

# Use of AI in Education to Support KM Processes in Organizations

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**Abstract:** AI-tools are being used in some organizations and there is little doubt that AI-tools may be powerful aids in a stressful worklife. However, it is important to choose tools that will enable a productive use, and with the plethora of tools at hand today, it may be difficult to evaluate and decide on tools that will suit the needs of an organization. As an academic organization providing education also within the lifelong learning segment, we should integrate use of AI-tools in our courses. As many in the lifelong learning segment are already working in organizations, we should offer learning about AI-tools, as well as learn from our students regarding the use of AI-tools. Our project on using AI-tools to evaluate student assignments has been undertaken in cooperation with our students. After the students being provided feedback on their mandatory assignments from our faculty staff, the same assignments have received an evaluation from an AI-tool. The investigations have been threefold; about how the students evaluated their AI-evaluation (compared to the evaluation from the lecturer), about how the students predict or present similar AI-tools can be used back in their organizations, and from the perspective of the faculty staff; how lecturers can best integrate teaching AI-tools to students that are in a worklife. The paper presents results from the qualitative investigations and provide valuable insights that will define the further use of AI-tools for evaluation for their next courses.

**Keywords:** AI-tools, Organizational learning, Knowledge management processes, Work relevance

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## 1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) tools are increasingly being introduced into organizational settings to support knowledge-intensive work (Brynjolfsson and McAfee, 2014, Davenport and Ronanki, 2018). In contemporary work life, employees often face high cognitive and emotional demands, tight deadlines, and a constant flow of information. AI-based tools, ranging from recommendation systems and intelligent search to generative language models, promise to assist workers in dealing with these demands by automating routine tasks, enhancing decision-making, and providing on-demand access to relevant knowledge (Russell and Norvig, 2010, Shrestha et al., 2019). There is little doubt that such tools may become powerful aids in a stressful work life.

However, organizations face a major challenge: the sheer number and diversity of AI tools available on the market. This abundance makes it difficult to evaluate which tools are reliable, ethically acceptable, and well-suited to the organization's specific needs and practices (Davenport et al., 2020). The challenge is particularly acute in knowledge-intensive organizations such as universities, where both staff and students are expected to engage in continuous learning, critical thinking, and responsible use of digital technologies (Laurillard, 2012, Selwyn, 2017).

As an academic institution providing education not only to traditional full-time students but also to lifelong learners—many of whom are already employed in various organizations—we have a dual responsibility. On the one hand, we must integrate the use of AI tools into our teaching and assessment practices to ensure that our courses are relevant to current and future work life (Kong et al., 2025). On the other hand, we have a unique opportunity to learn from our students' experiences with AI tools in their own organizations. This bidirectional learning can contribute to both academic development and organizational innovation (Argyris and Schön, 1996, Wenger, 1998).

The present paper reports on a project in which AI tools were used to evaluate student assignments in cooperation with the students themselves. After students had received formative feedback on mandatory assignments from faculty staff, the same assignments were evaluated by an AI tool. The project had three overarching aims:

1. To explore how students evaluated the AI-generated assessment compared to the feedback from the lecturer.
2. To investigate how students predict or envision the use of similar AI tools in their own organizations.
3. To examine, from the perspective of faculty staff, how lecturers can best integrate AI tools into teaching for students who are already embedded in work life.

The paper is based on qualitative investigations involving both students and faculty. The findings provide valuable insights into how AI tools can be meaningfully integrated into educational practice, how such tools might transfer to organizational contexts, and how they may influence knowledge processes, both within the university and in workplaces where students are employed (Nonaka, 1994, Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). These insights will inform the further use of AI tools for evaluation in future courses.

## **2. Theoretical Foundation**

Here we will present the theoretical framework that we have based our understanding on.

### **2.1 Knowledge Management and Organizational Learning**

Knowledge Management (KM) focuses on how organizations create, capture, share, and apply knowledge in order to achieve their goals (Alavi and Leidner, 2001, Hislop et al., 2018). Effective KM involves enabling the conversion between tacit and explicit knowledge through processes such as socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization—often referred to as the SECI model (Nonaka, 1994, Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

From a KM perspective, AI tools can be understood as socio-technical mechanisms that support or transform these knowledge processes (Pan and Scarbrough, 1999, Grant, 1996). For instance, AI-based recommendation systems and search engines can support the combination and retrieval of explicit knowledge. Generative AI tools (such as large language models) may assist in externalizing tacit knowledge by helping users articulate ideas, draft texts, and structure arguments. At the same time, the use of AI requires individuals to critically evaluate AI outputs and integrate them into their own understanding, thereby supporting internalization (Shrestha et al., 2019).

Another important aspect of KM is the role of communities of practice and social learning (Wenger, 1998, Brown and Duguid, 1991). Knowledge is not only stored in documents or systems but is embedded in the practices and interactions of people. When AI tools are introduced into such communities, they may change the patterns of communication, the distribution of expertise, and the norms of knowledge sharing (Leonardi and Treem, 2012). In educational settings, this implies that AI tools are not merely technical add-ons but become part of the learning environment and influence how students and lecturers co-create knowledge.

In addition, KM emphasizes knowledge flows across organizational boundaries (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2011). Lifelong learners who attend university courses while working act as knowledge brokers between the university and their organizations (Hargadon and Sutton, 1997). They bring practical experiences and organizational know-how into the classroom and, in turn, transfer theories, methods, and tools from the university back into their work contexts. The introduction of AI tools into teaching can therefore have ripple effects beyond the educational institution, potentially affecting knowledge processes in the students' organizations.

### **2.2 AI Tools in Organizations and Education**

AI tools can be defined broadly as computational systems that perform tasks which typically require human cognitive capabilities, such as perceiving, reasoning, learning, or generating content (Russell and Norvig, 2010). In organizational contexts, AI is increasingly used to support decision-making, automate routine tasks, and personalize services (Davenport and Ronanki, 2018, Dwivedi et al., 2021). Examples include predictive analytics, intelligent document processing, conversational agents, and generative text or image tools.

Recent developments in generative AI, especially large language models, have particular relevance for knowledge work and education (Bommasani et al., 2021). These models can summarize texts, generate explanations, draft documents, and provide feedback on written content. As such, they blur the boundaries between human and machine contributions to knowledge production. This raises both opportunities and concerns. On the opportunity side, generative AI can reduce mundane workload, provide rapid formative feedback, and support creativity and reflection. On the concern side, issues of accuracy, bias, transparency, academic integrity, and over-reliance on AI must be addressed (Selwyn, 2019, O'Neil, 2016).

In education, AI tools have been explored in several roles: as tutors that provide feedback and guidance, as tools that support teachers in assessment and course design, and as objects of study that students learn about and learn to critically evaluate (Holmes et al., 2019). The use of AI for assessment is particularly sensitive, as it touches upon fairness, validity, and the trust relationship between students and instructors (Williamson and Eynon, 2020). AI-generated feedback can be timely and scalable, but may lack contextual understanding, nuance, or alignment with course learning outcomes if not carefully calibrated.

The idea of “human-in-the-loop” AI has been proposed as a way to balance automation with human judgment (Shneiderman, 2020). In this view, AI tools do not replace teachers or professionals but augment their capabilities. The human retains responsibility for critical decisions, while AI supports by providing analyses, suggestions, or alternative perspectives. In the context of our project, AI is used to provide an additional layer of evaluation on student assignments, which students and lecturers can compare with human feedback.

### **2.3 AI Tools as Knowledge Management Instruments**

By integrating knowledge management perspectives with AI research, we can conceptualize AI tools as instruments that not only process data but also mediate knowledge processes (Dwivedi et al., 2021, Shrestha et al., 2019). For example, in the evaluation of student assignments, an AI tool might:

- Help externalize tacit criteria by making explicit the aspects of an assignment it deems strong or weak (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).
- Serve as a repository of codified evaluative knowledge in the form of prompts, rubrics, and examples (Alavi and Leidner, 2001).
- Support knowledge sharing by generating feedback that can be discussed and refined in interaction between student and lecturer (Wenger, 1998).
- Stimulate organizational learning by revealing differences between AI and human evaluations and thereby prompting reflection on assessment practices (Argyris and Schön, 1996).

In our project, the university can be seen as a knowledge-intensive organization experimenting with AI-based KM instruments in collaboration with students who themselves are embedded in other organizations (Hislop et al., 2018). Through this experiment, the university not only supports student learning but also gathers knowledge about how AI tools may function in diverse work contexts. Students’ reflections on AI evaluation in their own organizations thus become a source of organizational learning for the university and contribute to a broader understanding of AI as a KM technology (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2011).

## **3. Method of Inquiry**

The study employed a qualitative research design to explore how AI tools can be used to evaluate student assignments and how such use is experienced by both students and faculty. Qualitative methods were chosen to capture the nuances of participants’ perceptions, interpretations, and reflections, which are central when investigating emerging technologies and complex knowledge processes (Creswell, 2022, Braun et al., 2021).

The project was conducted in the context of a university course aimed at lifelong learners, many of whom are employed in various organizations while studying part time. The course included mandatory written assignments that are normally evaluated by faculty staff. For the purposes of this project, an AI tool capable of generating evaluative feedback on written texts was introduced as a supplementary evaluator.

Participants consisted of 9 students enrolled in the course and the lecturers responsible for teaching and assessment. The students represented a variety of professional backgrounds, including public administration, private sector companies, and non-profit organizations. Most participants were experienced professionals seeking to update their competences and to engage in lifelong learning (Jarvis et al., 2003).

The AI tool was introduced after students had submitted a mandatory written assignment and received formative feedback from their lecturer. Students were informed about the project’s purpose, the role of the AI tool, and the voluntary nature of participation in the qualitative investigation.

### **3.1 Data Collection**

Data were collected from three main sources aligned with the threefold focus of the project:

#### *Student evaluations of AI-generated feedback*

After receiving both the lecturer’s feedback and the AI-generated evaluation, students were invited to reflect on and compare the two. This was done through written reflective notes and semi-structured interviews or focus groups (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The reflections addressed questions of accuracy and usefulness, the difference between AI feedback and teacher feedback, and how they perceived the *combination* of AI and lecturer feedback regarding learning outcome.

#### *Students' envisioned use of AI tools in their organizations*

Students were also asked to consider how similar AI tools might be used in their current or future workplaces. Data were collected through focused questions in the interviews and through an assignment prompt asking students to describe potential applications, benefits, and challenges of AI-based evaluation tools in their own organizational context (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2011).

#### *Faculty perspectives on integrating AI in teaching*

Lecturers involved in the course participated in interviews and reflective discussions about their experiences of using AI tools for evaluation. They were asked to reflect on 1) how AI-generated feedback compares to their own assessments, 2) how the use of AI affected their teaching and assessment practices, and 3) what considerations might be important when teaching students who are already in work life about AI tools. These reflections relate to broader debates about digitalization and AI in higher education (Selwyn, 2017).

All qualitative data (student reflections, interview transcripts (from notes), and faculty reflections) were analysed using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The data was coded, aligning it with the three research aims ensuring coherence and to relate findings back to the theoretical framework of knowledge management and AI in organizations.

Throughout the analysis, we adopted a reflexive stance, acknowledging our dual role as lecturers and researchers and being sensitive to the power dynamics in educational settings (Finlay, 2002). The aim was not to produce generalizable findings in a statistical sense, but to provide rich, contextualized insights that can inform further experimentation and theory development.

## **4. Results and Discussion**

### **4.1 Students' Evaluation of AI-generated Feedback**

Overall, students reported that the AI feedback was surprisingly coherent and relevant, especially regarding surface-level aspects such as structure, language, and clarity. Many appreciated the immediacy of the AI feedback, which could be obtained quickly after the assignment was processed (Holmes et al., 2019).

However, when comparing AI feedback to the lecturer's evaluation, students consistently highlighted the lecturer's feedback as deeper and more closely aligned with the course learning outcomes. The lecturer's comments were perceived as better at capturing the nuances of argumentation, theoretical understanding, and the specific expectations of the assignment. AI feedback, in contrast, was often described as more generic, sometimes repetitive, and occasionally misaligned with the specific context of the course. This resonates with concerns about the context-insensitivity of automated feedback systems in education (Selwyn, 2019).

From a knowledge management perspective, this finding reflects the difference between codified, explicit criteria and the tacit judgment of an experienced lecturer (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). The AI tool appears to operate primarily on explicit, surface-level features of the text, while the lecturer draws on tacit pedagogical knowledge, familiarity with the curriculum, and knowledge of the student's progression. This confirms the importance of keeping a human in the loop and suggests that AI tools are best used as complementary, not substitutive, evaluators (Shneiderman, 2020).

At the same time, some students reported that the AI feedback prompted them to reconsider aspects of their work that the lecturer had not emphasized, such as overall coherence or specific phrasing. In this sense, the AI tool contributed to knowledge combination by offering an additional perspective (Alavi and Leidner, 2001). When students engaged critically with both sources of feedback, the result could be a richer learning experience, exemplifying the internalization of knowledge from multiple inputs (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

### **4.2 Envisioned Use of AI Tools in Organizations**

A second major theme concerned how students imagined the use of similar AI tools in their own organizations. Many participants saw clear potential for AI-based evaluation in HR processes, training programs, and organizational learning initiatives (Dwivedi et al., 2021). For instance, some suggested that AI tools could provide rapid feedback on internal reports, project proposals, or policy drafts, helping employees improve their writing and argumentation before documents are formally submitted.

Students working in organizations with extensive documentation burdens highlighted the possibility of using AI to summarize documents, extract key points, or assess whether texts adhere to established templates or guidelines. In such scenarios, AI tools function as knowledge management instruments that support the

combination and retrieval of explicit knowledge (Grant, 1996, Shrestha et al., 2019). Several participants emphasized that AI could help reduce repetitive cognitive work, thereby freeing time for more complex problem-solving and interaction with colleagues.

However, students also identified significant challenges. Concerns were raised about data privacy, confidentiality, and the risk of uploading sensitive documents to external AI services (O'Neil, 2016, Dwivedi et al., 2021). In some sectors, such as public administration and health care, strict regulations limit how data can be processed and stored, making the use of external AI tools particularly problematic. Participants stressed the need for clear organizational policies and technical safeguards, such as on-premise solutions or anonymization routines, to mitigate these risks.

In addition, several students emphasized the need for training and guidelines to ensure responsible use and avoid over-reliance on AI. Some worried that AI-based evaluation could reinforce existing biases or lead to standardized, less creative forms of expression if employees adapt too strongly to what they perceive as "AI-approved" writing (O'Neil, 2016, Selwyn, 2019). A few participants expressed concern that middle managers might be tempted to use AI feedback as a proxy for human evaluation, potentially delegating important judgments to systems that are not fully understood.

These reflections align with KM theories' emphasis on socio-technical systems and the importance of organizational context (Pan and Scarbrough, 1999, Leonardi and Treem, 2012). Introducing AI evaluation tools is not merely a technical implementation but a change in knowledge processes and power relations. For example, when AI tools evaluate employees' texts, questions arise about who controls the evaluation criteria, how transparency is ensured, and how feedback is integrated into performance management. Students' awareness of these issues underlines the importance of involving end-users in the design and governance of AI-based knowledge systems (Easterby-Smith and Lyles, 2011).

Overall, students' envisioned uses of AI tools in their organizations suggest a strong potential for AI to support knowledge work, especially in relation to document handling, internal communication, and training. At the same time, they point to a need for organizational learning about AI—developing collective understanding of what AI can and cannot do and establishing norms for responsible and effective use (Argyris and Schön, 1996, Wenger, 1998).

#### **4.3 Faculty Perspectives on Teaching AI Tools to Working Students**

The third theme focused on faculty reflections on the integration of AI tools into teaching, particularly when students are already embedded in work life. Lecturers reported that the project challenged them to articulate their own assessment criteria more explicitly in order to compare their feedback with that of the AI tool. This process of externalization contributes to organizational learning within the university, as tacit pedagogical knowledge is made more explicit and potentially shareable among staff (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995, Alavi and Leidner, 2001).

The lecturers noted that comparing their feedback to the AI-generated evaluation made them more aware of their own assumptions and preferences in assessment. In cases where AI feedback diverged significantly from human feedback, this prompted discussions among staff about what constitutes quality in student writing and how criteria are communicated to students. In this way, the AI tool functioned as a "mirror" on existing assessment practices, encouraging reflection and potential refinement.

Lecturers also observed that students' experiences from their organizations enriched the classroom discussions about AI. Students brought concrete examples of AI adoption, resistance, and experimentation from diverse sectors, which allowed the course to function as a space of cross-organizational knowledge exchange (Hargadon and Sutton, 1997, Wenger, 1998). In KM terms, students acted as knowledge brokers, facilitating knowledge flows between their workplaces and the university.

At the same time, faculty expressed concerns about how best to teach AI literacy and critical AI use. They emphasized the need to go beyond technical demonstrations and to engage students in discussions about ethics, bias, and the limitations of AI (O'Neil, 2016, Selwyn, 2019). Lecturers also highlighted the importance of setting clear expectations for the use of AI in assignments to safeguard academic integrity while encouraging responsible experimentation. This involved clarifying when AI assistance is allowed, how it should be documented, and how students are expected to critically assess AI-generated content.

From a pedagogical perspective, the project illustrated the value of positioning AI tools both as "resources" for students (e.g., for drafting and receiving feedback) and as "objects of reflection and critique" (Holmes et al.,

2019). By experiencing AI-generated evaluation themselves, students were better prepared to reflect on the implications of introducing similar tools in their organizations. This dual orientation supports deeper learning and strengthens the link between academic theory and professional practice (Laurillard, 2012).

## **5. Conclusion**

This paper has presented a qualitative study of using AI tools to evaluate student assignments in an academic course targeted at lifelong learners who are already engaged in work life. The project combined perspectives from knowledge management and AI research to explore three main questions: how students evaluate AI-generated feedback compared to lecturer feedback, how students envision the use of similar AI tools in their organizations, and how faculty can integrate AI tools into teaching for working students.

The findings indicate that students generally appreciate the immediacy and coherence of AI-generated feedback, particularly for structural and linguistic aspects of their assignments. However, they regard lecturers' feedback as deeper, more contextualized, and more closely aligned with course objectives. AI tools are therefore best understood as complementary evaluators that can enrich, but not replace, human assessment.

Students identified multiple potential applications of AI tools in their organizations, particularly in supporting documentation, training, and internal communication. At the same time, they expressed concerns about privacy, governance, and the risk of over-standardization. These reflections underscore the importance of viewing AI implementation as a socio-technical change in knowledge processes, rather than a purely technical upgrade.

For faculty, the project acted as a catalyst for articulating assessment criteria more explicitly and for engaging with students' real-world experiences of AI in organizational contexts. Teaching AI tools to working students requires not only demonstrating their capabilities but also fostering critical reflection on their limitations and ethical implications. From a KM perspective, the project illustrates how AI tools can function as instruments for externalizing, combining, and internalizing knowledge, while also highlighting the irreplaceable role of human judgment and communities of practice.

For future courses, the insights gained from this project suggest 1) a transparent integration of AI evaluation using this as a part of a deliberate pedagogical strategy to stimulate critical reflection on assessment criteria and on the nature of expertise, 2) strengthening AI literacy and critical competence to include understanding how AI systems work, their biases and limitations, and how to critically evaluate their outputs, and 3) link university experiments to organizational practice through collaborations with students' organizations as this could be developed further to explore real-world pilots of AI-based evaluation tools, with the university contributing research-based guidance and evaluation. Such collaborations could support organizational learning about AI, while providing authentic contexts for academic inquiry.

In sum, AI tools hold significant promise as aids in both educational and organizational contexts, but their value depends on careful selection, critical use, and alignment with human and organizational knowledge processes. Universities, especially those serving lifelong learners, are well positioned to act as laboratories for developing such responsible and productive uses of AI tools.

**Ethics Declaration:** The data has been collected with consent from the informants and where they have been informed about their rights to withdraw from the study. No names have been disclosed, and we got a permission to disclose the sex of one of the main informants (who is referred to as "she"). As we in this part of the research did not use any recordings or video where the informants could be recognized by name or appearance, no application has been forwarded to the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research.

**AI Declaration:** AI has been used in this article for two purposes: to translate our writings and to improve the quality English. The tool used is the Norwegian developed tool from the Norwegian Agency for Shared Services in Education and Research (SIKT KI Chat – sikt.no).

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