AI and Assessment

Conversation starter cards

Learning Design

2025

The Open University

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AI and Assessment: conversation starter cards

Learning Design

What are these cards for?

The 15 cards in this set are intended to initiate discussion and reflection around approaches to integrating AI in assessment in course design. The aim is to enable students to develop the knowledge and skills they need in an AI-enabled world.

How should they be used?

- To support module teams to consider best fit method of assessment through concrete examples.
- To provide guidance on how the assessment ideas connect with existing frameworks at the OU: Digital Information Literacy (DIL), Employability and Activity Types.
- To support teams to focus on assessment design that encourages authentic assessment approaches, student choice and allows students to showcase their knowledge and skills.

References:

The design of these cards is based on the 'Top Trumps' assessment cards by Lydia Arnold which were further developed into an AI-enabled version by JISC.

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AI and Assessment: conversation starter cards

Each card outlines:

- The type of assessment task (e.g., writing effective AI prompts)
- Skills promotion: the learning that it assesses and develops
- Potential formats (e.g., essay, video, presentation)
- Corresponding links to OU frameworks (DIL, Employability and Activity Types)

Further information:

The QAA has useful advice on developing assessment strategies in the face of AI.

Writing effective AI prompts

Skills promotion:

- Problem-solving
- AI literacy (e.g. prompt engineering)
- Reflection
- Collaboration

Potential formats:

- Online forums
- Written docs or presentations
- Live or recorded oral, PPT or video

Student activities:

- Identify a major question/challenge in your discipline, preferably with no clear solution.
- Collaborate on developing and agreeing 5 to 10 criteria for assessing AI-generated responses to the question, e.g. does it reference more than one theoretical perspective?
- Individually write a prompt for AI to answer the question.
- In small groups use criteria to judge the responses of other students and rate the AI prompts/responses from best to worst.
- Write up a report/reflection on the process.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Understand and engage in digital practices
- Critically evaluate

Employability:

- Digital and information literacy
- Collaboration
- Initiative

Activity types:

- Communicative
- Productive

Developing an AI case study

Skills promotion:

- Professional application of AI
- Critical evaluation
- AI literacy (e.g. ethics and data protection)
- Metacognition

Potential formats:

- Blog
- Presentation
- Written output

Student activities:

- Research a real example where AI has influenced an aspect of life, e.g., voting in an election, decision-making in law or finance, a medical diagnosis. This can be discipline-specific.
- Analyse the implications and consequences of the chosen example in relation to (discipline-specific) careers.
- Identify key skills or capabilities needed to improve on or develop in the specific career.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Find information
- Critically evaluate

Employability:

- Problem-solving
- Commercial/sector awareness
- Self-awareness

Activity types:

- Finding and handling info
- Productive

AI-generated research leads

Skills promotion:

- Researching
- Critical evaluation
- Disciplinary knowledge
- Prompt engineering

Potential formats:

- Prerecorded or live presentation with additional written evidence
- Template for research proposal

Student activities:

- Students use AI to identify which current debates and complex challenges are happening in their profession or discipline and which are in need of resolution.
- They can then either explore through further research or observation in a real-world context and write up a research proposal. Alternatively, the research leads exercise can be an end in itself where students present their findings with commentary and links to resources.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Understand and engage in digital practices
- Critically evaluate

Employability:

- Digital and information literacy
- Commercial/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Finding and handling info
- Productive

AI road test

Skills promotion:

- Critical thinking
- Collaboration
- Referencing
- Summarising

Potential formats:

- Forum-based or live discussion
- Live or pre-recorded presentation

Student activities:

- Use AI to generate a short (200 word) response to an open question.
- Individually complete a proforma which includes elements in the AI-generated answer such as quality of writing (language, references, argument etc.).
- In small groups, discuss findings.
- Give a joint presentation on the process and outcomes of discussions.
- Extra: Individually or collaboratively write a better written piece.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Critically evaluate
- Collaborate and share

Employability:

- Collaboration
- Communication
- Digital and Information literacy

Activity types:

- Communicative
- Productive

AI solution finder

Skills promotion:

- Creativity
- AI literacy
- Research
- Professional application

Potential formats:

- Live or recorded presentation
- Written output
- Blog post

Student activities:

- Appraise current challenges in a specific professional or disciplinary field and investigate where AI could offer opportunities OR identify a new or predicted challenge.
- Present rationale for selection of the challenge (why it is a priority) and a plan for how AI might help to resolve it.
- Present this to work-based colleagues/managers for feedback where relevant.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Find information
- Manage, create and communicate information

Employability:

- Initiative
- Self-management and resilience
- Commercial/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Finding and handling info
- Practice

AI think-pair-share

Skills promotion:

- Critical thinking
- Evaluation
- AI literacy
- Reflection

Potential formats:

- Written output
- Logs of edits in, e.g., Track Changes

Student activities:

- Individually identify a key challenge in field or discipline.
- Using three different types of prompts, generate a response from an AI text generator.
- Pair up to exchange notes on the process and whether the outputs were correct, surprising, etc.
- Individually, refine prompt to generate a final AI output and log the changes.
- Submit this output along with prompt, improved AI response, added content highlighted and a reflection about the pre-work in pairs.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Critically evaluate
- Collaborate and share

Employability:

- Collaboration
- Digital and information literacy

Activity types:

- Assimilative
- Communicative
- Productive

Consultant report: professional futures

Skills promotion:

- Research
- Presentation skills
- Synthesising ideas
- Professional skills and knowledge

Potential formats:

- Webpage
- Blog
- Video
- Podcast
- Written document

Student activities:

- Explore the role of AI in discipline or professional areas.
- Research or imagine how AI may influence their future career, e.g., through news articles, speaking to others, looking at webinars on the subject.
- Develop the task by inviting in guest speakers and providing opportunities for Q&A. Students can also contribute to discussion forums or work collaboratively.
- Individually/ in groups, produce a consultant report for a professional body. Could also create an action plan evaluating current strengths and areas for development in terms of AI /technical skills.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Find information
- Manage, create and communicate info

Employability:

- Self-awareness
- Commercial/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Finding and handling info
- Communicative
- Productive

Data explainer

Skills promotion:

- Data analytics
- Evaluation
- Communication
- Metacognition

Potential formats:

- Online quizzes
- Written output
- Live or pre-recorded presentation
- Video

Student activities:

- Direct to a data set, e.g., business accounts or product testing measurements, and perform appropriate calculations and interrogation.
- Compare calculations done on specialist data sets with those obtained from generative AI.
- Describe the steps as if explaining to a client, patient or colleague.
- Draw conclusions and make recommendations. Use data visualisations to summarise findings.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Understand and engage in digital practices
- Critically evaluate

Employability:

- Numeracy
- Self-awareness
- Commerical/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Assimilative
- Productive

Debate with AI

Skills promotion:

- Critical evaluation
- Problem solving
- AI literacy
- Independence

Potential formats:

- AI-generated outputs
- Group debate live or in a forum
- Written, video or audio output

Student activities:

- Choose a major question or challenge in field or discipline.
- Either as an individual or group activity, present this to an AI text generator and engage in a debate with AI by questioning the responses (you may have to provide some guidance around questioning strategies).
- Individually produce an argumentative essay based on the dialogue with AI – evaluating both their own position and that of AI.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Critically evaluate
- Collaborate and share

Employability:

- Problem solving
- Communication
- Initiative

Activity types:

- Assimilative
- Communicative

Design a quiz

Skills promotion:

- Subject knowledge
- Research
- Evaluation
- Collaboration

Potential formats:

- Written output
- Online quiz tool

Student activities:

- Before starting, tutors will need to discuss question design with students – what 'good distractors' (i.e., wrong answers) look like and how to avoid 'giveaways.'
- Students individually research question material, answers and feedback they will provide. They might use AI to generate some initial ideas but will have to interrogate responses.
- They then share with others for peer review and revise where necessary.
- After quality checking /assessment, quizzes can be used by future cohorts for formative assessment.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Understand engage in digital practices
- Manage, create and communicate information

Employability:

- Collaboration
- Self-management and resilience

Activity types:

- Finding and handling info
- Communicative

Design a non-AI assessment

Skills promotion:

- Critical evaluation
- Problem solving
- Groupwork
- AI literacy

Potential formats:

- Output from GenAI tool
- Group discussion – live or in a forum
- Written, video or audio output

Student activities:

- Students use an AI text generator to answer an essay question about a major question or challenge in their field or discipline.
- In groups or individually they write down five things they learned about the topic from the AI text generator and reflect on what they learned from this tool and/or what they didn't learn.
- Students then design a new assignment that doesn't allow for the use of AI but that allows them (or other students) to demonstrate their learning.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Critically evaluate
- Manage, create and communicate information

Employability:

- Problem solving
- Digital and information literacy

Activity types:

- Assimilative
- Productive

Digital field guide

Skills promotion:

- Critical evaluation
- AI literacy
- Subject knowledge
- Collaboration

Potential formats:

- Blog
- Webpage
- Downloadable PDF

Student activities:

- Students use digital sources of information to create virtual field guides about specific sites (natural world, archaeology, heritage, architecture, geology, etc). If using AI sources, these need to be evaluated for accuracy, bias and so on.
- Using a range of media, students collate an in-depth description or analysis of particular species, landscape feature or place. Subject can be chosen by students or allocated.
- This can be undertaken individually or as a group.
- Completed guide is published online with QR codes to enable users to use the field guide to enhance their engagement with the environment.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Find information
- Manage, create and communicate information

Employability:

- Digital and information literacy
- Initiative
- Commercial/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Finding and handling info
- Productive

Objects exhibition

Skills promotion:

- Creativity
- Critical evaluation
- AI literacy

Potential formats:

- Physical or online portfolio
- Blog with reflections
- Audio or video recording with written docs

Student activities:

- Ask students to identify an object, building or product that they would like to design (one that does not currently exist).
- Students generate cross-section drawings of the imaginary object using permitted AI image generators.
- They then translate this into three dimensions for an exhibition.
- In a seminar they discuss the objects with peers.
- They need to document the process throughout and finally submit this, a summary of the seminar discussion and their own conclusions about the product.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Understand and engage in digital practices
- Manage, create and communicate information

Employability:

- Communication
- Initiative
- Commercial/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Productive
- Practice
- Communicative

Style and profile

Skills promotion:

- Critical evaluation
- Creativity
- Analysis
- AI literacy

Potential formats:

- Live or pre-recorded video
- Written document
- Blog post

Student activities:

- Use AI to generate a range of outputs in different genres or styles.
- Consider which aspects of the output are true to the original and where it differs or misrepresents the original and in what way, e.g., sentence formation, word selection, punctuation and grammar, etc.
- Students should document their thinking.
- Also, they could produce work 'in the style of' then compare with the AI output (as well as the original).

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Understand and engage in digital practices
- Critically evaluate

Employability:

- Problem solving
- Digital and information literacy

Activity types:

- Productive
- Assimilative

Visualise a concept

Skills promotion:

- Conceptual understanding
- AI literacy
- Evaluation
- Reflection

Potential formats:

- Live or pre-recorded presentation
- Blog
- Document with image embedded

Student activities:

- Select a term or concept to represent visually. Write words describing this and generate an AI-generated image from appropriate software.
- Write a five-minute essay describing the image and linking it to the original term/concept.
- Adapt image prompts for the AI image generator to create an improved image reflecting understanding of the term/concept.
- Present or submit images and short reflective pieces.

Links to OU frameworks:

DIL:

- Find information
- Manage, create and share information

Employability:

- Digital and information literacy
- Initiative
- Commercial/sector awareness

Activity types:

- Assimilative
- Productive