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Rethinking EAP's Role in Assessment in the Age of Generative AI: A Multidisciplinary Perspective from an EMI Institution

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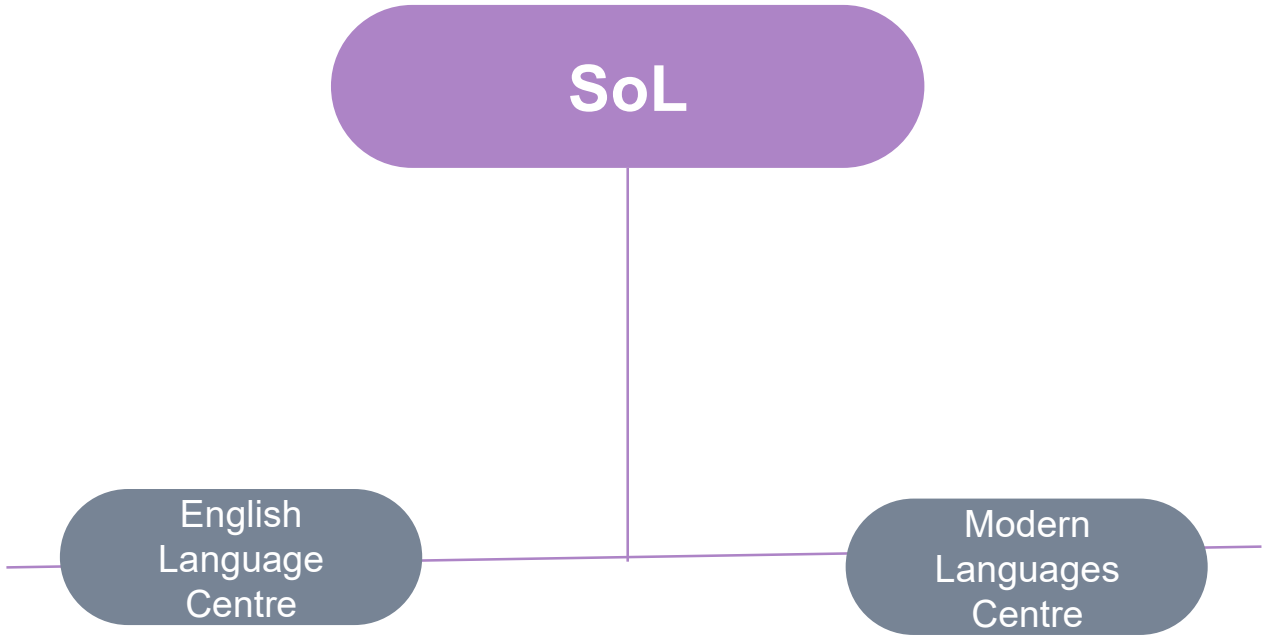
Outline

Introduction to School of Languages, XJTLU

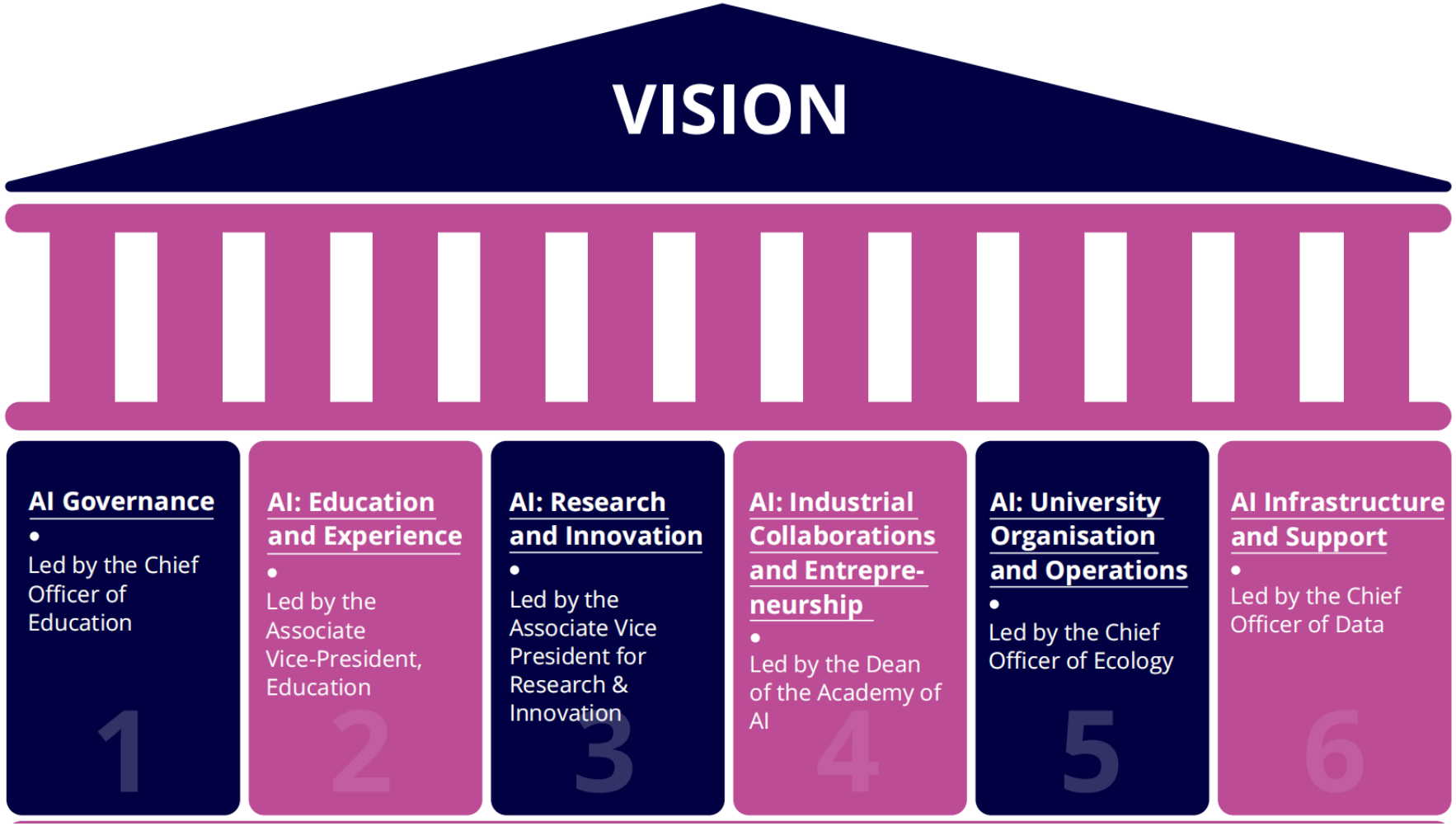


250+ **Staff members**

60+ Credit-bearing modules

10,000+ UG and PG students

Introduction to AI+ Education Strategy @XJTLU



Research Aims

To understand general attitudes:

- Assess the overall perception of academics in different academic disciplines towards the use of GenAI.

To establish changes in assessment practices:

- Analyse the extent to which assessment methods have evolved in response to GenAI.

To explore future skill requirements:

- Determine the implications of these evolving skill requirements for the curriculum and teaching strategies in EAP modules.

Methods

Sampling
Snowball + Convenience Sample

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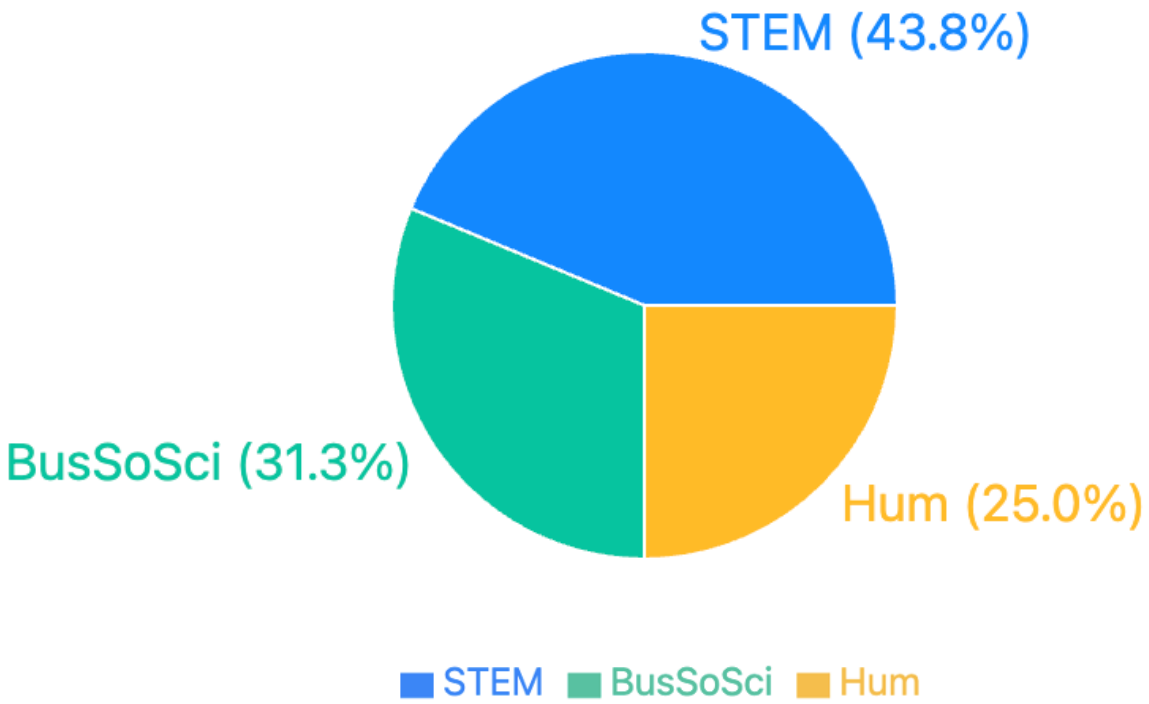
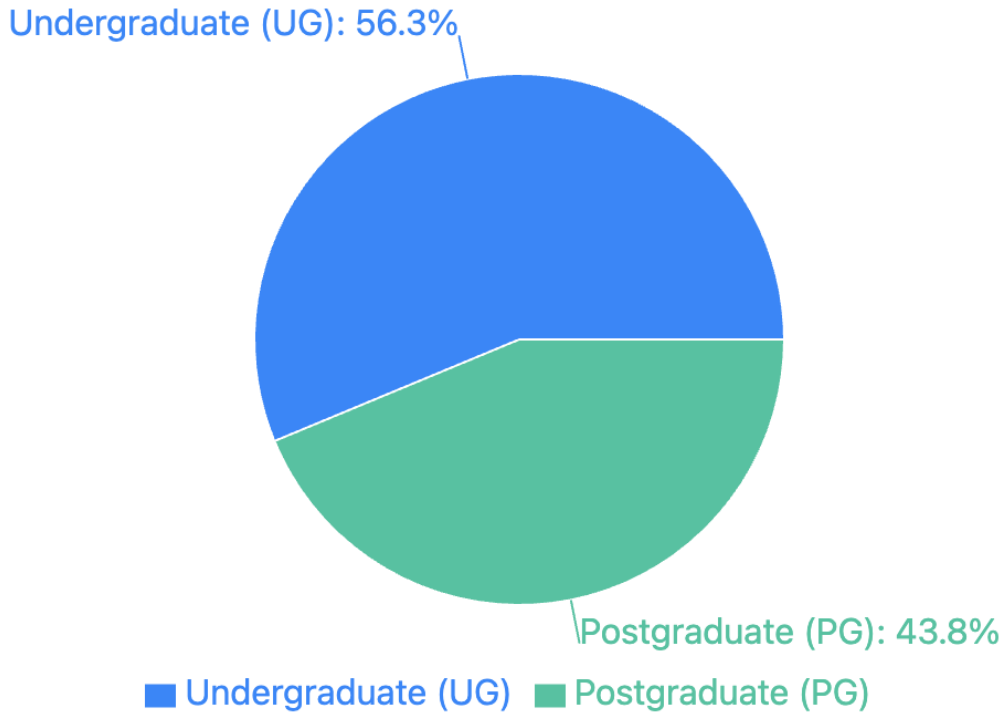
Participants
16 Program directors (both for UG and PG) from various Schools and Academies across XJTLU

Interview
One-on-one interview, 30-45 minutes

Data analysis
NVivo for thematic analysis

Participants





Findings

Disparities in the Perceived Impact of GenAI

Technical and mathematical disciplines believe they will be the least affected due to GenAI's limitations in handling numerical and analytical tasks.

STEM: "We are kind of fieldwork-based or lab-based… I think the current AI technology…cannot influence that [laboratory] session very much."

Humanities and social sciences, which rely more on written coursework, anticipate the most significant changes due to concerns about inappropriate student use of GenAI.

Hum: "[In] literature modules, they rely on essays… That will be a big challenge… The entire approach is quite traditional… We do worry about [students] relying on AI."

Findings

Current Use and Perceptions of GenAI Among Students

Some program directors suspect students are already using GenAI, but most believe its inappropriate use is not yet widespread.

STEM: 'No, not so much… I was more surprised it was obvious they hadn' t used ChatGPT at all because the English is awful… Maybe they were scared of using it and thought they' d be caught.' "

There is a general perception that GenAI cannot currently complete entire assessments for students due to existing variations in assessment formats

Hum: "I encourage them to use generative AI…[but] I have the confidence they cannot cheat on my course…[because] in order to write a good portfolio, they need to do the real project, and generative AI cannot do the project for them."

Findings

Appropriate or Inappropriate Student Use

There is broad agreement that some uses of GenAI are appropriate

- **Proofreading**
- **Brainstorming ideas**
- **Answering introductory-level questions**
- **Pictures/Posters/ Visual aids**

There are concerns about inappropriate use

- **Copying and pasting AI-generated content without critical engagement**
- **Over-reliance on AI-generated text leading to poor-quality work that lacks originality and critical analysis**
- **Inability to distinguish between high- and low-quality GenAI responses.**

Findings

Assessment Adaptation and Institutional Response

Most departments have not made major changes to their assessment methods but recognize the potential for disruption.

BusSoSci: "So far, I haven't received any feedback from teachers wanting to change [their assessment] because of this reason."

Hum: "[So far] half of the modules still use essays… A few module leaders now want to try with in-class exam for the first time…we'll see how it works."

There is broad agreement that traditional written coursework may need to be replaced

STEM: "We are seriously thinking about whether to increase the component of the oral exam [for the Final Year Project]. It could go up to maybe 30 or 40%… so we can really check if they wrote it themselves and understand it."

Hum: "Video essay… Our colleague asked [students] to compare three versions: AI translation, student translation, model translation…then produce a reflective video essay… That's in response to AI."

Findings

Challenges in Preventing and Detecting GenAI use

There is inconsistency in how departments handle suspected misuse of GenAI

Hum: "Yes, some staff simply say 'don't use AI at all, or I'll fail you,' but others encourage it in their class… Our department is very diverse… attitudes vary."

STEM: "Some colleagues do changes, some do not. Our school tries to collect info about modules using AI. But no standardized [policy]… Everyone decides on their own."

Some academics claim they can identify AI-generated work but rely on vague indicators such as 'suspiciously high-quality writing' or Turnitin scores (both of which could misidentify legitimate student work).

STEM: "We can see…some dummy words…like we only looking for one word but [GPT] provides three sentences… If the answer is too perfect, we suspect it."

Hum: "[We see an essay] with very few grammatical mistakes, reads like professional writing but not addressing instructions. We suspect… but we don't have enough evidence."

Findings

There are inconsistencies in penalties, ranging from minor grade deductions to academic misconduct sanctions, and many departments are still debating their approach. Institutional policy on GenAI appeared to have shifted from neutral to highly positive within a short time, leading to confusion.

There is a universal recognition that AI literacy will be an essential skill for students moving forward.

Beyond AI skills, program directors identified key competencies that will be increasingly valuable, including: Higher-order thinking (critical thinking, problem-solving, decision-making), Communication skills (collaboration, teamwork, human literacy), and Attitudinal attributes (lifelong learning, growth mindset, entrepreneurial mindset).

Implications for EAP Teachers

Teaching AI Literacy Skills
Guide critical evaluation of AI-generated content
Teach proper AI use in academic writing
Help distinguish between appropriate/inappropriate AI use

Language Support with AI Integration
Train effective AI use for proofreading
Develop skills to evaluate AI language suggestions
Balance AI assistance with independent writing skills

Cross-disciplinary Support
Collaborate with subject teachers on AI guidelines
Help international students understand AI policies
Bridge language learning with AI literacy

Conclusion

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Removal of all Year 2 EAP credit-bearing modules

Establishment of a new Academic Literacies Centre to work with various Schools/Academies and provide language support to all Y2+ UG and PG students

"The only way to make sense out of change is to plunge into it, move with it, and join the dance." - Alan Watts

Thank you!

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