

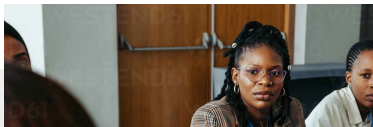
Artificial Intelligence in Higher Education Administration: A Human-Centred Public Administration Framework for Efficiency, Governance, and Institutional Support

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THE CHALLENGE



Expanding Workloads

Administrative task volumes continue to grow within constrained working hours, leading to extended after-hours work.



Manual Processes

A persistent reliance on manual workflows limits efficiency and reduces capacity for strategic engagement.



Limited Trust in AI

Low confidence in AI tools among administrators constrains workflow optimisation and time management.



RESEARCH DESIGN & APPROACH

Autoethnographic Approach

- › Draws on lived professional experience within academic administration
- › Situates personal insight within broader institutional context
- › Supported by a focused review of emerging AI in higher education literature

Administrative Domains Examined



Data Management



Communication



Scheduling



Reporting



Workload
Distribution



Workload
Distribution

KEY FINDINGS

01

Streamlined Routine Processes

AI effectively automates repetitive administrative tasks, freeing time for higher-value strategic and relational work.

02

Improved Accuracy

AI tools reduce errors in data management and reporting, enhancing quality and institutional accountability.

03

Better Time Management

Integration of AI supports more effective scheduling and workload distribution, reducing after-hours overload.

04

Human Judgement Preserved

AI augments — not replaces — administrative expertise; empathy and professional judgement remain central.

AI AS ENABLER, NOT REPLACER



"AI is positioned not as a replacement for administrative expertise, but as an enabling tool that enhances productivity and strengthens institutional support systems."

Quality

AI supports consistent, accurate outputs across administrative functions.

Accountability

Transparent AI-assisted processes strengthen institutional reporting.

Human Foundation

Relational, empathetic work remains at the core of academic administration.

PRACTICAL AI APPLICATIONS IN ADMINISTRATION



Automated Drafting

AI drafts routine emails, letters, and reports; administrators review and refine, saving hours weekly.



Data Analysis & Dashboards

AI tools aggregate enrolment, performance and workload data into real-time dashboards for decision-making. Also to improve QA



Smart Scheduling

AI-assisted scheduling reduces coordination friction for meetings, advising, and exam timetabling.



Document Intelligence

AI parses policy documents and prior learning records, accelerating RPL assessments and compliance checks.



Automated Reminders

Deadline and follow-up reminders handled by AI ensure nothing slips through administrative cracks.



Student Communication

Templated, personalised AI-generated communications improve response times and student support consistency.

A FRAMEWORK FOR RESPONSIBLE AI INTEGRATION

1

Assess

Map current administrative workflows. Identify high-volume, routine tasks.

2

Select

Choose contextually appropriate AI tools that align with institutional values.

3

Pilot

Test AI in low-risk areas first, gathering feedback from administrators.

4

Integrate

Embed AI into standard practice with clear governance and quality checks.

5

Review

Continuously evaluate impact on efficiency, accuracy, and staff wellbeing.



IMPLICATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION



For Institutions

- › Invest in contextually relevant AI tools and training
- › Develop clear AI governance and ethics policies
- › Reduce after-hours burden through smart automation



For Administrators

- › Build digital confidence and AI literacy
- › Engage critically with AI tools rather than avoid them
- › Advocate for workload relief through responsible AI use



For Policy

- › Align AI integration with equity and access goals
- › Ensure accountability frameworks keep pace with AI adoption
- › Protect relational dimensions of administrative work
- › Minister of Communication latest policy it was written by AI, despite that it's a national policy



For Research

- › Expand autoethnographic studies of AI in HE admin
- › Explore AI impact across diverse institutional contexts
- › Centre staff wellbeing in AI integration studies

LIMITATIONS OF AI IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Policy

Policies may also become outdated quickly due to the **rapidly changing HE environment** (e.g., digital learning, internationalisation, student needs).

Guidelines

Institutions are guided to maintain **good governance and accountability**, ensuring that leadership structures act responsibly, manage resources effectively, and are answerable to stakeholders.



Human capacity

AI has **limitations in ethical decision-making and accountability**. It cannot take responsibility for errors, bias in data, or unfair outcomes, which places pressure on human staff to monitor and regulate its use.

Institutions

lack of institutional readiness and capacity. Many institutions do not yet have sufficient skilled staff, policies, or training programmes to effectively integrate AI into academic and administrative processes.

CONCLUSION

An illustration of two people, a man and a woman, sitting at a desk and looking at a computer screen. The man is on the left, wearing a blue shirt, and the woman is on the right, wearing a brown jacket. The background is dark with a grid pattern and various digital elements like glowing lines, dots, and icons, suggesting a high-tech or AI environment. The overall color palette is dark with highlights of blue, yellow, and red.

AI holds affordances to transform administrative practice in higher education — not by removing the human at the centre, but by enabling that human to work with greater focus, clarity, and impact.

Contextually appropriate, responsible AI integration can:

The human foundations of university work remain non-negotiable.

Thank You

Questions & Discussion

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