Al Building Blocks Series

Pedagogy Over Tech

7 Steps for Active Learning with Al

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Educational Technologist – Digital & Information Services





Al Building Blocks Series

Al for Research	27 Mar, 11am	Vilinda Ross, Aidan Deery
AI and Accessibility	25 Mar, 11am	Sarah Stewart
Pedagogy Over Tech 7 Steps for Active Learning with Al	20 Mar, 11am	Patrick Phillips
Al for Teaching and Learning	13 Mar, 11am	Kirsty Gillen
Al for Everyday Tasks	27 Feb, 11am	Una Lynch
Al Ethics	20 Feb, 11am	Aidan Deery
Al Foundations	13 Feb, 11am	Aidan Deery







Our guidance is based on the RAISE Principles:

Responsible Use, Al Best practice, Integrity,

Support, and Equitable Access.

Key Guides

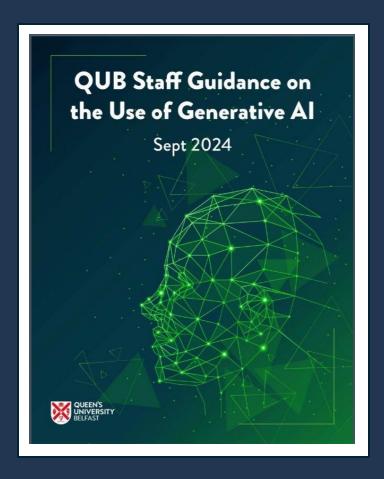
- QUB Position on AI
- RAISE Principles: QUB Staff Guidance on the use of Generative AI
- Trailblazers Guide: Al as Your Partner

Al and Assessment

- Guidance on the use of AI in Assessment: 24-25
- Use of Gen AI in Dissertation Projects
- Use of AI Detection Tools
- Al Assessment Self-help Guide

Video

Watch our short video for advice on what to look out for when starting to use Generative AI: Click here



Pedagogy first, Al second.

"Technology must serve teaching, not replace it."

Dr Philippa Hardman



"Think deeply, not just automate responses."

Ethan Mollick



2025

EMPOWERING EDUCATION WITH AI CHAT

7 Steps for Enhanced Active Learning

Transforming Teaching with AI Chat

A Pedagogy-First Approach

A Resource for Educators
Unlock engagement, foster inquiry, and drive innovation.

Prepared by:

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7-Step Process for Integrating AI Chat in Education



A Pedagogy-First Approach

Step 1 – Pedagogy Over Tech



Key Goal:

Define clear, measurable learning objectives and prepare aligned Al prompts. (Outcome: Establish your teaching foundation with outcome-based planning.)

Step 2 – Inquiry-Based Dialogue

Key Goal:

Foster critical inquiry by having students propose ideas and refine them through targeted questions. (Outcome: Enhance critical thinking and reflective learning.)

Step 3 – Simulations & Role-Plays

Key Goal:

Engage students in realistic, Al-driven scenarios and interactive role-plays. (Outcome: Build practical decision-making skills through dynamic simulations.)

Step 4 – Al-Generated Case Studies

Key Goal:

Use AI to expand outlines into detailed case studies for in-depth analysis. (Outcome: Promote deep inquiry and multi-perspective problem solving.)

Step 5 – Discussion Starters

Key Goal:

Spark engaging dialogue by critiquing Al-generated content. (Outcome: Develop collaborative inquiry and critical analysis.)

Step 6 – Critical Evaluation & Ethics

Key Goal:

Critically assess AI outputs for accuracy, bias, and ethical issues using a structured template.

(Outcome: Cultivate ethical thinking and rigorous evaluation skills.)

Step 7 - Practical Implementation

Key Goal:

Test, refine, and integrate AI prompts into your lesson with an iterative, feedback-driven approach.

(Outcome: Seamlessly incorporate AI into your curriculum and share best practices.)

Overview (7 Steps)

Step 1 – Pedagogy Over Tech

Step 2 – Inquiry-Based Dialogue

Step 3 – Simulations & Role-Plays

Step 4 – Al-Generated Case Studies

Step 5 – Discussion Starters

Step 6 – Critical Evaluation & Ethics

Step 7 – Practical Implementation

Step 1 – Pedagogy Over Tech

Step 1 – Pedagogy Over Tech

- Clearly Define Your Goals First
- Set explicit, clear learning outcomes.
- Clearly select Al's supportive role.

Lecturer









Today

You are my teaching assistant helping me clearly define my teaching goals.

My aim is to clearly improve student engagement in [insert your topic clearly here].

Please ask clear questions to help me:

- Clearly identify specific skills or knowledge students should gain.
- Clearly outline challenges students face with engagement in this topic.
- Clearly determine the most suitable AI-supported activity (e.g., dialogue, case study, or roleplay).

Don't provide solutions yet—just clearly help refine my thinking through your questions.

Copilot



Copilot

Absolutely, let's refine your teaching goals with some targeted questions:

Identifying Specific Skills or Knowledge

- 1. What are the top three takeaways you want students to have from this session?
- 2. Which aspects of AI's impact on education do you believe are most critical for students to understand?
- 3. Are there any specific skills related to AI and education that you want students to develop?

Outlining Engagement Challenges

- 4. What engagement issues have you noticed in previous sessions on similar topics?
- 5. How do students generally react to discussions about the relevance of traditional lectures in the Al era?
- 6. Are there particular points in the lecture where student interest tends to wane?

Determining Suitable AI-Supported Activities

- 7. What types of activities have you found to be most engaging for your students in the past?
- 8. How familiar are your students with interactive methods like dialogue, case studies, or roleplays?
- What specific outcomes do you hope to achieve with the AI-supported activity?

These questions should help you clarify your objectives and identify the best strategies to enhance student engagement. Feel free to elaborate on any of these points!

Lecturer

Outlining Engagement Challenges

- Engagement issues from past sessions:
- Student participation typically drops during passive lecture delivery.
- Students often struggle to see the relevance of theoretical discussions without interactive elements.
 - Student reactions about traditional lectures in AI era:
- Mixed reactions; some enthusiasm, but often scepticism or lack of connection unless examples are clearly interactive and relevant.
 - Lecture points where interest wanes:
- Usually around mid-lecture during long theoretical explanations or when examples aren't clearly relatable or interactive.

Copilot

Outlining Engagement Challenges

- 4. What strategies have you tried in the past to address the drop in student participation during passive lecture delivery?
- 5. Can you provide examples of interactive elements that have successfully made theoretical discussions more relevant for students?
- 6. What types of interactive and relatable examples do you think would resonate most with your students during the lecture?

Lecturer

To help you suggest the best Al-supported activity clearly, here is additional context:

- I've previously tried breakout discussions, live polling, and role-plays, which improved engagement temporarily.
- Students often lose interest during lengthy theoretical explanations or abstract content without clear practical examples.

Now, please clearly suggest:

- The specific knowledge and skills students should gain.
- The most engaging Al-supported activity (dialogue, case study, role-play).
- How exactly I could implement this AI activity effectively.

Please clearly structure your suggestions, providing brief reasoning for each.

Copilot

Most Engaging Al-Supported Activity

Case Study:

Reasoning: Case studies provide practical examples that make abstract concepts more relatable. They
encourage active participation and critical thinking.

Implementation of AI-Supported Case Study

1. Preparation:

- Select a relevant case study that illustrates the impact of AI on education.
- Ensure the case study includes clear examples of AI tools and their effects on student engagement.

2. Execution:

- Introduction: Briefly introduce the case study and its relevance to the topic.
- Group Work: Divide students into small groups to discuss the case study. Provide guiding questions to
 focus their discussions.
- Al Tools: Use Al-driven platforms for real-time collaboration and feedback (e.g., shared documents, live polling).

3. Discussion:

- · Group Presentations: Have each group present their findings and evaluations.
- Interactive Debate: Facilitate a class-wide debate on the case study's implications, using Al tools to track
 participation and gather insights.

4. Reflection:

- Critical Analysis: Encourage students to critically analyze the case study and reflect on their learning.
- Feedback: Use Al-driven surveys to gather student feedback on the activity and its effectiveness.

By structuring the session around a case study, you can make the content more engaging and practical, while leveraging AI tools to enhance participation and critical thinking.

Step 1 – Pedagogy Over Tech Summary

Great teaching starts with clear goals

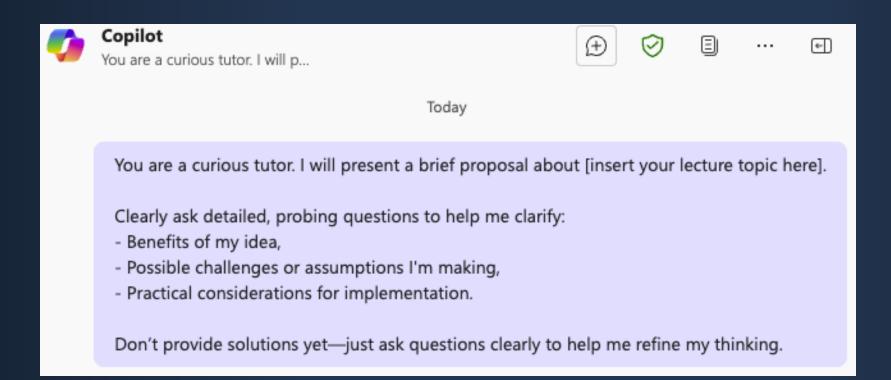
— Al just helps you get there faster.

Step 2 – Inquiry-Based Dialogue

Step 2 – Inquiry-Based Dialogue

- Students propose initial ideas clearly.
- Al chat asks targeted, curious questions.
- Students clarify assumptions and refine their thinking.

Student



Copilot



Great topic! Let's dive into it with some detailed questions:

Potential Benefits and Limitations of Lectures Today

- 1. Benefits: What specific advantages do you believe traditional lectures offer in today's educational landscape? Are there particular aspects of lectures that you think are irreplaceable?
- 2. Limitations: What are the main drawbacks or limitations of lectures that you have identified? How do these limitations impact student engagement and learning outcomes?

Assumptions Underlying Your Thinking

- 3. **Effectiveness**: What assumptions are you making about the effectiveness of lectures compared to Al-driven learning methods? Are there any studies or data that support these assumptions?
- 4. Student Preferences: Are you assuming that students prefer traditional lectures over AI-based alternatives? How might student demographics or learning styles influence this preference?

Practical Considerations for Lecture Alternatives Involving Al

- 5. Implementation: What practical steps would be necessary to integrate AI into the lecture format or replace lectures with AI-driven methods? What resources and infrastructure would be required?
- 6. Accessibility: How would Al-based learning alternatives address issues of accessibility and inclusivity? Are there potential barriers that need to be considered?
- 7. Evaluation: How would you measure the success of AI-driven learning methods compared to traditional lectures? What metrics or criteria would be most important?

These questions should help you refine your proposal and think more deeply about the various aspects of your topic. Looking forward to your insights!

Student

Copilot

- "Lectures provide a structured way to present foundational knowledge quickly to large groups."
 - "Yes, lectures can be passive and don't always actively involve students."
- "Student engagement likely increases significantly when interactive AI activities support lecture content."



Copilot

Thank you for sharing these insights! Let's delve deeper into each point:

Structured Presentation of Foundational Knowledge

- 1. Efficiency: How do you measure the efficiency of lectures in delivering foundational knowledge? Are there specific metrics or examples that illustrate this efficiency?
- 2. Retention: What strategies do you think can enhance knowledge retention in lectures? Are there particular techniques or tools that can make lectures more effective in this regard?

Passive Nature of Lectures

- 3. Engagement: What are some specific ways to make lectures more interactive and engaging for students? Have you considered incorporating elements like Q&A sessions, group discussions, or multimedia?
- 4. Feedback: How do you gather and incorporate student feedback to improve the lecture experience? Are there any methods you find particularly effective?

Interactive AI Activities

- 5. Integration: How do you envision integrating AI activities with lecture content? Are there specific types of AI tools or platforms you think would be most beneficial?
- 6. Impact: What evidence or data do you have to support the claim that AI activities significantly increase student engagement? Are there case studies or research findings that back this up?
- 7. Challenges: What potential challenges do you foresee in implementing Al-supported interactive

Final Refined Statement (Proposal):

Copilot

Traditional lectures remain efficient for foundational knowledge delivery but become significantly more effective and engaging when clearly combined with structured, interactive Alsupported activities. Integrating AI transforms passive learning into dynamic, reflective sessions that clearly improve student engagement, retention, and critical thinking.



Copilot 🏂

Your refined statement is clear and compelling! It effectively highlights the benefits of combining traditional lectures with Al-supported activities. Here's a summary of your proposal:

Summary: "Do Lectures Still Matter in the Age of AI?"

Traditional lectures are efficient for delivering foundational knowledge to large groups. However, they can be passive and may not always actively involve students. By integrating structured, interactive Al-supported activities, lectures can become significantly more effective and engaging. This combination transforms passive learning into dynamic, reflective sessions that improve student engagement, retention, and critical thinking.

Key Points:

- 1. Efficiency: Lectures are efficient for covering core concepts quickly to large audiences.
- 2. Retention: Techniques such as interactive Q&A, short quizzes, brief reflection points, and multimedia content enhance retention.
- 3. Engagement: Regular Q&A breaks, short group discussions, live polls, and multimedia examples make lectures engaging and interactive.
- 4. Feedback: Regular quick polls, anonymous feedback surveys, or short reflective tasks collected digitally improve lecture quality.
- 5. Integration: Al-supported dialogues or case studies embedded into lecture sessions stimulate active learning.
- 6. Impact: Research shows significant improvements in student engagement and critical thinking with AI integration.
- 7. Challenges: Addressing student tech accessibility, comfort with AI tools, and resistance to new methods through gradual introduction and clear guidance.

Step 2 – Inquiry-Based Dialogue Summary

Great discussions don't start with answers

— they start with better questions.

Al helps students think deeper, challenge assumptions, and stay engaged without replacing the role of the educator.

Step 3 – Simulations & Role-Plays

Step 3 – Simulations & Role-Plays

- 1. Define your educational scenario.
- 2. Assign clear roles (e.g., student, client, expert).
- 3. Let Al interactively respond to students in realistic role-play conversations.

Student



You are taking the role of [clearly insert role here: e.g., 'concerned student', 'business client', 'expert', 'stakeholder'].

[→]

I have proposed [clearly insert your proposal/topic here].

Please clearly respond to my proposal realistically, ask challenging questions, raise potential concerns, and prompt deeper thinking. Do not give direct solutions—just clearly simulate realistic interaction.

Student

You are a sceptical student. I'm suggesting that integrating Al-supported activities can significantly improve student engagement in lectures.

Ask clear, realistic questions expressing common concerns students might have about this approach. Don't provide solutions yet—just prompt deeper discussion.



Copilot

Sure, I'll take on the role of a skeptical student. Here are some questions and concerns:

Questions:

- 1. Effectiveness: How do you know that Al-supported activities will actually improve engagement? Are there any studies or evidence that show this approach works better than traditional methods?
- 2. Complexity: Won't integrating Al make lectures more complicated? How will students keep up with the technology and the content at the same time?
- 3. Personal Interaction: How will Al-supported activities affect the personal interaction between students and instructors? Isn't the human element of teaching important for learning?

Concerns:

- Accessibility: What about students who don't have access to the necessary technology or who aren't comfortable using Al tools? How will you ensure everyone can participate equally?
- 2. Privacy: How will you protect student data when using Al tools? Are there risks of data breaches or misuse of information?
- 3. Resistance: What if students or instructors are resistant to using Al in lectures? How will you address skepticism and ensure everyone is on board with this new approach?

Prompts for Deeper Discussion:

1. Long-term Impact: How will integrating Al into lectures affect students' long-term learning and career prospects? Will it prepare them better for the future job market?

Copilot

Copilot



Copilot

You are a curious tutor. I will present a brief pr...



Thank you for addressing these points. As a skeptical student, I still have a few more questions and concerns to ensure this approach is thoroughly considered:

Effectiveness

1. Evidence: Can you provide specific examples or case studies from the research by Mollick and Hardman that demonstrate the improved engagement and deeper learning? How were these improvements measured?

Complexity

2. Learning Curve: How steep is the learning curve for these Al tools? What if some students struggle despite the step-by-step guidance? Are there additional support systems in place?

Personal Interaction

3. Balance: How will you maintain a balance between Al-supported activities and traditional teaching methods to ensure that the human element remains central?

Accessibility

4. Tech Issues: What contingency plans are in place if students face technical issues during Al-supported activities? How quickly can these issues be resolved to minimize disruption?

Privacy

5. Data Security: How will you ensure that the Al tools comply with GDPR and other privacy regulations? Are there specific security measures in place to protect student data?

Resistance

6. Adoption: How will you handle resistance from students who are not comfortable with Al, even after demos and training? Are there alternative options for these students?

Step 3 – Simulations & Role-Plays Summary

Real learning happens in the moments of challenge.

Al-powered role-plays push students to think

critically, respond dynamically, and engage more

deeply — turning passive learners into active

participants.

Step 4 – Al-Generated Case Studies

Step 4 – Al-Generated Case Studies

- Al quickly generates detailed, relevant case studies.
- Case studies clearly illustrate real-world scenarios, enhancing student understanding.
- Al-supported case studies actively engage students through practical analysis and reflection.

Lecturer



You are an educational assistant creating realistic case studies for my lesson on [clearly insert your topic here].

Please generate a concise but detailed case study scenario that:

- Clearly highlights key issues or dilemmas relevant to this topic.
- Includes realistic characters, context, and practical considerations.
- Encourages students to analyse, discuss, and critically reflect.

Clearly structure the scenario to stimulate active student engagement and deeper thinking.



Copilot

Case Study Scenario: "Do Lectures Still Matter in the Age of AI?"

Context

Dr. Smith, a seasoned professor at Tech University, is exploring ways to enhance his traditional lecture format by integrating Al-driven methods. He aims to improve student engagement and learning outcomes by combining lectures with interactive AI activities. This decision has sparked varied reactions among students and faculty.

Characters

· Dr. Smith: A professor of Cor methods.

Key Issues and Dilemmas

- 1. Engagement: How can Al-driven methods enhance student engagement during lectures? What specific Al tools can be used to make lectures more interactive?
- 2 Fffectiveness: Are Al-supported activities more effective than traditional lectures in improving learning

Scenario

Dr. Smith decides to integrate Al-driven interactive activities into his lectures. He uses Al platforms like Copilot Chat and interactive polling tools to engage students during his sessions. Anna feels that these activities disrupt the flow of the lecture and prefers the traditional format. Ben, on the other hand, finds the Al activities exciting and believes they help him understand the material better. Ms. Johnson works closely with Dr. Smith to ensure the smooth implementation of Al tools and addresses any technical issues that arise.

Discussion Questions

- 1. Engagement: How effective are Al-driven methods in enhancing student engagement compared to traditional lectures? What evidence supports this?
- 2. Effectiveness: How can the effectiveness of Al-supported activities be measured? Are there specific metrics or assessment methods that can be used?
- 3. Accessibility: What challenges might arise in ensuring that all students have access to AI tools? How can these challenges be addressed?
- 4. Balance: How can Dr. Smith maintain a balance between Al-driven activities and traditional lectures to ensure that the personal touch is not lost?
- 5. Inclusivity: How can Al-supported activities be designed to be inclusive and cater to diverse learning needs and backgrounds?

of AI tools affect students who may not have access to the necessary ble with digital learning methods?

the use of Al with maintaining the personal touch and human ffer?

hing sessions for both students and faculty to ensure they are

g regular feedback surveys to assess the effectiveness of Al-driven

dequate resources are allocated for the implementation and

ensure that Al-supported activities are inclusive and accessible to all

Step 4 – Al-Generated Case Studies Summary

Al-generated case studies turn passive learning into active problem-solving — helping students connect theory to real-world challenges instantly.

Step 5 – Al-Enhanced Discussion Starters

Step 5 – Discussion Starters

- Use AI to quickly generate thought-provoking discussion starters.
- Clearly boost student engagement and participation.
- Foster deeper critical thinking through targeted discussions.

Lecturer



Copilot

You are a curious tutor. I will prese...











You're my teaching assistant preparing clear, engaging discussion starters for a class on [clearly insert your topic here].

Please generate 3 short but thought-provoking statements or questions designed to:

- Clearly spark active student discussion.
- Encourage diverse viewpoints and critical reflection.
- Stimulate debate on key issues or assumptions.

Structure clearly to engage students right from the start of the conversation.

Copilot



Discussion Starter 1: The Value of Traditional Lectures

Statement: "Traditional lectures have been the backbone of education for centuries. In the age of Al, do they still hold the same value, or are they becoming outdated?"

- Purpose: This statement encourages students to reflect on the historical importance of lectures and debate their relevance in the modern educational landscape.
- Engagement: Prompt students to share personal experiences and opinions on the effectiveness of traditional lectures.

Discussion Starter 2: Al and Learning Outcomes

Question: "Can Al-driven activities enhance learning outcomes more effectively than traditional lectures? Why or why not?"

- Purpose: This question prompts students to critically analyze the impact of AI on learning outcomes and compare it with traditional methods.
- Engagement: Encourage students to provide examples, evidence, or research findings to support their viewpoints.

Discussion Starter 3: Balancing Technology and Human Interaction

Question: "How can educators balance the use of Al with maintaining the personal touch and human interaction that traditional lectures offer? Is it possible to achieve the best of both worlds?"

- Purpose: This question stimulates debate on the integration of technology in education while preserving
 the human element.
- Engagement: Invite students to propose strategies or solutions for achieving this balance.

Step 5 – Discussion Starters Summary

Al-generated discussion starters turn passive listening into active participation

— helping students think critically, debate ideas, and engage more deeply in learning.

Step 6 – Critical Evaluation & Ethics

Step 6 – Critical Evaluation & Ethics

- Critically evaluate the use of AI in education.
- Clearly identify ethical considerations and biases in AI interactions.
- Encourage students to reflect on responsible Al usage.

Student



Copilot

You are a curious tutor. I will prese...









(←

You're assisting me to create reflective, critical evaluation questions for my class on [clearly insert your topic here].

Please clearly generate 3 concise questions designed to:

- Encourage students to reflect critically on the ethical implications of using Al.
- Identify potential biases or assumptions in Al interactions.
- Explore responsible, inclusive, and ethical AI use in education.

Student

Copilot

You're assisting me to create reflective evaluation questions for my class on "Do Lectures Still Matter in the Age of AI?".

Please clearly generate 3 concise questions to:

- Reflect on ethical concerns when integrating AI with traditional lectures.
- Identify possible biases or assumptions around Al-based education.
- Explore how to use AI responsibly and inclusively in lecture settings.



Reflective Evaluation Questions: "Do Lectures Still Matter in the Age of AI?"

Ethical Concerns

Question 1: "What ethical concerns arise when integrating AI with traditional lectures? How might these concerns impact the trust and relationship between students and educators?"

Biases and Assumptions

Question 2: "What potential biases or assumptions could be present in Al-based education? How can these biases affect the fairness and inclusivity of the learning experience?"

Responsible and Inclusive AI Use

Question 3: "How can educators ensure that AI is used responsibly and inclusively in lecture settings? What strategies can be implemented to address issues of accessibility, equity, and data privacy?"

These questions are designed to encourage students to critically reflect on the ethical dimensions, identify biases, and explore responsible and inclusive practices when integrating Al into educational settings.

Step 6 – Critical Evaluation & Ethics Summary

Teaching students to think critically about AI is just as important as teaching them how to use it. Responsible AI use starts with reflection, not blind trust.

Step 7 – Practical Implementation

Step 7 – Practical Implementation

- Clearly plan practical steps for immediate AI integration.
- Pilot your AI-supported teaching activities effectively.
- Gather student feedback for continuous improvement.

Lecturer



Copilot

You are a curious tutor. I will prese...









You're my assistant helping me plan practical implementation steps for my lesson on [clearly insert your topic here].

Please clearly outline 3 short, actionable steps that will:

- Help me pilot my chosen Al activities effectively.
- Allow me to easily gather student feedback.
- Support continuous improvement of these activities.



Copilot

Practical Implementation Steps: "Do Lectures Still Matter in the Age of AI?"

Step 1: Effectively Pilot Al Activities

Action: Start with a small-scale pilot using interactive case studies.

- Details: Select a few case studies relevant to your topic and integrate Al tools like Copilot Chat or interactive polling platforms (e.g., Mentimeter) to facilitate discussions. Clearly explain the purpose and usage of these tools to students.
- Goal: Assess the initial impact on student engagement and interaction, and gather preliminary observations.

Step 2: Gather Student Feedback Quickly and Efficiently

Action: Implement immediate feedback mechanisms.

- Details: Use digital surveys or feedback forms right after the lecture. Include questions about the
 effectiveness, ease of use, and overall experience with the Al activities. Tools like Google Forms or
 SurveyMonkey can be useful.
- Goal: Collect actionable insights from students to understand their perspectives and identify areas for improvement.

Step 3: Continuously Improve Teaching Methods

Action: Regularly review and refine Al activities based on feedback.

- Details: Analyze the collected feedback and make necessary adjustments to the Al tools and their integration. Schedule periodic check-ins with students to gather ongoing feedback and monitor progress. Consider holding brief focus group discussions to dive deeper into specific issues.
- Goal: Ensure that Al activities remain effective, engaging, and inclusive, continuously enhancing the learning experience.

Step 7 – Practical Implementation Summary

Successful AI integration isn't a one-time change — it's an evolving process.

Pilot, gather feedback, and refine to create meaningful, engaging learning experiences.

2025

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Key Goal:

Test, refine, and integrate AI prompts into your lesson with an iterative, feedback-driven approach.

(Outcome: Seamlessly incorporate AI into your curriculum and share best practices.)

Feedback Form

Please take a couple of minutes to tell us your thoughts on the session, and Al support at Queen's:

forms.office.com/e/pqf5g8jh9Z

Al Building Blocks Series

