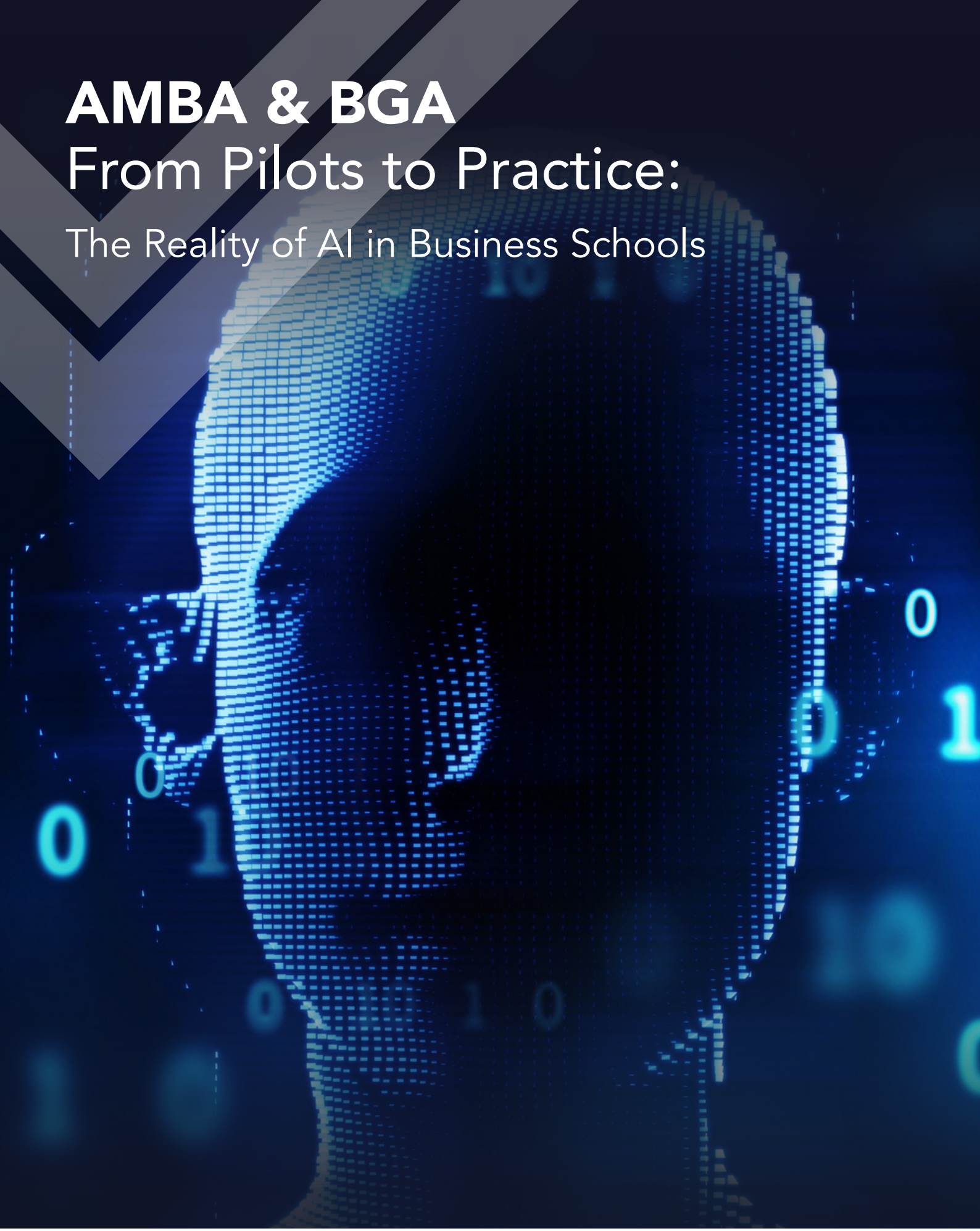
AMBA & BGA
From Pilots to Practice:
The Reality of AI in Business Schools



Association of MBAs

Business Graduates Association
LEADERS NEVER STOP LEARNING

UBI Business School

Alexandria

Publicis Commerce



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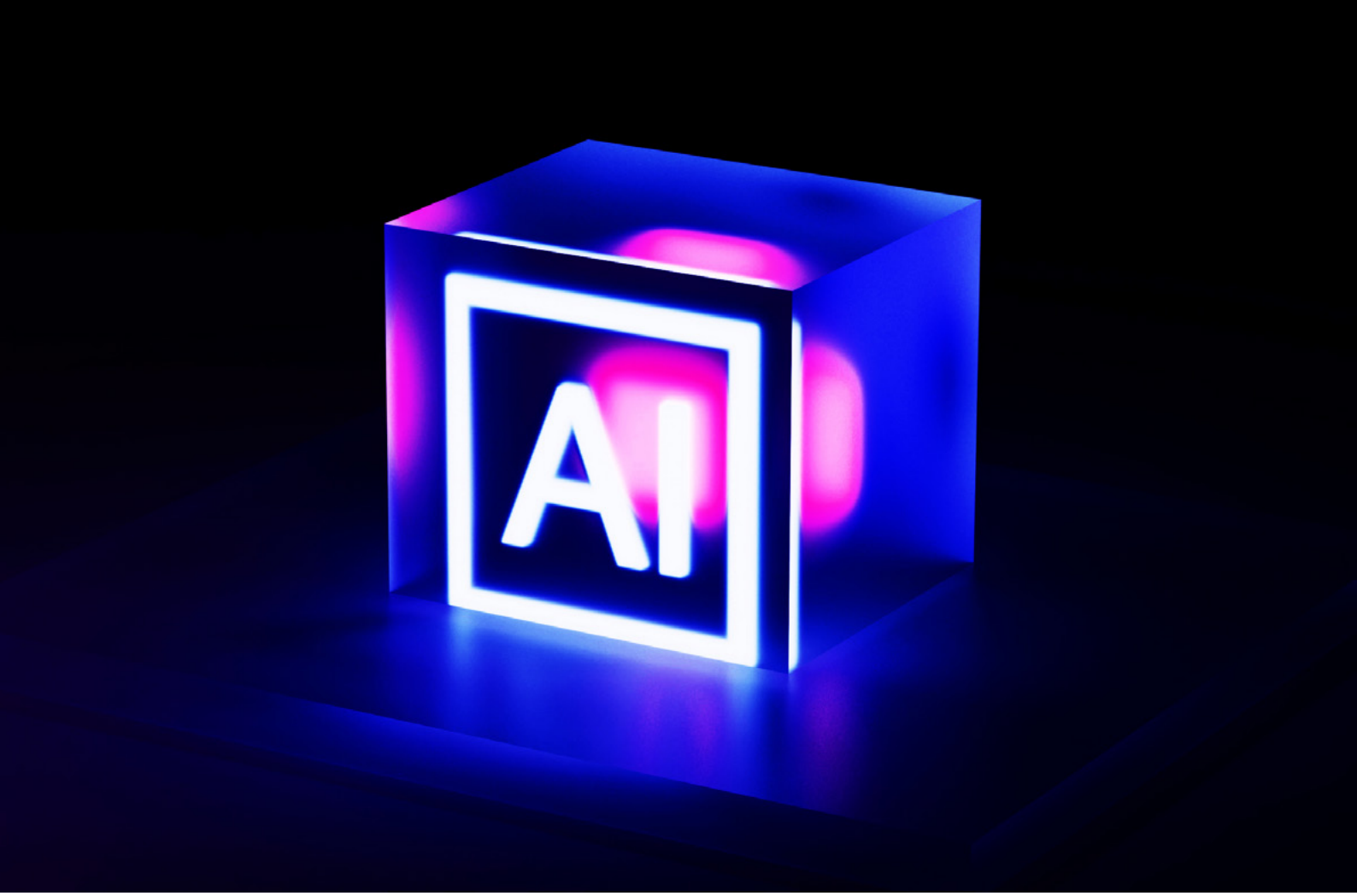
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Executive summary

Our survey demonstrates that Artificial Intelligence (AI) is already being used across business schools, particularly in teaching and learning design, but adoption remains uneven. While many institutions are experimenting with AI or using it in selected areas, fewer have embedded it across the whole institution. Respondents see clear opportunities in operational efficiency, personalised learning and future-focused programme design, but they also highlight significant concerns around academic integrity, over-reliance, assessment redesign, governance and staff capability. The findings suggest that the next phase of AI adoption will depend less on access to tools and more on clear policies, coordinated leadership and effective training for both staff and students.

Key findings

- In terms of integrating AI into business schools, 44 per cent of institutions use it in selected areas/ programmes with only 18 per cent of schools having fully integrated AI institution-wide
- 87 per cent use AI in teaching and learning design whereas only 17 per cent use it in careers services
- 49 per cent rate AI usage as moderate on average within their institutions, with only 24 per cent rating AI usage as high or very high
- 74 per cent benchmark themselves as on the same level of integration or slightly ahead of peers in terms of AI adoption
- 78 per cent say future-focused programme design is a key driver for their AI strategy
- 81 per cent are concerned AI will lead to student over-reliance

Introduction

AI is rapidly reshaping teaching, learning, assessment, administration and strategy in higher education. Business schools are at the centre of this shift: students are already using AI in their everyday lives, while employers increasingly expect graduates to enter the workforce ready to use AI tools responsibly. However, many institutions are still working out how to integrate these tools safely and meaningfully into the curriculum.

This new and ever-changing technology does not come with an instruction manual for business schools, and challenges have emerged around building comprehensive guidelines, using AI ethically, and integrating it without fostering over-reliance.

This survey, run in association with Alexandr.ia, an AI-powered learning platform co developed between UBI Business School and Publicis, explores the challenges and opportunities AI presents for AMBA & BGA schools. It examines how business schools are benchmarking their AI adoption against peers, where AI is currently being used, and what barriers remain to fuller integration.

I would like to thank Alexandr.ia for their brilliant collaboration with this project.

Ellen Buchan
Insight, Content and PR Manager
AMBA & BGA

In recent years in business education we have all seen new technologies influence how we teach and how organisations operate. Artificial Intelligence, however, represents a transformation of a different magnitude. It is already reshaping learning, assessment, institutional decision-making and professional practice. For business schools, the question is no longer whether AI will affect us, but how we will respond and what kind of future we will help to create.

This investigation, developed jointly by AMBA & BGA and UBI Business School, forms part of our wider commitment to understanding that transformation. By capturing the perspectives of business school leaders internationally, the study provides valuable insight into how institutions are moving from experimentation towards meaningful implementation. It also shows how schools are navigating the associated challenges of governance, capability, culture, and academic integrity.

At UBI, we have sought to contribute not only through research, but through action. Our development of Alexandr.ia with Publicis, recognised as Highly Commended at the 2026 AMBA & BGA Excellence Awards, reflects our belief that business schools must actively shape the responsible adoption of AI. As educators, we have a duty to prepare graduates who can use these technologies critically, ethically, and purposefully. And more importantly preserving the distinctly human qualities upon which responsible leadership depends.

Gaston Fornes
Dean
UBI Business School

Methodology

This survey went into the field in May 2026 and received 114 responses.

In terms of respondent seniority within the business school, 35 per cent were Programme Directors, 24 per cent were Deans, 18 per cent held senior academic positions, 11 per cent were Associate Deans, 5 per cent were Directors of academic quality, 4 per cent were Directors of digital, innovation and technology, and 3 per cent were Directors of learning and teaching.

Looking at the types of institutions represented, 66 per cent of respondents were from business schools within a university, 23 per cent were from independent business schools, 9 per cent were from a university faculty or school broader than business, and 3 per cent selected 'other'.

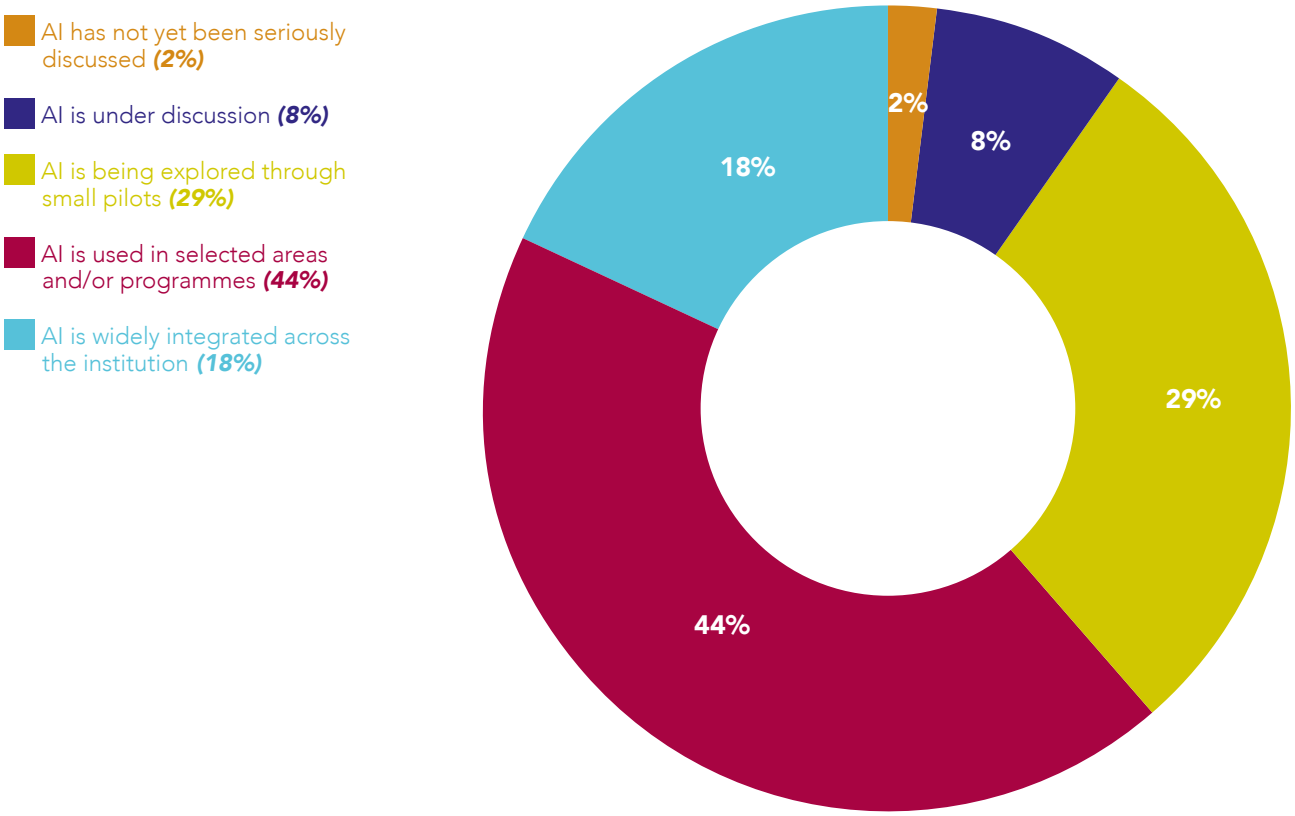
In terms of institution size, 18 per cent of respondents were from schools with fewer than 1,000 students, 31 per cent were from schools with 1,000–2,999 students, 29 per cent were from schools with 3,000–5,999 students, 12 per cent were from schools with 6,000–9,999 students, and 11 per cent were from schools with 10,000 students or more.

The survey included respondents from a range of regions. 15 per cent were based in the UK, 39 per cent in Europe, 21 per cent in Latin America, 15 per cent in Asia and the Middle East, 4 per cent in Africa, 3 per cent in North America and the Caribbean, and 3 per cent in Oceania.



Part 1:
Current institutional use and maturity

FIGURE 1: HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT STAGE OF AI ADOPTION?



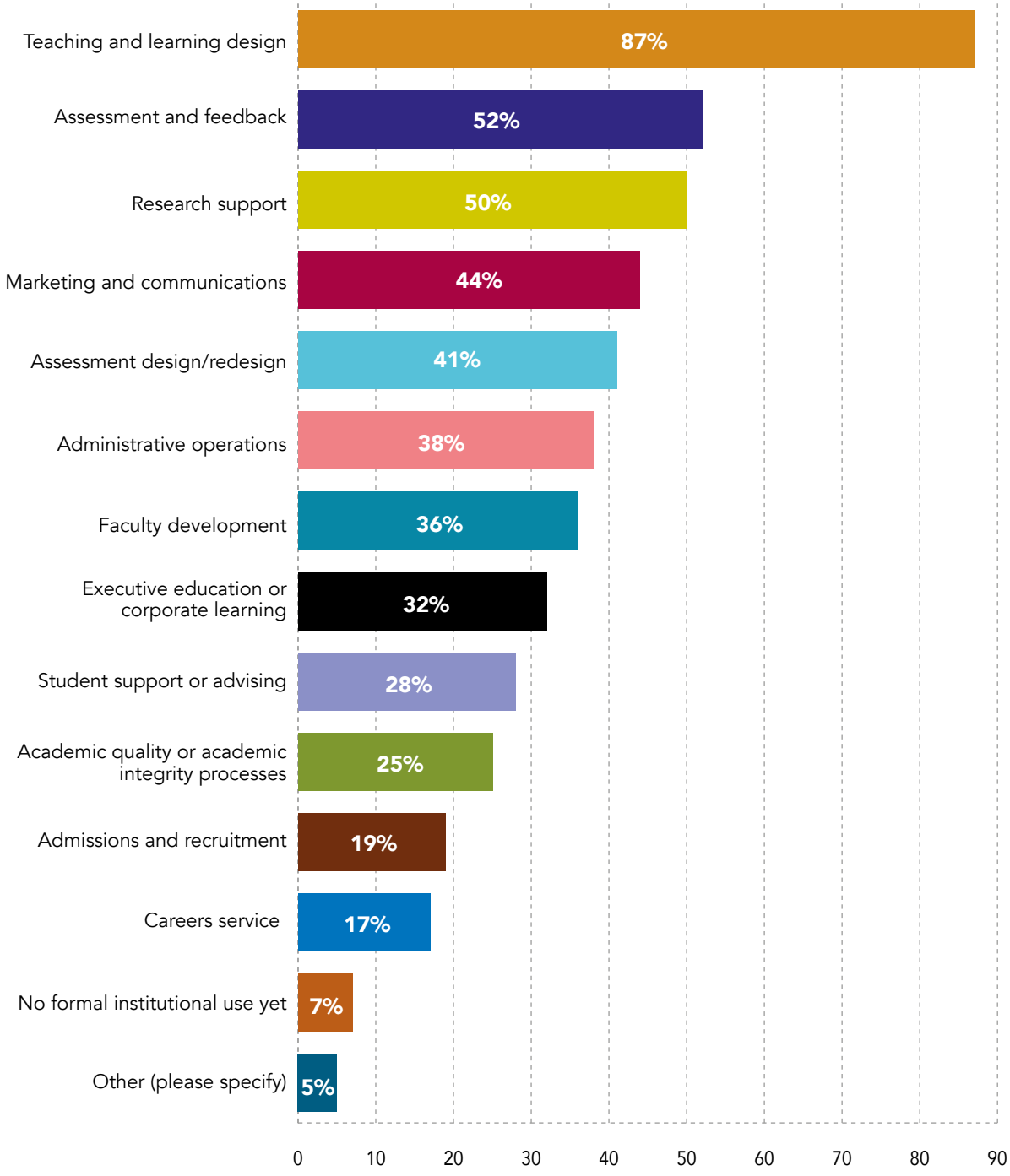
Only **18%** of business school leaders say AI is widely integrated across the whole institution.

The first question in the survey covered how leaders would describe the current state of their institution's AI adoption.

There was a wide range of areas of adoption of AI. For most, (44%) their school was using AI in selected areas and programmes. Considering the need (even responsibility) to produce AI-ready professionals to shape and drive the next stage of value creation with AI, 44 per cent seems like a low number. Only 18 per cent of business schools said that they had integrated AI across their entire institution.

At the other end of the spectrum, only 2 per cent of business school leaders said that AI was not being seriously discussed within their institution.

FIGURE 2: IN WHICH AREAS IS AI CURRENTLY BEING USED IN YOUR INSTITUTION? SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

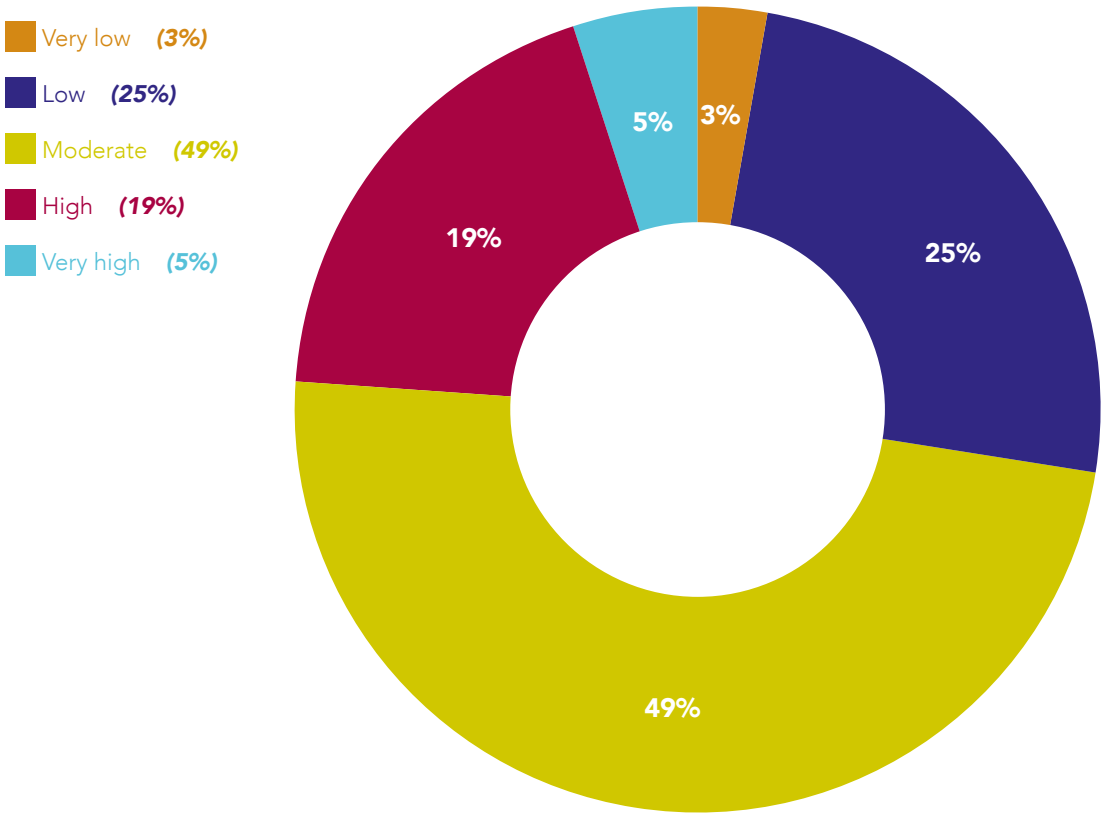


To understand the areas in which business schools are investing in AI – the survey explored how AI was currently being used in the institution. The most common applications were in teaching and learning design (87 per cent) and in assessment and feedback (52 per cent).

The least common areas were in admissions and recruitment (19 per cent) and in careers services (17 per cent).

87% of business schools are already using AI in teaching and learning design.

FIGURE 3: IN YOUR OPINION, HOW EXTENSIVE IS AI USE IN YOUR INSTITUTION?



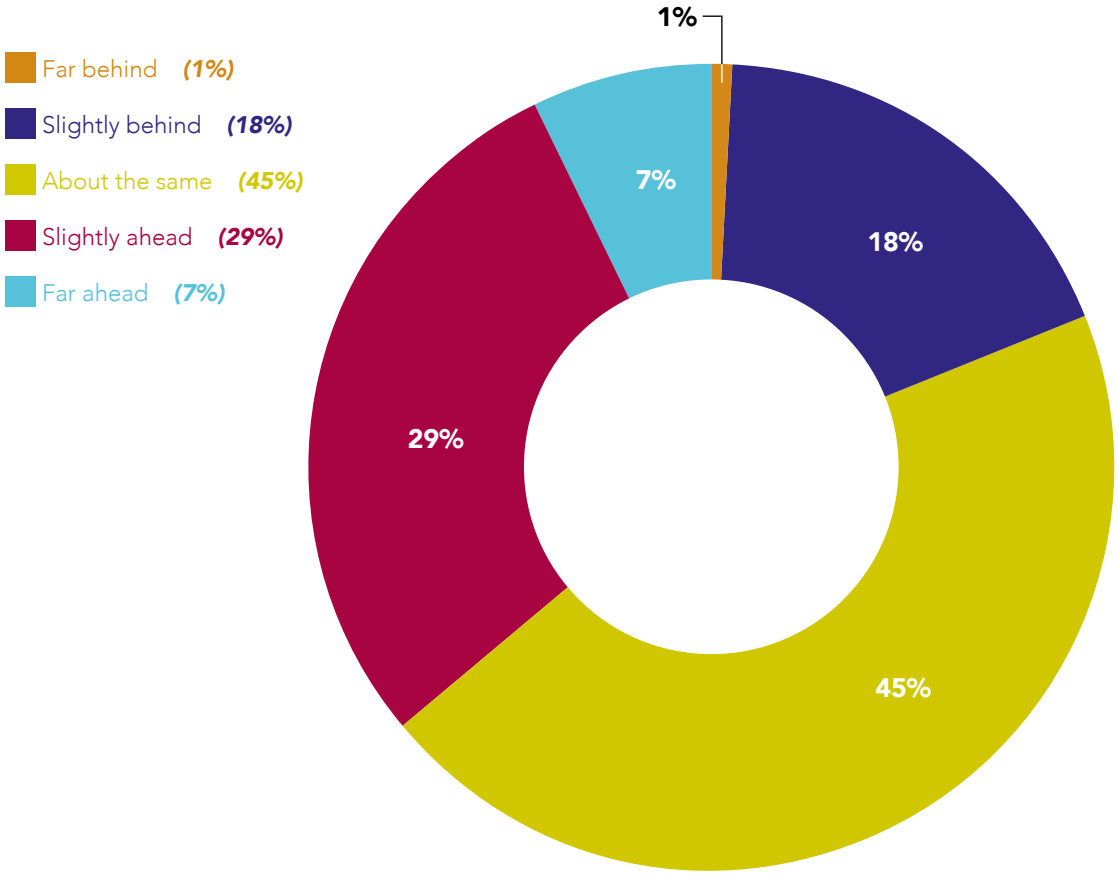
To understand the extent of AI use within organisations the survey asked how extensive the use of AI was in their institutions.

For most respondents, AI adoption was described as moderate. A total of 49 per cent rated AI use in their institution as moderate, while 19 per cent rated it as high and 5 per cent as very high. This shows adoption is low considering how highly business schools rate the importance of AI.

However, businesses schools do not operate in isolation. The survey also explored how business school leaders felt their institution's adoption of AI compared to peer institutions.

49% of leaders describe AI use in their institution as "moderate"

FIGURE 4: COMPARED WITH PEER INSTITUTIONS YOU ARE FAMILIAR WITH, HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR INSTITUTION'S CURRENT POSITION IN RELATION TO AI ADOPTION?



For almost half of respondents, AI adoption at their institution was perceived to be broadly in line with peer business schools: 45 per cent said their institution was at a similar level, while a further 29 per cent said they were slightly ahead.

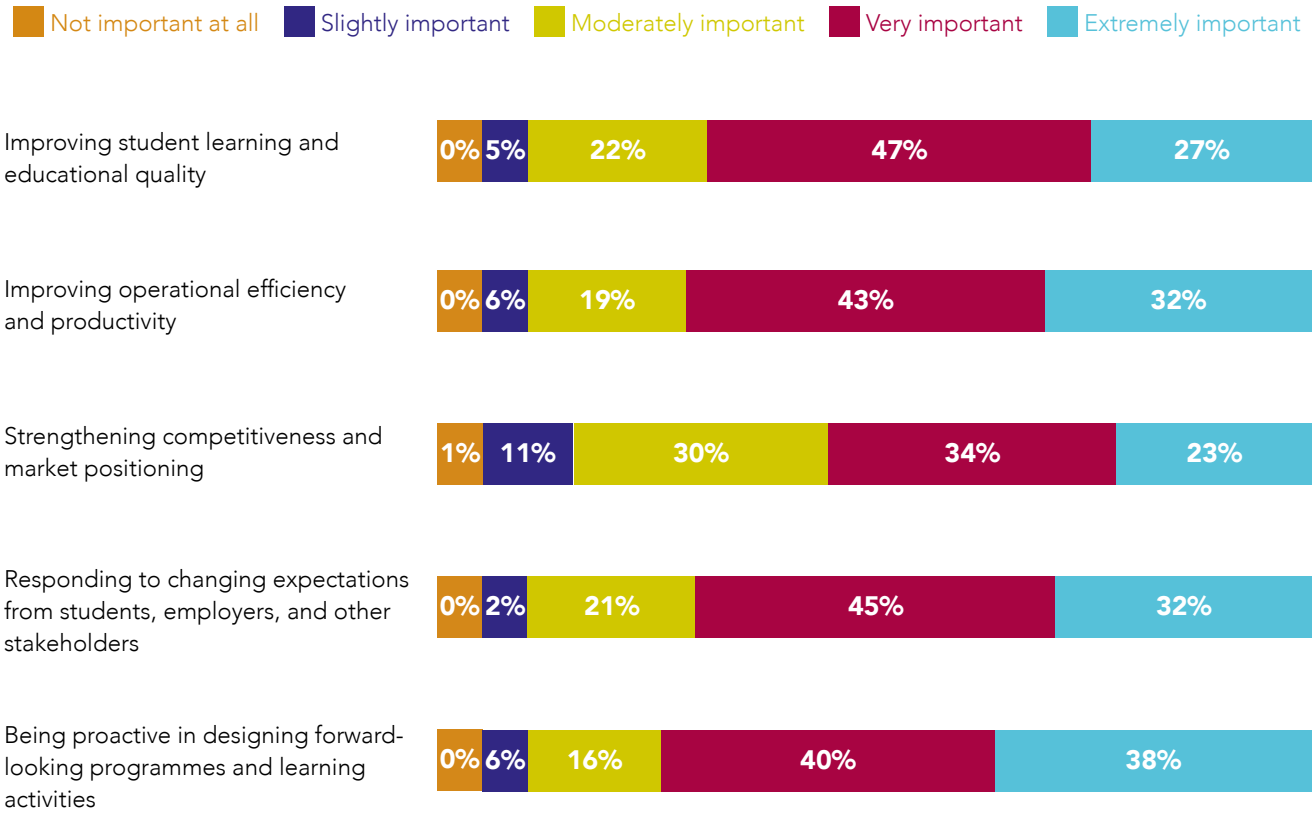
Considering the low levels of adoption highlighted in Figure 3, this suggests that business schools broadly remain in the early stages of AI adoption.



Part 2:
Strategic drivers of AI adoption

FIGURE 5: IMPROVING STUDENT LEARNING AND EDUCATIONAL QUALITY

For the following questions, please indicate how important each factor is as a driver of AI adoption in your institution. Scale: 1 to 5.



For business school leaders, the survey explored the most important areas of AI adoption in relation to student learning and educational quality.

Business school leaders were most likely to rate being proactive in designing forward-looking programmes and learning activities as very or extremely important, with 78 per cent selecting one of these two categories. By contrast, strengthening competitiveness and market positioning was rated as very or extremely important by 57 per cent of respondents, making it the least strongly endorsed driver among those tested.

With 78 per cent of business school leaders believing AI is very or extremely important, it seems somewhat surprising that only 49 per cent of business schools rate their engagement with AI as moderate.

78% of business school leaders say forward-looking programme and learning activity design is a very or extremely important driver of AI activity.

Part 3:
Barriers and implementation challenges

FIGURE 6: BARRIERS AND IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

For the following, please indicate the extent to which each issue is a barrier in your institution. Scale: 1 to 5.



The survey then explored the biggest barriers preventing business schools from fully integrating AI.

For most respondents, the biggest barrier to implementing AI was concern over academic integrity, with 53 per cent identifying this as a significant or major barrier.

Another key challenge was limited financial, technical or support resources of which 47 per cent of business schools said this was a significant or major barrier. This is understandable given the large investment needed for AI capabilities in business schools. Similarly to this, there was seen to be difficulty redesigning assessments and teaching practices for the AI era.

The least significant barrier to AI implementation was limited staff acceptance of AI tools in day-to-day practice, suggesting that faculty generally recognise the importance of integrating AI into business schools.

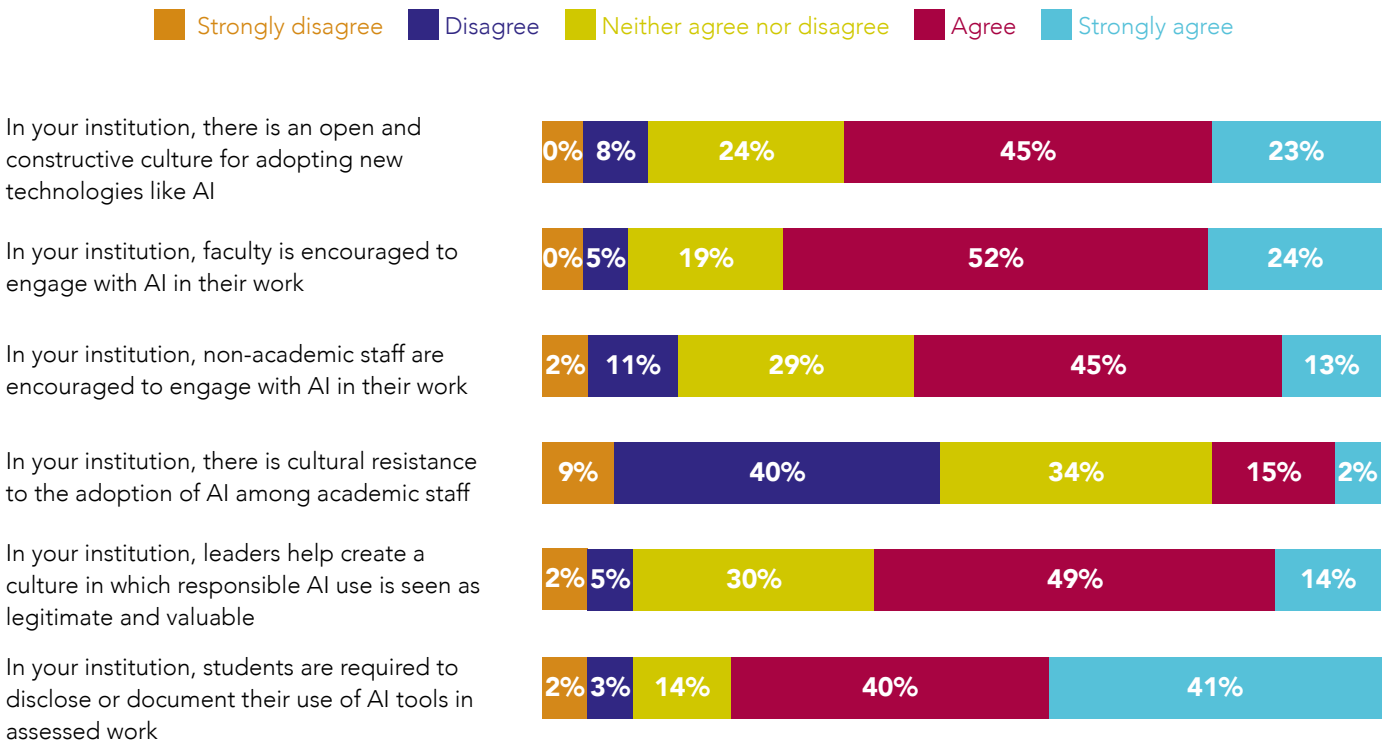
A lack of faculty AI capability and AI literacy was also identified as a major barrier. This reflects a wider challenge facing organisations: equipping key stakeholders and those responsible for value creation with the training and capabilities needed to engage effectively with AI.

53% of business school leaders identify academic integrity concerns as a significant or major barrier to implementing AI.



Part 4:
Cultural integration

FIGURE 7: PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT WITH THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT YOUR INSTITUTION'S CULTURE AROUND AI.



The next set of questions explored the cultural cohesiveness surrounding AI in business schools. The question which received the highest level of agreement was if students were required to disclose or document their use of AI tools in assessed work. A total of 40 per cent of respondents agreed with this and 41 per cent strongly agreed.

The second highest area of agreement related to whether faculty are encouraged to engage with AI in their work. More than three-quarters of business school leaders agreed with this statement.

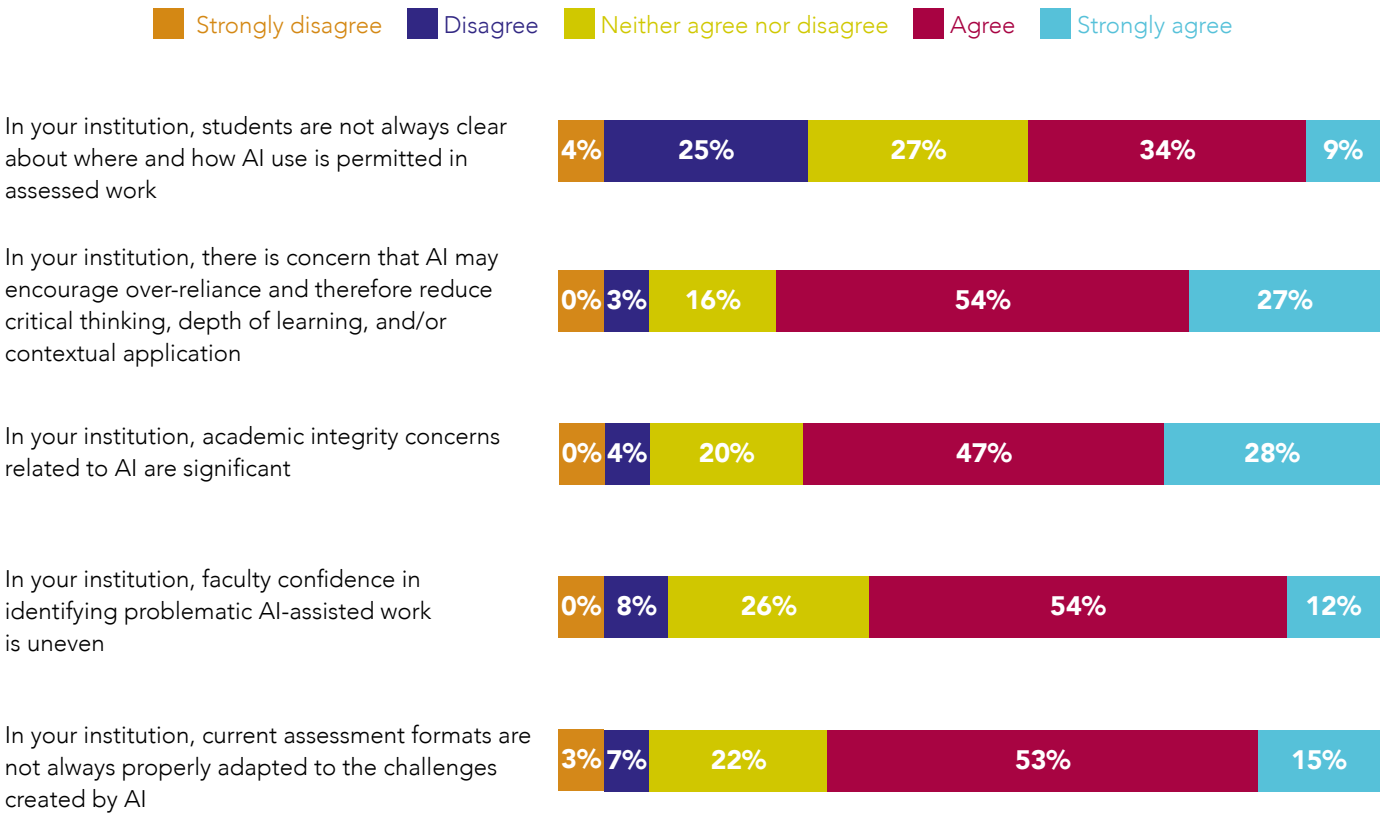
Overall, respondents reported a largely positive culture surrounding AI within their institutions. Only 17 per cent either agreed or strongly agreed that there was cultural resistance among academic staff.

The survey suggests that faculty are more encouraged to use AI than non-academic staff. When asked whether different groups were encouraged to engage with AI, 76 per cent of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that faculty were encouraged to use AI, compared with 58 per cent for non-academic staff. This result linked with that from Part 3, shows that there is a gap, faculty needs AI training and capabilities development, and are open to get it.

76% of business school leaders agree or strongly agree that faculty are encouraged to engage with AI and only 17% agree or strongly agree that there is cultural resistance among academic staff.

Part 5:
Academic quality, concerns, and perceived risks

FIGURE 8: FOR THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT. SCALE: 1 TO 5



Moving on to the impact of AI on student work, the survey found strong agreement among business school leaders that AI may encourage over-reliance and potentially reduce critical thinking, depth of learning, and/or contextual application. A total of 81 per cent of leaders either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement. Yet, at the same time, business schools face the challenge of developing AI-ready professionals who are equipped to lead AI transformation within organisations. Addressing this tension will require education providers to consider how AI can be integrated into learning in ways that build students' AI capabilities while preserving and strengthening critical thinking, depth of learning and contextual application.

81% of business school leaders are concerned AI may encourage over-reliance and reduce critical thinking or depth of learning.

Business schools around the world appear to be grappling with how to integrate AI into learning while ensuring students do not become overly reliant on these tools.

There was also agreement that current assessment formats are not always sufficiently adapted to the challenges created by AI. Given the rapidly evolving nature of AI, alongside the investment required to implement it effectively, it is perhaps unsurprising that some business schools feel they are struggling to keep pace with the demands of this technology.

Responses were more mixed when considering whether students are clear about where and how AI use is permitted in assessed work. A total of 34 per cent agreed that there may be some confusion, while more than a quarter (27 per cent) neither agreed nor disagreed. Again, given the rapid pace of AI development, business schools may find it challenging to create guidelines for students that account for the wide range of ways AI can be used.

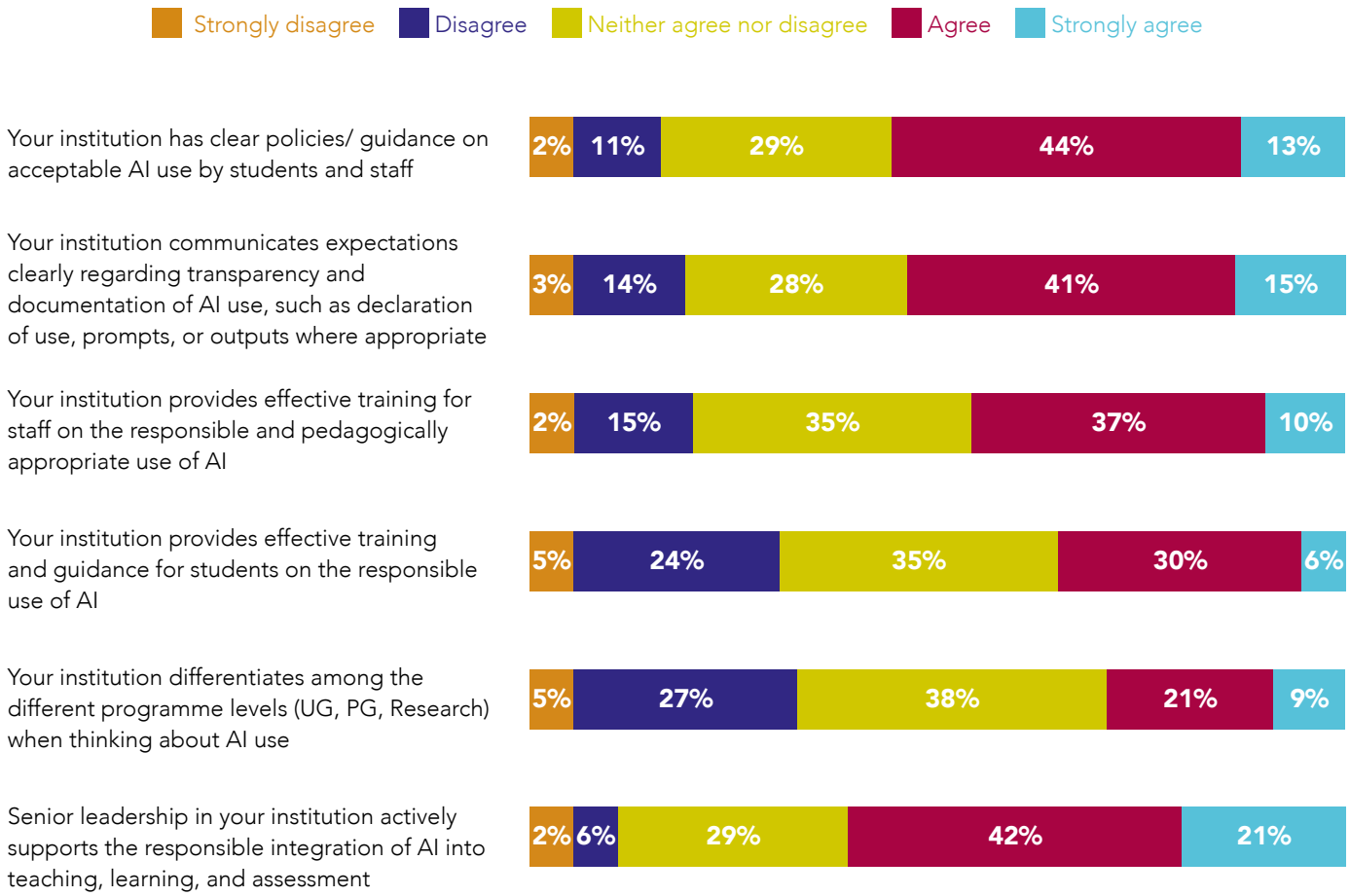
Students, particularly those in the early stages of their undergraduate education, are increasingly AI-native. However, being familiar with AI does not necessarily mean knowing how to engage with it critically and responsibly. Business schools therefore have an important responsibility to guide students in developing the knowledge, judgement and skills needed to use AI effectively and wisely.





Part 6:
Governance, training, and readiness

FIGURE 9: FOR THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS, PLEASE INDICATE YOUR LEVEL OF AGREEMENT. SCALE: 1 TO 5



Moving on from this, the survey explored how business schools were managing training and guidance for both staff and students on the use of AI.

Responses were mixed across the board when it came to institutional approaches to AI training and guidance.

Only 13 per cent of respondents strongly agreed that their institution has clear policies or guidance on acceptable AI use by students and staff, while 44 per cent agreed with this statement. This is lower than would have been been expected given that AI is fundamentally changing the way people work and learn, having clear guidance in place is an important consideration for business schools as they navigate its integration.

There were also lower levels of agreement around whether business schools are effectively training students and staff to use AI. A total of 47 per cent of leaders agreed or strongly agreed that their institution provides effective training for staff on using AI. Agreement was even lower when considering training and guidance for students on the responsible use of AI, with only 36 per cent of leaders agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement.

Interestingly, leaders were less likely to agree that their institutions differentiate between programme levels (undergraduate, postgraduate, and research) when considering AI use. Most respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement.

Finally, there was relatively low agreement that senior leadership actively supports the responsible integration of AI into teaching, learning, and assessment, with 63 per cent of leaders either agreeing or strongly agreeing with this statement. Given the strategic importance attributed to AI across the sector, a higher level of support and leadership from the most senior levels of business schools might be expected. This may point to a gap between recognising the importance of AI and providing the leadership and institutional support needed to integrate it responsibly into education.

A total of **47%** of business school leaders agree or strongly agree that staff receive effective training on responsible and pedagogically appropriate AI use.

Only **36%** agree or strongly agree that students receive effective training and guidance on responsible AI use.



Part 7:
AI threats, challenges, opportunities and implementation

The final section of the survey allowed respondents to provide free-form answers to specific questions on AI.

First, respondents were asked to identify the single biggest opportunity AI presents for their institution.

The most commonly cited opportunity was operational efficiency. Respondents highlighted AI's potential to save time, reduce administrative workloads, automate processes, and improve overall operations.

Secondly, respondents saw it as a personalised learning opportunity, mentioning that they could use it to tailor education to students, improve support and enhance learning outcomes.

Some others mentioned that they see an opportunity to embed AI into programmes, assessments, work-based learning, and future skills.

It was also seen to be a way to improve teaching quality with better materials, assessment designs and classroom practice.

Overall, AI is seen less as a standalone technology and more as a strategic lever to make business education more personalised, efficient, relevant, and future-focused.

The next question was what is the single biggest threat AI presents for their institution?

The most mentioned area was the risk associated with academic integrity, with specific worries surrounding plagiarism, assessment validation and misuse of AI by students.

There was also a fear that students would lose the ability to think critically. There was a fear of over reliance and the reduced ability to think analytically.

On a more theoretical level there was a worry about the reduced value of education. Respondents were concerned about the commodification of knowledge and universities seeming less necessary.

Respondents also felt there was a gap in policy and governance – they were concerned with the lack of control tools and also by the potential of privacy and security leaks.

Finally, respondents were concerned that their institutions were failing to adapt quickly enough or were falling behind their competitors.

Respondents appear to be concerned about AI on two fronts: its potential impact on education itself, and the wider risks it may pose to their organisations.

The survey was keen to find out about the single biggest challenge facing institutions in using AI responsibly and effectively.

The biggest challenge noted by respondents was being able to move from an interest in AI to responsible, consistent and institution-wide adoption.

Respondents felt like the challenge was around governance and guidelines. Respondents were not sure how to implement clear policies which were transparent for all.

Another challenge was seen in staff capabilities and training. Respondents felt it was a challenge to successfully upskill faculty and professional staff so they could use AI more meaningfully.

There was also the concern over academic integrity and assessment in preventing misuse and plagiarism.

Respondents also mentioned there was a challenge in avoiding fragmented leadership when it came to AI and expressed that there needed to be a shared strategy across the institution.

Overall, institutions need clear governance, staff development and coordinated leadership so AI enhances learning rather than creating uneven, risky or poorly controlled practice. At the same time, greater emphasis is needed on the responsibility of business schools to equip students with the knowledge, skills and

judgement required to become AI-ready graduates and, ultimately, to lead AI transformation within organisations.

Finally, respondents were asked to share any examples of effective practice in AI use, training, governance or assessment redesign from their institution.

The results show practice is moving beyond discussion into hands-on implementation, especially where institutions combine training, governance and redesigned assessments rather than treating AI as a standalone tool.

The results showed that business schools had started adding compulsory training, workshops, AI learning pathways and staff development sessions.

Another area where schools mentioned using AI was in assessment redesign. There was mention of AI-based assessments, oral defences, case simulations, disclosure requirements and prompt evaluations.

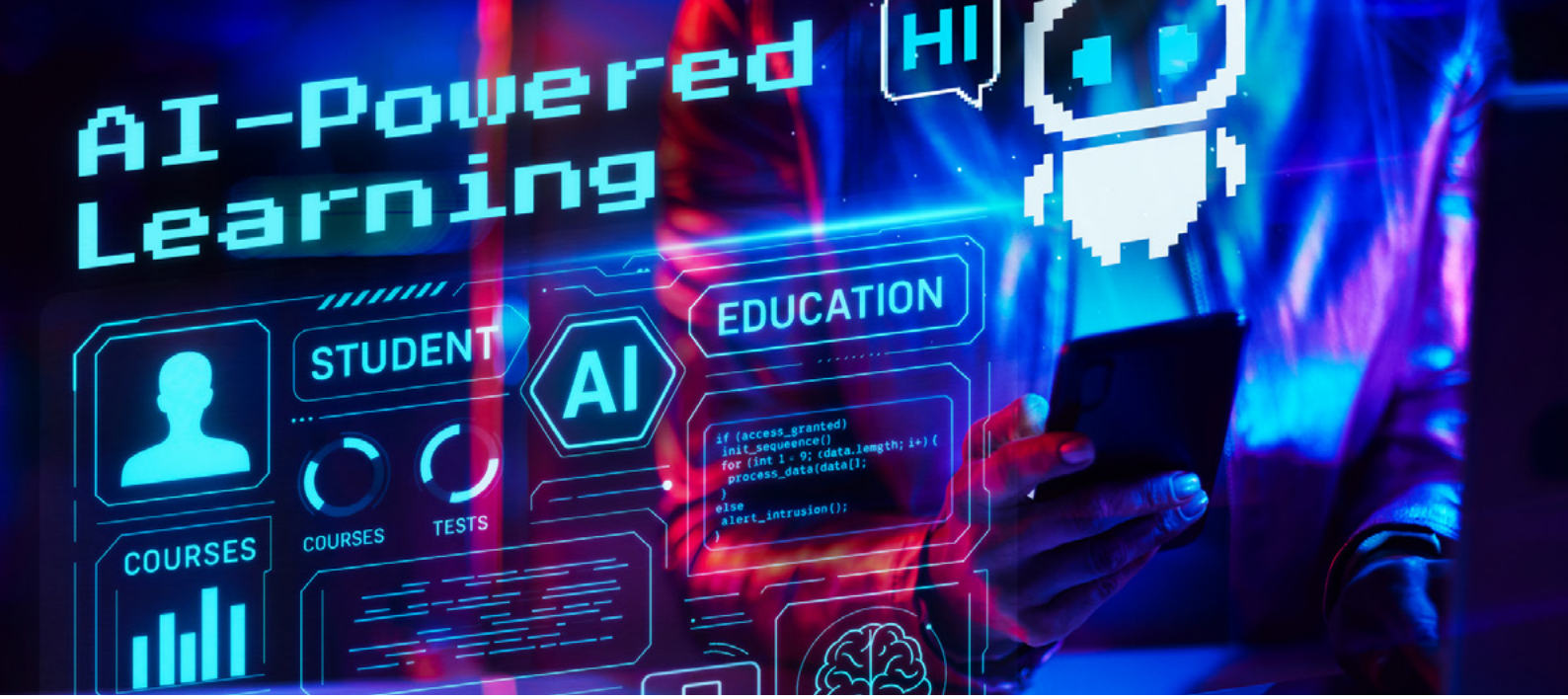
There has also been implementation in governance and responsible use. Business schools mentioned implementing policies, AI usage declarations, ethics, transparency, and taskforces.

AI has also been making its way into the curriculum. It has been embedded into modules, syllabi, case analysis, programme design and competency frameworks.

There was also the integration of AI into student support tools. For example, chatbots, document-grounded AI assistants, learning bots and customised review bots.

Finally, there were signs of it being used in an operational way via automation, recruitment chatbots, curriculum review, documentation, scheduling and refund-process verification.





Conclusion

The results of this survey show that AI is no longer hypothetical for business schools. Awareness of its potential is growing, and institutions are exploring opportunities to use AI across learning design, operational efficiency and future-focused programmes. However, adoption remains uneven and often partial, while significant concerns persist around academic integrity and the risk of students becoming overly reliant on the technology.

The next step is for business schools to move beyond simply responding to the challenges and opportunities AI presents, and take greater responsibility for preparing the graduates who will lead AI transformation in organisations. Producing AI-ready professionals requires more than teaching students how to use AI; it means developing their critical thinking, judgement and ability to apply AI responsibly and strategically. Business schools that combine institution-wide responsible AI adoption with a clear commitment to developing these capabilities will be better positioned to shape, rather than simply respond to, the future of work.

The concern 81% of schools express here, that AI will create over-reliance, is the problem we built for.

Cognitive offloading erodes exactly the reasoning employers value most. Our response, built on two years of research with students, lecturers and employers, is Human AI First: students acquire knowledge of GenAI and its limitations, apply it to assess GenAI outputs, construct new understandings of its uses, and recognise its ethical boundaries. UBI adopts the AI Literacy Framework of the European Commission and OECD, within the EU Artificial Intelligence Act.

Alexandr.ia, our AI-powered learning platform co-developed with Publicis, is built accordingly: it does not deliver final answers. It guides step by step, challenges students to reach solutions independently, and draws on sources filtered from 15 million verified citations.

Over-reliance is a design choice, not an inevitability.



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