

## **ChatGPT – The future is now**

It has long been my opinion that Artificial Intelligence (AI) will eventually remove the requirement for physical teaching and to some extent the role of assessor. The recent pandemically enforced paradigm shift to a majority online teaching platform has opened the door to an explosion of private online teaching provision; previously the preserve of vocational / occupational training and qualification.

It isn't a huge leap to visualise how this human online teaching provision will soon morph into AI at the other end of the line. The first schools to feel the march of AI teaching provision, will be private institutions. As parents begin to embrace online education, they will quickly see from any cost benefit analysis that children educated from home via human or indeed AI will prove a great financial saving and to date the results from 1-2-1 online teaching are not too shabby.

As with private institutions, emphasis will soon turn to the important issue of fairness. Currently online tutoring is [generally] undertaken in addition to full time education, but as this method of teaching gains momentum so the issue of availability to all children will be addressed; something that many politicians have been pushing for, for a very long time. And hey presto, being in 'loco parentis' will shift to an EdBot (a term that I have just coined).

With the proliferation of AI EdBots, tools such as ChatGPT will quickly become obsolete as the AI will easily recognise AI produced work (and other cheating) over the individual's own outputs. Examinations should (in my opinion) still be held and invigilated centrally and in person, for reasons that are obvious.

So what would this paradigm shift mean for professional assessors? Well the role will inevitably change. Interim assessment could easily be done by AI, however summative assessment by way of formal examination or, in the case of apprenticeships, an end point assessment process should always be carried out by professional assessors, this will ensure academic rigour in the tri-partite examination process.

The main issue left outstanding is (and has perhaps always been) course work. This method of learning has been contentious, due to the integrity element built into it and is a weakness that ChatGPT will no doubt be able to exploit. I would caution against dismissing out of hand AI in this regard, as I feel it is this area that would benefit the most from AI assessment. As mentioned earlier I believe AI would be able to identify plagiarism and other types of cheating more expertly and more quickly than any human can.

Finally, with this paradigm shift would come the need for greater and more focussed human scrutiny in the form of highly skilled Internal and external Quality Assurance and Audit Regimes, including 'secret shopper' programs to test the AI being used.

As a sector I suggest that this progress is inexorable and unstoppable and railing against AI, will not turn the tide. We must now embrace the future of education, learning, assessment and assurance and ensure we have the right tools and processes in place to meet the challenges ahead. To paraphrase the philosopher Thomas Kuhn (1962) everything is already there waiting behind the curtain, we just need to open the curtain a little wider and we will see the whole picture.

These are my thoughts on the subject of AI and are of course open to debate.

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