# Program – 2026 AI in Higher Education ANZ Symposium

Tuesday 3 February 2026. All times are in Sydney time, Australian Eastern Daylight Time (UTC+11).

| Time | Stream 1 | Stream 2 | Stream 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 9:00 | **Welcome**<br><br>**Plenary**<br>Ray Fleming and Dan Bowen | | |
| Block 1 starts 9:30 | **Redesigning assessments when AI is part of the picture** | **AI agents to extend learning** | **Teaching students to critique AI outputs** |
| 9:30 | **Scaffolding Learning and Assessment in Business Writing with GenAI in Mind**<br>Hans Hendrischke, David Jun Zhao, Carmen Vallis<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>Students tell us they want guidance on using AI critically, not blanket bans or uncritical adoption. In response, we redesigned business assessments through a co-design process involving educators and students, creating scaffolded activities that prompt iteration, reflection, and ethical evaluation of AI outputs. We share practical examples and sample assessments that other disciplines can adapt for their own contexts. | **Coordinating a multi-campus maths support centre using GenAI as a first point of contact**<br>Luis Camacho<br>*Federation University Australia*<br>Many students find it intimidating to ask for help with foundational maths skills they feel they "should" already have. By embedding GenAI agents into units across education, nursing, engineering, and foundation studies, we offer a lower-stakes entry point available whenever students need it. We discuss practical lessons learned, how we secured leadership buy-in, and the formative insights educators gain from student conversations with the agents. | **AI as a Catalyst for Interdisciplinary Dialogue in Large-Scale Courses**<br>Daniel Brennan<br>*Bond University*<br>What happens when you make AI use visible and collective instead of hidden and individual? In our charrette exercises, students engage AI as an active participant, debating its outputs, pushing for clarity, and deciding together what is genuinely useful. I will walk through specific activities, including a student-built Devil's advocate agent and AI image-making tasks, showing how these approaches help students establish their agency as critical users of AI tools. |
| 9:45 | **Conversations and AI reports: an assessment pattern**<br>Simon Thompson<br>*Australian National University*<br>Developing students' ability to work effectively with AI requires structured opportunities for planning, creation, and reflection. We designed a paired assessment where students first discuss their approach to an upcoming project, including their intended use of AI tools, then submit both their final artefact and a learning journal documenting their process. Course evaluations from 2025 confirm students find this approach valuable, and this session provides the practical mechanisms needed to implement the pattern in your own teaching. | **Statbot – A friendly cognitive tutor for statistics and coding**<br>Liana Pozza, Minh Huynh and Floris van Ogtrop<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>Statistics is daunting for many students, and with broadening cohorts we found demand for support was outstripping what teaching staff could provide in practical classes. We built 'Statbot', a GenAI agent tailored to our unit content that gives students instant help with statistical concepts and R coding at any hour. This session walks through how we set up the agent using Cogniti, what students actually used it for, and what 413 conversations taught us about where learners need the most support. | **Cultivating Ethical Agency through Critical AI Literacy: A Seven-Stage Learning Framework**<br>Meena Jha<br>*Central Queensland University*<br>Students initially struggled to understand what critiquing AI actually looks like in practice. To address this, I developed a seven-step process that guides students through evaluating AI-generated content for accuracy, coherence, bias, and ethical blind spots, then demonstrated it live using real examples. The structured approach, combined with group practice and reflection templates, shifted students toward seeing AI as a tool for inquiry rather than a shortcut to answers. |

| Time | Stream 1 | Stream 2 | Stream 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 10:00 | **AI in database education**<br>Reihaneh Bidar<br>*University of Queensland*<br>Teaching students to generate SQL code and develop database skills with AI is only meaningful when assessment design requires them to critically reflect on, evaluate, and justify how AI is used in their learning. In this session, I outline how two database courses were redesigned around this principle, embedding Gemini AI into interactive Colab notebooks and aligning assessments with supporting lecture and tutorial structures. The assessment require students to document their use of AI, evaluate and validate AI-generated SQL, and reflect on the role of AI in their problem-solving processes rather than accepting outputs at face value. | **Professor Wombat - your personal biochemistry tutor!**<br>Barbara Hadley<br>*Griffith University*<br>Biochemistry concepts build on each other, and students who miss the basics early often disengage for the rest of trimester. We created a series of AI agents that scaffold learning progressively, starting with simple analogies and building toward scientific explanations one concept at a time. The result? Emails asking for clarification dropped from 420 per trimester to zero, pass rates improved, and students tell us they no longer feel lost or embarrassed to ask questions. This session demonstrates how this scaffolding works, shares thematic analysis of real conversations, and explains how we turned student struggles into targeted revision sessions and improved course materials. | **Empowering Language Learners to Engage Critically with AI: A Practical Approach to Assessment Design**<br>Patricia Koromvokis<br>*Macquarie University*<br>Teaching students to spot where AI gets language wrong turns out to be an effective way to strengthen their own linguistic knowledge. In my Modern Greek assessments, students evaluate AI-generated text for accuracy, identify errors, and articulate their reasoning using the technical language of grammar. I will walk through specific tasks and the rubric criteria that guide student analysis, showing how this approach builds both AI literacy and deeper engagement with how language works. |
| 10:15 | **Designing for Responsible Collaboration: Many Losses and Some Wins Across Three Years of GenAI Integration in Assessments**<br>Armin Alimardani<br>*Western Sydney University*<br>Since 2023, undergraduate law assessments in my courses have required students to work with generative AI and account for how they used it. The assessment splits evenly between the quality of the legal analysis and a 500-word reflection detailing how students verified and challenged AI outputs. Three iterations have revealed what works, what doesn't, and why verification must be explicitly assessed rather than simply encouraged. | **Scaffolded Socratic AI: Reimagining Assignment Feedback for Metacognitive Growth**<br>Joanna Ernenwein and Tyler Sprague<br>*University of Sydney Law Extension Committee*<br>While many AI tools offer generic feedback, this session showcases an assignment-critique agent that goes far beyond surface-level comments. Built with robust guardrails and a structured variant of the Socratic method, it provides scaffolded support across planning, drafting, revision, and post-marking reflection in the context of legal education. By pinpointing reasoning gaps and prompting students to justify their choices, it embeds authentic metacognition and delivers analytical development that standard feedback agents simply cannot match. | **Using generative AI to strengthen research and reasoning: Integrating AI critique and reflection into law assessments for non-law students**<br>Mark McConnell<br>*The University of Auckland*<br>An AI-integrated assignment asked students to critique an AI-generated legal answer and reflect on their own AI use, shifting focus from producing content to evaluating reasoning. Rather than preventing AI, the task leveraged it to teach legal accuracy, testing of claims, and critical thinking. Survey results showed deeper reasoning but mixed engagement, with students preferring traditional tests for core concepts. The project highlights trade-offs and raises questions about assessment design in AI-rich learning environments. |
| 10:30 | **Discussion and movement** | | |
| 10:45 | **Morning tea** | | |

| Time | Stream 1 | Stream 2 | Stream 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Block 2 starts 11:15 | **AI in creative and interdisciplinary contexts** | **AI tools and approaches for educators' own practice and development** | **AI-powered practice environments for professional skills** |
| 11:15 | **Co-creating Alumni Narratives with Generative AI: A Visual and Participatory Learning Experience**<br>Francesc Fusté-Forné<br>*University of Girona (Spain) and Sustainability and Resilience Institute New Zealand*<br>Connecting current students with alumni can be challenging, so we designed a collaborative book project where students use generative AI to create visual representations of graduates' professional journeys. The process prompted rich discussions about identity, storytelling, and the role of AI in shaping how we present ourselves. We walk through the practical workflow, share examples of student work, and discuss how educators might adapt this approach for their own context. | **Using Generative AI to get more frequent feedback on our teaching**<br>Dan Levy<br>*Harvard University*<br>What if we could get useful feedback on our teaching weekly rather than twice a year? Generative AI can summarise student sentiment, highlight recurring concerns, and even analyse class recordings to offer targeted observations on our practice. I will demonstrate the tools I have developed, discuss what they cannot do as well as a human teaching coach, and make them available for others to try and adapt. | **Enhancing Communication Skills with Generative AI: Lessons from the Hume.ai Pilot**<br>Naomi Cocks<br>*Curtin University*<br>Allied health students need extensive practice with clinical communication, but finding partners and tutors for realistic role-play is a constant challenge. We piloted Hume.ai, a voice-interactive AI that plays the role of a client or patient while also providing feedback on students' communication skills. This session demonstrates how students used it for case history interviews, difficult conversations, and goal setting, and shares what they found most (and least) helpful. |
| 11:30 | **Multi-modality, AI and Design Education: The Use of Text, Image, and 3D Models for Co-Creation**<br>Anastasia Globa<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>When AI generates geometries that cannot be fabricated or reinforces stylistic clichés, those failures become some of the most valuable moments in my design classroom. Students working across text, image, 3D models, and XR environments learn to interrogate AI outputs critically, questioning why the tool produces what it does and adapting when results prove impractical or biased. This session shares the workflows we have developed and demonstrates how treating AI limitations as learning opportunities builds more resilient, thoughtful designers. | **The R2-D2 approach: AI as your learning design co-pilot, not autopilot**<br>Andrew Komoder<br>*Western Sydney University*<br>What happens when you stop treating AI as an automation tool and start using it as a conversational design partner? On a real project with real constraints, I developed a custom agent built on Gagné's Nine Events, Krathwohl's taxonomies, and other pedagogical frameworks to help create contextualised learning experiences that templated approaches cannot match. This session walks through the iterative process, the prompt engineering behind it, and the honest limitations I encountered along the way. | **Designing adaptive clinical scenarios with generative AI: Lessons from practice**<br>Yifang Parker, Irene Lubbe and Jessica Allan<br>*University of Canterbury*<br>Exercise prescription for patients with cardiac conditions or diabetes demands confident clinical reasoning, yet students often lack opportunities to practise before entering real clinical settings. Generative AI helped us create branching scenarios where students interpret test results, make exercise prescription decisions, and receive immediate feedback on their choices. A digital patient feature additionally enables real-time AI-mediated conversations. We share one scenario in detail, from the initial storyboarding through to the editing of AI-generated outputs, and offer practical lessons for educators wanting to start small. |
| 11:45 | **The use of AI agents in transition transdisciplinary and education focussed units of study**<br>Dominic Hearne<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>GenAI can play very different roles depending on what students need: an FAQ bot for quick answers, a Socratic guide for deeper inquiry, or a creative partner for producing podcasts and videos. We've tested these approaches across transition and education units, learning what works at each stage. This session picks apart the practical design of these tools and helps educators identify which GenAI applications might suit their own teaching contexts. | **From prompt builder to pedagogical partner: iterative AI learning with Kaiako**<br>Karl McGuirk<br>*University of Auckland*<br>Many educators want to use generative AI but feel uncertain about where to start or how to prompt effectively. We built Kaiako, an AI co-designer that guides staff step by step through structured, reflective prompt engineering within a self-paced professional learning course. This session shares the practical design of Kaiako, our "Prompt Parlour" drop-in sessions, and how we've normalised experimentation by openly discussing what hasn't worked. | **Talking to AI: Reducing Oral Assessment Anxiety Through Virtual Simulation**<br>Stephan Tseng<br>*UNSW Sydney*<br>What if students could rehearse oral assessments as many times as needed before the stakes become real? In our marketing course, students engage with an AI avatar simulating a customer interaction, building their confidence in communication and problem-solving at their own pace. This session shares how we designed the simulation, what early evidence shows about reduced anxiety and improved engagement, and how similar approaches could work without specialist technology. |
| 12:00 | **Discussion and movement** | | |

| Time | Stream 1 | Stream 2 | Stream 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| Block 3 starts 12:15 | **Institution-level insights and approaches to AI integration** | **Integrating AI into collaborative contexts** | **AI to simulate ambiguity of professional practice** |
| 12:15 | **The Promise and the Pushback: Understanding Student Reactions to AI-Supported Learning**<br>Katherine Jensen and Shahper Richter<br>*University of Auckland*<br>Our marketing students use generative AI to create brand personas, develop digital storytelling content, and build immersive experiences, all while critically reflecting on what these tools mean for their future careers. Scaling meaningful AI integration across 800 students taught us hard lessons about leading with pedagogy and creating space for genuine dialogue about concerns. We walk through specific activities, share student responses, and offer practical guidance for others attempting similar approaches. | **Inviting AI to the Team: Reimagining Teamwork Assessments**<br>Danielle Ramirez, Caroline Sanz-Veitch and Pat Chen<br>*Monash University*<br>What happens when students can formally invite AI into their project team? We piloted this assessment design across multiple disciplines. Teams decided whether to engage with AI and then reflected on its contributions and limitations. Early findings show that students gained confidence in engaging with AI and discovered new ways of applying it to professional contexts, while some teams chose not to engage with AI, prompting valuable discussions about when AI adds value and when it does not. | **Simulating Stakeholder Dynamics with Multiple AI Agents in Project Management Education**<br>Mark Freeman<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>Real projects involve stakeholders who give contradictory advice and have competing interests. Our students practise navigating this complexity by interacting with multiple AI agents, each representing a different role with its own priorities. They can replay scenarios, try different strategies, and learn that conflicting guidance is a feature of professional life. We share how to design effective personas and build in reflection activities that deepen the learning. |
| 12:30 | **Global insights into AI integration into Higher Education: A socioecological analysis.**<br>Kellie Charles<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>How are leading international universities actually supporting their teaching staff to engage with AI? Drawing on visits to 15 institutions, this session cuts through the noise to share what is working on the ground: exemplar assessment designs, emerging support models, and insights from education teams fielding growing requests for AI guidance. The key finding is that flexibility matters more than uniformity when building educator capability. | **Working Out What Works: Exploring Generative AI in teaching, learning and assessment**<br>Raquel Ho<br>*Adelaide Institute of Higher Education*<br>Students in our Language in Business class used Gen AI to create products, logos, and brand campaigns while applying communication theories learned in class. We scaffolded the assessment process to guide students through AI-assisted creation, incorporating reflection on ethical implications for the workplace. This session shares practical strategies for designing group assessments that harness AI while developing critical evaluation skills. | **How AI Turns Passive Learners into Active Strategists**<br>Xinyue Zhang<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>Moving beyond content generation, this session introduces the 'Create-and-Critique' model. In this framework, AI serves as a 'dynamic cognitive simulator' where students first co-create plans with AI, then defend them against virtual stakeholders. This method bridges the theory-practice gap, allowing educators to shift from lecturers to coaches while delivering scalable, personalised experiential learning to large cohorts. |
| 12:45 | **Using AI to surface enduring human skills in higher education**<br>Stephen Doherty, Josephine Holecek, Himani Chugh, Jia Zhang and Jennifer Perkins<br>*UNSW Sydney*<br>Educators often embed valuable skills in their teaching without explicitly naming them, and students graduate unable to articulate what they have learned. Our Skills Passport project uses generative AI to help both groups surface and describe these skills, with students curating their development and educators enhancing how they scaffold skills-based activities. We share practical examples across diverse disciplines, reflect on our co-design process, and invite collaboration for the next phase of the project. | **Co-Intelligence: Learning with AI, Not from It**<br>Sasha Nikolic<br>*University of Wollongong*<br>Every postgraduate engineering student at UOW now learns to work with GenAI through structured workshops that mirror their assessed projects. Students apply a co-intelligence cycle at each project stage, using AI to extend their thinking while developing clear awareness of its limitations through hands-on activities and visualisation exercises. I will demonstrate the techniques I use and share resources that educators in other disciplines can adapt. | **The Use of Generative AI in the Mooting Training and Teaching**<br>Peng Guo; Alex Wan<br>*Swinburne University of Technology*<br>Teaching students to use GenAI well means teaching them to question it rigorously and document their process. In our moot program, students use AI to synthesise complex records and test arguments, but they must verify outputs at sentence level and defend their reasoning orally under pressure. We share how integrated assessment design rewards transparency and prevents over-reliance, offering an approach transferable to any discipline requiring structured, evidence-based reasoning. |
| 1:00 | **Discussion and movement** | | |

| Time | Stream 1 | Stream 2 | Stream 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1:15 | **Lunch** | | |
| Block 4 starts 2:00 | **Using AI to scaffold metacognition and reflection** | **AI to help student preparation** | **Building learning tools without code** |
| 2:00 | **Scaffolding reflections at scale in experiential learning**<br>Corinna Galliano<br>*University of Sydney Business School*<br>Students often struggle to move beyond surface-level reflection, particularly when preparing for portfolio assessments. Our AI mentor scaffolds deeper thinking by validating students' experiences, prompting them to consider their role in group dynamics, and guiding them to connect these reflections to theoretical frameworks. We'll demonstrate how the chatbot works in practice, explain how we monitor student engagement through submitted logs, and show how this approach transfers easily to other disciplines. | **Flipping Learning with AI: From Translation to Transformation**<br>Sonu Sarda<br>*Independent Educator*<br>Getting students to think about their own thinking is notoriously difficult. I use generative AI as a thinking partner, with prompt-based worksheets that ask critical questions rather than providing answers, bilingual reflection activities for multilingual learners, and exercises where students reorganize jumbled paragraphs to understand analytical structure. This session shares practical strategies that have shifted students away from copy-paste shortcuts toward genuine engagement with their reasoning. | **Vibe Coding: A Low-Barrier Approach for Creating Digital Teaching and Learning Resources with Generative AI**<br>Reece Sophocleous and James Tsatsaronis<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>Educators can now build functional digital learning tools without writing a single line of code themselves. By describing a resource in natural language and refining it through iterative prompting, we have created drag-and-drop games, interactive activities, and dynamic Canvas pages that would previously have required developer support. We share our workflow, reflect on what works (and what doesn't), and invite colleagues to join a community for sharing vibe-coded teaching resources. |
| 2:15 | **AI Bots as Career Coach to Facilitate Self-regulated Learning**<br>Ju Li Ng, Jennifer Sun, Mark Freeman, He Huang, and Doowon Lee<br>*The University of Sydney*<br>Our HR cohort ranges from executive directors to students with no work experience, making personalised career guidance impossible to deliver at scale through traditional means. A custom AI Career Coach now facilitates tailored coaching conversations, prompting students to reflect on their motivations and refine their career plans across two assessment iterations. This session demonstrates the agent design, shows how student writing shifted from descriptive to genuinely reflective, and discusses what made students willing to engage with the tool. | **Study Buddy: A custom GPT for flipped classroom pre-class learning support**<br>Daniel Ruelle<br>*VinUniversity*<br>The pre-class phase of Team-Based Learning asks students to engage with materials independently, yet this solitary experience often leads to last-minute cramming rather than genuine preparation. "Study Buddy" is a custom GPT that helps students upload their assigned readings, create personalised study schedules, and engage with content through interactive questioning. This session shares how student feedback shaped the tool's development and offers practical guidance for building similar AI tutors in any flipped classroom context. | **Hacking the Game: AI-Generated Gamification for Students**<br>Armin Alimardani, Jacinta Sassine, Kaitlyn Poole, Bradley Gooding, Shreeya Smith, Sophia Bai, and Juliette Overland<br>*Western Sydney University*<br>Generative AI enabled our team of legal scholars to become game developers, building tools like Hallucination Lab where students practise identifying flawed AI-generated legal reasoning. We'll walk through how vibe coding works, demonstrate building a simple trivia game in real time, and discuss the pedagogical decisions that shaped our prototypes. The aim is to show that creating customised, low-cost learning activities is now accessible to any educator willing to experiment. |
| 2:30 | **LARC and the Human and AI Sandwich: Appropriate Use of AI for Learning**<br>Mairead Fountain and Emma Allen<br>*Otago Polytechnic*<br>We use AI in a deliberately small-scale, process-focused way to help students interrogate their own thinking, not generate text. Our LARC framework treats AI as a collaborative study partner between two human judgements, supporting learners to clarify ideas, compare explanations, and test understanding. Paired with short reflection prompts, this approach improves evaluative judgement, strengthens confidence, reduces integrity concerns, and gives educators clearer insight into student reasoning. | **Project Sofia: Preparing Students for Flipped Learning through Generative AI Tutoring**<br>Patrick Dodd and Shahper Richtre<br>*University of Auckland*<br>Preparing students effectively before flipped classroom sessions remains a persistent challenge across disciplines. We developed Project Sofia, an AI tutor that uses Socratic dialogue and experiential learning cycles to build metacognitive skills and accountability before students arrive on campus. This session walks through the practical design of Sofia's modules, the certification workflow, and how analytics help identify students who need additional support. | - |

| Time | Stream 1 | Stream 2 | Stream 3 |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2:45 | **Discussion and movement** | | |
| 3:00 | **Optional: Birds of a feather** | | |