DIGITAL EDUCATION COUNCIL

Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey 2024

AI or Not AI: What Students Want

Foreword

The **Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey** aims to provide insights into student perceptions around artificial intelligence (AI) in higher education to inform decision-making for university leadership. The report covers the status of AI usage and readiness, student perception of AI use cases, expectations and preferences on university actions on AI, satisfaction with institutions' AI adoption, concerns and key attributes for AI use.

This survey has gathered **3839 responses across 16 countries**, from bachelor, masters, and doctorate students in multiple fields of study, offering a diverse range of student viewpoints on AI in education. With universities both keen to integrate AI into their institutions and wary of possible liabilities and concerns that this integration may bring, this survey aims to be a guide to take action.

Data from this survey provides valuable guiding points for universities on general student sentiment, brings up notable useful AI use cases that universities can implement and highlights the largest areas of concern amongst students that universities should consider. The varied and global perspectives represented in the Global AI Student Survey would not have been possible without the support and contributions of DEC institution members and all universities who assisted in the distribution of this survey.

As part of our analysis, this presentation includes references to the **DEC AI Readiness Framework** and **DEC AI Governance Framework**, which DEC members can access at **digitaleducationcouncil.com**.

For feedback and inquiries

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DEC Leadership Note

It is our pleasure to publish this report for Digital Education Council members. Due to the impact we believe it will have, we have decided to release this edition of our Global AI Student Survey publicly - shortly after releasing it in the form of an Executive Briefing to our members.

We believe that we are at the 'Tool' stage of development of this transformational technology. The next two stages of development - 'Disruptive Use Cases' and 'Societal Transformation' are yet to be realised.

Investment in AI technologies is at an all-time high. Those who remember the dot-com bubble will be watching for the investment tide to potentially go out, only to be replaced with transformational use cases shortly thereafter.

Yahoo! and AOL didn't disrupt traditional media. But Google and Facebook certainly did.

Our research can be considered as a leading indicator of the profound implications AI will have for university leadership and the higher education business model, more broadly.

We would like to thank the institutions around the world, members and non-members alike, who helped us collect the data for this report. Please let us know how you use this and how it impacts your decision making.



Alessandro Di Lullo
Chief Executive Officer



Daniel A. Bielik
President

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1. AI Usage

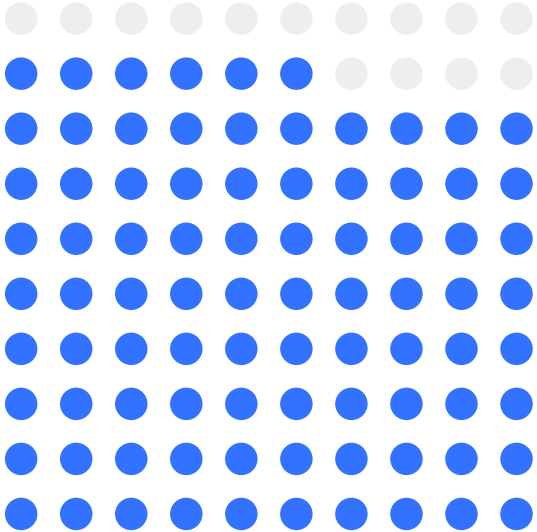
86% of students already use AI in their studies

Percentage of students using AI in their studies

Question: How often do you use AI tools?

86%

of students claim to use AI in their studies

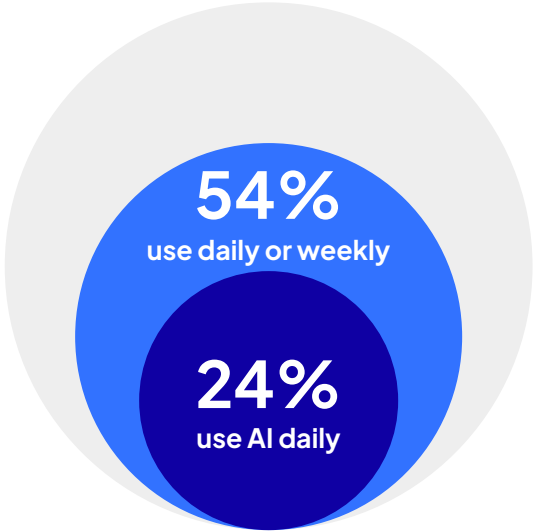


Frequency of students using AI in their studies

Question: How often do you use AI tools?

54%

of students use AI at least on a weekly basis

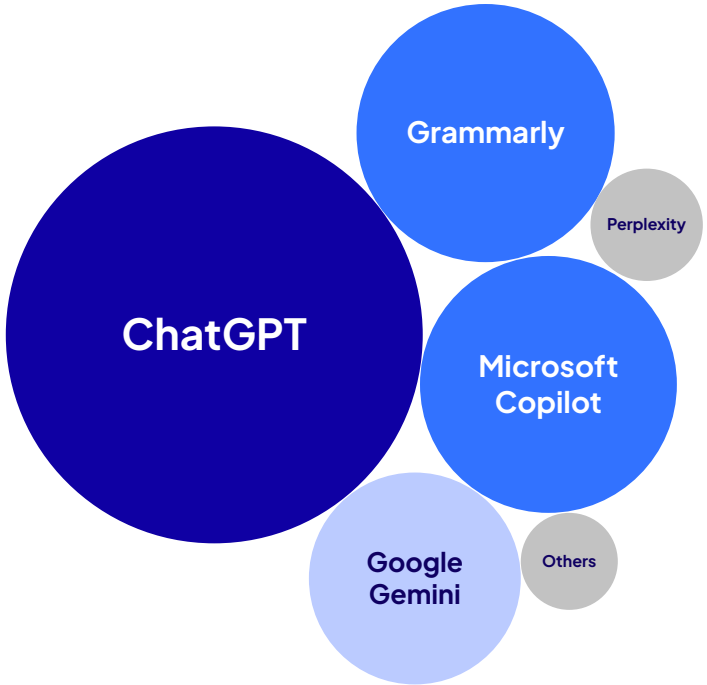


Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

ChatGPT is the most used AI tool among students

Most used AI tools by students and number of AI tools used

Question: Which AI tools do you use for your course/programme?



2.1 AI tools are used by each student on average

The survey shows a broad adoption of various AI tools among students.

ChatGPT emerges as the most widely used tool, with 66% of students using it in their studies. Grammarly and Microsoft Copilot also see substantial usage, each with a 25% adoption rate among students. In addition to these popular tools, students report utilising a range of other AI applications such as Claude AI, Blackbox, DeepL, and Canva image generator.

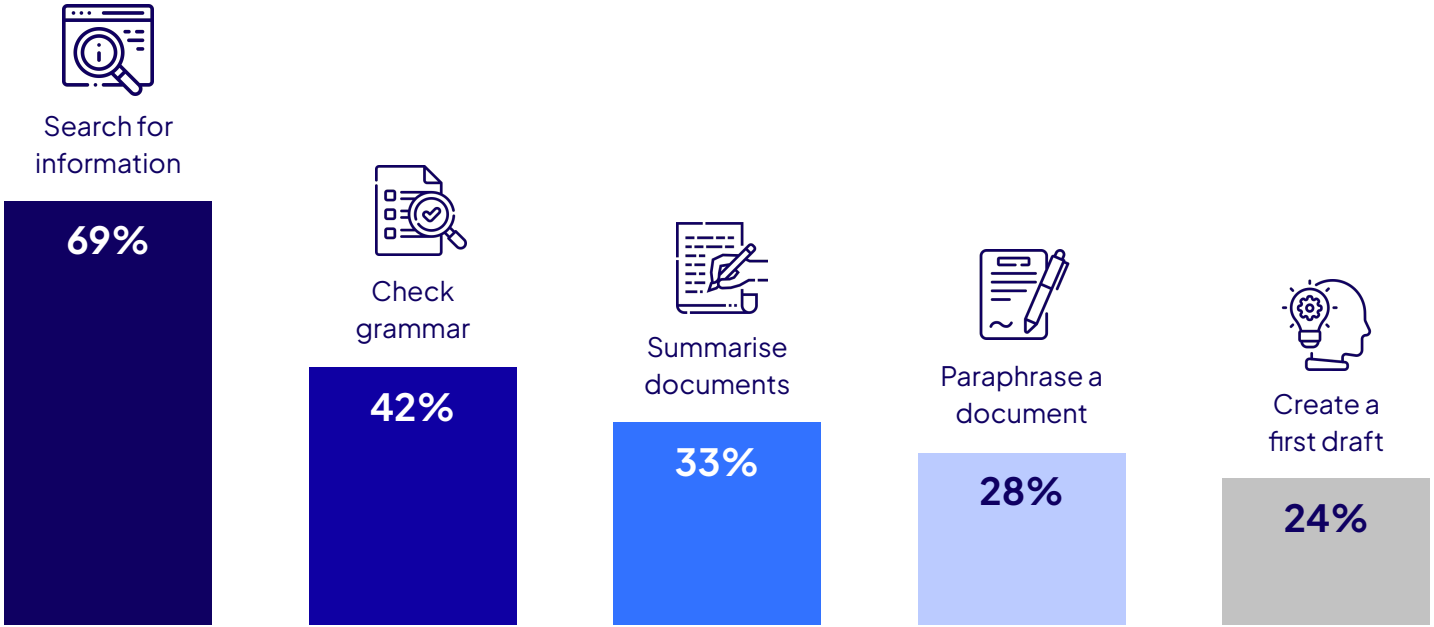
On average, each student uses more than two AI tools, and 22% of students claim to use more than three AI tools to assist their studies.

Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Is Gen AI the new Google?

Information searching tops the list for AI use cases among students, followed by grammar checking

Question: What do you usually use AI tools for (Select all that apply)?



Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

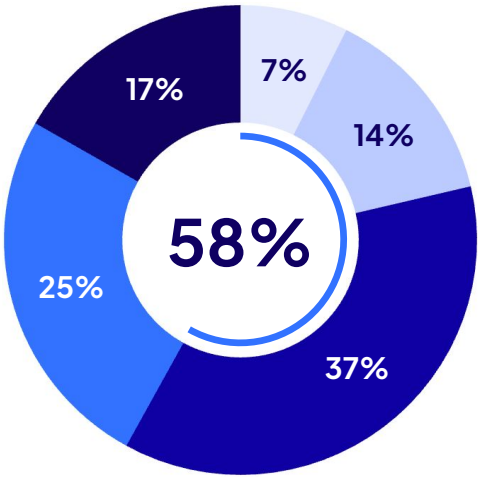
2. Readiness, Satisfaction and Expectations

1 in 2 students do not feel AI ready

Student AI knowledge and skills

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

- I have sufficient AI knowledge and skills

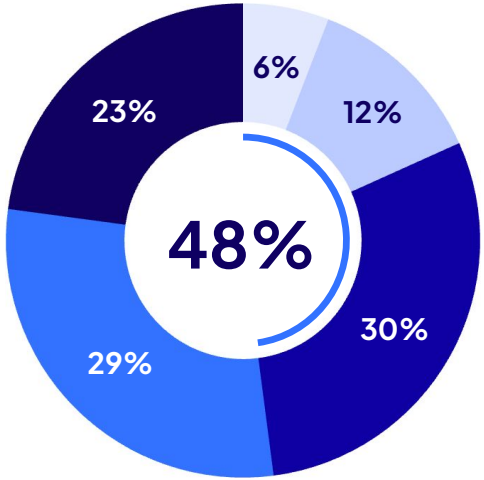


58% of students feel that they do not have sufficient AI knowledge and skills

Student AI workplace readiness

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

- I feel prepared for a future workforce that heavily utilises AI



48% of students do not feel adequately prepared for an AI-enabled workplace



Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

80% of students say AI in university not fully meeting expectations

Student perception of university's AI integration

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- My university effectively integrates AI tools in a way that meets my expectations



80%

of students report that their university **AI integration does not fully meet their expectations**

The survey indicates that vast majority of students feel their university's AI integration has not fully met their expectations.

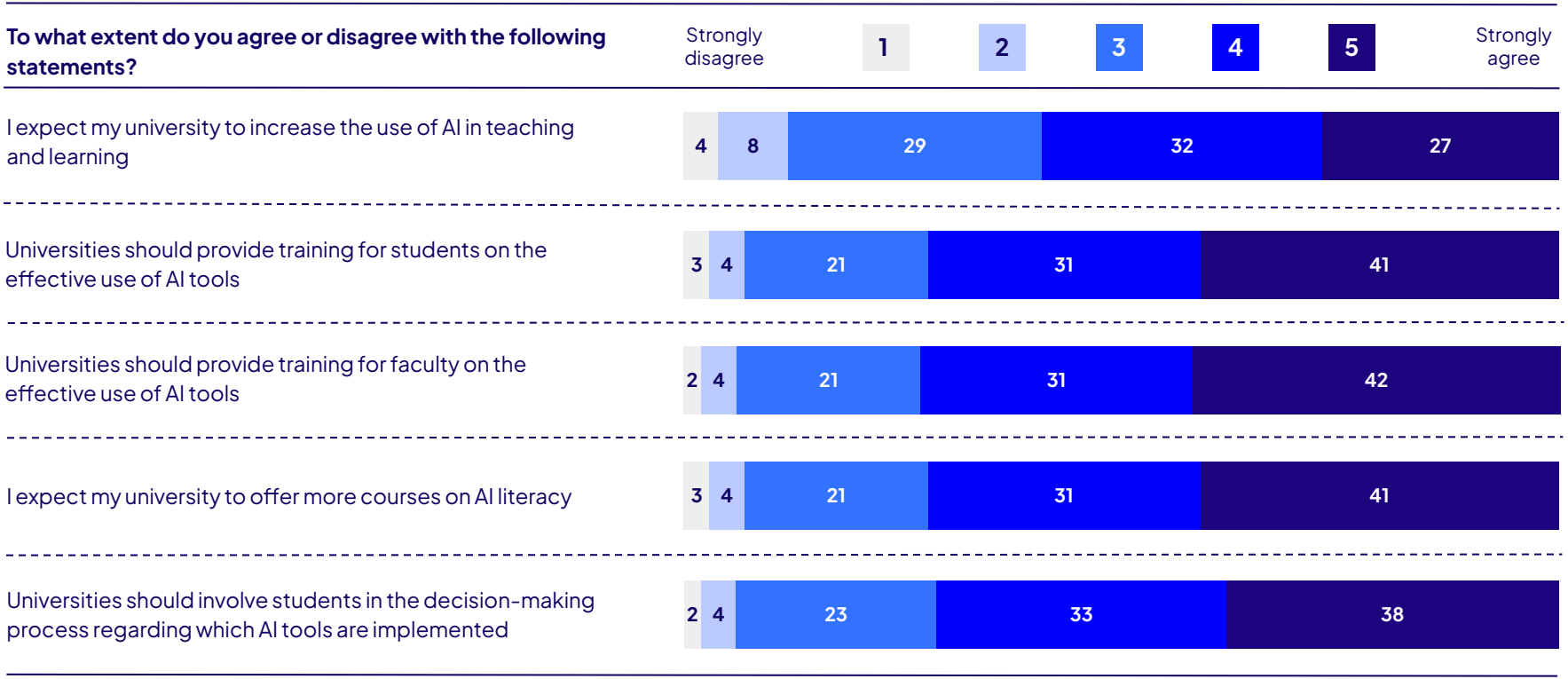
To address this gap, it is critical for institutions to understand AI use cases and attributes that students perceive as most valuable.

This understanding will enable institutions to integrate AI in a more effective and student-centric way.

Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Students expect universities to provide more training on AI

Student expectations for AI in universities, percentage of respondents



Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Students expect faculty to be prepared for AI integration

59% **expect their universities to increase the use of AI in teaching and learning**

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
- I expect my university to increase the use of AI in teaching and learning



73% **agree that universities should provide training for faculty on the effective use of AI tools**

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
- Universities should provide training for faculty on the effective use of AI tools



Key Insights

Students expect training for faculty on AI use, showing their prioritisation of this aspect in faculty-facing expectations. This indicates that training faculty for AI use may be a baseline expectation before integrating AI into teaching and learning.

What strategies should universities consider for AI integration?

- Universities should ensure that all educators in their institution are trained and proficient in handling AI tools that universities plan to integrate into teaching and learning
- Universities should also seek feedback from faculty and students about how AI should be implemented and on the effectiveness of AI integration to identify areas for improvement
- Universities should identify the attributes of AI that their students and faculty value
- Universities should define guidelines for AI usage by faculty and students to ensure accountability and preserve academic integrity

Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Improve AI literacy support, say students

Key Insights

The distribution of students who scored 4–5 on both statements are identical, indicating that students place equal emphasis on readiness and training in both AI use and literacy.

Students expect guidance on AI use
58% of students do not feel that they have sufficient AI knowledge and skills, which universities can address through AI literacy and skills courses. Students are expecting clear guidelines on AI use, as well as structured and practical courses on AI literacy, to develop an accurate and functional understanding of AI.

Students see importance in understanding AI
AI competency is a necessary trait in future-ready graduates, and is an in-demand core skill. Students understand that they need to develop their AI competencies to be employable, and want their universities to provide the resources to do so.

Universities should also introduce guidelines for AI use in learning, allowing students to practice applying AI in their work, while following guidelines for maintaining academic integrity.

72% **agree that universities should provide training for students on the effective use of AI tools**

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
- Universities should provide training for students on the effective use of AI tools



72% **agree that universities should offer more courses on AI literacy**

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:
- I expect my university to offer more courses on AI literacy



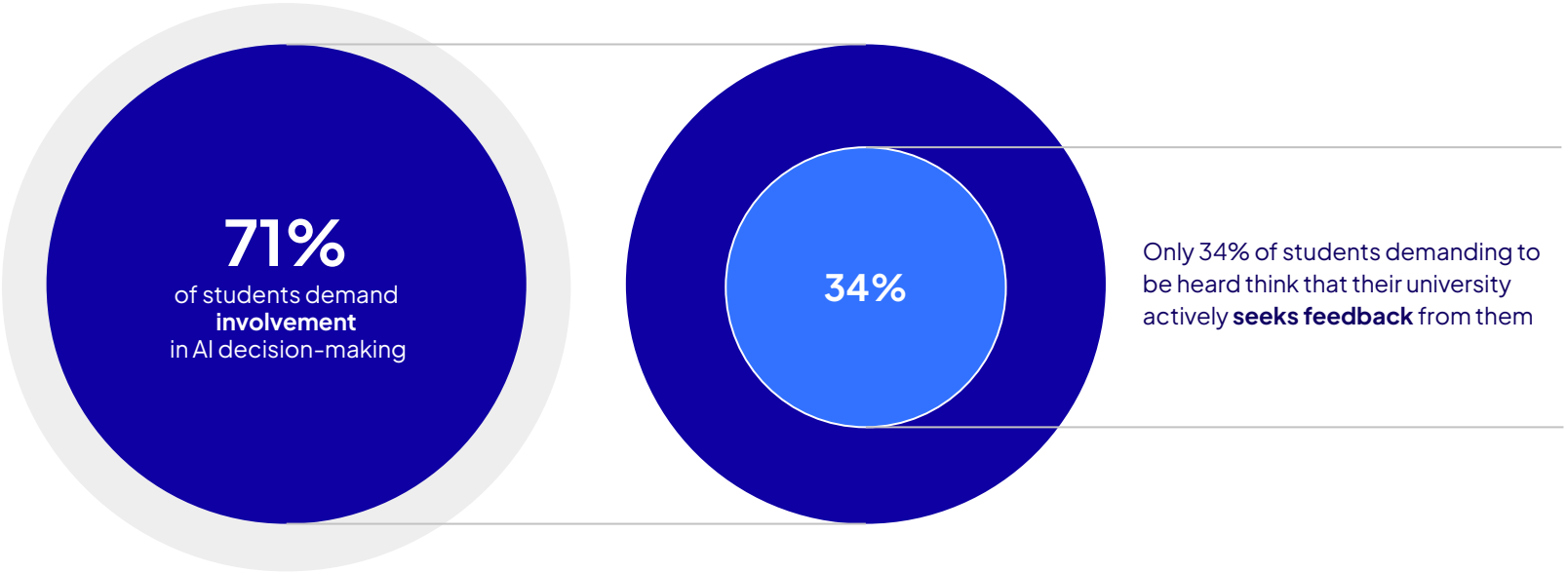
Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Students seek greater involvement in AI decisions, yet feel unheard

Student expectations and perception of involvement in AI decision making

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

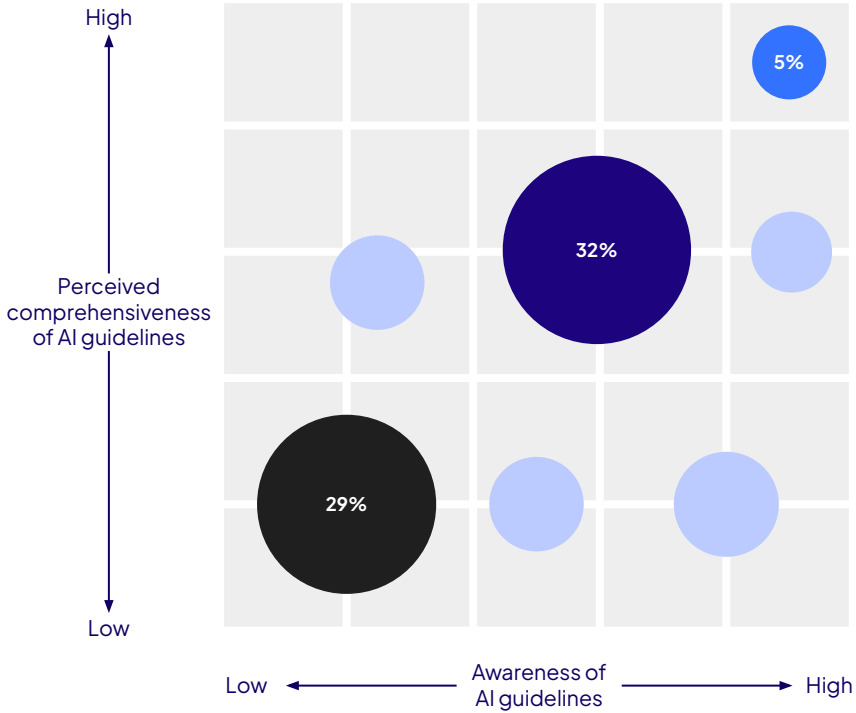
- Universities should involve students in the decision-making process regarding which AI tools are implemented
- My university actively seeks student feedback on the effectiveness of its AI tools



Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Students call for improved AI guidelines and communications

Student perception of comprehensiveness of AI guidelines and awareness



Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements:

- My university has comprehensive AI guidelines in place
- I'm fully aware of the AI-related regulations and policies at my university

- Students with full awareness
- The confused mass
- The lost

5%

of students are fully aware of AI guidelines that their university has in place and feel they are fully comprehensive

86%

of students are not fully aware of the AI guidelines in their university

93%

of students feel that there is still room for improvement in their university AI guidelines

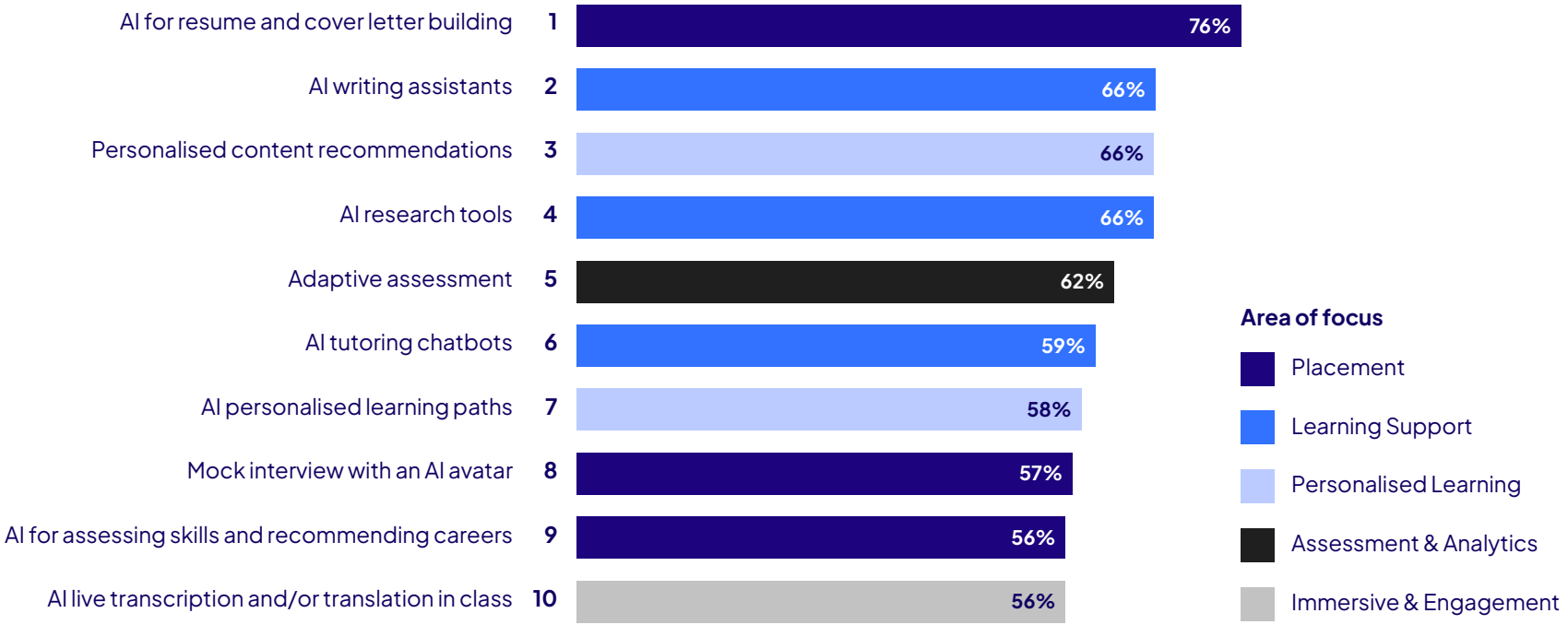
Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

3. Perception and Attributes

Resume writing is most positively perceived across AI use cases

Top 10 AI use cases in higher education most positively perceived by students

Question: To what extent do you agree the following AI use case is useful/ will improve your learning journey/outcome



Note: rankings are based on unrounded percentages

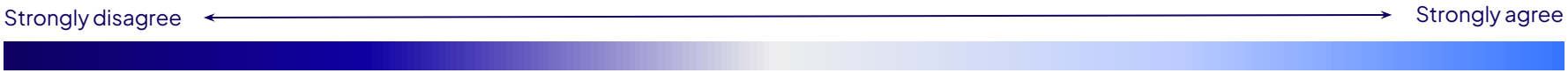
Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Students question the value of AI-generated courses

Student perception of courses that are primarily created and delivered by AI

Questions: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

- I find courses that are primarily created and delivered by AI more valuable than traditional courses





54%

of students do not find courses primarily created and delivered by AI more valuable than traditional courses

Courses primarily created and delivered by AI are less well perceived by students. Only 18% of the students believe that they are more valuable than traditional courses.

Universities should consider making cautious moves when using AI in content creation and delivery.

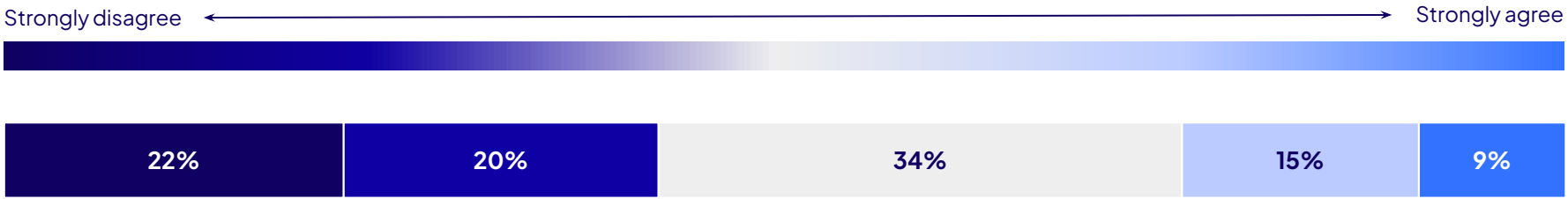
Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

AI monitoring of wellbeing faces pushback from students

Student perception of AI monitoring of wellbeing

Questions: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement:

- AI tools that monitor my stress levels and recommend mental health resources improves my wellbeing





42%

of students do not believe AI monitoring of stress levels and giving recommendations improves their wellbeing

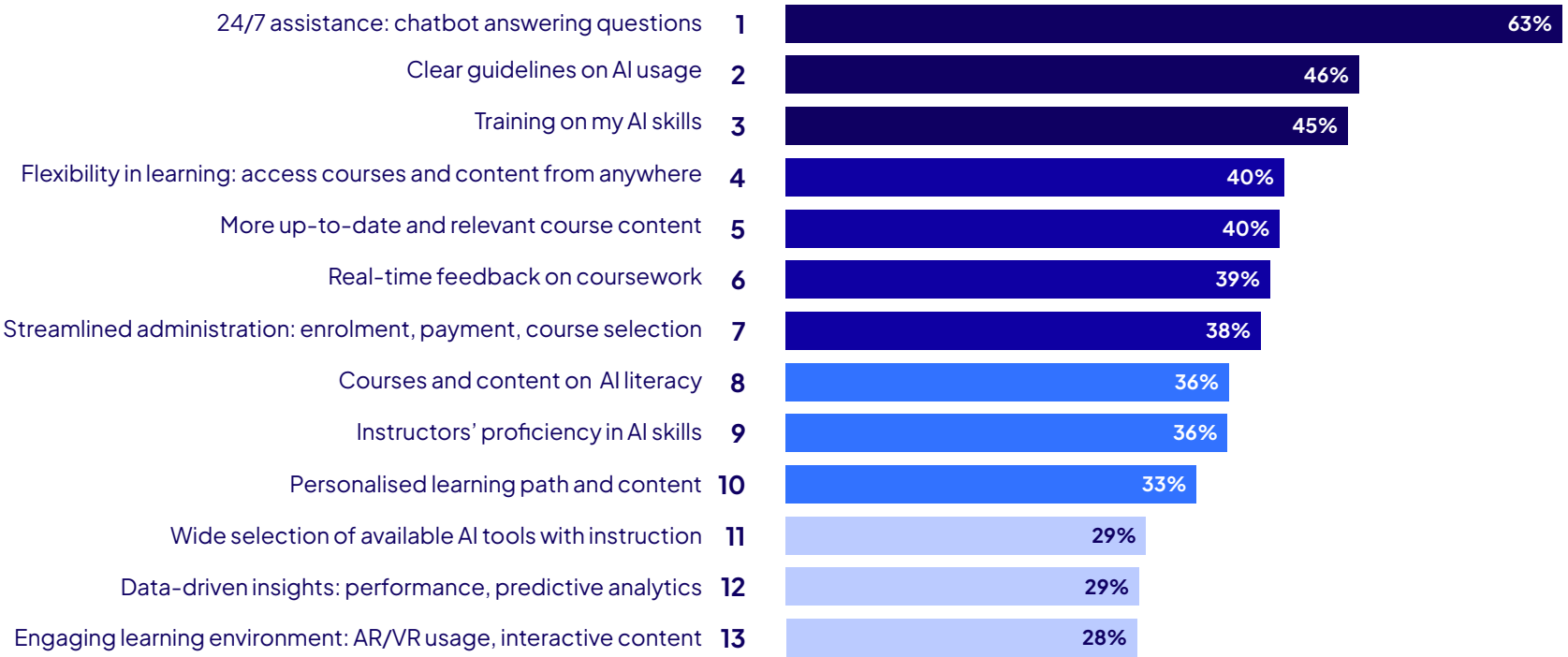
AI for stress level and wellbeing monitoring is one of the use cases that face strong pushback form students. Only 24% of the students perceive such AI use positively.

Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

Students value timely assistance, guidance, and training on AI

Attributes students value in ensuring a satisfying experience using AI in higher education

Question: To ensure you have a satisfying experience using AI in universities, which of the following factors are most important? (Select all that apply)



Note: rankings are based on unrounded percentages

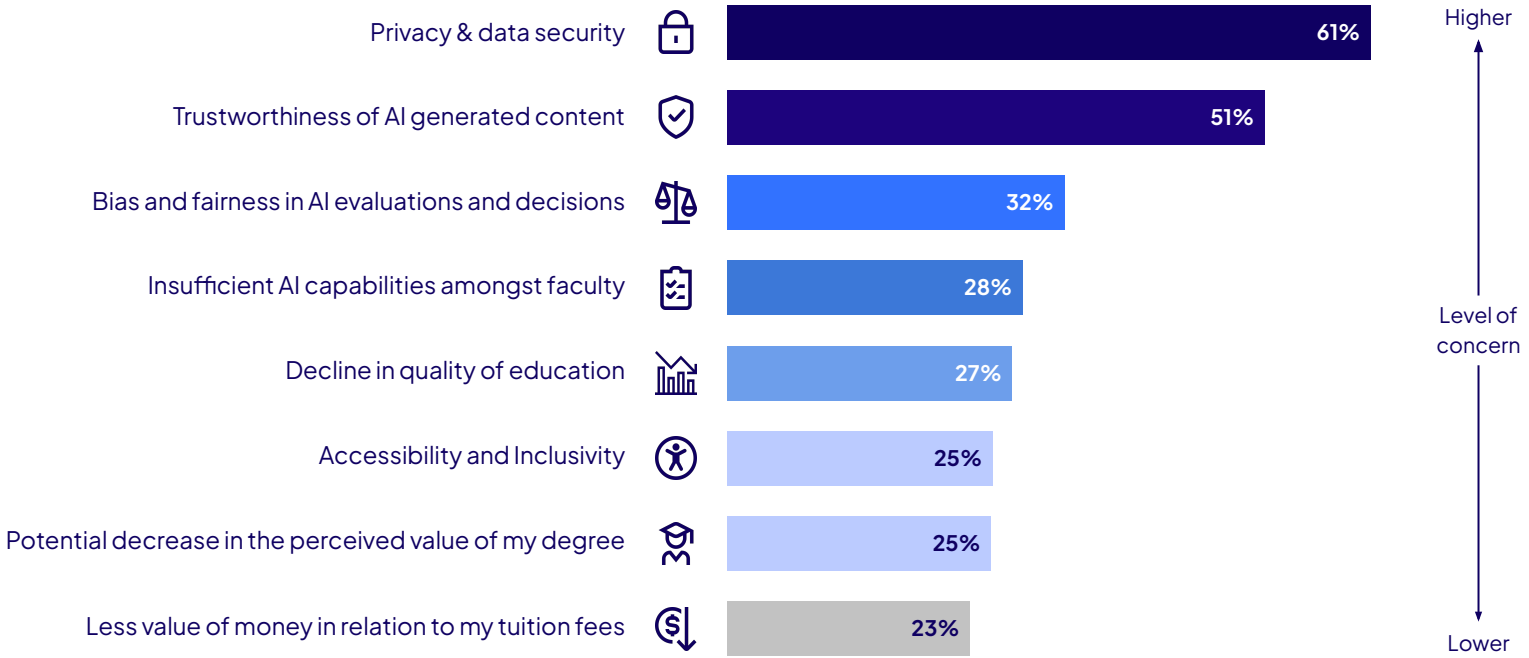
Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

4. Concerns

Privacy and trustworthiness of AI are students' top concerns

Top concerns among students about AI use

Question: What concerns do you have about a university's use of AI? (choose all that apply)



Note: rankings are based on unrounded percentages

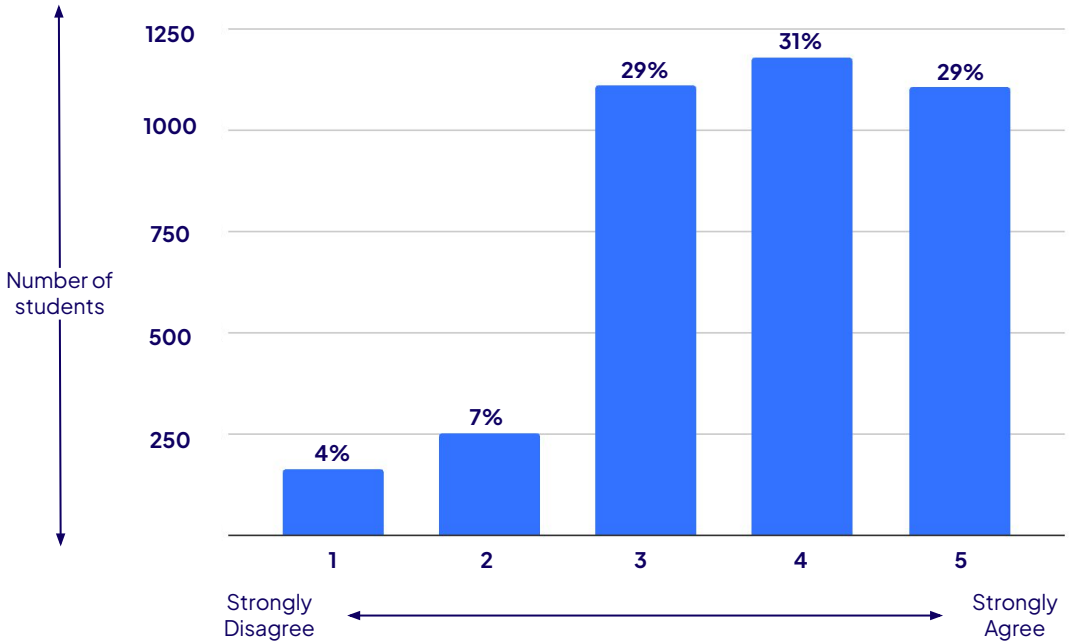
Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

60% of students worry about fairness of AI evaluation

Students' level of concern about fairness of AI evaluation

Question: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement

- I worry about the fairness of AI in evaluating student work



Key Insights

With only 11% of students unworried about the fairness of AI evaluations (scoring 1–2), this issue is a key concern among students. Data distribution is skewed heavily to the side of concern, with 89% of students scoring 3–5 on this question.

How can universities maintain fairness in evaluations when using AI?

1. Set clear institution-wide guidelines on AI use in assessments and evaluations
2. Involve students and faculty in decision-making processes on the topic
3. Specify what tools can be used after conducting thorough research on their capabilities and processes
4. Ensure human oversight from faculty when using AI in assessments and evaluations
5. Seek feedback from students and faculty on the effectiveness and fairness of AI assessments and evaluations

Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024 | Digital Education Council AI Governance Framework, 2024

Over-reliance on AI concerns more than 50% of students

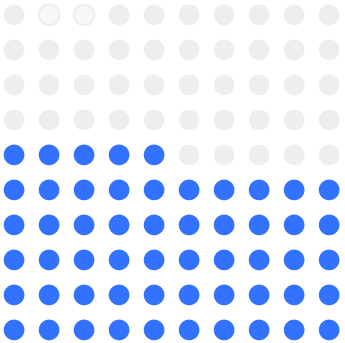
Students' level of concern about over-reliance on AI in education

Questions: To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statements:

- An over-reliance on AI in teaching decreases the value I receive
- An over-reliance on AI would negatively impact my academic performance

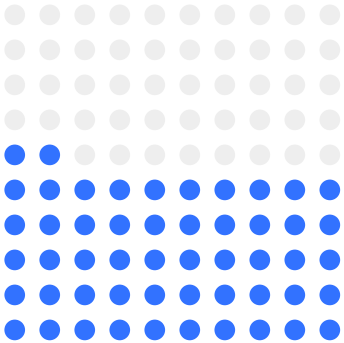
55%

of students believe over-reliance on AI in teaching decreases the value they receive



52%

of students believe over-reliance on AI negatively impacts their academic performance



Key Insights

Students do not want to become over-reliant on AI, and they do not want their professors to do so either
Most students want to incorporate AI into their education, yet also perceive the dangers of becoming over-reliant on AI.

Concern about AI over-reliance in teaching may cause students to question the quality of education they receive and the fairness of any AI evaluations, without human involvement from educators.

Universities need to strike a balance between integrating AI and an over-reliance on AI
When integrating AI into teaching and learning, universities need to determine the tipping point between assistance and over-reliance.

Universities need strict guidelines ensuring accountability and oversight to limit over-reliance on AI among faculty and staff in order to maintain a high quality of education.

Source: Digital Education Council Global AI Student Survey, 2024

5. Looking Forward

What next? Key considerations for decision-makers

Implications for University Leadership

- The rise in AI usage forces institutions to see AI as core infrastructure rather than a tool[1]
- Universities must address the call for improved guidelines and communication, actively engaging students in the feedback loop to ensure responsible and desirable adoption of AI[2]
- The positive correlation between student demand for more AI adoption and level of concern on AI over-reliance[3] signals the need for universities to clearly define what should be considered as appropriate AI use[4]
- Universities need to consider how to effectively boost AI literacy to equip both students and academics with the skills to succeed in an AI-driven world[5]
- Universities should design effective strategies to keep humans-in-the-loop in areas such as teaching and assessment, and admissions processing[6]

Implications for Governments and Regulators

- Governments should collaborate with academia to guard against over-reliance on AI in an effort to avoid negative impacts on productivity and competitiveness levels of the workforce of tomorrow
- Regulators will need to consider balancing the promotion of a positive environment for AI innovation and adoption in universities with effective compliance requirements to ensure equity, transparency, and accountability
- Governments should reflect on the appropriate role to play in the global race to upskill people in AI. Defining appropriate upskilling incentives should take into consideration expected economic outcomes and stakeholder expectations

1. DEC members may refer to "DEC AI Readiness Framework", Executive Briefing #002 - Getting Ready for AI, February 2024
2. DEC members may refer to "DEC AI Governance Framework", Executive Briefing #006 - Solving the AI Governance Problem, June 2024
3. DEC members may refer to "Building a Resilient Educational Value Chain", Executive Briefing #002 - Getting Ready for AI, February 2024
4. See 2. above
5. See 1. above
6. See 2. above

6. Copyright and Contact Details

Copyright and Contact Details

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