2025 Generative AI Needs Assessment Community Shareback- November 8th, 2025

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Our Approach: Living our Values

Purpose: At Queen's, our AI strategy is an integrative and cross-campus view where all reasoned and well-intended perspectives can be heard and considered. The Queen's AI Nexus will bring together diverse perspectives from pedagogical, operational, legal, technical, ethical and other domains. It is the site of decisions, policies, and guidance for ensuring that AI is only used by Queen's people in service of our community, augmenting our people's capacity, and living our values. This needs assessment, administered by the Special Advisor to the Provost on Generative AI, is a key component of forming our AI Nexus, maintaining a policy ecosystem that puts people at the centre, and providing the tools that help our people be the best version of themselves. In this way:

- This survey is a strategic tool designed to support our institutional planning and quality improvement efforts at Queen's University.
- Your insights will directly inform the creation of policies and the function of the AI Nexus Subcommittee that guide responsible integration of AI across teaching, operations, and research.
- By sharing your experiences, concerns, and perspectives with generative AI, you help to build a future where innovation and academic integrity walk hand in hand.
- We share these aggregated, but balanced perspectives giving voice to the hopes, aspirations, concerns, and challenges around AI as stated by the responding people of Queen's.

Methodology: The survey was structured around detailed respondent profile sections that capture perspectives from diverse roles on teaching and learning, administrative operations, and research administration. 2244 Queen's community members responded to the survey between July 2nd and October 15th: 562 staff, 381 faculty/librarians, and 1242 students. Our approach is aligned with our vision for responsible AI integration. The data collected supports our commitment to ethical, human-centred progress by ensuring that your experiences and concerns inform every step of how Queen's considers AI tools for its personnel. In line with our rigorous processes and the ethics review exemption (TRAQ 6044315), we employed strict confidentiality measures: all responses are de-identified and aggregated so that every individual's input contributes to a community-defined understanding while preserving personal privacy.

Respondent Snapshot

Respondent Roles

Adjunct, Teaching Fellow or Continuing Adjunct	134
Graduate/Postgraduate/Professional Student	446
Librarian/Archivist	13
Post-doctoral Fellow	13
Staff (Administrative or Operational Role)	562
Tenure Track Faculty	223
Undergraduate Student	796

*Please note that the needs assessment was conducted over the summer, hence student participation was low as they were away from the institution; their perspectives will be included through participation on committees, future surveys, and consultations with student government.

Domains of Response

Teaching and Learning (e.g., teaching, learning tools, academic integrity, skills development)	1154
Operations (e.g., processes, finance, administration, human resources)	901
Research (e.g., data synthesis, knowledge translation, creative works, intellectual property)	1069

Familiarity with AI (%)

Extremely familiar	12.1%
Very familiar	26.43%
Moderately familiar	37.1%
Slightly familiar	19.14%
Not familiar at all	5.19%

Perspectives on AI use in Higher Education

People from all walks of life at Queen's responded to the needs assessment. Perspectives on AI use in higher education ranged from passionate, principled objections to unmitigated enthusiasm for integrating AI (59% positive, 9% neutral, and 32% negative). This continuum of perspective exists at Queen's and is respected as the foundation for critical conversations that our community must have. The analysis that follows will balance both and provide a faithful retelling for this diversity of perspectives.

Gratitude and Commitment to our Community

It is an honour to serve our community as a special advisor on generative AI. I would like to thank our community for the thought, time, and candour you've shared through this needs assessment and consultation process. It has been humbling to have many meaningful conversations with passionate members of our community speaking their truth on the virtues of using and not using AI. Your voices, your hopes, your concerns, and your practical insights continue to shape not only how Queen's approaches AI, but also how we will uphold the values that define Queen's as our community. It is my fervent belief that our AI governance staffed with volunteers from across Queen's will be equal to the task and guide our navigation of this turbulent moment with wisdom and knowledge providing our stability. We commit to transparency, to listening, and to building an approach that balances innovation with care. Your feedback has already guided concrete next steps, like those we provide at the end, and we look forward to working alongside you to ensure that AI supports the human heart of teaching, learning, and research at Queen's.

In service,
Dr. Eleftherios Soleas, Special Advisor to the Provost on Generative AI

Teaching & Learning Insights: Faculty & Educators (n=1154)

Instructors were asked "Are you prepared to use AI in your teaching

Strongly disagree	30%
Somewhat disagree	16%
Neither agree nor disagree	22%
Somewhat agree	21%
Strongly agree	11%

46% of instructors reported negative preparedness, 22% held neutral belief, and 32% held positive beliefs. When asked if instructors planned on integrating AI into their teaching, 37% of instructors stated their plans on deploying AI tools into their teaching, whereas 63% did not.

Instructor Concerns on AI use

Reduced student critical thinking	86%
Inaccuracies in AI-generated content	86%
Misinformation in AI-generated content	85%
Student academic integrity (e.g. unauthorized content generated by AI)	83%
Bias in AI outputs	67%
Ethical issues (e.g., use of copywritten materials for training without consent)	67%
Reduced student engagement	65%
Environmental impact	57%
Data privacy or security	51%
Discrimination in AI outputs	47%
Undermines basic pedagogical values	45%
Social issues	44%
Fairness in AI outputs	40%

Desired Supports for Integrating AI in Teaching

Best-practice guides for using AI in teaching	50%
Workshops on using AI tools in educational contexts	46%
General case studies or examples of effective AI use in teaching	41%
Access to AI software or platforms access	38%
Guidance on designing assessments with AI	38%
Ethical/ equitable use training in education	38%
Disciplinary case studies or examples of effective AI use in teaching	32%
Opportunities to collaborate or share practices with colleagues	30%
Summaries of relevant policies or guidelines	30%
Technical or helpdesk assistance	20%
None, I do not wish to integrate AI	30%

Tools that Queen's instructors report using

ChatGPT (OpenAI)*	86%
Microsoft Copilot	36%
Grammarly	32%
Turnitin	29%
Google Gemini	29%
Other (please specify)	22%
Notebook LLM	19%
Research Rabbit	7%
AI-enabled proctoring for tests/ exams	5%
Quillbot	5%
Goblin.Tools	3%
*The university launched LibreChat, an enterprise level tool that uses ChatGPT models, while the data never leaves Queen's. The total reflects the combined usage of ChatGPT and LibreChat	

Headline takeaways from written responses

Academic integrity & learning erosion: widespread worry that AI undermines effort, reading, writing, and weakens critical thinking.

Policy vacuum & uneven practice: strong calls for clear, university-wide guidance, consistent disclosure rules, and coordinated supports.

Ethics, IP, and environmental impact: frequent objections to data provenance/consent, creator rights, bias/hallucinations—and sizeable concern about climate/water/energy use.

Discipline specificity: enthusiasm or cautious use in coding/quantitative areas; strong resistance in humanities/arts ("writing = thinking").

Readiness & workload: many feel underprepared, overburdened, and seek practical assessment designs and enforcement processes.

Student Learning Insights and Usage of AI (n=1242)

Student Reported AI Use*

No, I do not use AI tools	42%
Unsure	2%
Yes, I use AI tools	55%
*Students knew they were anonymous	

AI-Using Student Reported Tool Choice

ChatGPT (OpenAI)	86%
Grammarly	41%
Microsoft Copilot	30%
Turnitin	30%
Google Gemini	30%
Notebook LLM	15%
Research Rabbit	5%
Goblin.Tools	4%
AI proctoring for tests/exams	4%
Quillbot	3%

Student Concerns when using AI

Inaccuracies in AI-generated content	86%
Misinformation in AI-generated content	86%
Reduced student critical thinking	81%
Student academic integrity (e.g. unauthorized content generated by AI)	78%
Bias in AI outputs	65%
Reduced student engagement	64%
Ethical issues (e.g., use of copywritten materials for training without consent)	61%
Environmental impact (e.g., energy or water use of data centers)	58%
Data privacy or security	53%
Discrimination in AI outputs	45%
Social issues (e.g., use of human labour in AI safety training)	44%
Fairness in AI outputs	39%

Student Desired Supports for Integrating AI

Clear rules on when and how AI can be used in courses	56%
Clear instructions from instructors on permitted AI use.	53%
Guidance on how to reference AI-generated content.	48%
Guidance about the risks of relying on AI (e.g., accuracy, bias, privacy, academic integrity violations).	46%
Workshops on responsible and ethical use of AI.	39%
None, I do not wish to integrate AI	32%

Headline takeaways from written responses

Academic integrity & assessment: AI can bypass learning, while unreliable detectors erode trust. Students feel forced into reactive redesigns and want assessments that reveal genuine student thinking.

Erosion of learning & critical thinking: AI's quick answers discourage effort, patience, and problem-solving. Over-reliance risks shallow engagement and weaker critical thinking.

Policy, guidance, and consistency gaps: Boundaries on AI use are hard to police, and use is inevitable. Without an institutional stance, rules vary across courses. Education is seen as a better response than bans.

Ethics, IP, data provenance, and bias: Models trained on unconsented data raise objections, especially in the arts. Concerns over bias, hallucinations, and derivative outputs drive calls for regulation and protections.

Environmental & social impact: AI's energy demands seem to clash with Queen's Climate Action Plan. Many also worry about its normalization without broader debate.

Role of instructors and instructional quality: Students fear instructor displacement and degraded feedback if AI replaces grading. They stress preserving human relationships and note undifferentiated instruction pushes students to AI.

Equity & fairness: AI fluency advantages some students while others feel excluded or opt out.

Discipline differences: STEM fields find AI more verifiable and useful. Humanities and social sciences report frequent inaccuracies and fabricated sources.

Minority/contrasting views: A small group urges faster adoption or has no concerns. Some support assistive uses like brainstorming or translation with human oversight and disclosure.

Enhancing Operations & Administration (n=901)

51% of operations respondents reported using AI in their administrative tasks (43% no, 6% unsure). Of these respondents, 47% felt they were prepared, while 17% were neutral, and 37% felt they were unprepared to use AI tools in their work. 9% of respondents were emphatic that they would never use AI for any work.

AI-Using Operations Personnel Tool Choices

ChatGPT (OpenAI)	80%
Microsoft Copilot	53%
Grammarly	29%
Other (please specify)	27%
Google Gemini	19%
Notebook LLM	8%
Turnitin	4%
Research Rabbit	2%
AI-enabled proctoring for tests and exams	2%

Concerns of Using AI in Operations Work

Inaccurate or unreliable results	84%
Data security or privacy	78%
Bias, fairness or discrimination in AI outputs	62%
Lack of transparency or accountability in AI decision-making	62%
Ethical issues (e.g., responsible use of copywritten data for training)	61%
Impact on job roles	57%
Environmental impact (e.g., energy use of AI systems)	52%

Desired Supports in Operations

Training/tutorials	74%
Clarity on ethical and responsible AI use	49%
Examples or case studies relevant to my role or discipline	47%
Time or workload relief to explore or implement AI	43%
Opportunities to collaborate	43%
Technical infrastructure	39%
Governance policies	37%
Helpdesk/expert access	32%
Leadership encouragement	29%
None, I do not wish to integrate AI	18%

Support for Operations Use Cases of AI

Data analysis and reporting	71%
Streamlining repetitive tasks	70%
Meeting support (e.g., note-taking)	60%
Scheduling and logistics (e.g., calendaring)	50%
Document and records management.	45%
Communications (e.g., chatbots)	47%
IT support (e.g., troubleshooting)	32%
Predictive analytics (e.g. resource needs)	30%
Finances	27%
Risk management/compliance	23%
Procurement and inventory management	22%
Human resources	21%

Headline takeaways from written responses

- **Legal, Policy & Governance:** Concerns over liability, IP, sovereignty, and inconsistent policies, plus fears of adopting AI without proper planning or evaluation.
- **Data Security & Quality:** Risks of losing control of sensitive data, poor source quality, reliance on vendors, and unverified outputs. Some recommend local hosting for privacy.
- **Workforce, Skills & Training:** Worries about job loss, deskilling, and over-reliance ("digital amnesia"). Staff want equitable access, training, and clarity on when AI should supplement, not replace, people.
- **Operational Effectiveness:** Doubts about productivity gains, with reports of errors and inefficiencies. Calls for careful, evidence-based use tied to real workflows (e.g., scheduling).
- **Human Value & Relationships:** Strong emphasis on empathy, mentoring, collaboration, and human decision-making, especially in HR and student support where AI cannot care.
- **Equity, Fairness & Justice:** Concerns over uneven adoption, monopolistic tech power, discrimination, and sustainability. Push for fairness in grading and staff adaptation.
- **Adoption Philosophy:** Many support limited, supplemental use for routine tasks, but warn against over-reliance or replacement of human judgment. A minority want faster integration

Scholarly Activity & Research Innovation (n-1069)

49% of research respondents reported use of an AI tool, with as many reporting no use.

Reported Preparedness: Individual and Unit

Response	Individual	Unit
Strongly disagree	25%	19%
Somewhat disagree	18%	19%
Neither agree nor disagree	21%	36%
Somewhat agree	25%	18%
Strongly agree	11%	8%

Research AI Users Tool Choices

ChatGPT (OpenAI)	87%
Microsoft Copilot	31%
Google Gemini	31%
Grammarly	31%
Notebook LLM	13%
Research Rabbit	6%

What concerns do you have about AI

Inaccurate or unreliable results	90%
Data security or privacy	71%
Bias, fairness or discrimination in AI outputs	71%
Ethical issues	68%
Lack of transparency or accountability in AI decision-making	63%
Risk of inadvertent plagiarism	61%
Environmental impact (e.g., energy use of AI systems)	59%
Impact on job roles (e.g., job loss, changes in responsibility)	55%

What supports would help you use AI in research?

Training/tutorials	55%
Clarity on ethical and responsible use of AI	44%
Technical infrastructure	33%
Examples or case studies relevant to my role or discipline	33%
Opportunities to collaborate or learn from colleagues	30%
Time/ workload relief to explore AI	27%
Governance policies	25%
Helpdesk/expert access	19%
Leadership encouragement	19%
None, I do not wish to integrate AI	31%

Where can AI be useful in Research?

Editing or proofreading writing	56%	Arts-based or creative outputs	22%
Conducting literature review	43%	Drafting interview or focus group guides	21%
Analyzing data	43%	Simulating scenarios	17%
Creating visuals for knowledge translation	42%	Identifying potential collaborators	17%
Translating research findings for audiences	37%	None, I do not wish to integrate AI	16%
Preparing grant applications	36%	Designing experiments	13%
Assisting with qualitative data coding or thematic analysis	30%	Organizing community consultation or co-design inputs	10%
Drafting manuscripts	25%	Developing reflective or narrative research	8%

Headline takeaways from written responses

Risks/Ethical Concerns: Issues of liability, intellectual property, research ethics, and data sovereignty. Belief that “black box” tools compromise transparency and rigour.

Skill Atrophy and Dependency: Some fear a generational slide into “mental laziness” and refuse AI on principle to preserve authenticity.

Reliability Issues: Outputs are often inaccurate, lacking nuance, and can be riddled with hallucinations, making verification essential.

Varied Adoption and Non-Use: Some folks avoid AI due to restrictions, ethical objections, or doubts about reliability, while others remain unsure of its value. Some reject AI as harmful environmentally and antithetical to creativity.

Future Possibilities: AI shows promise for large datasets, specialized research, and knowledge translation, with applications from systematic reviews to digitizing archives. Respondents call for enterprise tools to support responsible and discipline-specific adoption.

What the Data Tells Us: Overarching Insights and Community Consensus

Feedback reveals a strong appetite for AI adoption balanced by thoughtful caution and maintaining our values. The Queen's community recognizes opportunities to accelerating the work of research, teaching and learning, and operations, but remain alert to risks around data, equity, academic integrity, and losing human connection. Clear support is needed in the form of training, infrastructure, and policy to ensure confidence and consistency across our community. Diverse perspectives ranging from enthusiasm to outright rejection are vital to have represented in our AI conversations as they enrich planning and highlight the importance of autonomy and trusting our people to make the right decisions based on their expertise. Ultimately, our success will lie in balancing innovation with safeguards, ensuring AI supplements human expertise without eroding creativity, integrity, and the relationships that define academic life.

What people want from the university

1. **Unified policy & course-level clarity**
    - A campus-wide acceptable-use framework; standard syllabus clauses; explicit disclosure when AI assists teaching or grading, and how it is used by personnel in research or operations.
    - Evidence standards and due-process guidance for integrity cases; communicating our stance on detector limitations and appeals.
2. **Assessment redesign support**
    - Adaptable templates for documents, process logs, performance and hands-on assessment tasks, staged drafts, in-class writing, "AI-critique" tasks that still require independent reasoning.
    - Practical workload guidance (e.g., TA models) and alternatives for large classes.
3. **AI tools/literacy for all roles**
    - Short, required modules (benefits/limits, bias, hallucinations, citation ethics).
    - Curated, well-explained tools that provide the potential for thoughtful augmentation/delegation under the supervision of existing personnel, but without replacing the human-in-the-loop.
    - Targeted PD for teachers (prompting for improved teaching in alignment with curated high-impact-practices and higher order thinking, verifying outputs, designing AI-resilient tasks).
4. **Ethical guardrails & procurement**
    - Closed-loop/secure tools with data-protection assurances; do-not-train commitments; consent pathways for course content.
    - Environmental impact disclosures; greener defaults; alignment with sustainability goals.
5. **Community & transparency**
    - Cross-disciplinary communities of practice; showcase both successes and failures.
    - Clear comms to avoid "integration by default" and honor legitimate opt-out positions.

Acceptable use patterns

1. **Assistive, Not Authoring:** Using AI for brainstorming, outlining, language polishing, code scaffolding, bug-hunting, or item-bank seeding; all with human oversight and final authorship clearly retained.
2. **Learning About AI:** Designing activities where students critique AI outputs, identify errors, biases, or missing reasoning, and reflect on how human judgment improves results.
3. **Administrative Streamlining:** Drafting rubrics, projections, workflows, emails, MCQs, or templates as *starting points* only, with human edits documented to maintain transparency and accountability.
4. **Data Handling & Summarization:** Condensing meeting notes, survey comments, or policy documents into summaries or thematic groupings—always paired with human review to ensure accuracy.
5. **Translation & Accessibility Support:** Using AI to translate, simplify, or reformat text (e.g., plain language, alternative formats), while validating outputs to ensure fidelity and inclusivity.

Emerging Trends and Patterns to watch for

The Queen's Community's Usage of Tools differs significantly by context

	Operations	Research	Teaching	Learning
ChatGPT (OpenAI)	81%	87%	86%	87%
Other tool	25%	21%	62%	54%
Microsoft Copilot	53%	29%	36%	28%
Grammarly	29%	31%	32%	39%
Google Gemini	21%	30%	29%	30%
Notebook LLM	9%	13%	19%	15%
Research Rabbit	3%	6%	7%	5%

It is important to note that this survey pre-dates the launch of communications on several Queen's enterprise tools and it will be important to monitor how this changes over time. It is also important to note that other tools not listed makes up a large part of the AI usage at Queen's.

Early Conversations that we will continue over the next year

1. Balancing Appetite and Caution: There is genuine interest in AI adoption, but it is consistently paired with hesitation about unintended consequences—reflecting a "yes, but carefully" stance.

2. Authenticity and Integrity: Widespread concerns center on AI, when deployed heedlessly, undermining academic integrity, critical thinking, and intellectual struggle, making authenticity in work a top priority.

3. Support and Skill-Building Needs: Faculty, staff, and students all want equitable training and access provided by Queen's, with an emphasis on how AI should *augment* rather than replace human expertise.

4. Data, Security, and IP Tensions: Recurring fears about data loss, provenance, confidentiality, and unconsented training highlight the need for local hosting, stronger privacy measures, and regulation.

5. Operational Pragmatism: There is skepticism about prioritizing real efficiency gains as many tools create extra work or errors when used poorly. The uptake of AI will be determined on how we promote thoughtful and efficient AI use, and remedy poor or inefficient use.

6. Adoption Philosophy: The most common position is that AI should be a supplemental, task-specific tool with guardrails—while a minority either rejects it outright and another urges faster integration.

7. Human Value and Relationships: Respondents stress that teaching, mentoring, HR, and student support must remain human-centered, preserving empathy and trust where machines fall short.

8. Equity, Fairness, and Access: Concerns about uneven AI fluency, bias, discrimination, and monopolistic influence fuel calls for fairer access and safeguards against systemic inequities.

9. Environmental and Cultural Impacts: Energy use, ecological harm, and cultural critiques (e.g., loss of human intellect, Indigenous sovereignty, perpetuating inequities, tech monopolies) frame AI adoption as more than a technical issue.

Recommended Next Steps, Gratitude, and Commitment

Short-Term Considerations

With input from advisory committees, AI governance will focus on the following areas for refinement and implementation as appropriate:

1. **Policy & Guidance Pack** – How do we continue to communicate institutional AI policy, proceed with standard syllabus clauses, and finalize letters of information on responsible tool use for all of Queen's?
2. **Assessment Support Kit and Course Redesign Institutes** – How do we identify sample assessment designs across disciplines (STEM, humanities, health, law), guidance on new policies, and ongoing support
3. **Share Enterprise AI tools** – How do we create and distribute access to enterprise level AI-tools to democratize access to AI at Queen's.
4. **Sustainability** – Ponder potential approaches to understanding and reporting on the environmental impact of AI services.
5. **Establish Queen's AI Nexus and Communities of Practice** – Strike subcommittees on each of teaching and learning, operations, and research administration which will discuss and debate policies, concerns, and opportunities for AI as well as share use cases, exemplars, and evidence.

Longer-Term Considerations

With input from advisory committees, AI governance will focus on the following areas for refinement and implementation as appropriate:

1. **On-demand Online Learning Provided for all Queen's Community Members**–Develop short online AI literacy primers (bias, provenance, acceptable use, etc.) for everyone.
2. **AI Cohort Learning Program** – Working with cross-campus partners, consider a cohort-based pilot where participants bring a real project and engage in three structured learning sessions on AI integration. In the fourth session, each presents their applied project, fostering peer-to-peer learning and building a pipeline of AI-competent staff and faculty.
3. **AI Showcase Event Series** – Assess the feasibility of a flagship "AI at Queen's" Showcase with three distinct streams: Emerging Leaders (highlighting early-career staff/faculty experimenting with AI in operations and research)- highlighting what works and what does not, State of the Art (recognizing established innovators in AI use in all areas), and Teaching & Learning (demonstrating classroom-ready applications and best practices) - highlighting what works and what does not.

Questions or Comments

For any questions, please contact the Special Advisor to the Provost on Generative AI, Dr. Eleftherios Soleas at sagai@queensu.ca .