

# What's next with AI in higher education?

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Two years on from the release of ChatGPT and other generative AI language programs, schools and universities are continuing to grapple with how to manage the complex challenges and opportunities of the technology.

University of Queensland researchers are playing a key role in the [education sector](#)'s response to the new learning environment.

Associate Professor Jason Lodge from UQ's School of Education is developing a systematic approach to guide educators on how they can adapt to generative AI.

"Fundamental changes are underway in the education sector and while the tech companies are leading the way, educators should really be guiding that change," Dr. Lodge said.

"We're currently focused on the acute problem of cheating, but not enough on the chronic problem of how—and what—to teach."

Dr. Lodge said there are five key areas the higher education sector needs to address to adapt to the use of AI:

## **1. Teach 'people' skills as well as tech skills**

"It will be increasingly important to teach students how to use new tech tools, but even more important is to teach skills that make us human," Dr. Lodge said.

"Things like thinking deeply, understanding emotions, and learning independently are skills computers can't simulate or support well.

"We can't expect students to make the most of these tools if they don't understand their own learning first."

## **2. Help all students use new tech**

"Some students are great with new technology, while others are less inclined to use it," Dr. Lodge said.

"Student usage trends suggest large gaps between use of AI—some students with strong literacy are using AI innovatively, some use it superficially but don't trust it and will fact-check, and some are scared to use it, often due to a fear of being labeled as cheating.

"Higher education institutions need to make sure all students can use these new tools effectively and ethically."

## **3. Prepare students for the jobs of the future**

"Many higher education programs globally are teaching for jobs that might not exist in the future," Dr. Lodge said.

"Schools and universities need to update what they teach to help students be ready for the new kinds of work that are coming."

## **4. Learn to make sense of complex information**

"As computers get better at handling information, humans need to identify what's important and make decisions in complex human social environments," Dr. Lodge said.

"Higher education should focus on teaching students this, because these skills will become increasingly important as professions change and adapt to AI."

## **5. Universities to lead the tech change**

"Universities should decide how they're going to use new technology in teaching, not just follow what [tech companies](#) say," Dr. Lodge said.

"Universities are doing world-leading research in both AI and in higher education, so they have the expertise to develop technology to help students learn and support them on their educational journey."

## **Studying how AI is changing education**

Dr. Lodge is working with colleagues on a project conducting in-depth interviews and [observational studies](#) with students to understand how they are using generative AI.

"We're investigating how AI is impacting learning and how students might use AI to get feedback on their thinking and their work," he said.

"Understanding how students are already adopting these new tools and technologies in their learning can inform how teachers can best support learning and incorporate AI into their teaching and assessment."

Dr. Lodge led the development of national guidance on Assessment Reform for the Age of Artificial Intelligence in partnership with the Federal Government's Tertiary Education Quality and Standards Agency, which was released last year.

The team was recently awarded the Professor Tracey Bretag Prize for Academic Integrity, an international award for advancing the understanding and implementation of academic integrity in [higher education](#).

Dr. Lodge will chair an industry panel at the Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia Conference in Adelaide this

week about "Where to next with AI in Higher Education Learning, Teacher and Assessment?"

Provided by University of Queensland

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