# AI shifts higher education from skills to creativity, argues new analysis



Generative AI is collapsing weeks of student work into minutes, prompting calls for a radical rethink of higher education’s purpose. Writing in *Times Higher Education*, Ioannis Glinavos describes how tasks such as designing a water filter for refugee camps can now be prototyped in seconds, forcing universities to reconsider what they teach and how they assess.

Research cited in *Frontiers in Education* frames prompt engineering as a distinct literacy, warning that quality depends on critical, iterative prompting and that blind trust risks errors. Advocates argue for embedding prompt craft across curricula and for studio-style pedagogy that emphasises visible iteration, critique and interdisciplinary problem-solving.

Assessment is emerging as a fault line. Jisc identifies three approaches: restrict AI use, redesign tasks to be AI-resistant, or integrate AI into learning. Glinavos argues for the latter, suggesting students should be assessed on both AI-assisted artefacts and reflective design logs that reveal their judgement and process.

The role of lecturers is also shifting. Rather than content delivery, academics are urged to act as “creative directors” — curating debate, modelling intellectual risk and teaching students to interrogate machine outputs. That transformation will require significant staff training and time for curriculum redesign.

International analysis reinforces the case. A World Economic Forum briefing highlights creativity, critical thinking and ethical judgement as the “uniquely human” skills employers must prioritise in an AI-augmented economy. UK policy bodies and funders are urged to support digital infrastructure, fellowships for pedagogic innovation, and clear national guidance on assessment that balances integrity with innovation.

Risks remain. Studies stress the dangers of hallucinations, cost pressures on departments, unequal access to AI tools and the possibility that students may bypass universities in favour of faster, cheaper routes to market. But supporters see a chance to forge a new contract with students and employers: universities as the place where imagination, critical prompting and ethical navigation are taught as core literacies.

The optimistic imperative, advocates argue, is to turn AI from a threat into a launch pad for responsible innovation. “Ask your cohort what problem they have always wanted to solve,” Glinavos advises. “Then make the first assignment turning that answer into a prototype.” For universities willing to adapt, that shift could place the UK at the forefront of creative, human-centred higher education in the AI age.

Created by [Amplify](https://www.hbmadvisory.com/amplify): AI-augmented, human-curated content.

## Bibliography

1. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/does-genai-provide-opportunity-creativity-take-centre-stage> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/campus/does-genai-provide-opportunity-creativity-take-centre-stage> - Times Higher Education’s Campus piece by Ioannis Glinavos argues that generative AI shifts higher education from skill acquisition to ideation and creativity. The author recounts rapid prototyping using ChatGPT, suggests curricula cannot simply add prompt slides to old lectures, and recommends studio-style learning, interdisciplinary sprints, and assessments that privilege design logs and creative process over rote output. Lecturers should become creative directors who model experimentation and orchestrate debate about model blind spots and ethics. The essay warns universities that a skills-first identity risks student exodus to bootcamps plus AI, and calls for a creativity-first contract with employers and applicants now.
3. <https://wordpress.org/plugins/ai-content-creator/> - The WordPress.org plugin page for “AI Content Creator” describes a plugin that generates posts using OpenAI models such as GPT‑3.5 and GPT‑4, requiring an OpenAI API key. It explains installation steps, configuration options, language support, SEO features, preview and editing workflows, and security measures to protect keys. The page includes changelog entries showing active development and support for newer models, user reviews, and developer links to the source code. The entry demonstrates how readily available generative‑AI integrations can automate routine coding and content tasks, enabling non‑developers to create functioning site features and content rapidly with minimal technical background and confidence.
4. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/feduc.2024.1366434/full> - The Frontiers in Education article frames prompt engineering as a distinct twenty‑first‑century skill essential for effective use of large language models. It defines prompt engineering as articulating problems, context and constraints so models produce reliable outputs, and proposes a conceptual framework covering prompt structure, prompt literacy, prompting methods and critical online reasoning. The paper reviews empirical studies showing prompt quality substantially affects model performance, warns of hallucinations and blind trust, and argues educational systems must teach iterative prompting, evaluation of outputs, and assessment methods for this competence. It concludes prompt craft should be integrated into curricula as core transversal competency.
5. <https://www.jisc.ac.uk/blog/exploring-ai-and-assessment-avoid-outrun-or-embrace> - Jisc’s blog post surveys three institutional approaches to generative AI in assessment: avoid, outrun, or embrace. The ‘avoid’ option favours restrictive measures such as supervised exams and alternative formats to minimise misuse. The ‘outrun’ route redesigns assessment tasks to be resistant to AI, emphasising oral exams, personalised or staged submissions. The ‘embrace’ strategy integrates AI into assessment design, awarding credit for process, reflection, and tool‑aware learning. Jisc highlights trade‑offs for each approach, urging institutions to consider equity, resource constraints and authentic workplace alignment, and recommends instructor training and policy development to manage integrity while harnessing pedagogic opportunities and student agency.
6. <https://www.mdpi.com/2227-7102/12/10/712> - The MDPI study examines blended design studio pedagogy for urban design, showing studio environments support collaborative, problem‑based learning and encourage visible, iterative practices where process is formative. Drawing on postgraduate case studies, the research finds studios combine fieldwork, policy review, peer critique and tutor feedback to foster interdisciplinarity, sustained engagement and authentic outputs. It argues studio pedagogy emphasises process over rote content delivery and can be adapted across disciplines beyond architecture, enabling students to prototype solutions rapidly and trade perspectives. The paper highlights practical issues for implementation, including group size, feedback structures and equitable access to studio resources and pedagogy.
7. <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2025/01/elevating-uniquely-human-skills-in-the-age-of-ai/> - The World Economic Forum article argues that AI elevates uniquely human skills such as creativity, critical thinking and ethical judgement by automating routine tasks and freeing time for imagination. It presents research showing a large majority expect AI to enhance human creativity and recommends organisations invest in reskilling, leadership that prioritises strategic thinking, and tools that augment rather than replace people. The piece stresses interdisciplinary collaboration, lifelong learning and the redefinition of roles towards human‑centred leadership. It urges education systems and employers to emphasise creative capabilities and moral navigation to prepare workers for an AI‑augmented economy with equitable access frameworks.