NZ Perspectives on GenAI in Higher Education - a ‘Students First’ Symposium

studiosity.com/studentsfirst

Transcript

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:00:09] Good morning everybody and welcome to the first New Zealand symposium on AI. I want to start off by saying Kia Ora, but first of all I would also like to invite Martin Carroll to do a traditional Māori welcome. You're on, you're on mute, you are on mute.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:00:42] It's traditional to open with a karakia which is like a non-denominational prayer and this means cease the winds from the west, cease the wind from the south. Let a gentle breeze blow over the land and sea, let the red tipped dawn come, let the sharpened air touch a frost and the promise of a glorious day. And it's a karakia we often use to open things up. Kia ora, back to you, Judyth.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:01:20] Thank you. And before we start, I want to acknowledge Giselle Byrnes, the Provost from Massey University, for her encouragement to Studiosity for us to have a specific New Zealand symposium. So if you are listening today, Giselle, thank you for your efforts and thank you for your continued support. What we're going to do today, we've got some questions that I'm going to start off with just to get things going. Then people have sent in a number of questions, but then I would encourage people to put questions in. There'll be the chat, but if you want questions asked to the panel, please put the questions into the Q&A, but the chat is also a really good way to have sidebar conversations between people and they're equally as interesting as the conversation. So if I could start off with Professor Naomi Cogger from

Massey University. Naomi, would you introduce yourself and tell people what brings you to this conversation?

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:02:19] Yes, so my day job is a Professor of Epidemiology and Risk Analysis with a side hustle of being a bit of a tech nerd. And so in my work being about managing uncertainty, evaluating evidence, and how do we make robust decisions in environments with significant complexity. And those are the skills that I'm going to bring to a new role that Massey has created which is the Strategic Lead for generative AI reporting directly to our Provost. And in that role, I'm here to work across the university to help find practical solutions and approaches to integrating AI, and in some cases, maybe not integrating AI. I'd also say that this is a part-time role, and that's by design. I still want to be at the coalface, exploring how we use AI, understanding how we can do it in our teaching, maybe in our research projects, and perhaps even responding to the odd passive-aggressive email we sometimes get.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:03:21] Could I introduce our student representative and I want to thank Luc for making time to contribute to this symposium. So Luc, tell us about Luc.

Luc MacKay [00:03:32] Thank you, Judyth. Kia ora, my name's Luc. I'm from the University of Canterbury and a bit like Naomi, I'm quite into my tech on the side. I work quite closely, my team and I work quite closely with Catherine, who's here on this panel as well today. I suppose the reason I'm here is because I'm an expert on students and how students use AI and how that sort of world looks. So it's important to have that customer perspective when you look at things, especially like AI, generative AI in the university space. So I've been using AI for quite a while for many different things. So I suppose I bring that student perspective quite heavily. Yeah, that's a bit of me, I guess.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:04:13] Morning again, everybody. So I'm Martin Carroll, I'm the Deputy Chief Executive Academic for two large polytechnics in New Zealand, Unitec and the Manukau Institute of Technology. Why am I interested in this? Well, because it's not an option not to be interested in this. It's permeating absolutely every facet of what we do. I guess my own interest goes back probably 15, 16 years now. Actually, Judyth, when I was in Australia, when I as Pro Vice Chancellor Academic at Charles Darwin University, and we were partnering with Blackboard and starting to look at things like the ethical issues associated with AI-powered online services back then that could have included student support. Those ethical issues have only become more stark over time. So I'm looking forward to this korero.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:05:10] Thank you, and Catherine.

Prof Catherine Moran [00:05:12] Kia ora koutou, Catherine Moran. I'm the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic at the University of Canterbury. And our strategy around education is accessible, flexible and future focused. And certainly the future is here at the moment with AI and changing very rapidly. So I'm really passionate about how we integrate AI in the curriculum, the impact on

assessment and how we can better use it for assessment and also just how it influence or shapes how we might go about learning and teaching and of course work very closely with Luc as he noted and getting the understanding what the students are using around AI and what their interests are.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:06:03] Thanks very much. My first question is a sort of a general question, but it's to give a sense of what's happening in New Zealand. So what developments around AI have you observed or experienced in New Zealand in the last 12 months? And how have these impacted on student learning? And the third part is what is unique about the approach to AI in New Zealand, say from what might be happening in Australia? Naomi, would you like to start off that question? And you can, there are three parts to it. So start wherever you'd like.

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:06:36] Yeah, I think I would start by saying, I don't think we're fundamentally facing anything different with AI in education in New Zealand. There are some nuances that we need to consider around Māori and how that happens, and I'll come back to that. Across the university sector, I see that the two kinds of things that we to deal with are the two illusions as... As others have pointed to, the first is the illusion that we can detect, that AI detection tools are going to help us. It's pretty clear from the evidence I've seen that that's not the case. And so we need to look at re-imagining assessment. And the other issue I think we need to address is the Illusion of Knowledge. And this is more a student-focused thing where... Um, students are not necessarily, and I, and I'm talking as an epidemiologist, I love population averages, I'm taking about across the population, not individuals... are not necessarily understanding that their use of AI is harming their learning if used in particular ways that are about just generating the answers. And so I see the challenge for universities is, um, creating curriculum that is teaching students to, um develop evaluative skills. And those skills are important, whether it's AI or whether it is fake news, they've just become more important. And then the other point I think where New Zealand has a consideration is, you know, AI is particularly problematic for Indigenous communities. It's built on Western knowledge systems and incorrect looking at certain things. And we risk damaging information and knowledge systems for Māori in particular. And at Massey University, given that we have a Tiriti partnership-led university, we have an obligation to take it seriously. Having said that, I'm acutely aware that I'm Pākehā and it's not my place to say what that looks like. It has to be by Māori for Māorī and my role is to listen and support and if asked, help with the heavy lifting.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:08:53] Luc, would you like to add something from the experience of a student? Because in many respects, you're the focus and the recipients of AI and the beneficiary, but also perhaps the test case.

Luc MacKay [00:09:09] Yeah, I think there's some really strong points that Naomi's made. I absolutely agree. I don't think there is anything fundamentally different about the usage of AI in New Zealand in particular, but I think when we look at AI and how students are using it, I absolutely agree with Naomi in that. I

think there are a lot of people who aren't aware of the impact that it's having on their education, on how they learn about things, how they interface with the world, and I think that's a really key aspect to focus on. For me, you know, when I think about the damage that AI potentially does in some of these aspects, I think so much of it can be mitigated by reassessing the way that we assess students. For example, UC has done some really good work specifically in our arts courses in redesigning how assessments work to make sure that they're really focused on, you know providing students with the skills because AI is not going away. We all know that very, very well. But I think it's about changing how we work with AI in the world, as opposed to work against. And UC has done a really good job of that. So the course that Catherine might want to talk a bit more about is looking at how we actually assess students. And it's actually also about building that connection with the lecturer or the person giving the content and the student. As you think about it colloquially, when you interact with a friend, for example, you're less likely to cheat them or to lie to them or, you know, to mistrust them. But when you have that actual relationship with your lecturer, when have that one-on-one connection where you can say, look, I don't understand this thing, you get way better results than if you just have a class of 500 people and you barely know your lecturer. So I think the way that we assess and the interactions that we have with the people who are teaching us is very important and that will guide us to you know how we should use AI and particularly in New Zealand. I mean as Naomi pointed out interfacing with Māori knowledge I think that's quite an important key aspect as well.

Prof Catherine Moran [00:11:11] Yeah, so just following on from both just another little wee lens is we recently worked with, I had an opportunity to liaise with a number of businesses in Canterbury, and to understand what they see as as important and what they think our students should be coming out with in terms of the employability. And the businesses are using AI. So our challenge then is to make sure that our curriculum is up to date and that we are still keeping the critical thinking and the ability to question and the ability to check what's right and not right. We have some fantastic academics doing interesting work integrating it into assessments as Luc said in those first year assessments. They're often focused on the critique of AI and and how you have to question what you're seeing. There was a time when we were very content focused I think as as often as universities and now we're moving beyond content to process. I do I have been thinking you know we would all benefit probably from a philosophy course in first year to understand that whole issue of grey. And then start applying it as we see it relative to AI. So that's some examples that I'm seeing in New Zealand businesses and from the students.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:12:46] I agree with everything said so far. I think the New Zealand experience has been similar to everyone else in that, you know, the early tidal wave was students using AI-powered tools in a way that threatened traditional notions of academic security, learner authentication and learning authentication, then of course it progressed into staff using it. In ways that were both innovative, but also put at risk, things like the human accountability of assessment of learning work. But now we're sort of going through a bit of a phase where there's the rise of the AI agents. Most institutions are creating

agents at pace and deploying them through learning management systems as augmentations to student learning. And that's probably been the same as... Most countries, certainly the countries that I deal with, but I do think that what Naomi was touching on is a point of departure for New Zealand. I think as a country, we're probably putting quite a lot of effort into the local contextualisation of culture, of language, Te Tiriti-led, we have Māori data sovereignty principles which are starting to come to the fore in things like the selection of LLMs and where they get their data from, through where do they do their training, where is that data being hosted? Has it been hosted outside of New Zealand, in which case there's different controls that can apply? I'm mindful also of things like The Royal Society here that has just issued guidelines for the use of genAI in research. That draws very heavily on how we will leverage the principles of Te Tiriti or Waitangi too to be careful around who's acquiring the base data that's being used to build these LLMs, who's controlling the training, who is controlling the application of the outputs of using these types of AI agents. Look, it's early days for us and it remains particularly problematic while New Zealand lacks the capacity to do much in the way of hosting of the data. But it's a really interesting direction of travel that I think has much broader applicability than just in connection to New Zealand.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:15:36] Look, what I'm hearing you say is that there's an enormous level of complexity around the issue and all too often, there's a possibility of people wanting to simplify and compartmentalise it. So as you're talking, I'm hear about resource issues, cultural issues, structural issues within an institution and political issues. So how does an institution manage this complexity, particularly around data sovereignty for Māori people, but also it's not just necessarily Māori people. It's diverse populations. So does it and this is just you know the complexity and the sort of corrosion of trust in people and processes that it seems to me to be one of the issues emerging. Does anybody want to take a punt at sort of unpacking that?

Prof Catherine Moran [00:16:29] I'll just comment on that a bit. I mean, I think the I think the data and the data sovereignty issue and the and the trust around that is critical, which we've heard about all the data that's going out with AI. We know number of depending on what tool you're using, that we're not always sure where that data is going, it may be offshore and so on and that's where it's really critical to think about protecting our data, our student data, and of course for our Māori colleagues, our Māori and Pacific colleagues that maintaining that data sovereignty. There are some ways around it. We can use closed systems like you know, depending on what you use, if many people use Microsoft co-pilot or those types of closed systems where it is working within, we know the data is not going offshore, but it really boils down to, I think it really boils down, that trust really comes, our learning has not stopped, learning hasn't changed, I tend to be very Vygotskian based where I'm really a believer in the scaffolding of learners. And so we're now having to see where they are from a different perspective, whether it's in our assessment or otherwise. I also just on that whole data protection and data sovereignty, that's one of the things that makes me uneasy about the Turnitins and those kinds of AI detection types of tools that we use. It's not an answer. But but a further thought.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:18:18] Naomi, do you want to make any sort of further contribution? And then I'll ask Luc and Martin the same thing.

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:18:28] To say, I think we need to be kind to ourselves in this space. I know I'm stealing from Jacinda. I haven't read the memoir. But in the sense that this, in its current form, has been around for less than three years. And so we are all in a space of dealing with something that is making some very significant changes to how we think about education, how we think about issues, and no, I don't have a definitive answer in that space, but I do know that universities are full of a community of innovative and creative thinkers. And so my challenge would be that let's stop looking for someone to solve it for us and let's use our innovation and creativity to drive and make those changes within universities because that's what society needs from us now.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:19:22] Luc, from where you sit as a student, what are the issues that you're having to manage and your peers are managing? And what advice would you give to Naomi, Martin, and Catherine in their role as being the stewards of implementing and managing AI in the institution?

Luc MacKay [00:19:40] What was the original question again? Sorry, I forgot where this has pivoted towards.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:19:46] This is about data sovereignty dealing with diversity.

Luc MacKay [00:19:52] I think it's a really difficult one to answer because, you know, unless we develop a specific New Zealand-based LLM, it will be very difficult to get New Zealand specific answers. I mean, you can ask... You can ask, um... For specific New Zealand output. But the difficulty, as somebody pointed out in the chat, is that if you ask about New Zealand colonisation, it's stuff that's been written about Europeans, for example, as opposed to Māori themselves. And you have to get very specific and please reference specific works from specific people. So I think ensuring that you're very clear with what you want and what the limitations of the systems you're using are. Are quite important from a student perspective. So if I get asked to write about, you know, colonisation in New Zealand, I think it's quite important to know where the limitations of AI are. And I think just making that clear to students is probably the biggest thing, ensuring that they know it. And I thing there was some comments made before about, well, Catherine made them before about ensuring that first years have that understanding of how to critically critique AI and what its limitations are. So I think ensuring that people know the limitations of AI is probably the first big step.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:21:14] I think it's actually where AI agents can be incredibly helpful because AI agents do provide us with an opportunity to address a specific issue and prioritise data sources that we want the AI agent to refer to and draw upon when entering into the engagement with the learner. Rather than just going to copilot or, you know, just going to chat GPT. We can

help shape it in that way, which is, I think, why there's such a rush underway to get these AI agents in place. One could easily envisage a future not too far from now, months, years at the most from now in which pretty much every learning management system core site will be populated with multiple AI agents designed to help prioritise the world of knowledge and not just leave it to the expense of, you know, open AI type LLM. And there are ways that, in our instance, Māori knowledge can be incorporated. So for example. I'm thinking about the work that Peter Lucas-Jones from Te Hiku Media is doing, where he worked with generations of interviews by Māori for Māori through Māori radio to create a Māori language pack that can be incorporated into an AI LLM, so we're not necessarily reliant on. You know, Google's Māori to English translation service or we're not, you know dependent on Claude or OpenAI. There are local resources that are being developed that have far more of the nuance, far more of the cultural context. Not easy, but it is starting to happen. You know, there is that kind of data sovereignty starting to take effect that, you know, the more we know about it, the more we share it, the more can strengthen what we're doing in that space.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:23:31] Just changing the direction of our conversation slightly. Just recently I decided to, you know, I was writing an email and the offer was made by the, the system, do you want us to polish this for you? So I thought, all right, I've written this email, but I'll use the polishing resource that was offered by the email service. And when I read it, it was not my voice. And so it was very, in inverted commas, polished. But it was not my voice. And so as I read it, it wasn't authentic. So I didn't send it. I used my voice, but is this sense of authentic voice about a personal voice and about a unique voice, something that concerns you in your practises across your institutions about looking at the limitations of AI? So technically it's correct, but authentically it's actually, there's a lack of alignment. Naomi, do you want to comment on that?

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:24:32] Yeah, I want to comment on it in two parts. And the first is, yeah, I see that as an issue is, how do we keep our voice in with the AI? And there's certainly kind of workarounds in the sense of, I've had AI analyse my writing style, and I give it instructions that say, that's how I want you to write. And so that can keep that voice. And of course, I edit when it comes out. The other thing I kind of want to say in that space is, I am a dyslexic. Or I have dyslexia depending on how you like to think about those things. And for me, I spent an awful lot of time pre-AI trying to polish my emails and everything I do. Like I've gone to the expense of having to pay for copy editors for important reports. So I think the other side of that is, you know, using AI, yes, we may risk our voice, there are potentially ways around it, But we also need to think of the gain for some of our students with. With learning disabilities, the amount of time it saves me and anxiety is huge. But I do think there are fields such as creative writing and things like that where we need to think very carefully about AI use and things like that. So yeah, no definitive answers, but that's sort of my reflections on that.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:25:52] Catherine, do you want to add anything?

Prof Catherine Moran [00:25:54] Yeah, actually, and I just wanted to comment on a couple of things that are coming through the chat about assessment, particularly how we build the foundational knowledge. Do we have paper based in that first year? So I do think you need some foundation before you can do synthesis and analysis and so on of content and critically think you do need some base knowledge. You also need some world knowledge. So just for background, I'm a speech language pathologist by background. My research was in individuals with head injury and particularly around working memory and working memory and memory and language. And so you do need that world knowledge gives you a foundation to build on. You also, so I do think at first year as New Zealanders, we need to be thinking about our curriculum vertically and around AI as a programme, AI how it's used across a degree. So it's not about one type of assessment. I don't think, I think in first year you can have a range of assessments. I think you do need to build some automaticity in a discipline and first year. But you can also challenge some thinking. As I said, a first year philosophy course would be would be good. Our secondary education system comes up with, works well, but also does the students get used to a set answer, which I think has been referred to in the chat, and how do we get the students comfortable with the grey. So I think we need to think at first year build some of that foundational knowledge. That can include - so assessment doesn't all have to be of learning. You can also have assessment as learning and for learning. So people can use content and foundational knowledge and can learn content and foundation knowledge by some using some AI. Our classics, one of our fabulous classics professors is using it is using exactly for that way to critique and to is as a form as learning. Then you include the assessment of learning. And across a degree, across a programme, you can have a range of skills that the students are using. So I think there is a, we do need to think about scaffolding across the full degree. We need a range of assessments that are as for of, and we don't have to limit ourselves to every, does every course need an invigilated exam? Does every course needs AI? Probably not. It's about understanding what's right for the degree. And I think that's not changed. It is forcing us to think a bit harder maybe at the moment. But I think we've always had to do that through our learning. So that was to Craig who had been who had mentioned on the, I had seen him pop up asking some questions.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:29:02] Martin, do you want to make a comment or can I go into my next question? More than happy for you to comment.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:29:07] Just really quickly, you were talking about the impact of this on people's voice. I mean, we are almost by definition often dealing with people who are still finding their voice. It's not just a question of how might it be changing, it's how are they finding it. And there's something about using AI that, of course, brings instant gratification. You get to the result immediately, and that's incredibly attractive. It's been fascinating now watching more and more research emerge showing that the more that we use AI, the less we develop a lot of those foundational skills of, I think Catherine talked about, synthesis and analysis and evaluation. Because we skip that. Grant Blashki at Uni Melbourne, he's got a great way of putting it. He says it's like the difference between climbing a mountain and taking a helicopter to the top. But they both

end up giving you the view, but one of them takes you on the journey and builds your strength and your resilience and your skills, so you end up with all of that as well. And so I think that part of what we need to do, and Luc, you touched on it beautifully when you talked about the relationship between the teacher and the student. What we need do is encourage a student to think about. What do they want to get out of education? You know, what do they actually want to be? Do they just want to know how to prompt AI because everyone can do that? Or do they want to discover what value that they can add to the world? And, you know, tap in to people's innate desire to discover themselves and express themselves and recognise AI can help, but used wrongly AI could severely retard that development. Can I just say one more thing on that? MIT Media Lab, as in Boston, they've done a fantastic bit of research. It's under peer review at the moment, where they're looking at sort of physiological brain activity for people that were accomplishing a task using AI and people that weren't. And they repeated it over several months. And that research is showing that the use of AI to seek that instant gratification to get that result straight away is actually consuming far less brain activity than doing these things manually and developing those foundational skills. And I do worry that this conversation really needs to be happening at preschool, primary, secondary, and tertiary level, because if in those earlier years students have been allowed to use AI too much, by the time they come to tertiary, we may find ourselves having to do a lot more remedial foundational skills development than now.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:32:05] There's not a day that goes by when you don't read something about AI in the media, whether it's the academic literature or the public discourse or social media or whatever. And I came across an article in the New York Times and it picked up on a point that you made about trust. And it's sort of something that we haven't been talking about because we trust AI, but we don't trust it. So it's called, Broken Promises, how AI hypocrisy undermines trust in higher education. And it's relating to the reduction of trust through the use of AI when students discovered their lecturer had used chat GPT to make lecture notes. As the students said, he is telling us not to use chat GPT then using it himself. So can we unpack that idea of trust, trust in the processes, trust in in the intent and trust in outcomes, and just see what you see the issues are, but also what we need to do. What type of interventions we need to reinstate trust in chat GPT as a tool for learning, not as something instead of learning. And I'm not going to dob somebody in, who'd like to take on that challenge?

Luc MacKay [00:33:24] I can, I can jump in, especially from a student perspective, I think. You know, there is that trust relationship, right, with the lecturer or the person who's teaching you about the content in the world. And that's a really important relationship to get right. And I think part of that starts from when you first get to university, ensuring that the lecturer or the person providing the content is somebody who's open, has open office hours, is approachable at the start of the lecture, at the end of the lecturer, you know, tells a bit about their life story. I think that's really important thing to get right. But also, you know, when we talk about things like lecture notes and, you know,

should it go both ways, I think there is a difference in, you know, what is actually happening here. So the students are the ones who are learning and who, yeah, who are engaging in a process. And the lecturers are generally the ones who have this knowledge and who are, you know, trying to figure out the most efficient way to teach the students. And I think going back to the previous question about, you now, the authenticity of your voice, I think it really depends on how those lecture slides are used. I think as a student. If the lecturer is purely reading off the lecture slides, I think that is a terrible way to go. I think the lecture slide should be prompts. And in that case, if the lecture slides are prompts, and are used as a reference point, then using AI to generate a few points is, you know, that's whatever, it's trivial in my point. But if the main, you know, lecture content is being generated by AI, then yeah, absolutely, it does erode that trust between a student and the lecturer, and I think that's a really important thing to... Acknowledge that as a lecturer, if you are using AI for part of your, you know, the content that you're providing your students, that needs to be acknowledged really well and needs to be explained to the students, you, know, why has this happened? Why have I generated this content when I'm telling you to go and make your own content? I think that needs to be related very, very strongly. But it is about that authentic voice at the end of the day. I don't feel that there is a need to generate AI-generated content as content that you're going to teach because, you know, it's your voice, you're the lecturer, you are the one who's providing this information to the students. Make it as personal as you want. So, I don't know. It's a very difficult one to answer, but I think it's about that trust, that relationship is the big, important key point there.

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:35:49] I think you've really touched on all the main points I would make, Luc, is around that. We're using it for different purposes. I think we need to be, at the moment, at this point in time, people want to know if you used AI to generate. I have views about how useful that is, but I'll park that. But I think they also need to remember that whether the academic generated those lecture notes by AI or themselves, this is about content creation and about quality. And so the critical issue isn't, did they use AI? The critical, to my mind, the critical issue is: did they produce a high quality learning environment for their students? And if they're not doing that, let's deal with the quality issue. Let's, and that's an issue that permeates whether academics are using AI to create their slides or whether they're just using outdated techniques. So I don't personally, if you're creating a good learning environment, how you do that and if it's measured well and you creating good learning outcomes for your students, great. If you're not, I don't care how you created that content, we need to deal with that problem.

Prof Catherine Moran [00:37:05] I'm with Naomi on that. I think it is about the quality of the environment. And remembering it was interesting because you shared that article with us, Judyth, ahead of time. And it's interesting because it's about lecture notes, but actually, a course, and then hence within across a degree is actually not about an individual lecture. In fact, when we create, when we devise a course, we have outcomes. And a lot of those outcomes, I bet most people on this call, for those who are teaching, would not just have as their outcomes of an individual course to say, know this content, know that content,

there will be some kind of, we are doing assessments that we want some critical thinking, we want some evaluation and so on. So it's really about, as Naomi said, creating a good way to be able to develop those kinds of skills. Again, it's back to where is the student now and where can we get them to? If it's using, I mean, there's a bit of a hypocrisy, I suppose, in that example you gave, Judyth, as somebody who said, don't, you know, that the student can't use AI, but I can. And that's where transparency is important. But again, it is .... As I said, it's not just about the content we give, it's really about that bigger picture. And I love that if it makes a better learning experience, that's fantastic.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:38:42] So does this require improved training? So for many of us academics, we're educated, I love to say this, last century. And we actually are still using the techniques that we learned through our own education in a context that is so fundamentally different. So I'm interested to know what sort of opportunities in your institutions do you have to provide support and trainings for academics to deliver the quality that Naomi talked about earlier.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:39:17] I might kick off there, a couple of things. So we've been deploying a module, an AI module for students to use as a kickstarter to understanding AI and our expectations of how AI will be used by students. Just on the previous point, to the extent that we expect a student to be very transparent and clear about when, how, and why they used AI in their assessable work. Good role modelling would suggest staff ought to do the same when they're using AI with their class, with their students. Secondly, we're curating. There's a massive, massive and ever-growing suite of free educational materials out there about AI and all the different ways AI can be used. In fact it's um. One can't keep up in trying to curate what's out there and make it available, but that's certainly the quick wins. I'm not necessarily having to redo all that within an institution as much as to curate what's there and point people towards resources that we've quality assured and deemed to be good fit for what we're doing, but I'll touch on a third one that might not otherwise come up. We are in particular investing in training of our ethics committee in relation to AI because there's an awful lot to do with the use of AI that most people just don't know about. For example, the longevity of things like ChatGPT are precisely because the OpenAI company has invested massively in identifying rules that govern, you know, what chat GPT will or won't say and address, there's a whole lot of subject matter that it won't go near, it won't t deal with profanities, it won't deal with a lot of matters to do with sex and sexuality or gore or even certain areas of politics. But we as educators, we need to go into those spaces. We need go into the spaces that society finds challenging, whether we're teaching counselling or social work or medicine or whatever it might happen to be. So when we're proposing to develop new things or engage in research, that we go through an ethics process, we need to make sure that the ethics process knows how to assess an application that will utilise AI, including the limitations and inherent biases, et cetera, of the choice of AI tool that's going to be deployed in that research or in that teaching programme. So I thought that might be interesting to share.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:42:18] I think the ethics issue is really important because those higher order thinking skills of critique, analysis, deconstruction are really fundamental to being able to create value from it rather than just reproduce current sort of knowledge. But how do you actually do that in an institution? And are things happening in your institutions around this ethics issue that you brought up, Martin. Catherine, do you want to have a go at that?

Prof Catherine Moran [00:42:53] Yeah, sure. Most in the, I did have a quick peek to see at the ethics committee. I like that idea, Martin, of really, of our ethics committees actually having an overview of it. We do have an AI teaching and learning group that looks at a number of factors around AI, both staff use, student use, training, ethics. Sharing articles like is AI helping learning or harming learning? Is it helping or harming? How do we do it? And I think that ethics, the ethics is really also not just around the research ethics or some of the other, which is where our ethics committee would typically, where people would typically engage with our ethics Committee, but also I guess coming back to that ethics of truth-telling of the ethics around how do we, that relationship with staff and student, and that's where that transparency comes into play. I know we have a number of training tools out there for staff and students, and we have academics who are working on everything from looking at how well students are learning using AI, using AI support. And also looking at inter-rater reliability and inter-radar reliability on grading and so on. So our academics are doing what academics do and actually assessing and using data. So I think that's another way to ensure some ethical use of it. So if we're using it, let's make sure we're collecting data to at least understand if it is useful or if it's actually making it worse, Is it actually making it better? Is it just another tool? So that's another, I suppose, somewhat angle on the ethics question.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:45:05] Can I move our discussion just slightly? And it's linked with the ethics, and it's about risk. I've got a great interest in risk from a sort of an audit perspective, but also in terms of an academic element of it. And there was another article that I read in preparing for this, and it's in the Skinny on AI and Education Skinny Scan, and this came out late May. And let me read this quote, and I'll get you to respond. "The question in higher education institutions and employers alike is fast becoming not whether to adapt, but how quickly. Those who are embracing AI as a catalyst for personalisation and opportunity, not as a threat, will be best placed to serve today's learners and tomorrow's workforce. But they must always be mindful of the risks and ensure mitigation is thorough." What do you see the risks of AI being and how is your institution mitigating some of these risks? Okay, who'd like to take that one up?

Prof Martin Carroll [00:46:19] All right, well, I'll kick off. I think there's three big risks. One of them is existential for tertiary education providers. And that is, as this AI becomes so accomplished at taking people to answers quickly, what the heck do we need tertiary educational for? Now, obviously, that's not my view. But the value-add that we offer is being challenged by the value add that generative AI is offering. Again, it's that instant gratification, you know, there will be an increasing number of people who will think, do I really need to go through the expense and time and effort of learning if in fact I can get the kind

of answers that I'm going to need in the workplace by being a good prompt engineer? So the first risk... Is about the value add and we need to be able to demonstrate what our value add is afresh. Second risk is the authentication. We're in a social covenant with a society and that covenant is that they don't just look to tertiary education to educate. They also look to us to authenticate the learning that takes place. And of course, you know. We're probably most familiar with AI through the threat that has placed on our traditional methods of authenticating the learner and the learning that has taken place. And people touched on two lanes earlier. I mean, there are solutions to it, but they're still evolving. They haven't fully deployed yet. And then the third is about errors. So if students are placing reliance on AI as they increasingly are, and AI leads them astray? No, if AI, and it could be for any number of reasons, it could because of hallucination, it could it be because the inherent biases in the data set that they're drawing upon play out in a certain way. If that happens, who do we see about that? Where does the accountability lie for learning that has been moulded more and more invisibly by AI for which we don't have clear sight, clear transparency, and a clear understanding of the impact of the guidance of AI on the learning taking place. So I think that they're the three big ticket items. I think we're probably all in the process of having to to re-conceptualise what academic mahi, academic work... Looks like, what the academic value add looks like and how we verify that to our learners and to society. It's a fun topic, but it's going to take a little while.

Prof Catherine Moran [00:49:25] I think a couple of our risks, one of the risks I think is being so focused in a way on AI that we forget about the other parts of education and there's lots to it. Like I said, it's a very multifaceted, education is very multifactored, there's the relationships. I referenced earlier working with businesses to understand what they're seeing and the changes they're seeing. And, in fact, our students have become quite adept at online and written communication because we do so much of it that way. But now they're looking more for oral communication skills and the negotiation and discussion skills that happen. So that might shift our assessment, which actually is also a shift away from potentially the AI use, although there's probably some use that'll come up. The other risk, so I think we need to just remember it's a whole package. The second risk, I think, is that it's all moving so fast and we're just trying to keep up with it ourselves. I think the staff, the students, the developers are all keeping up with it. Our Chief Digital Officer has said it's the fastest tech revolution he has seen in his time. Keeping on top of it is quite a challenge. So those are a couple of the risks that I see.

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:51:03] I don't really have anything to add beyond the comments from Catherine and Martin. I think they're spot on.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:51:10] Luc, from where you sit as being the sort of the next generation of citizens, but also the next generation of workers, what risks do you see as things that, you know, your institution perhaps need to at least be aware of?

Luc MacKay [00:51:24] I think some of the points have been touched on, you know, it's one of the big risks is ensuring that the critical thinking isn't being taken away. I mean, I think Martin made a really good analogy before that I actually use in my life day to day about the mountain, right, about, you know, how you get to the top of the mountain whether you take a helicopter, you drive or would you walk the whole thing? When you walk the whole mountain, you get that sense of fulfilment and achievement. You've seen everything and you understand, you know, what is part of this mountain. How do you get from the bottom to the top? If you take a helicopter, you miss a whole lot of it. You see sort of the tops and the trees and the canopy and whatever, but you don't see the earth and the worms and the little animals that have scurried through and the footprints. And I think that's a really important thing. And for me, one of the big risks is that people will use AI in a way that is the helicopter as opposed to a tool as you walk up the mountain. For example, I think it's a tool that needs to be used to highlight specific things. For example asking it to explain a complex topic and then testing yourself against that to make sure that you fully understand it is a far better way than just, you know, pump out an essay on how this thing works. So I think one of the big risks is that we we need to be concerned about how we actually interface with AI, and just being aware, you know, whether it's taking away from our actual value as an individual or not. And, you now, and that of course works into the workplace. You know, if you walk into a workplace and you've used AI for your whole university career, well, you're not gonna be very productive when you get to the workplace and you have to do some real stuff with some real people. So it is just being a aware, I think it's one of the big risks and some people just aren't.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:53:12] If we could move on to, and it's something that Catherine brought up a little earlier, and it is about evaluation and AI. So assessment has fundamentally changed what we're assessing, how we're accessing it. So what do you see, you know, how do we now evaluate and assess what students learn and understand that concerns about AI enabling cheating become irrelevant? What might this recasting or resetting evaluation and assessment look like?

Prof Naomi Cogger [00:53:48] Yeah, I think before answering that question, I want to make a couple of key points. First is that let's be really clear assessment's been problematic since pre AI, you know, and, and I think that's important when we think about solutions, because they've got to be much more structural than let's detect or let's make it AI proof. That's number one. Number two, I think how we go forward will be very different across disciplines. Okay, so for example, I come from the School of Veterinary Science at Massey, we need to turn out graduates that meet competencies in order to be registered to be veterinarians versus others where they may not be a professional registration. So I think those are kind of the caveats to the comments that come. But I think with assessment, we need to move from preventing AI use. We need to reimagine what assessment means. We need to be thinking about how they can reproduce and work so not reproduce how they can work with knowledge, what they can do with information. I really do like the two lane approach that comes out of the University of Sydney where we

say, if it's really important that you can do this without AI, then unfortunately we need a secure assessment. If it's not so important that they do it without AI then stop trying to police it with detection tools that are not fit for the job. We might go to doing things such as looking at processes, having students track their thinking, have them critically evaluate AI. I think we want to, and I don't have the magic answer for this, but again, I come back to academics are creative and innovative, but we need to make it so that if you've done an AI assisted assignment, it actually becomes irrelevant. Because we're wanting to assess a whole lot of other skills. And that to me is how universities remain relevant. We need our graduates to be able to be AI plus our graduates is better than AI alone or better than us alone. And the only way we can do that is by helping students work with it. And again, maybe I'm not saying every assessment needs to have an AI component or every paper or course but I do think we we need to rethink that element and I and I for me the two-lane approach is the only viable option I see on the table at the moment for that.

Prof Catherine Moran [00:56:25] And we're discussing the two lane approach and it's gone to through our learning and teaching committee and moving toward that. I agree with you Naomi on that.

Prof Judyth Sachs [00:56:36] Look, I just noticed that Ji Ruan is leaving. Ji has certainly been very active in the chat box. And I just want to thank his careful listening and his provocations to other members. So I'm sorry that you have to leave now, but I want to acknowledge that I was very aware of what you were saying. Martin, what do you think about, not only the two-lane thing, but really at the end of the day, it's about clarification and resetting the purpose of assessment.

Prof Martin Carroll [00:57:08] Yeah, so maybe I'll offer a VET-specific perspective here, which I think will resonate in Australia as much as in New Zealand. We've had an arguably over-preoccupation, certainly an excessive fascination with outcomes-based education. And, you know, again, AI fast tracks people to evidence of an outcome and skips the collection, synthesis, analysis, evaluation that gets to the outcome. So I think our assessment needs to be more balanced between the journey towards the outcome as well as the outcome. And the reason that that is particularly challenging in the VET sector is because so much of the learning outcomes and increasingly the assessment used to get to the learning outcomes is prescribed. And it's prescribed often outside of the provider entities by external standards development organisations. And it's... It's full. So your curriculum has very little room to include additional approaches to learning and assessment that might be critical. I mean, universities often have the luxury of doing things like introducing generic graduate attributes, particularly at first year, but not only at first year, and folding them into curriculum. And it's often in the humanities and social science that we, it's them that we turn to often to develop these generic graduate attribute components of the curriculum. In vocational education and training, there's very little space and very little agency to do that. And I think that the rapid advent of AI in the education space is going to need us to be able to draw upon that broader range of assessing not just what people are learning, but how they're learning. So I

think, I think that that's a systems level challenge that we're going to have to rise to. Here in New Zealand, we're just about to embark on a new system again, which will include industry skills boards, which will have responsibility for setting learning outcome standards. For vocational education and programmes up to kind of associate diploma level, and we'll need to make sure that the process that they undertake is cognisant of this discourse that's happening here and doesn't just perpetuate, you know, final outcome type assessment.

Prof Judyth Sachs [01:00:25] Look, we've reached 10 o'clock and I'm sorry, Luc, we've run out of time to invite you to respond to that, but can I thank the four members of the panel for your really thoughtful, but also challenging responses to a conversation that I think will be ongoing. And certainly I wish you all well, both Luc in your profession and your future, because it's your future that in fact is going to support those of us who were born last century. But it's also that I think that it's good to see that there's lots of thought happening in New Zealand and I would expect nothing less, but they're all multiple challenges. And if we had this conversation this time next year, there'd be some things that would be similar, but there would be a whole set of new challenges. So I wish you all the best in both your institutional endeavours and in your personal challenges. And wish you a fantastic end of the day. So thank you for participating. And this has been recorded, so people will be able to access it on the Studiosity website. So enjoy the rest of your day. Thank you.

Luc MacKay [01:01:37] Thank you very much to you, Judyth. Very well moderated.

Prof Catherine Moran [01:01:42] Thank you.