

Teaching and Learning in the Age of AI: Higher Education, Work, and Human Judgment

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Abstract

Artificial intelligence is changing how students learn, how teachers teach, and how graduates prepare for work. Its influence is already visible in writing, assessment, research, feedback, and classroom planning. This research blog argues that higher education should not respond to artificial intelligence only through fear, restriction, or detection. The deeper task is to rethink what meaningful learning looks like when intelligent tools can draft, summarize, analyze, and respond within seconds. Drawing on recent work on teaching with artificial intelligence, generative artificial intelligence in higher education, assessment reform, and human-centred policy, the blog highlights the need for artificial intelligence literacy, ethical judgment, and stronger assessment design. It also connects these changes to future work and global inequality. The central argument is simple: artificial intelligence does not make higher education less important. It makes human judgment, critical thinking, and responsible learning more necessary.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, higher education, teaching and learning, assessment, human judgment

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Rationale

Artificial intelligence is reshaping the way people learn, work, and think. Its presence in higher education is no longer a distant concern. It is already part of student writing, classroom activities, research support, feedback, and academic planning. Teachers are now facing questions that were uncommon only a few years ago. How should assignments be designed when students can use artificial intelligence to draft ideas? How should learning be assessed when a polished answer can be produced in seconds? How should universities prepare graduates for workplaces where human and machine work are increasingly connected?

These questions matter because higher education has always been more than content delivery. It is also about judgment, responsibility, creativity, and intellectual growth. A research blog should begin by showing why a topic matters in both academic and practical life (Hasan et al., 2026a). In this case, the rationale is clear. Artificial intelligence is changing both education and work, and universities must respond with care (Hasan et al., 2026b; Hasan et al., 2026c; Hasan et al., 2026d).

Bowen and Watson (2025) argue that artificial intelligence is creating major changes in classrooms and workplaces. Their work shows that educators need confidence, not panic (Hasan et al., 2026e; Hasan et al., 2026f). They need practical ways to use artificial intelligence while still protecting learning. Chan and Colloton (2024) also explain that generative artificial intelligence requires changes in curriculum, teaching, assessment, and institutional policy.

This means the issue is not only whether students use artificial intelligence. The more important question is whether higher education can teach students to use it wisely. Students need to learn how to question outputs, check sources, recognize bias, and make ethical decisions. In the age of artificial intelligence, teaching should not become weaker. It should become more thoughtful.

Research Gap

A major gap remains in current discussions about artificial intelligence in higher education. Much attention is still given to cheating, plagiarism, and detection. These concerns are important. But they do not capture the full educational challenge. If universities focus only on whether students used artificial intelligence, they may miss the deeper issue. The real question is what students are learning, how they are learning, and how they are developing judgment.

A research blog should identify the gap that makes the discussion necessary (Hasnat et al., 2026a). The gap here is that artificial intelligence is often treated as a tool to control rather than a learning condition to understand. Many institutions are still trying to decide whether to ban, allow, or monitor artificial intelligence. Fewer are asking how teaching and assessment should change when artificial intelligence becomes part of normal academic life (Hasnat et al., 2025; Hasnat et al., 2026b).

Assessment is one of the clearest examples. Lodge et al. (2023) argue that assessment must be redesigned for the age of artificial intelligence. Traditional assignments may not always show what students know. A final written product may no longer be enough. Teachers may need to assess process, reasoning, reflection, oral explanation, and applied judgment.



Miao and Holmes (2023) also call for a human-centred approach to generative artificial intelligence in education and research. This approach reminds us that technology should support human learning. It should not replace responsibility, fairness, or ethical decision-making.

The gap is therefore not only technical. It is educational. Higher education needs stronger ways to teach students how to think with artificial intelligence, not simply how to use it. Students must learn when to trust a tool, when to question it, and when human judgment must come first.

Future Implications

The future implications are important for teaching, assessment, curriculum, and graduate readiness. Research blogs should connect evidence to future practice, policy, and innovation (Khandakar et al., 2026). For higher education, this means moving beyond emergency responses. Universities need to redesign learning for an artificial intelligence-rich world.

First, assessment must become more meaningful. This does not mean removing essays, projects, or exams. It means asking better questions about evidence of learning. Students can be asked to explain their process, defend their choices, compare artificial intelligence outputs, and reflect on their own thinking. These practices can make learning more visible.

Second, artificial intelligence literacy should become part of higher education. Students need more than basic tool use. They need to understand error, bias, authorship, privacy, and accountability. Bowen and Watson (2025) suggest that artificial intelligence can support learning when educators use it with clear purpose. It should help students become stronger thinkers, not passive users.

Third, universities need to prepare students for changing work. Aoun (2017) argues that higher education must prepare graduates for a world where machines can perform many technical tasks. This makes human abilities more important. Students will need creativity, ethical reasoning, communication, collaboration, and problem framing. These skills cannot be reduced to quick answers.

Finally, universities must consider inequality. The United Nations Development Programme (2025) warns that artificial intelligence will not benefit all people equally. Access to tools, infrastructure, training, and institutional support will shape who gains from artificial intelligence and who is left behind. This issue matters deeply for developing countries and under-resourced institutions.

Artificial intelligence does not make higher education less valuable. It asks higher education to become clearer about its value. The future of teaching and learning should not be built around fear alone. It should be built around human judgment, ethical use, critical thinking, and the responsible development of students.

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