individually or combined.

ASSESSMENT APPROACHES		
Category	Example approaches	What they can support
Dialogue-based	Viva voce, oral defence, professional conversation, poster plus Q&A	Authentication, explanation, confidence in student understanding
Process-based	Processfolio, draft checkpoints, design log, research diary, feedback response log	Visibility of development, decisions and revision
Authentic/applied	Case-based assessment, workplace task, simulation, scenario-based assessment, practical demonstration	Contextual judgement, professional relevance, application
Reflective	Reflective commentary, learning journal, artefact plus rationale, recorded explanation	Student voice, metacognition, explanation of choices
Critique/evaluation	Comparative critique, source evaluation task, AI critique task, annotated bibliography	Critical thinking, evidence evaluation, AI literacy
Secure/supervised	In-class application task, supervised problem-solving, timed writing, observed performance	Verification of independent knowledge or competence

6.8 Small changes, stronger evidence

Assessment redesign does not need to mean replacing familiar tasks. Small, purposeful changes can connect the final product with the thinking, evidence and decisions behind it.

An argument map, decision log, reflection or professional conversation adds value when it is closely linked to the work rather than included as an extra task. These connections prompt students to consider how they developed their ideas, selected evidence, responded to feedback and reached decisions. This supports critical thinking and metacognition while giving assessors a richer picture of learning.

It is important to distinguish between authenticity and authentication. Authenticity concerns whether an assessment reflects meaningful disciplinary, professional or real-world practice. Authentication concerns whether there is credible evidence that the student possesses the knowledge, skill and judgement represented in the work. A task can be authentic without being fully authenticated.

AI may still support parts of the process. The aim is to avoid relying on a single polished output, rather than making a task impossible for AI to complete. Stronger designs connect multiple sources of evidence and require students to explain, justify or apply their thinking.

EXAMPLES OF ASSESSMENT REDESIGN		
Original task	Stronger assessment design	What becomes visible
Write a 2,000-word essay on X	Use specified course material and submit an annotated argument map explaining how the evidence shaped the final position	Argument development, source use and decision-making
Produce a report	Write for a defined audience and include a decision record plus a short professional conversation	Application, prioritisation and justification
Complete a literature review	Include a documented search strategy, evidence table and evaluation of selected sources	Research process, source selection and synthesis
Create a presentation	Present for a specified audience and respond to questions about evidence, conclusions and design choices	Understanding, communication and independent response
Write a laboratory report	Include raw data, explanation of anomalies and discussion of a methodological limitation	Interpretation, reasoning and understanding of uncertainty
Complete a take-home MCQ quiz	Use a supervised, scenario-based quiz with explanations for selected responses	Independent knowledge, application and reasoning
Produce a business plan	Respond to a specific organisation, opportunity and set of constraints, then defend key assumptions through a short pitch and Q&A	Contextual judgement, decision-making and professional reasoning
Submit a portfolio of final work	Include selected iterations and explain one significant change during a portfolio review	Development, use of feedback and ownership of decisions



Defining acceptable AI use

For	Educators, programme leaders, quality teams and students
Purpose	Communicate clearly what is permitted, prohibited and expected
Estimated time	15 minutes

One of the most common causes of uncertainty around generative AI and assessment is the question of what counts as acceptable use. Students may be unsure whether they can use AI for planning, grammar, feedback, translation, coding, image generation or summarising. Staff may also interpret AI use differently across departments or assessment types.

This section provides practical frameworks for defining and communicating acceptable AI use. The aim is to move beyond a simple “ban or allow” approach and towards more nuanced, assessment-specific guidance.

The frameworks in this section should be used alongside institutional policy, awarding body guidance, professional body requirements and local academic integrity procedures. They are designed to support clarity, not replace formal regulations. Guidance from the Joint Council for Qualifications (JCQ) for assessment contexts emphasises that students should acknowledge AI use clearly so that teachers and assessors can judge whether the use was appropriate for the specific assessment (JCQ, 2025).

What AI use is allowed?

Question

Why it matters

Is AI permitted?

Students need to know the boundary

What can it be used for?

Different uses carry different levels of risk

Does it need to be declared?

Transparency supports trust and fairness

How will it be assessed?

AI use should align with the learning outcomes

What if students are unsure?

Guidance should prevent accidental misconduct

7.1 The Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale

The Artificial Intelligence Assessment Scale, or AIAS, is a five-level framework for deciding what role AI should play within an assessment. Rather than applying a simple institution-wide rule, it helps educators align AI use with the learning outcomes, task design, evidence of learning and marking criteria (Perkins et al., 2024; Perkins, Roe and Furze, 2025).

Each level represents a different type of assessment task, not a hierarchy of increasing permission. No level is inherently better than another. The appropriate choice depends on what students need to learn and demonstrate.

1 No AI

This task is completed in a controlled environment designed to exclude AI. Knowledge, understanding, and skills are demonstrated and assessed independently.

2 AI Planning

This task focuses on planning activities such as topic exploration, outlining, and initial research. AI may be used to support this process, and the quality of planning and idea development is assessed whether or not AI was used.

3 AI Collaboration

AI may be used to help complete this task, including idea generation, drafting, feedback, and refinement. It is designed so that AI alone will not reach the required standard. Assessment covers both the work itself and how AI outputs are evaluated, modified, and integrated.

4 Full AI

There is an expectation of AI involvement in this task. The goal cannot be reached by AI or by a person working alone in the time available. Assessment focuses on the critical thinking and subject knowledge shown in directing AI.

5 AI Exploration

This task is designed for creative AI use to solve problems, generate novel insights, or develop innovative solutions in the discipline. Approaches may be co-designed by students and instructors.



AI Assessment Scale (AIAS) v2.1 © 2026 Learning Innovation Practice Ltd. Based on the original AIAS by Perkins, Furze, Roe & MacVaugh.

Using the AIAS

Selecting a level is only the starting point. The assessment must also be designed so that the permitted or expected use of AI supports the intended learning and produces valid evidence of student capability (Perkins, Roe and Furze, 2025).

Course teams should:

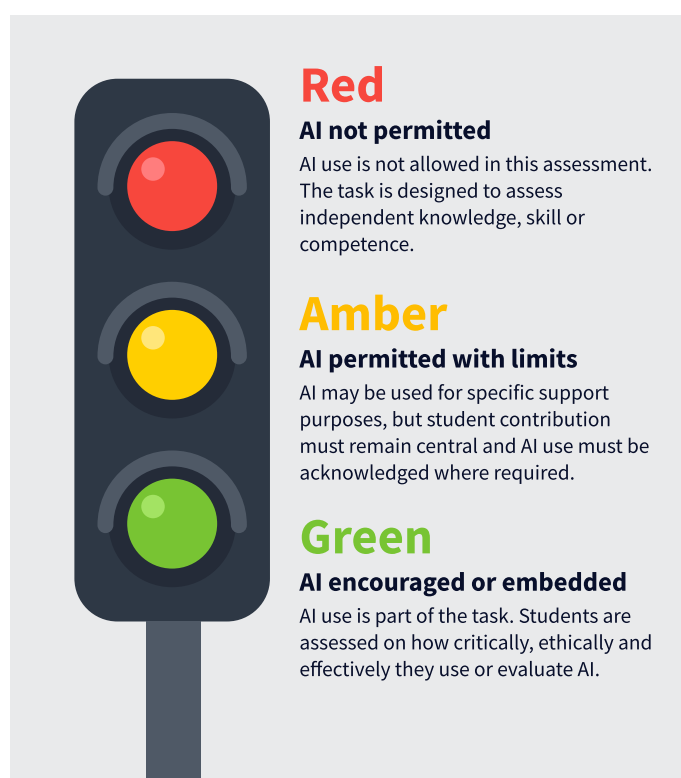
- begin with the learning outcomes and the capability being assessed
- select the AIAS level for the individual task rather than applying one level across an entire programme
- clarify what learners may, must or must not use AI to do
- identify the evidence students need to produce
- align the marking criteria with the expected level of AI use
- consider whether process evidence, explanation, demonstration or dialogue is needed
- ensure learners have equitable access, appropriate guidance and opportunities to develop the required AI literacy

A module or programme may include assessments at several AIAS levels. For example, a controlled Level 1 task might verify independent foundational knowledge, while a later Level 3 or Level 4 task assesses how students apply that knowledge while working critically with AI.

7.2 Red, amber and green traffic light labels

The AI use scale gives detailed guidance, but students may also benefit from simple visual labels on assessment briefs. A traffic light approach can provide quick clarity, especially when used consistently across a programme or institution.

Traffic light labels should not replace detailed guidance; they should act as a front-facing summary.



7.3 What counts as acceptable use?

Acceptable AI use depends on the assessment. A use that is appropriate in one task may be inappropriate in another. For example, translation support may be acceptable in some contexts but not in a language assessment. AI-generated images may be appropriate in a design task if declared, but inappropriate if the task assesses the student's own image-making skills.

Institutions should therefore avoid relying only on general statements such as "AI may be used responsibly". Students need concrete examples.

The table below could be adapted into a student-facing guide or assessment brief support tool.

WHAT COUNTS AS ACCEPTABLE USE?		
AI use	Typical status	Conditions or cautions
Brainstorming	Usually acceptable or acceptable if declared	Should be used to generate initial ideas, not replace student thinking
Summarising notes	Usually acceptable	Best used with the student's own notes; students should check accuracy
Structuring ideas	Usually acceptable or acceptable if declared	May support planning, but the argument or content should remain the student's own
Improving grammar	Acceptable if declared, depending on task	Should not change meaning, argument or level of contribution
Checking clarity	Usually acceptable or acceptable if declared	Student remains responsible for final wording and accuracy
Generating examples	Depends on the task	Examples must be checked and should not replace student analysis
Generating references	Usually not acceptable	High risk of fabricated or inaccurate references
Writing sections of work	Usually not acceptable unless explicitly permitted	May undermine authorship and validity if substantive content is generated by AI
Creating images or media	Depends on the task	Must align with learning outcomes, copyright expectations and declaration requirements
Analysing data	Depends on the task	May be acceptable if the task assesses interpretation, but students must understand and verify outputs
Translating text	Depends on the task	May support access, but may be inappropriate where language production is being assessed
Coding support	Depends on the task	Students should explain, test and understand any code used
Producing slides	Depends on the task	May be acceptable for design support if content and judgement remain student-led
Generating feedback	Usually acceptable or acceptable if declared	Students should decide what to accept, reject or adapt
Checking logic	Usually acceptable	AI suggestions should be checked against evidence and disciplinary expectations
Simplifying complex text	Usually acceptable for study support	Students should return to original sources and avoid relying only on AI summaries

Five possible categories

Institutions may wish to use five categories in student guidance:

1. Usually acceptable
2. Acceptable only if declared
3. Depends on the task
4. Usually not acceptable
5. Not acceptable unless explicitly required



7.4 AI declaration and acknowledgement

AI declarations support transparency. They help students explain how AI contributed to their work and help staff judge whether the use was appropriate for the task. A declaration should not automatically be treated as suspicious. Declarations should be understood as part of responsible academic practice.

They are particularly important because AI-generated content is not the same as a published academic source. It may be inaccurate, fabricated, biased, unsupported or difficult to verify. JCQ guidance notes that acknowledging AI use and showing clearly how it was used allows assessors to review whether the use was appropriate in the context of the assessment (JCQ, 2025).

Students should normally declare:

- the AI tool used
- the purpose of use
- the stage of the task where it was used
- the type of support received
- the extent of AI influence
- how outputs were checked or adapted
- whether any AI-generated content appears in the final submission

The level of detail in an AI declaration should be proportionate. A student who used AI once to generate revision questions may need only a short declaration. A student who used AI repeatedly to support drafting, coding, analysis or design may need a fuller explanation or prompt log.

AI influence	Declaration detail needed
None	Confirm no AI use if required
Minimal	State tool and limited purpose
Moderate	Explain tool, purpose, stage and how output was used
Extensive	Provide detailed declaration, prompt examples and reflection

How declarations differ from references

An AI declaration is not the same as a reference. A reference identifies a source that can normally be located, checked and evaluated. An AI declaration explains the role a tool played in the student’s process.

AI-generated content may not be recoverable or verifiable in the same way as a published source. For this reason, students may be asked to keep records of prompts and outputs, especially where AI use is permitted in a substantial way.

Students may be asked to choose one or more of the following:

- No AI used
- AI used for planning
- AI used for grammar or clarity
- AI used for feedback
- AI used to generate ideas
- AI used to support drafting
- AI used as part of the task
- AI output critically evaluated and adapted

Example declaration wording

Minimal AI use

“I used [tool name] to generate revision questions and help me plan the structure of my assignment. I did not use AI to write the submitted text.”

Moderate AI use

“I used [tool name] to review the clarity and structure of a draft I had already written. I considered the suggestions, accepted some changes and rejected others. The final argument and wording are my own.”

Extensive or integrated AI use

“I used [tool name] as part of the assessment task to generate an initial response, which I then compared with academic sources. I identified inaccuracies and limitations in the AI output and used this critique to develop my final submission. A summary of my prompts and how I responded to the output is included in the appendix.”



Example student declaration template

Which AI tool did you use?

What did you use it for?

At what stage did you use it?

☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Planning / drafting / feedback / checking / other (please specify) _____

How much did it influence the final work?

☐ ☐ ☐

Minimal / moderate / extensive

How did you check the output?

What did you accept, reject or change?

I confirm that the information above is accurate and that I have reviewed, checked and taken responsibility for the final submitted work.

Name: _____ Sign: _____ Date: _____

7.5 Staff AI disclosure

Staff should model the transparency they expect from students. If students are asked to declare AI use, it is helpful for educators to show how AI can be used responsibly in professional practice.

Staff AI disclosure does not need to be lengthy; it can simply explain whether AI was used to support the development of teaching materials, examples, quiz questions, feedback prompts or student guidance, and how the output was checked.

This helps avoid a perceived double standard where students are asked to be transparent but staff use AI invisibly. It also frames AI as a professional tool that still requires human judgement, editing and accountability.

Examples of staff AI use that could be disclosed

- AI used to generate initial examples
- AI used to adapt the reading level of guidance
- AI used to produce draft quiz questions
- AI used to create draft teaching materials
- AI used to generate discussion prompts
- AI used to summarise student feedback themes
- AI used to create alternative explanations
- AI output checked and edited by the lecturer

AI transparency note

- Tool used:
- Purpose:
- Human review completed:
- Final responsibility:

Example staff disclosure statements

Teaching material disclosure

"Some initial examples in this resource were generated with support from [tool name]. They were reviewed, edited and checked by the lecturer before use."

Quiz question disclosure

"AI was used to draft some initial quiz questions. These were checked for accuracy, edited and aligned with the learning outcomes before being shared."

Guidance disclosure

"AI was used to support the first draft of this guidance. The final version was reviewed and adapted by staff to reflect institutional policy and assessment requirements."



7.6 Assignment brief wording bank

Clear assignment brief wording is one of the most effective ways to reduce confusion. Students should not have to infer AI expectations from general policy. The task itself should explain what is permitted, what is prohibited and whether a declaration is required.

The wording below can be adapted for different assessment types. It should always be checked against institutional policy and awarding body requirements.

RED: AI USE NOT PERMITTED

Example wording 1

"AI use is not permitted in this assessment because the task is designed to assess your independent knowledge and understanding. You must not use AI tools to generate, draft, rewrite or edit your response."

Example wording 2

"This is a secure assessment. You must complete the task without AI assistance. Using AI to complete any part of this assessment may be treated as academic misconduct."

Example wording 3

"AI tools must not be used for this assessment. This includes using AI to plan, draft, translate, summarise, edit or improve the submitted work. If you are unsure what this means, please ask before beginning the task."

AMBER: AI PERMITTED WITH LIMITS

Example wording 1

"You may use AI for planning and idea generation, but not to write the submitted response. Any AI use must be acknowledged using the standard declaration form."

Example wording 2

"You may use AI to support grammar, clarity or structure after you have written your own draft. AI must not be used to generate substantive content, analysis or conclusions. You remain responsible for the accuracy and integrity of the final submission."

Example wording 3

"Limited AI use is permitted in this task for brainstorming, feedback and checking clarity. You must declare the tool used, the purpose of use and how you checked or adapted the output."

GREEN: AI ENCOURAGED OR EMBEDDED

Example wording 1

"This assessment requires you to use AI critically. You will be assessed on how you evaluate the AI output, identify limitations and explain how your own judgement shaped the final submission."

Example wording 2

"AI use is embedded in this task. You must keep a record of the prompts used, the outputs generated and the decisions you made in response. Your reflection should explain what you accepted, rejected or changed."

Example wording 3

"You may use AI as part of your research, planning or development process. Your final submission must include a reflective commentary explaining how AI influenced your work and how you checked accuracy, bias and relevance."

OTHER STATEMENTS

Wording for uncertainty

"If you are unsure whether a particular use of AI is permitted, ask your tutor before using it. Do not wait until submission to clarify the rules."

"If your use of AI changes during the assessment process, update your declaration so that it accurately reflects what you did."

Wording for responsibility

"You are responsible for the accuracy, quality and integrity of everything you submit. AI outputs may be inaccurate, biased or fabricated, so you must check content carefully."

"AI can support parts of your learning process where permitted, but it does not replace your responsibility to understand, evaluate and explain your work."

Teaching ethical AI use and critical AI literacy

For	Educators, library and study-skills teams, student support and students
Purpose	Teach students to understand, evaluate and use AI responsibly
Estimated time	20 minutes

Students need more than rules about what is permitted or prohibited. They also need support to understand how generative AI works, where its limitations sit and how to use it critically, ethically and transparently where use is allowed.

Teaching ethical AI use should be understood as part of academic, digital and professional development. Students need opportunities to practise making informed judgements about when AI use is appropriate, how outputs should be checked, how use should be acknowledged and when AI should not be used.

This section provides a framework for embedding critical AI literacy into teaching, assessment and student support. It positions students as active decision-makers, not passive users of AI outputs. This aligns with sector guidance that emphasises student and staff AI literacy, ethical use, academic integrity and human agency (Russell Group, 2023; Miao and Cukurova, 2024; Miao, Shiohira and Lao, 2024; King's College London, 2025).

8.1 Six dimensions of AI literacy

Critical AI literacy should be explicitly taught, modelled and practised. Familiarity with a tool does not mean that a learner can evaluate its output, understand its limitations, use it ethically or apply it appropriately in an academic or professional context.

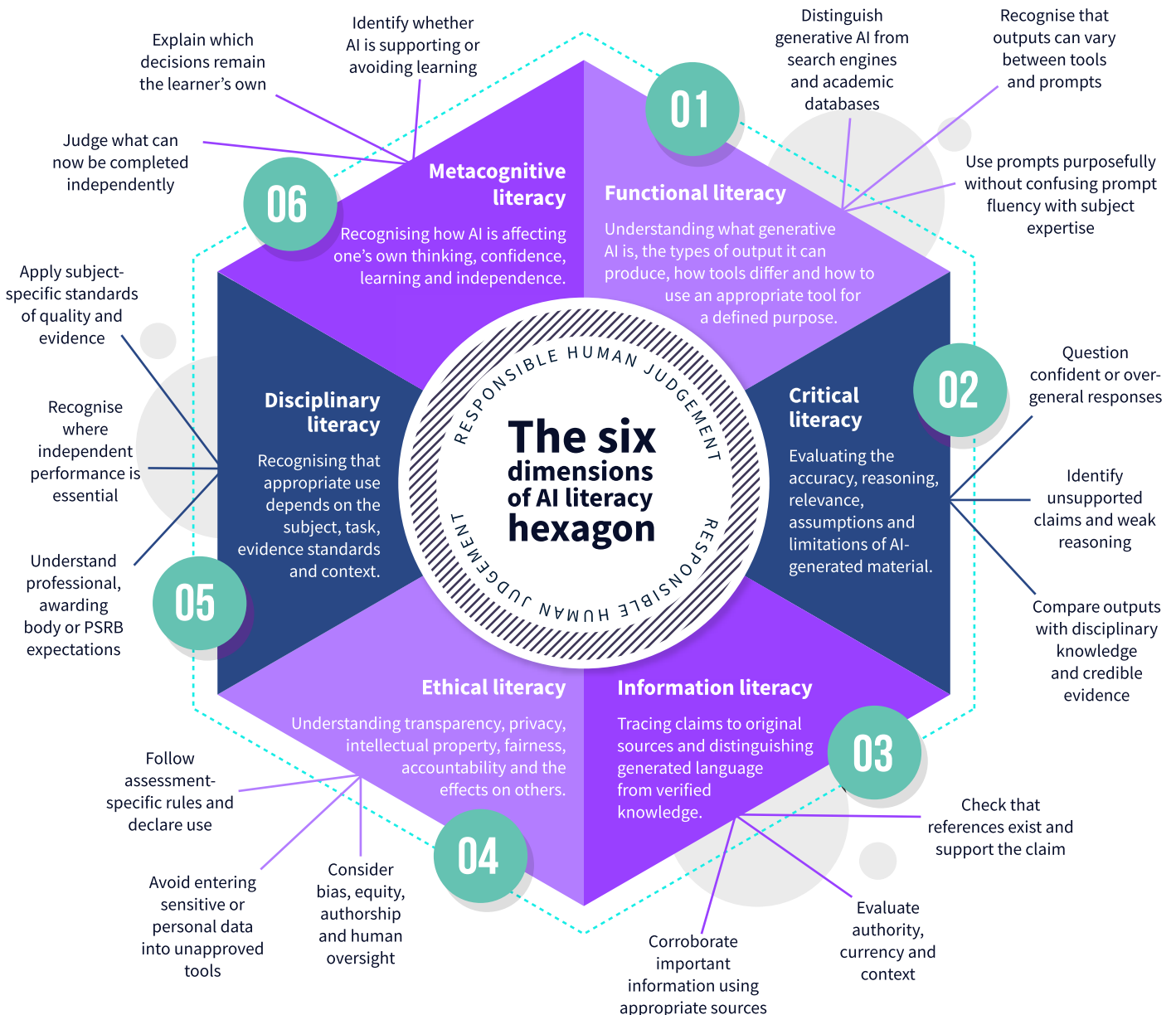
This guidance uses the same six dimensions introduced in Section 2.2 so that staff and students encounter one consistent framework throughout the pack. The dimensions overlap and should be developed through disciplinary teaching rather than treated as a one-off topic.

The six dimensions:

1. Functional
2. Critical
3. Information
4. Ethical
5. Disciplinary
6. Metacognitive



The six dimensions of AI Literacy Hexagon developed by Deakin (2026), informed by Long and Magerko (2020), Ng et al. (2021) and UNESCO's AI competency frameworks.



Teaching AI literacy through the MODEL cycle

AI literacy should not be developed only through policies, induction materials or lists of permitted and prohibited uses. Learners need structured opportunities to observe, question, practise and reflect. The MODEL cycle provides a practical teaching sequence.

M Make the technology visible

Explain, at an appropriate level, how the tool produces or retrieves material and why fluent language does not guarantee accuracy or understanding.

O Observe it in action

Demonstrate a live or prepared example. Show the original instruction, variation between outputs, strengths, errors and points of uncertainty.

D Deconstruct the output

Ask students to examine claims, evidence, language, reasoning, omissions, assumptions and disciplinary fit.

E Experiment with purpose

Provide a bounded, low-stakes activity such as improving a weak output, comparing explanations or testing how prompt wording affects representation.

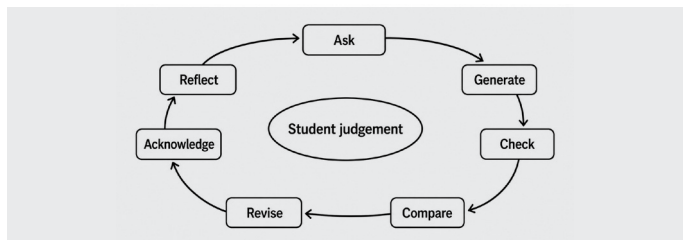
L Link use to learning

Ask students what AI helped them understand, what they corrected, which decisions remained theirs and whether the AI supported or substituted learning.

8.2 The Human-AI Loop

Where AI use is permitted, students need a clear process for working with AI responsibly. The Human-AI Loop provides a simple model for ethical collaboration.

The purpose of the loop is to prevent students from using AI as a substitute for learning. It keeps the student at the centre of the process as the person who asks, checks, compares, revises, acknowledges and reflects.



Ask

The student begins by understanding the task and deciding what kind of support is allowed. They should define the purpose of the AI interaction and write a prompt that includes relevant context, task requirements and constraints.

Students should ask themselves:

- What am I trying to learn or improve?
- Is AI use allowed for this task?
- What exactly do I want AI to help with?
- What information should I not share?
- How will I check the output?

Generate

AI produces an output, such as ideas, questions, explanations, feedback or a draft structure. At this stage, students should treat the output as something to evaluate, not something to submit uncritically.

Students should ask:

- What kind of response has AI produced?
- Is it useful, generic, inaccurate or incomplete?
- Does it answer the actual task?
- Does it reflect the level and discipline?

Check

Students verify AI outputs against reliable sources, such as course materials, academic texts, data, professional guidance or their own prior learning.

Students should ask:

- Are the facts accurate?
- Are the sources real?
- Is the logic sound?
- Are there missing perspectives?
- Is there unsupported or overconfident language?

Compare

Students compare the AI output with their own thinking, other sources or alternative AI outputs. This helps them notice assumptions, gaps and differences.

Students should ask:

- How does this compare with my own draft?
- What does this add?
- What does it miss?
- Which source is more reliable?
- Does this change my understanding?

Revise

Students decide what to accept, reject or change. The final work should reflect the student's own judgement, voice and understanding.

Students should ask:

- What will I keep?
- What will I reject?
- What needs to be rewritten in my own voice?
- What needs checking again?
- What is my final judgement?

Acknowledge

Students declare AI use according to the assessment guidance. This may include identifying the tool, explaining the purpose of use and describing how the output shaped the final work.

Students should ask:

- What AI tool did I use?
- What did I use it for?
- How did it influence the work?
- What did I check or change?
- What declaration is required?

Reflect

Students consider what they learned from the interaction and how AI affected their process. Reflection helps make learning visible and reduces passive reliance on AI.

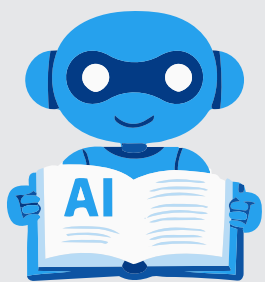
Students should ask:

- What did I learn?
- How did AI help or hinder my thinking?
- What would I do differently next time?
- Can I explain and defend the final work?

8.3 What students need to learn

Students need practical, repeated opportunities to develop critical AI literacy. This does not need to sit in a single standalone session. It can be embedded into induction, study skills, subject teaching, assessment briefings, tutorials, digital capability sessions and feedback activities. The poster below is aimed at students to help them identify what they need to learn.





AI LITERACY

Use AI. Understand AI. Own your learning.

9 tips to help you use AI well



1 EFFECTIVE PROMPTING

Good prompts = better answers. Use this formula:

**Role/context**
Set the background

**Task**
Be clear about what you want

**Constraints**
Add limits or requirements

**Format**
Choose the output style

**Evaluation**
Identify uncertainty or limitations

Example prompt: I am a high school student, explain the causes of the French Revolution. Keep it under 200 words, use bullet points and include the key dates. Include 1 warning about possible misconceptions.

2 SOURCE VERIFICATION

- Check the author, date and website
- Look for evidence from reliable sources
- Cross-check facts with at least 2 sources
- Use library databases and academic sites



3 IDENTIFYING HALLUCINATIONS

AI can sound confident - and still be wrong

- Watch for made-up facts or fake references
- If a source doesn't exist, it's a red flag
- Plausible but incorrect author names or dates
- Statements that do not match course material



4 SPOTTING BIAS

- Notice missing perspectives or stereotypes
- Ask: Whose voice is missing?
- Seek diverse sources and viewpoints
- Be wary of culturally narrow examples



5 ACADEMIC VOICE

Your learning. Your voice. Your responsibility

- Polished writing is not the same as strong thinking
- Edit AI suggestions critically
- Keep subject-specific terminology accurate
- Avoid generic or inflated language
- Ensure your work sounds like your own reasoned argument



6 TRANSPARENCY

Be honest about how you use AI

- Acknowledge AI in your work
- Include the tool name, purpose and how it helped
- Transparency builds trust and credibility



7 ACCESSIBILITY AND SUPPORT

Use AI to support learning, not replace it

- Ask AI to explain a difficult concept
- Generate revision questions
- Suggest a study plan
- Provide feedback on clarity
- Support brainstorming



8 SUPPORT VS SUBSTITUTE

AI should support your learning, not substitute it

Support	Substitute
Brainstorm ideas and explore options	Do your thinking or entire assignments
Explain concepts you're stuck on	Create your essays or responses for you
Give feedback and improve your work	Fix your work without you learning
Help you find starting points and resources	Find (and copy) answers or solutions
Summarise information you provide	Understand complex ideas for you

GOOD RULE OF THUMB

If you learn from it, it's support.
If it does it for you, it's substitute.
You are the driver.
AI is just the GPS.



9 PROTECT YOUR DATA

Think before you share information with AI

- Use institution-approved tools where possible
- Never enter personal, sensitive or confidential information
- Remove names and identifying details from examples
- Do not upload another person's work, images or data without permission
- Check before sharing workplace, placement or research
- Remember that you remain responsible for your uploads



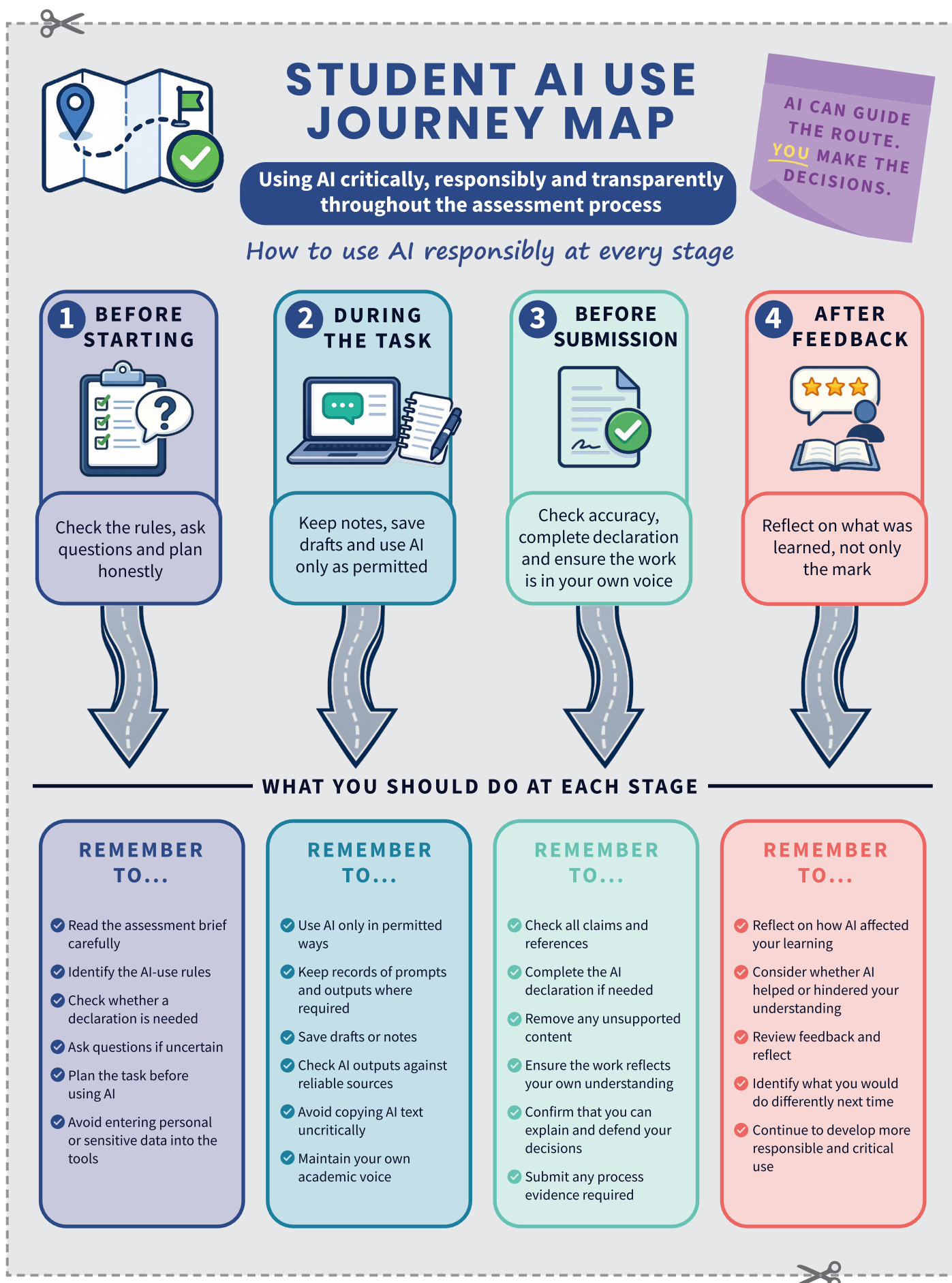
REMEMBER TO:

Check what the assessment brief allows
Ask your teacher or tutor when the guidance is unclear



The student submission journey

The student submission journey helps students understand what responsible AI use looks like at each stage of assessment. It can be used as a student-facing infographic, virtual learning environment (VLE) resource or assessment briefing slide.



8.4 Environmental and social ethics

Critical AI literacy should include the wider ethical, social and environmental implications of AI use. Students should understand that AI is not a neutral or consequence-free tool. Its use involves data, labour, energy, representation, access and accountability.

Data privacy

Students and staff should avoid entering personal, sensitive, confidential or identifiable information into AI tools unless the tool is approved for that purpose and institutional guidance allows it.

Sharing personal or sensitive information

AI tools should not be used to process sensitive student, patient, client, employer or placement information unless there is clear institutional approval. This is particularly important in education, health, social care, legal, counselling, business and research contexts.

Copyright and intellectual property

Students should be aware that AI tools may raise questions about copyright, ownership and reuse of content. They should avoid uploading materials they do not have permission to share and should check institutional guidance about using AI-generated images, media or text.

Bias and representation

AI outputs may reproduce dominant viewpoints or underrepresent particular groups, cultures or contexts. Students should be taught to critically examine whose knowledge is included and whose knowledge is absent.

Environmental impact

AI systems require energy and computing resources. The environmental impact varies by tool, use and infrastructure, but students should understand that AI use has material consequences, particularly when used at scale or for high-compute tasks such as image, video or large-scale data generation.

Accessibility benefits and risks

AI may support accessibility by helping students process complex text, organise ideas or receive alternative explanations. However, it may also create risks if students become over-reliant, if tools are inaccessible or if paid tools create unequal advantage.

Digital inequality

Not all students have equal access to devices, paid AI tools, stable internet or private study spaces. Institutions should consider whether AI-integrated tasks create unfair advantage and whether approved tools are available equitably.

Responsible professional use

Students should be encouraged to connect AI ethics to their future professional responsibilities. In many fields, responsible AI use will involve transparency, accuracy, confidentiality, human oversight and accountability.



Responding to AI-related misconduct and authenticity concerns

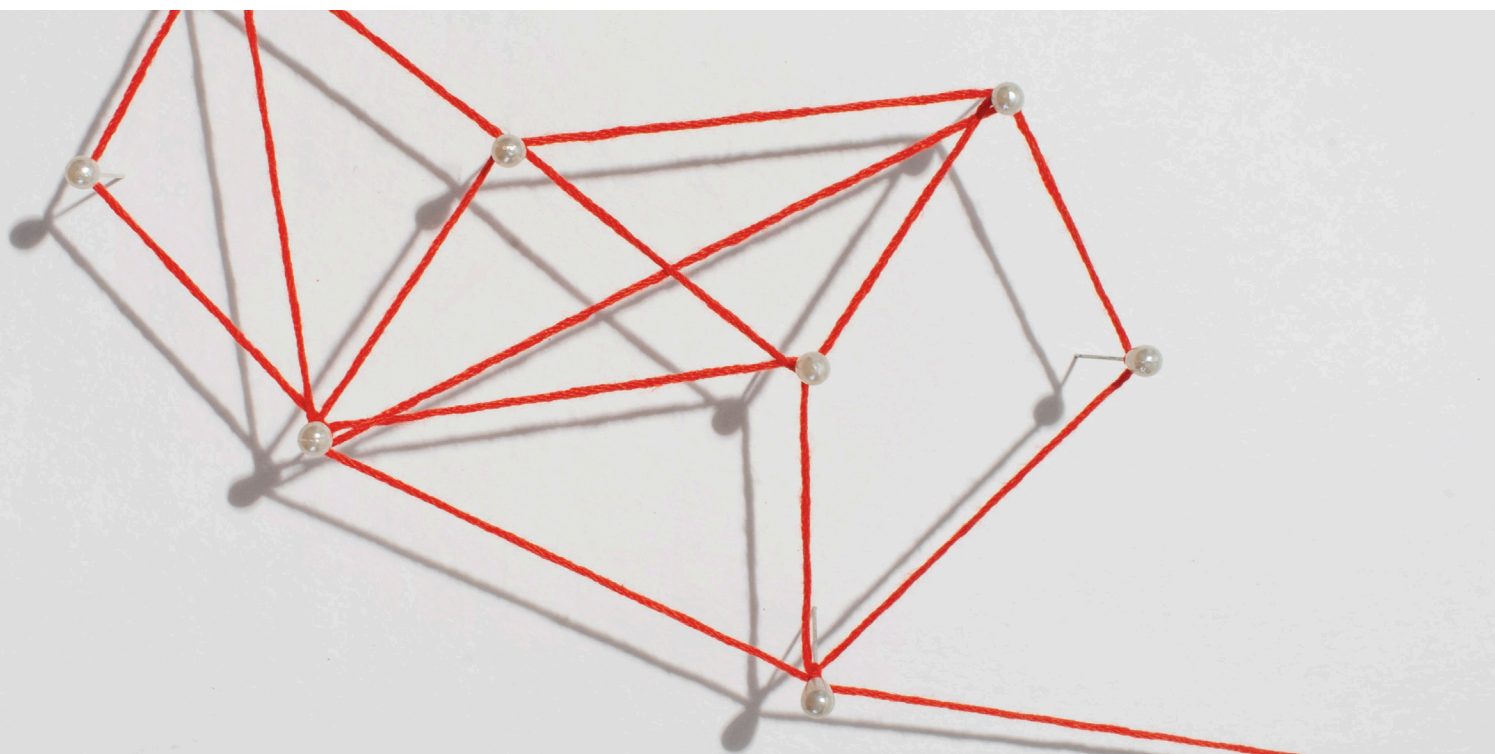
For	Assessors, academic integrity teams, quality colleagues and programme leaders
Purpose	Respond proportionately, gather evidence and protect fair process
Estimated time	25 minutes

This section provides guidance on responding to concerns about AI-related misconduct, malpractice and authorship. It is designed to help institutions, centres, course teams and individual staff respond fairly when concerns arise.

The aim is to move away from a purely reactive or detection-led response and towards a process that uses clear expectations, proportionate evidence, student dialogue and established institutional procedures. AI-related concerns often involve uncertainty. A student may have misunderstood the rules, used AI in a permitted but poorly declared way, relied too heavily on AI, or deliberately submitted work that does not represent their own knowledge, skills or understanding.

In regulated qualification contexts, centres must follow awarding organisation, JCQ and Ofqual requirements. JCQ guidance states that students must submit work that is their own and must be able to demonstrate that the final submission is the product of their own independent work and thinking. Ofqual's 2026 advice note similarly frames AI-related malpractice as a risk to assessment validity where AI tools enable learners to submit material that does not reflect their own knowledge, skills or understanding.

For higher education and other institutional contexts, the same broad principles apply, but terminology and processes may differ. Some providers may use the language of academic misconduct, academic integrity, authentication, poor academic practice or assessment irregularity. This section should therefore be adapted to local regulations.



9.1 Defining AI misuse

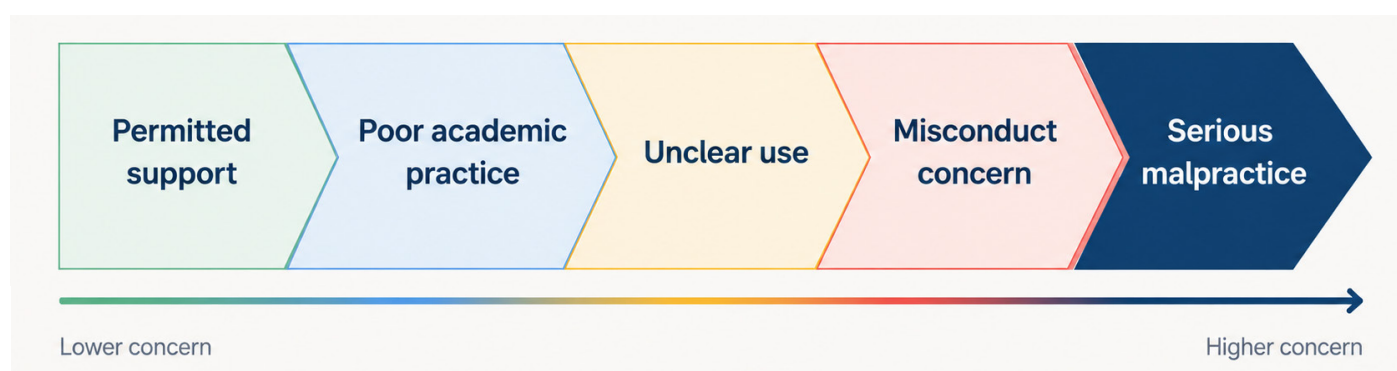
AI misuse occurs when a student uses AI tools in a way that is not permitted, is not appropriately acknowledged, or results in submitted work that does not represent the student's own independent work, thinking, knowledge, skills or understanding.

JCQ defines AI misuse as situations where a student has used one or more AI tools, has not appropriately acknowledged this use and has submitted work for assessment that is not their own. JCQ examples include copying or paraphrasing AI-generated content, using AI to complete parts of the assessment so that the work no longer reflects the student's own analysis or calculations, failing to acknowledge AI use and submitting misleading or incomplete references.

It is important to distinguish between different types and levels of concern. Not all AI-related issues are the same. Some may be better understood as poor academic practice, misunderstanding or over-reliance, while others may constitute serious misconduct or malpractice.

DIFFERENT TYPES OF CONCERNS		
Category	What this may involve	Possible response
Permitted assistive use	AI used in a way that is allowed by the assessment brief, such as planning, grammar support or feedback	No concern, provided use is declared where required
Poor academic practice	AI used clumsily, over-generically or with weak acknowledgement, but without clear intent to deceive	Educational feedback, correction, support or local process
Misunderstanding of rules	Student misunderstood whether AI use was allowed or how it should be declared	Clarification and guidance
Over-reliance on AI	AI use has reduced the student's own contribution, even if some use was declared	Marking adjustment, support, possible integrity process depending on context
Undeclared AI use	AI used but not acknowledged where acknowledgement was required	Investigation according to local or awarding body process
Unacceptable AI-generated submission	AI-generated content submitted as if it were the student's own work	Academic misconduct or malpractice process
Deliberate deception	Student intentionally hides AI use, fabricates process evidence or falsely declares authenticity	Formal misconduct or malpractice process
Contract cheating or third-party involvement	AI use combined with another person or service producing work for the student	Serious misconduct or malpractice process

Misuse spectrum: A continuum of concern



9.2 Assistive use versus malpractice

The boundary between assistive use and misconduct often depends on the assessment brief. The same AI use may be acceptable in one task and prohibited in another. For example, using AI to improve grammar may be acceptable in a written report where the focus is on professional analysis, but inappropriate in a language assessment where written production is itself being assessed. Similarly, AI-supported coding may be acceptable in a task where the student is assessed on debugging and explanation, but unacceptable in a task designed to test independent coding fluency.

Institutions should therefore provide task-level guidance and avoid assuming that the tool itself determines whether use is acceptable. The focus should be on whether the student's work still evidences the intended learning.

ASSISTIVE USE VERSUS MALPRACTICE EXAMPLES

Permitted or potentially acceptable use	Misconduct or malpractice concern
Using AI for grammar support where this is allowed and declared	Using AI to rewrite work so substantially that the student's own voice, meaning or understanding is no longer evident
Using AI to brainstorm possible starting points where planning support is allowed	Submitting AI-generated paragraphs as original student writing
Using AI to simplify complex reading for study support	Using AI-generated summaries instead of engaging with required sources, where source analysis is assessed
Using AI to generate revision questions	Using AI to answer assessment questions in a task where AI is prohibited
Using AI to check clarity of a student-written draft	Asking AI to complete the substantive analysis, evaluation or calculations
Using AI in an assessment where critique of AI is required	Submitting AI outputs without critique, declaration or evidence of human judgement
Using AI to support accessibility where permitted and appropriate	Using translation or writing tools where language production or independent writing is being assessed
Using AI to identify possible coding errors where allowed	Submitting AI-generated code without understanding, testing or acknowledgement
Declaring AI use accurately	Providing incomplete, misleading or false acknowledgement

9.3 Limits of AI detection tools

AI detection tools may have a role in some institutional processes, but they should not be treated as definitive proof that a student has or has not used AI. Detection outputs are probabilistic and can vary depending on the tool used, the type of AI, the prompt, the proportion of AI-generated content, subsequent editing and the student's writing style.

JCQ guidance states that AI detection tools vary in accuracy and that, where used, they should form part of a holistic approach in which all available information is considered. JCQ also notes that factors such as English language competency can affect detection tool performance.

Jisc similarly advises that decisions should never be based solely on AI detection, whether by a tool or a person, and warns against using random online detection tools without proper institutional consideration of accuracy, data protection and what happens to student work once uploaded.

Research also shows the difficulty of identifying AI-generated assessment work reliably. In a University of Reading study, AI-generated submissions in undergraduate psychology modules went undetected in 94% of cases and achieved higher grades on average than real student submissions (Scarfe et al., 2024). This study highlights the limitations of relying on human detection or conventional marking processes to identify AI-generated submissions.



Clear guidance on detection

Detection should be approached with caution:

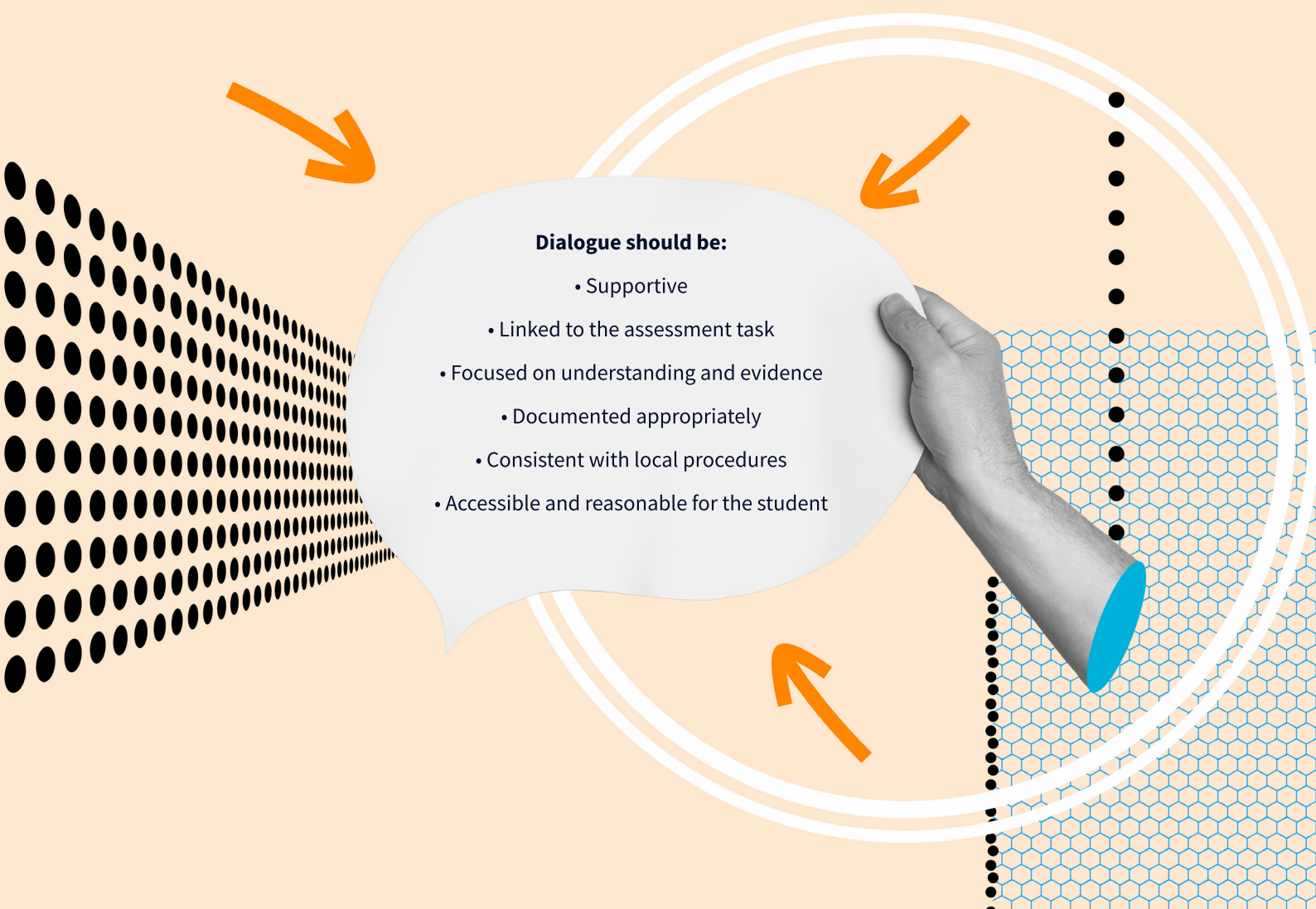
- Detector outputs should not be treated as proof
- Detection should not replace academic judgement
- Concerns should be triangulated with other evidence
- Staff should be aware of false positives and false negatives
- Students should have an opportunity to respond
- Institutions need consistent procedures
- Tools should be approved and reviewed before use
- Data protection and intellectual property implications should be considered

9.4 The human check: authentication through dialogue

A “human check” involves using dialogue, explanation or demonstration to understand whether the student can account for their work. This may be planned as part of the assessment or used as a follow-up where concerns arise.

The purpose is not to interrogate students or assume wrongdoing. It is to give students an opportunity to explain their process, demonstrate understanding and clarify any uncertainty. Ofqual’s 2026 senior leadership briefing advises that, where teachers suspect AI-generated coursework, they should have a conversation with the student and ask them to explain their thinking and describe their process before following malpractice procedures if concerns remain (Ofqual, 2026c).

OPTIONS FOR AUTHENTICATION	
Human check	How it could be used
Viva voce	A structured oral discussion where the student explains and defends their work
Professional conversation	A dialogue linked to workplace, vocational or professional competence
Oral defence	Student justifies sources, methods, design decisions or conclusions
Short follow-up questions	Targeted questions about specific sections of the work
Tutorial discussion	Informal or planned discussion during the development of the task
Explanation of process	Student talks through how the work was planned and developed
Source discussion	Student explains which sources were used and why
Draft comparison	Student compares final work with earlier drafts or notes
Reflective commentary	Student explains key decisions, revisions and learning
Practical demonstration	Student demonstrates the skill or process assessed
Supervised rework task	Student completes a related task under controlled conditions



CONCERN RAISED WORKFLOW

A fair evidence-informed response to suspected AI misuse

POSSIBLE INDICATORS

- ✓ Inconsistency with previous work
- ✓ Unverifiable or fabricated references
- ✓ Unexplained change in style
- ✓ Missing process evidence
- ✓ Mismatch between explanation and submission
- ✓ Detection output used cautiously

GOOD PRACTICE FOR STAFF

- ✓ Check the brief and AI rules first
- ✓ Avoid relying on one indicator or one detection score
- ✓ Consider whether expectations were clear
- ✓ Keep a factual record of evidence reviewed
- ✓ Seek advice when evidence is uncertain

2 CLARIFY RULES



Check the assessment brief, AI-use guidance, declaration requirements and relevant policy before taking action. Confirm that the expectations were communicated clearly, as students should not be judged against rules they were not given.

1 CONCERN RAISED



A concern should prompt a review, not an automatic judgement. Record the issue clearly and proportionately, preserve the available evidence and inform the relevant curriculum or course lead. Treat possible indicators as reasons for further enquiry, not proof of misconduct.

3 GATHER EVIDENCE



Review the whole evidence picture, including drafts, version history, source notes, tutorial records, declarations, previous work and any relevant tool outputs. Avoid reaching a conclusion from one indicator or detection score alone.

Invite the student to explain how they approached the task, which sources or tools they used and how they checked the final submission. Use neutral, supportive language and keep a factual record of the conversation.

4 SPEAK WITH THE STUDENT



Where the issue is resolved or educational in nature, provide guidance and support to prevent it recurring. Where concerns remain, follow the appropriate institutional, centre, awarding body or PSRB procedure, applying the process consistently and keeping clear records.

7 SUPPORT OR ESCALATE



NEXT STEPS

EDUCATIONAL RESPONSE

Guidance,
correction, support



FORMAL ROUTE

Local integrity
process, misconduct
or malpractice
referral

5 REVIEW EXPLANATION

Consider whether the student's explanation and supporting evidence resolve the concern. Distinguish between permitted use, poor academic practice, misunderstanding, over-reliance, undeclared use and possible deliberate misconduct.



6 DECIDE RESPONSE

Choose a fair and proportionate response based on the evidence and relevant procedures. This may include no further action, formative guidance, correction of a declaration or referencing, a marking adjustment, additional support or referral to an academic integrity process. Seek advice where the evidence is uncertain or the consequences may be serious.



9.6 Example meeting questions

The questions below can be used in an academic integrity meeting, tutorial, viva, professional conversation or informal follow-up. They should be adapted to the context and used in a supportive, non-accusatory way.

Opening questions	AI-use questions
• Can you talk me through how you approached it? • What was your first step when beginning the work? • How did you plan the structure of your response? • What did you find most challenging?	• Did you use any AI tools at any stage? • If so, what did you use them for? • How did you check the accuracy of AI content? • Did you keep any prompts or outputs?
Source and evidence questions	Understanding questions
• What sources did you use and why? • Which source most influenced your argument? • How did you decide what evidence to include? • Were there any sources you rejected? Why?	• Can you explain this section in your own words? • Why did you use this term or concept here? • How does this point link to the learning outcomes? • What is the main argument or finding of your work? • If you had to summarise your conclusion verbally, what would you say?
Development questions	Reflection questions
• How did your argument or response develop? • What changed between your draft and final version? • How did you use feedback? • What would you improve if you had more time?	• What did you learn from completing this task? • What part of the work best represents your own thinking? • How would you approach the task differently next time?

9.7 Evidence-gathering checklist

Evidence should be gathered proportionately and handled in line with institutional policy. The aim is to build a fair picture of the concern, not to search for evidence to confirm an assumption.

EVIDENCE CHECKLIST	
Evidence	Notes
Assessment brief	Does it clearly state AI rules and declaration requirements?
AI-use rules given to students	Were these communicated before the task began?
Student declaration	Was AI use declared? Was the declaration complete?
Drafts or version history	Is there evidence of development over time?
Tutorial notes	Were ideas discussed during the process?
Feedback records	Did the student respond to feedback?
Source list	Are sources real, relevant and used appropriately?
Search strategy or planning notes	Can the research process be traced?
Writing style comparison	Use cautiously; compare with supervised work where appropriate
Unusual references or fabricated sources	Are there sources that cannot be found or verified?
Student explanation	Can the student explain the process and content?
Detector output, if used	Clearly label as limited supporting information only
Records of prompts or AI outputs	If required by the task, review how these were used
Marking notes	Record any impact on marks or criteria clearly
Advice sought	Record advice from academic integrity, quality or awarding body contacts

9.8 Centre and institutional responsibilities

This subsection includes material relevant to schools and JCQ-regulated assessment, Ofqual-regulated qualifications and PSRB-regulated programmes. Apply only the requirements relevant to your setting.

Responsibilities vary by setting. Apply this section alongside local procedures and the relevant awarding, regulatory or professional requirements.

In regulated qualification contexts, JCQ guidance states that the Head of Centre is responsible for arrangements to ensure centre-assessed work is produced, authenticated and marked in line with awarding body instructions. JCQ also states that centre malpractice policies must cover AI use, including what it is, when it may be used, how it should be acknowledged, the risks of using it, what AI misuse is and how it will be treated as malpractice.

Ofqual’s 2026 advice note states that awarding organisations should consider where AI-related malpractice may pose risk, take reasonable steps to prevent and manage malpractice and keep arrangements under review as AI tools develop. Ofqual also emphasises that changes made to reduce AI-related malpractice should be considered carefully because they may have unintended effects on the construct being assessed or broader assessment validity.

- Institutions and centres should ensure:
- alignment with institutional misconduct procedures
 - consistency with awarding body requirements
 - Ofqual or JCQ considerations where relevant
 - clear data protection and privacy guidance
 - appropriate record keeping
 - students’ right to respond
 - fair and consistent investigation
 - clear support routes before and after misconduct processes
 - staff training on AI tools, risks and procedures
 - guidance on declaration and acknowledgement
 - processes for concerns before and after authenticity declarations are signed
 - controls for secure assessments.

JCQ guidance states that if suspected AI misuse is identified before a student has signed the authentication declaration, centres do not have to report it to the awarding organisation and should resolve it through the centre’s own malpractice or plagiarism policy. If AI misuse is detected or suspected after the declaration has been signed, the case must be reported to the relevant awarding organisation.

Data protection and privacy

Institutions should also consider data protection when using AI tools, including detection or marking tools. JCQ notes that centres may decide whether it is appropriate for teachers and assessors to use AI tools to help mark student work only after careful consideration of data privacy concerns, and that an AI tool cannot be the sole marker; a human assessor remains responsible for the mark or grade awarded.

Who is responsible?

Role	Responsibility
Senior leaders or head of centre	Ensure policy/procedure/compliance is in place
Quality teams	Support consistent process and record keeping
Programme/department leads	Ensure shared interpretation and escalation
Teachers/assessors	Authenticate work and raise concerns
Students	Submit work, follow the rules and declare AI use
Awarding bodies/PSRBs	Set requirements and consider cases

9.9 Case studies

Case studies can help staff and students understand how AI-related concerns may arise and how responses should be proportionate. The examples below are written for discussion.

CASE 1: AI USED FOR GRAMMAR SUPPORT

 Scenario	A student declares that they used AI to check grammar and clarity in a written report. The assessment brief allows AI for grammar support but states that substantive content must be the student's own.
 Key issue	Was AI used only for permitted support, or did it substantially change meaning, argument or content?
 Evidence to review	• AI declaration • draft before AI support • final submission • student explanation • assessment brief wording
 Possible response	If the student can show that AI was used only for clarity and the final work reflects their own understanding, no misconduct concern may arise. Feedback may focus on ensuring the declaration is sufficiently detailed.
 Prevention point	Provide examples of acceptable grammar support and unacceptable rewriting.



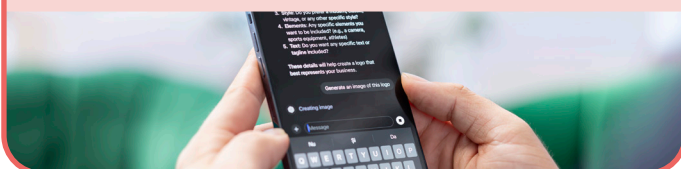
CASE 2: STUDENT SUBMITTED AN AI-GENERATED ESSAY

 Scenario	A final essay contains fabricated references, generic phrasing and sections the student cannot explain. The brief prohibited AI-generated content.
 Key issue	The work may not represent the student's own knowledge or understanding.
 Evidence to review	• assessment brief • declaration • source list • drafts or version history • student explanation • previous work • fabricated references
 Possible response	Follow institutional misconduct or malpractice procedures. If this is a regulated qualification and the authenticity declaration has been signed, follow relevant awarding body requirements.
 Prevention point	Teach students how to check references and explain that AI-generated references may be fabricated.



CASE 3: STUDENT USED AI BUT DECLARED IT POORLY

 Scenario	A student writes "I used ChatGPT" in their declaration but does not explain what it was used for. The task allowed limited AI support with declaration.
 Key issue	The declaration is incomplete, but AI use may not necessarily be misconduct.
 Evidence to review	• student explanation • prompts or outputs if available • draft history • assessment brief requirements • whether the use affected assessed criteria
 Possible response	If the student's use was within the rules, ask for a corrected declaration and provide guidance. If AI completed assessed elements, marking adjustment or further process may be needed.
 Prevention point	Use a structured declaration form with specific prompts.



CASE 4: PROFESSIONAL BODY RESTRICTIONS APPLY

 Scenario	Students on a professionally regulated programme are told that AI use is restricted in a particular assessment because it verifies professional competence.
 Key issue	AI restrictions may be necessary where professional standards require independent demonstration of knowledge or skill.
 Evidence to review	• PSRB requirements • assessment brief • student guidance • authenticity declaration • assessment conditions
 Possible response	Follow programme and professional requirements. Ensure restrictions are clearly explained before assessments.
 Prevention point	Map AI permissions against PSRB or awarding body expectations.



Building policy that supports practice

For	Senior leaders, policy owners, quality teams and programme leaders
Purpose	Translate principles into assessment briefs, responsibilities and procedures
Estimated time	20 minutes

Policy provides the institutional foundation for academic integrity, assessment expectations and fair decision-making. However, policy alone is not enough. A policy only becomes meaningful when it is translated into assessment briefs, teaching activities, student guidance, declaration processes, staff development and consistent academic integrity procedures.

This section focuses on what policy should include and how policy can support practice. Section 11 then focuses on implementation, quality assurance, communication and staff development.

10.1 Principles-based policy rather than prescriptive rules

Generative AI tools are developing quickly. Policies that are too narrow, tool-specific or focused only on prohibition may become outdated quickly. A principles-based policy is more sustainable because it establishes stable expectations while allowing departments, programmes and assessment teams to apply those principles to their own contexts.

Students and staff need to understand what is allowed, what is not allowed, how AI use should be acknowledged and what happens when misuse is suspected.

Guidance from the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA) on assessment in the ChatGPT era encourages providers to consider sustainable approaches to assessment in response to generative AI, rather than relying only on short-term fixes (QAA, 2023b). Russell Group principles also emphasise supporting staff and students to become AI-literate and adapting teaching and assessment so students can use generative AI appropriately and ethically (Russell Group, 2023).



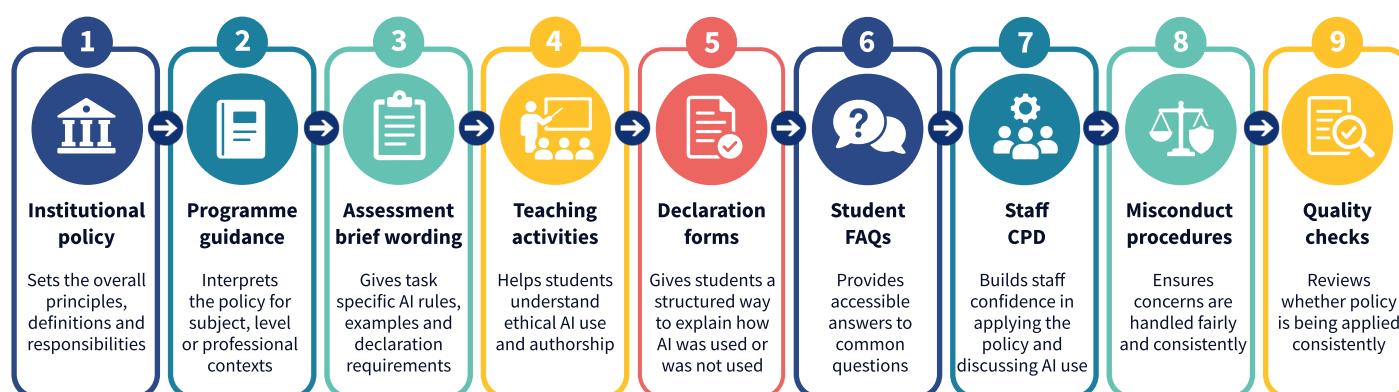
WHAT A GOOD AI AND ASSESSMENT POLICY SHOULD INCLUDE	
Policy element	What it should clarify
Institutional principles	The values guiding the institutional response, such as validity, transparency, fairness, ethical use, inclusion and human judgement
Definitions of AI and generative AI	Clear explanations of key terms so staff and students use shared language
Acceptable and unacceptable use	Broad categories of permitted, limited, prohibited and embedded AI use
Responsibility of students	Expectations around authorship, declaration, checking accuracy and following assessment rules
Responsibility of staff	Expectations around task-level clarity, teaching, feedback, modelling and fair response to concerns
Declaration and acknowledgement expectations	When students should declare AI use and how much detail is needed
Data protection and privacy guidance	What information should not be entered into AI tools and which tools are approved
Relationship to academic integrity procedures	How AI misuse fits within existing misconduct, malpractice or poor academic practice procedures
Assessment-level AI permissions	Examples of how AI use can be described in assessment briefs
Guidance for misconduct processes	How concerns should be reviewed, evidenced, discussed and escalated
Links to support	Routes to student guidance, library support, study skills, digital learning support and staff CPD

10.2 Policy into practice

Policy becomes effective when it is embedded across the institution. A central policy should create a common foundation, but it needs to be translated into the everyday places where students and staff encounter assessment: module handbooks, assessment briefs, teaching sessions, feedback processes, declaration forms and academic integrity procedures.

Guidance is clear that centres need policies and procedures that explain what AI misuse is, the risks of using AI, how AI use should be acknowledged and how AI misuse will be treated as malpractice in relevant assessment contexts (JCQ, 2025). Ofqual's 2026 advice note also stresses that awarding organisations should consider where AI-related malpractice may pose a risk and keep arrangements under review as AI tools develop (Ofqual, 2026a).

THE POLICY IMPLEMENTATION FLOW



What policy translation looks like:

A policy statement might say...



10.3 Reflection questions for senior leaders and course teams

Questions for senior leaders

Do we have clear institutional principles? Are these written in language staff/students can understand?

Are staff confident in applying the principles? Do they have time, examples and support?

Are students receiving consistent messages? Can they easily find guidance?

Are AI expectations visible in assessment briefs and teaching activities?

Are we avoiding over-reliance on detection? Do we have fair workflows for concerns?

Have high-risk assessments been reviewed? Do we know where secure or open assessments are needed?

Are we considering digital poverty, accessibility, privacy and support needs?

Are we aligned with PSRB, awarding body and sector expectations?

How will we update our approach as tools, regulations and research change?

Questions for course teams

Which assessments are most vulnerable? Which rely heavily on final-product-only evidence?

Which assessments need to remain secure? Where could AI be used ethically or professionally?

Are students clear on expectations? Do all assessment briefs include AI-use wording?

Are declarations built into the process? What process evidence would help authenticate learning?

Have students been taught how to use AI ethically and critically?

How will we respond consistently to concerns? Who should staff speak to before escalating?

How will we review impact? What feedback will we collect from students and external examiners?

Course team action sheet

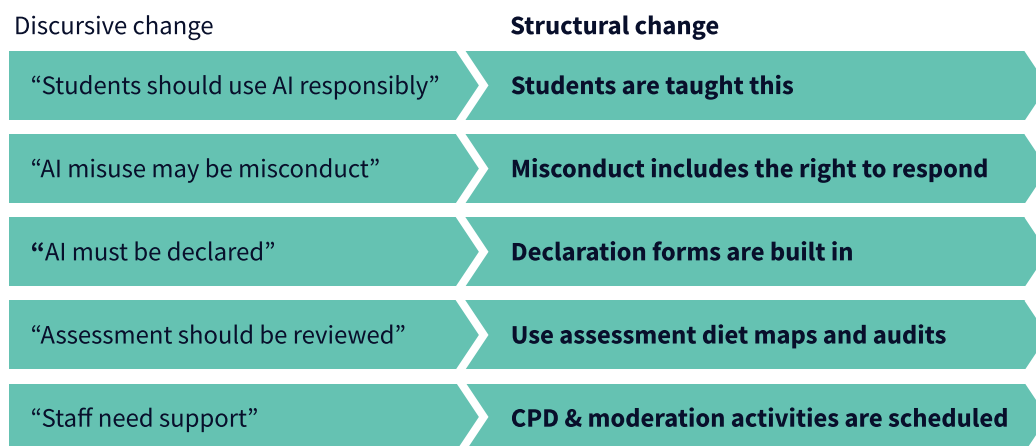
Question	Current position	Action needed	Owner	Timescale
Which assessments are most vulnerable?				
Which assessments need to remain secure?				
Where can AI be used ethically?				
Are students clear on expectations?				
How will we authenticate learning?				

10.4 From discursive change to structural change

A common institutional response to AI is to update policy language. This is useful, but it is only the first step. Telling students what not to do does not automatically change assessment design, staff confidence or student understanding.

Effective policy should support structural change. This means changing the systems and practices around assessment so that expectations are clear, student thinking is visible and academic integrity is supported before submission, not only investigated afterwards.

A shift in focus:



10.5 Policy review and continuous improvement

AI tools, student practices, sector guidance and regulatory expectations will continue to change. Institutions should therefore treat AI policy as a living framework that is reviewed regularly.

Review should consider: student feedback, staff feedback, academic integrity cases, assessment redesign activity, external examiner or moderator comments, PSRB or awarding body updates, changes in AI tools and institutional infrastructure, data protection and procurement decisions, equity and access implications and quality assurance findings.

It is important to keep arrangements under review as AI tools develop and consider whether changes designed to reduce malpractice may have unintended effects on assessment validity (Ofqual, 2026a). This is an important principle beyond regulated qualifications as well: changes to assessment and policy should be reviewed for both intended and unintended consequences.



Leadership, quality assurance and implementation

For	Senior leaders, quality teams, learning and teaching leads and digital strategy colleagues
Purpose	Assess readiness and embed sustainable institutional change
Estimated time	15 minutes

Successful assessment reform requires more than individual enthusiasm or isolated innovation. AI-responsive assessment needs to be supported through institutional leadership, quality assurance processes, staff development, student communication and ongoing review.

This section focuses on implementation and quality assurance (QA). Section 10 sets out what policy should include and how policy connects to practice. This section shows how leaders and quality teams can embed AI-responsive assessment into existing institutional systems.

11.1 AI and assessment readiness audit

Before implementing major changes, institutions should establish a clear picture of current readiness. A readiness audit can help identify strengths, gaps and priorities across policy, staff development, student guidance, assessment review, infrastructure and quality assurance.



AI AND ASSESSMENT READINESS AUDIT				
Area	Key question	Evidence to look for	RAG rating	Notes
1 Policy clarity	Do we have clear institutional principles for AI and assessment?	Policy, guidance, definitions, acceptable use categories		
2 Staff confidence	Do staff feel able to discuss AI, redesign assessment and respond to concerns?	CPD attendance, staff surveys, team discussions, confidence audits		
3 Student guidance	Do students understand what is allowed, prohibited and required?	Student guide, FAQs, VLE pages, assessment brief wording		
4 Assessment review	Have high-risk assessments been identified?	Vulnerability audits, programme review notes		
5 AI literacy curriculum	Are students taught critical and ethical AI use?	Teaching activities, study skills resources, induction materials		
6 Academic integrity procedures	Are AI-related concerns handled fairly and consistently?	Misconduct workflows, evidence checklists, meeting guidance		
7 Quality assurance alignment	Are AI considerations built into QA processes?	Validation forms, annual monitoring prompts, external examiner guidance		
8 Leadership ownership	Is there clear senior responsibility for AI and assessment?	Committee oversight, named leads, implementation plan		
9 Stakeholder communication	Are staff, students and relevant external stakeholders receiving consistent messages?	Communication plan, staff briefings, student updates		
10 Resource availability	Are staff and students supported with tools, templates and time?	Resource bank, approved tool guidance, CPD, workload planning		

READINESS DASHBOARD

Area	Red - concern	Amber - developing	Green - strong readiness
Policy clarity	No shared guidance	Draft or partial guidance	Clear principles and examples
Staff confidence	Limited confidence	Uneven confidence	Supported through CPD and templates
Student guidance	Unclear or inconsistent	General guidance exists	Clear assessment-level guidance
Assessment review	No systematic review	High-risk tasks being identified	Programme-level review embedded
Academic integrity	Case-by-case response	Procedures being updated	Consistent workflow and evidence process
QA alignment	Not included in QA	Included in some reviews	Embedded across QA cycle



PRIORITY ACTIONS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

11.2 Institutional maturity model

A maturity model can help institutions understand where they are in their response to generative AI and assessment. The aim is not to label institutions negatively, but to support staged development.

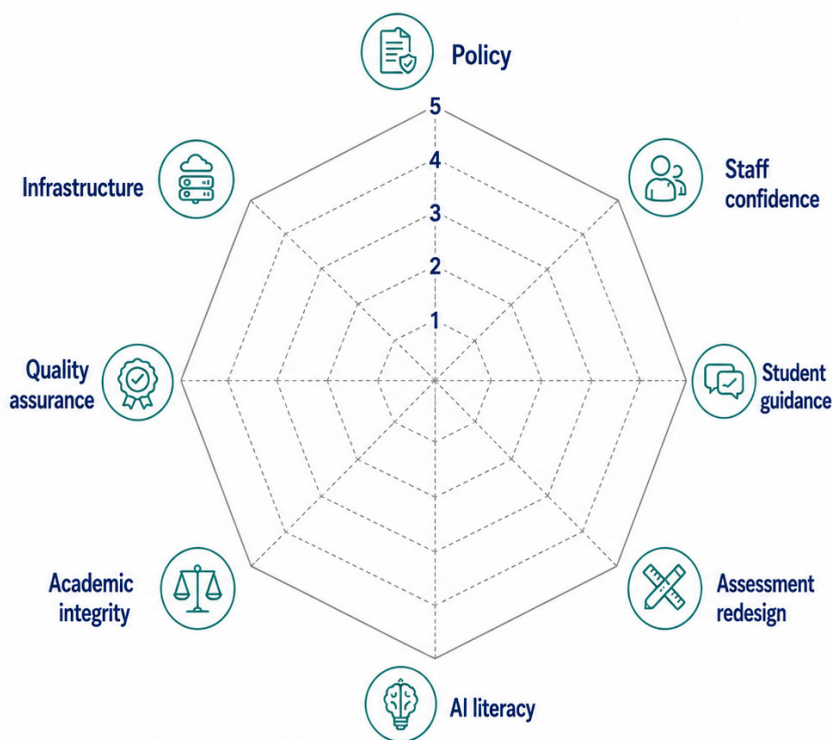


Area	1. REACTIVE	2. DEVELOPING	3. COORDINATED	4. EMBEDDED	5. TRANSFORMATIVE
What it looks like	Rules are unclear or highly restrictive. Responses are case by case and often depend on individual staff judgement.	Basic guidance exists, but practice is uneven across departments, programmes or modules.	Shared principles are in place, staff CPD, assessment audits and clearer communication are underway.	Assessment redesign, student AI literacy and academic integrity procedures are aligned.	AI is used critically, ethically and creatively across learning and assessment where appropriate, with strong validity and trust.
Typical indicators	- Unclear assessment briefs - Reliance on suspicion or detection - Limited staff support - Inconsistent student messages	- Some assessment briefs include AI wording - Some staff CPD has taken place - Students experience variation	- Programme teams begin assessment diet mapping - Traffic light labels or AI use scales introduced - Misconduct workflows reviewed	- Consistent student guidance - AI literacy is taught - High-risk assessments reviewed - QA processes include AI prompts	- Secure and open assessments are balanced - Students develop critical AI literacy - Staff practice is confident - Systems reviewed regularly
Next steps	Establish institutional principles and immediate guidance for staff and students	Agree shared wording, run staff development and begin assessment risk review	Embed AI into QA processes and programme-level assessment design	Evaluate impact on learning, integrity, workload, equity and student experience	Continue sector collaboration, share evidence and update practice as tools and regulation evolve

MATURITY SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Plot your current position and identify priorities for development.

- 5** Transformative
- 4** Embedded
- 3** Coordinated
- 2** Developing
- 1** Reactive



11.3 PSRB and awarding body alignment

Some assessments are governed by external requirements. This may include professional, statutory and regulatory bodies, awarding organisations, apprenticeship standards, qualification specifications or national assessment regulations.

In these contexts, AI permissions cannot be decided only by local preference. Course teams need to identify where external requirements apply and ensure that assessment design remains compliant.

The table below is a space where you can check external requirements and ensure that assessments align with these.

ALIGNMENT TABLE				
Assessment	External requirement	AI permission	Evidence of independent competence	Action needed
Assessment 1	Standard X	Restricted	Viva and practical demonstration	Update brief and student guidance

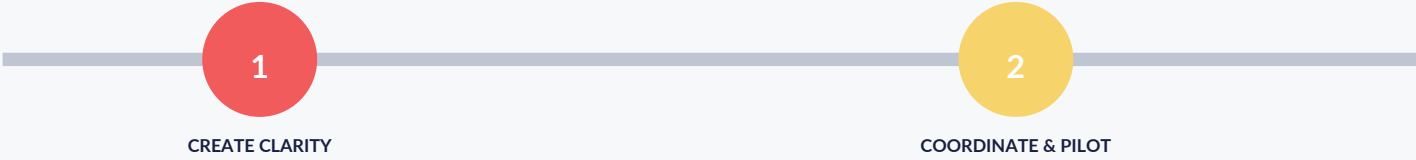
11.4 Staff development and CPD

Staff development is central to successful implementation. Staff need practical opportunities to explore AI tools, review assessment briefs, discuss case studies, practise student conversations and consider how AI affects their subject area. CPD should be practical, and a single awareness session is unlikely to be enough.

IDEAS FOR STAFF CPD		
Session	Purpose	Possible activities
60-minute introduction to AI and assessment	Build shared understanding of opportunities, risks and institutional expectations	AI myths and realities, policy overview, examples of permitted and prohibited use
Assessment redesign workshop	Help staff adapt one assessment task	Use PASS AI checklist, risk matrix and before/after examples
Teaching ethical AI use	Support staff to embed critical AI literacy	Human-AI Loop, activity cards, declaration practice
Responding to suspected AI misuse	Build confidence in fair and consistent processes	Misconduct scenarios, evidence checklist, meeting questions
Programme-level assessment audit	Support course teams to review assessment diets	Secure/open mapping, high-risk assessment identification
Bring one assessment brief workshop	Give staff time to improve a current brief	Peer review, AI-use wording, traffic light labels, action planning

FROM GUIDANCE TO ACTION

Institutional implementation plan for AI-responsive assessment



CREATE CLARITY

0-1 month

- Name leadership: appoint an executive sponsor, operational lead and programme owners. Confirm decision routes, resource and reporting.
- Complete a readiness audit: use a course-team discussion to identify strengths, gaps and one immediate priority for each programme.
- Identify high-risk assessments: use the risk matrix, vulnerability audit or PASS AI checklist. Prioritise generic, final-product-only, unclear, hard-to-authenticate or high-stakes tasks.
- Agree interim brief wording: state the AI level or RAG position, permitted and prohibited uses, declaration requirements, examples and a contact point.
- Teach declaration basics: show what counts as AI use, when and how to declare it, how declarations differ from references and what to do when unsure.
- Review concern procedures: require holistic evidence, student dialogue and proportionate decisions. Detection output must not be treated as proof.

DELIVERABLES & REVIEW

Outputs: named owners; readiness baseline; priority assessment list; shared wording bank; declaration guide; updated concern workflow and evidence checklist.
Review: sponsor or academic board at the end of month 1.

COORDINATE & PILOT

Months 2-6

- Map programme assessment diets: identify where secure assessment is needed, where AI can be guided or embedded and where process evidence or dialogue would strengthen validity.
- Run practical staff CPD: AI and assessment basics; redesign workshops; ethical AI teaching; suspected misuse; programme audit; "bring one assessment brief".
- Publish student guidance: explain assessment rules, academic voice, checking, declarations, safe study support, possible misconduct and routes for questions.
- Update policy and procedure: clarify definitions, acceptable use, responsibilities, declarations, privacy, integrity processes, support routes and staff-development links.
- Pilot a small number of redesigned tasks: test process portfolios, oral defence, AI critique, scenarios, decision logs, reflective rationales or supervised checks.
- Build AI into QA: add prompts to module review, validation, annual monitoring, moderation, assessment boards and external examiner reporting.
- Gather feedback: ask staff and students about clarity, fairness, workload, support and what remains confusing.

DELIVERABLES & REVIEW

Outputs: programme maps; revised briefs; CPD records; published guide and FAQs; pilot evaluations; updated policy and QA templates.
Review: quality or implementation group at month 6.

LIVE IMPLEMENTATION TRACKER - assign owners, evidence and review points

WORKSTREAM	PRIORITY ACTION	SUGGESTED OWNER
Policy clarity	Update AI and assessment guidance	Academic integrity / policy lead
Student guidance	Publish guide, FAQs and declaration support	Library / study skills / student services
Assessment review	Audit priority tasks and map programme diets	Programme leaders
Staff development	Run redesign and integrity workshops	Learning and teaching team
Integrity procedures	Approve concern workflow and evidence checklist	Academic integrity lead
QA alignment	Add AI prompts to QA and moderation	Quality team
AI literacy	Map learning across programmes	Programme teams
Evaluation	Monitor impact and reset priorities	Quality / institutional research

TEMPLATE-SUPPORTED

FEEDBACK-INFORMED

REGULARLY REVIEWED

ADAPTABLE

3

EMBED & EVALUATE

4

SUSTAIN & SHARE

EMBED & EVALUATE

Months 6-18

- Embed critical AI literacy: integrate it into induction, study skills, subject teaching, assessment briefings, professional practice, research methods and employability.
- Scale effective assessment changes: extend successful pilots and align tasks with disciplinary practice, workplace use and the need to demonstrate independent competence.
- Create shared institutional infrastructure: maintain common wording, declaration forms, student guidance, approved-tool advice, resource banks, support routes and escalation pathways.
- Moderate and calibrate practice: use programme review, peer discussion and cross-team examples to improve consistency while retaining justified disciplinary variation.
- Evaluate impact: review integrity cases, assessment validity, student clarity, outcomes, experience, equity and inclusion, staff workload, external examiner feedback and QA findings.
- Close the gaps: use evidence to target additional CPD, redesign support, digital access, workload allocation and student education.

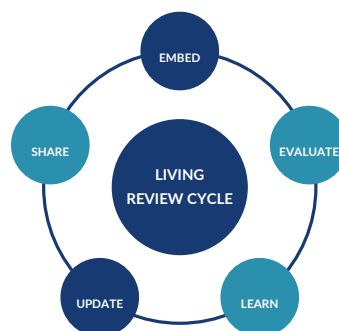
DELIVERABLES & REVIEW

Outputs: AI-literacy curriculum map; scaled redesigns; institutional toolkit; moderation records; impact dashboard and improvement plan.
Review: annual monitoring and periodic programme review.

SUSTAIN & SHARE

Ongoing

- Use a living review cycle: Embed -> Evaluate -> Learn -> Update -> Share.
- Refresh guidance when conditions change: review tools, institutional policy, research, student practice and JCQ, Ofqual, awarding body or PSRB expectations where relevant.
- Repeat the readiness audit and maturity review: track progress and reset priorities rather than treating implementation as complete.
- Maintain oversight: monitor ownership, resourcing, case patterns, quality findings and whether messages remain consistent across programmes.
- Collaborate and share evidence: publish case studies, templates and evaluation findings and contribute to sector, awarding body and professional conversations.



DELIVERABLES & REVIEW

Outputs: annual update log; refreshed guidance; maturity re-assessment; shared case studies; revised implementation priorities.
Review: annual academic board or equivalent governance cycle.

WHEN	EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS	REVIEW POINT
M1-M6	Approved guidance and definitions	Academic board
M1-M4	VLE resources and student feedback	Student committee
M1-M6	Priority list and assessment maps	Annual monitoring
M2-M6 + ongoing	Attendance, revised briefs and confidence data	CPD evaluation
M1-M3	Updated procedure and case audit	Integrity panel
M3-M6	Updated forms and review records	Quality committee
M6-M12	Curriculum map and teaching resources	Curriculum review
M6-M18 + annual	Impact dashboard and improvement plan	Academic board

Conclusion

Summary

Generative AI represents a significant turning point for assessment practice. It raises important questions about authorship, academic integrity, validity, fairness and the future of learning. However, it also offers an opportunity to improve assessment design, strengthen student support and develop the critical AI literacy students will need beyond their current course.

A strong response to AI and assessment will not depend on one tool, one policy or one individual. It will require layers of action: transparent guidance, thoughtful assessment design, student education, staff development, fair procedures and ongoing review.

By prioritising validity over surveillance, transparency over suspicion and design over detection, institutions can protect the integrity of qualifications while supporting students to navigate an AI-rich world with confidence, responsibility and critical judgement.

Accessing the resource bank

The downloadable resource bank includes editable templates, checklists, policy wording, student-facing materials, staff development resources and practical examples that can be adapted by institutions. You can access the resources via this QR code.



Feedback and sector collaboration

The challenges created by generative AI are shared across the education sector. No single institution, course team or educator has all the answers. Readers are invited to share what they found useful, what needs clarification, what is missing, what worked in practice, what created challenges, any case studies or examples. Thank you.



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