Office of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
31 August 2026

THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA
CREATE CHANGE

2026 UQ Student AI Survey Report



Contents

Student Survey: Perspectives on AI in Higher Education 2

About this report 2
Key Takeaways 2
Survey notes 3
1 UQ Student Response Insights 4
1.1 Participants 4
1.2 Distribution 4
1.3 Faculty 5
2 AI Use 6
2.1 Reasons 6
2.2 Barriers 7
2.3 Where students use AI 8
2.4 Guidance 9
2.5 Study 10
2.6 University-provided chatbots 11
2.7 Attitudes 12
2.8 Sophistication of engagement for learning 13
2.9 Assessment contexts 14
3 Insights by Faculty 17
3.1 Demographics 18
3.2 AI Use 19
3.3 Views 25
4 Changes in AI use since 2024 27
4.1 AI Use 27
4.2 Purpose 27
4.3 Reasons 27
4.4 Assessment contexts 27
4.5 Confidence for study 27
5 Analytical notes 28
Appendix A: Survey questions used in the report 30
Appendix B: Comparison of 2024 and 2026 data 33

Student Survey: Perspectives on AI in Higher Education

About this report

The 2026 Higher Education Student Perspectives on AI Survey was run from March to July 2026. The purpose of the survey was to understand student sentiment on artificial intelligence (AI) in assessment, student AI use, and students' expectations of a university response to AI.

The survey was conducted at The University of Queensland, Monash University, University of Technology Sydney, and Deakin University. Across all four universities, 10,222 students completed the survey.

The body of this report contains an analysis of quantitative data which highlights **UQ student responses**. Appendix A contains a list of the **survey questions**. Within Appendix B is a **comparison of 2024 and 2026 data for all four universities**, with UQ data highlighted. A summary and analysis of qualitative responses will be produced in the coming months.

Key Takeaways

- UQ-wide AI use was primarily motivated **by efficiency, overcoming obstacles, and making study easier**, while concerns about accuracy, independence, and responsible use were the main barriers. Engagement and confidence were strongest in BEL and EAIT and lowest in HASS, while increased use since 2024 was accompanied by declining trust in AI outputs. Principled avoidance also emerged as an important phenomenon, indicating that many students considered limiting AI use for ethical, personal, or other principled reasons.

- Perceived University **guidance** on AI has increased since 2024, supporting students' growing confidence in using AI for study and future work. However, fewer than half of respondents considered the available AI guidance sufficient, with perceived support consistently weaker for future professional use than for current study across faculties. Uptake of university-provided chatbots was also limited, suggesting that existing institutional AI resources may not yet be widely used or sufficiently visible.

- Students perceived **AI-restricted assessments** as better supporting deep learning and demonstrating authentic capability than assessments that allowed AI. Students valued assessments that demonstrate their capabilities independently of AI, while generally supporting AI-aware assessment design and most considered the University's AI assessment rules reasonable. Lastly, students used AI substantially more often in assessments when it was explicitly permitted and generally limited or avoided its use when it was not allowed.

Survey notes

Please note that not all questions in the 2024 survey were retained for the 2026 survey, hence direct comparisons cannot be made for all questions. Additionally, some new questions were introduced in the 2026 survey which aimed to capture more nuance in student responses given the increasing sophistication of AI tools and their use, as well as more information on discipline of study, which has allowed for faculty-level reporting.

1 UQ Student Response Insights

1.1 Participants

This report is based on 2,817 responses received across the University from March to July 2026. Survey participation was voluntary and anonymous. The dataset comprises undergraduate and postgraduate student responses.

1.2 Distribution

The survey captured a diverse student population across UQ (see *Figure 1*):

- 78% of respondents were aged 18–24
- 58% were women
- 76% were undergraduate students
- 76% were domestic students
- 24% identified as having a disability
- 18% were the first in their family to attend university
- 74% reported English as their first language

Collectively, the respondent profile reflects representation across a range of demographic groups within the UQ student population.

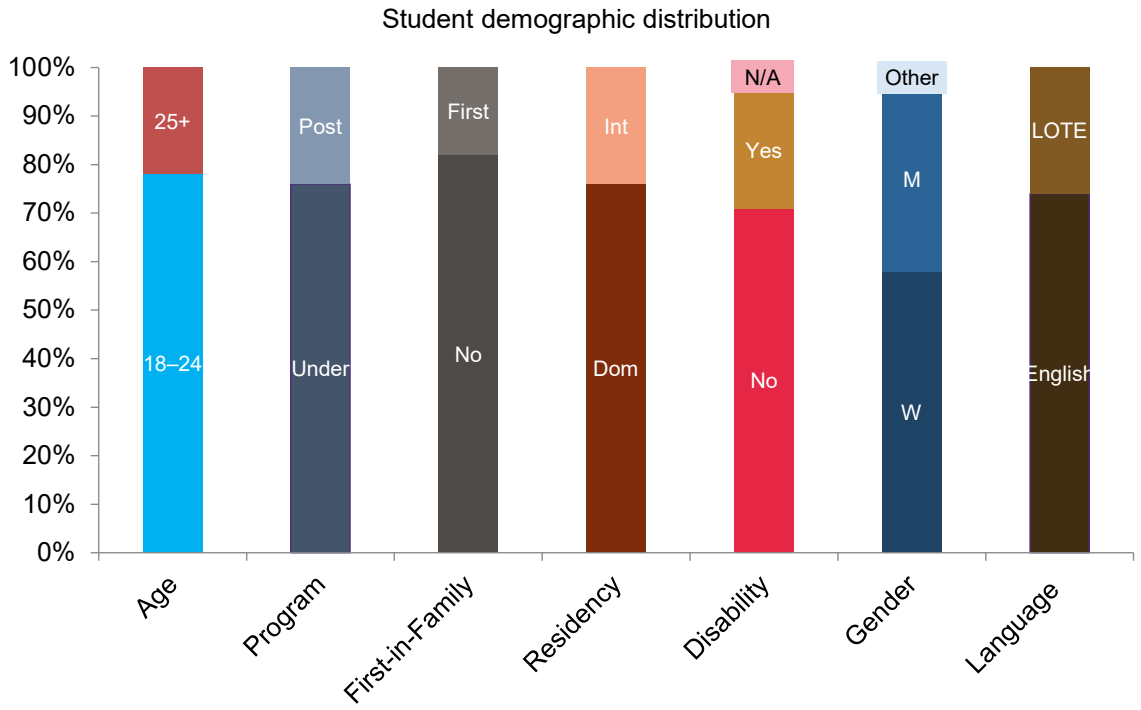


Figure 1. This figure presents the distribution of demographic characteristics among all respondents. Most respondents were aged 18–24, were enrolled in undergraduate programs, were not first-in-family, were domestic students, were without a disability, and were English-speaking.

1.3 Faculty

The HMBS Faculty had the highest proportion of respondents (22.5%), followed by the Science Faculty (20.9%). Overall, the distribution was relatively balanced, with relatively small variation across faculties, as could be seen from *Table 1*.

Faculty	Respondents (%)
HMBS	22.5%
Science	20.9%
HASS	18.9%
EAIT	18.7%
BEL	16.6%
Unknown	2.3%

Table 1. The table shows that respondents were distributed relatively evenly across faculties, with HMBS having the largest share. “Unknown” indicates respondents who did not report a faculty affiliation.

2 AI Use

2.1 Reasons

The most reported use of AI was saving time (48%), followed by overcoming barriers (45%) and using AI as a facilitator (39%), as shown in *Figure 2*. In contrast, fewer students reported using AI for accessibility support (12%), improving English (14%), or improving grades (16%). These findings suggest that students mostly use AI for practical benefits, particularly saving time and overcoming barriers, rather than personal enjoyment or academic improvement alone.

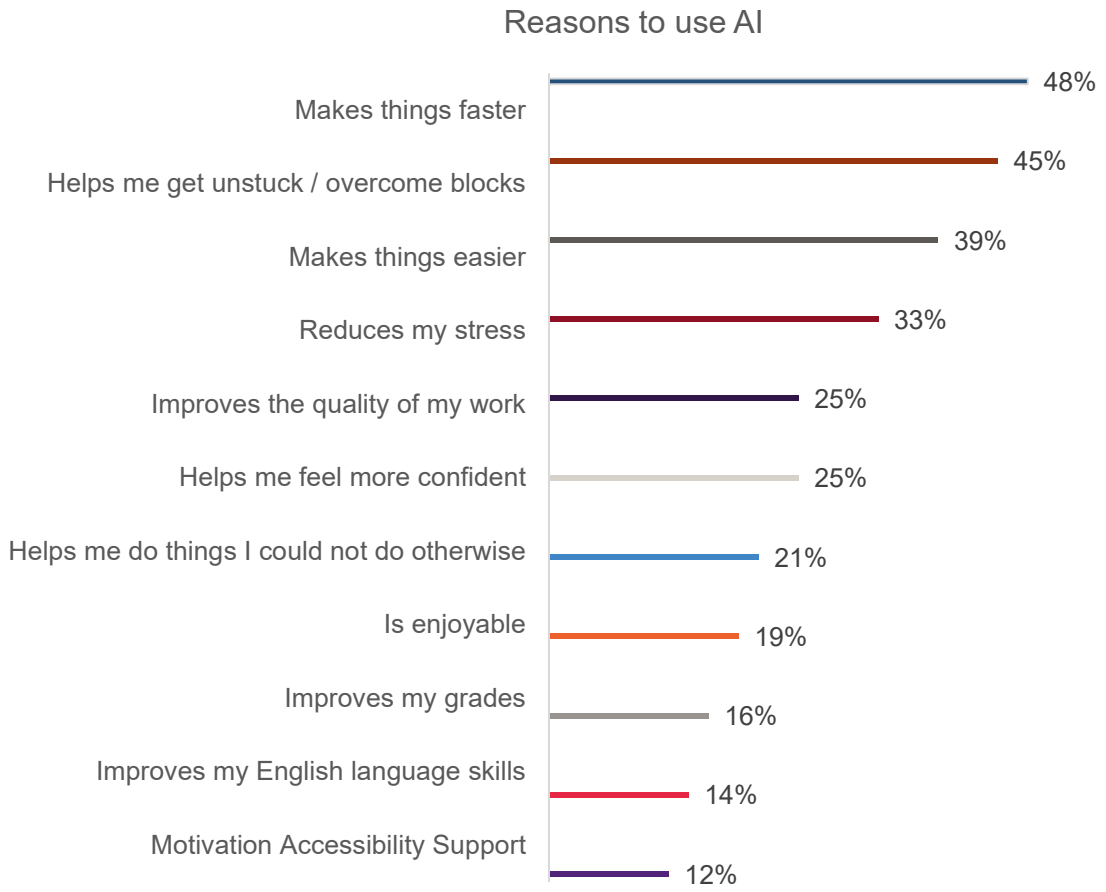


Figure 2. This figure presents students' reasons for using AI in their studies (see Questions Q1.1-Q1.11 in Appendix A). Percentages indicate the proportion of students who selected each reason. Percentages indicate the proportion of students who answered each item and selected "A great deal" or "A lot" on the Likert-type response scale.

Efficiency, overcoming obstacles, and making tasks easier were the most commonly cited motivations, followed by stress reduction and improvements in work quality and confidence. Academic performance, English language development, and accessibility or motivational support were among the least commonly reported reasons.

2.2 Barriers

The most common barrier to AI use was accuracy concerns (64%), followed by a preference for independent work (58%) and ethical concerns (49%). Fewer students reported barriers related to tool knowledge, confidence, access or affordability (see *Figure 3* below). The findings suggest that hesitation around AI use is mostly linked to trust, integrity, and responsible-use concerns rather than access issue.

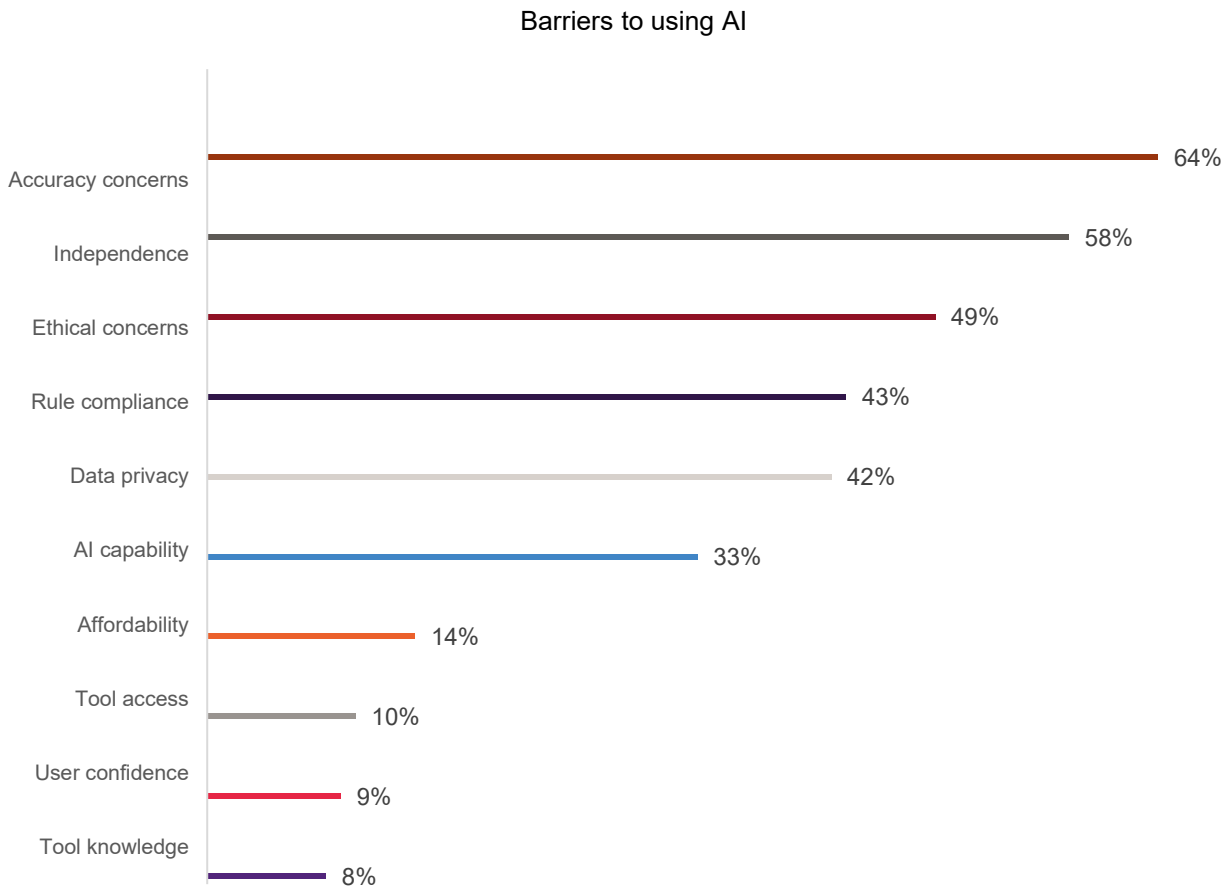


Figure 3. This figure shows reasons why students limit or avoid using AI in their studies. Percentages indicate the proportion of students who answered each item and selected “A great deal” or “A lot” on the Likert-type response scale (see Questions Q2.1-Q2.10 in Appendix A). The most frequently reported reasons were accuracy concerns and maintaining independence, followed by ethical concerns, rule compliance, and data privacy.

2.3 Where students use AI

The most common context for AI use was university study (86%), followed by personal reasons (79%) and then work purposes (56%). The results depicted in *Figure 4* indicate that AI was primarily used for UQ students' academic activities, although considerable proportions also used AI outside a study context. It is to be noted that 44% of students did not use AI at work, 21% did not use it for personal contexts, and 14% did not use it for study.

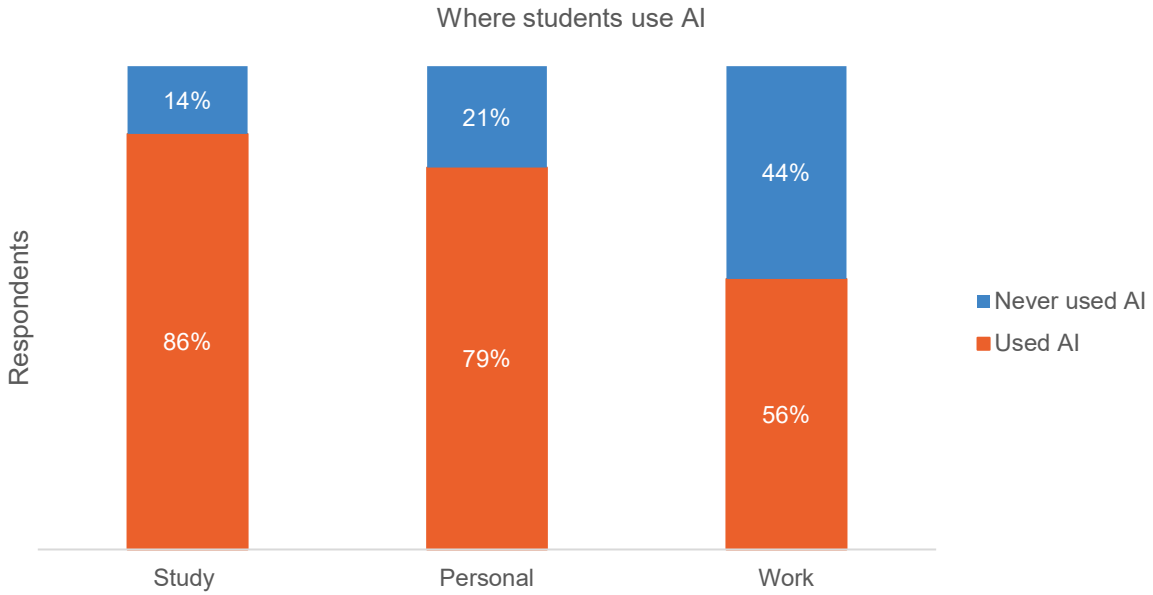


Figure 4. This figure shows contexts of regular AI use among students (see Questions Q3.1, Q3.2 and Q3.4 in Appendix A). Regular use was defined as using AI daily or weekly. AI use was most common for university study, followed by personal activities and work.

2.4 Guidance

Students were asked about how they perceived guidance from the University for two main purposes: guidance in using AI for studies, and guidance for future profession. As shown in *Figure 5*, students reported higher rates of having sufficient guidance for AI use in their studies (36%) than for their future careers (26%). This suggests that students feel more supported in using AI for their current academic work than in understanding how to apply AI in future professional contexts. However, both areas remained below 50%, indicating an ongoing need for clearer and more comprehensive AI guidance.

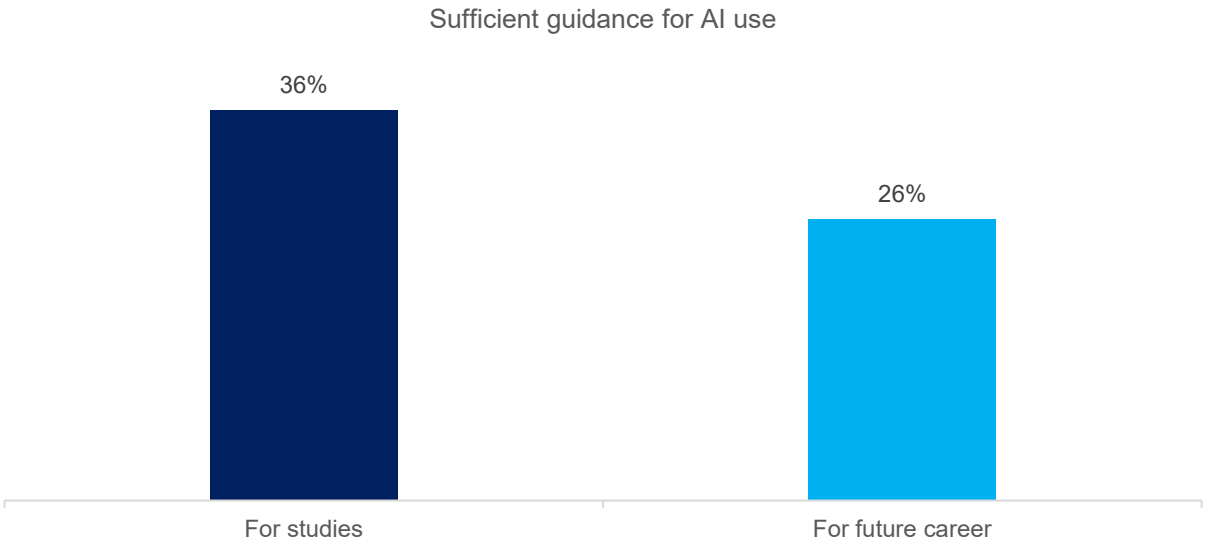


Figure 5. This figure presents students' perceptions of the sufficiency of the guidance provided by UQ for using AI in their studies and future *profession* (see Questions Q4.1 and Q4.2 in Appendix A). Percentages represent students who selected "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Students perceived greater guidance for study use than for future professional use, although agreement was low in both contexts.

2.5 Study

AI engagement varied considerably across UQ demographic groups. International students and students who speak a language other than English (LOTE) reported the highest levels of use, with 82% and 81% respectively, suggesting stronger engagement among multilingual and international cohorts. In contrast, lower levels of AI use were reported among domestic students (49%), English-speaking students (48%), and students who identified as having a disability (35%). Overall, the findings presented in *Figure 6* suggest that while AI use is evident across the student population, adoption is not yet universal across demographic groups.

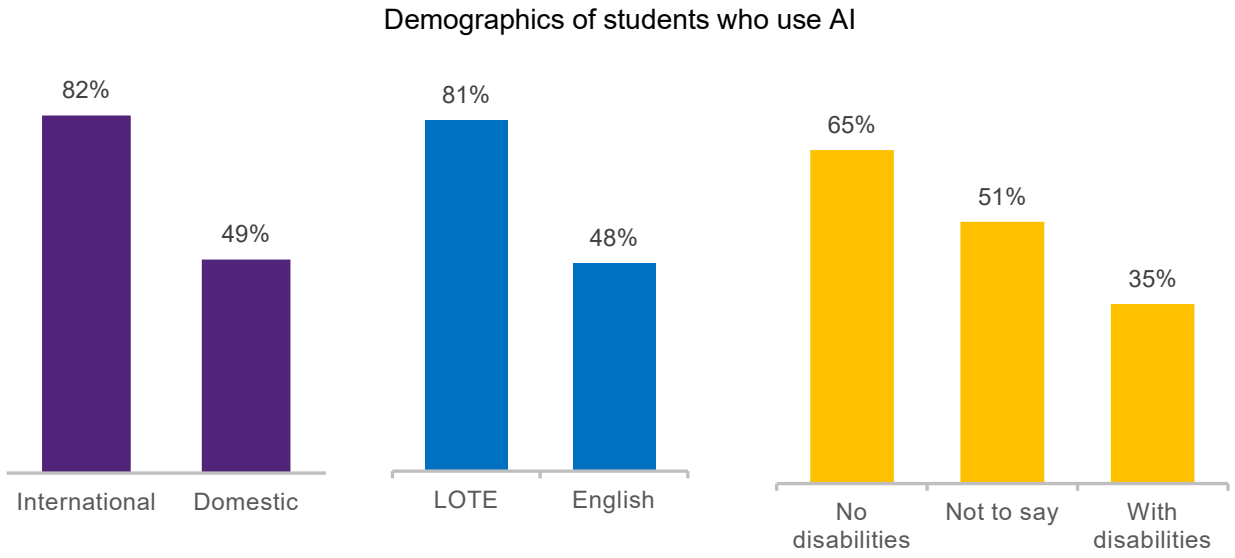


Figure 6. This figure presents students' regular use of AI for university study across selected demographic groups (see Question Q3.1 in Appendix A). Regular use was defined as daily or weekly use. Regular AI use was more common among international students and students who spoke a language other than English and varied by disability status.

2.6 University-provided chatbots

Another dimension of university-provided support is reflected in students' use of tailored institutional AI tools; however, reported use of such chatbots was relatively limited. As shown in *Figure 7,* the most common response was 'Not using university-provided chatbots' (e.g., Copilot, ChatGPT, Claude). 'Moderate use' was reported by 19%, while smaller proportions used them 'a lot' or 'a great deal' (both 11%). Overall, uptake appears limited, with higher levels of use reported by only a minority of students.

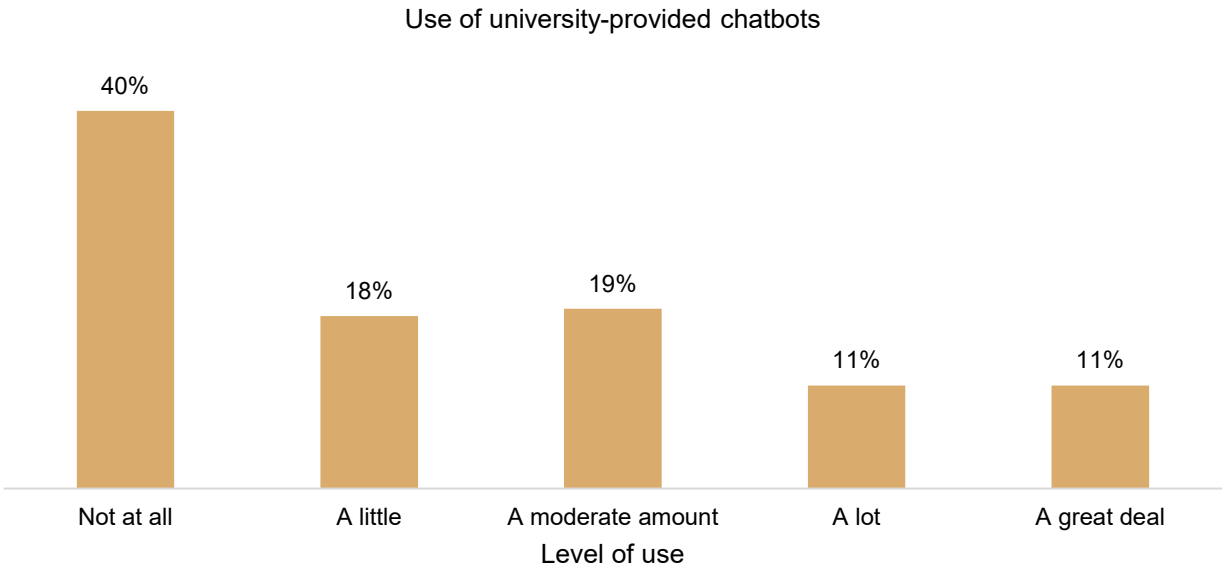


Figure 7. This figure presents students' reported level of use of university-provided chatbots (see Question 3.5 in Appendix A). Most students reported limited or no use, while fewer students reported using university-provided chatbots a lot or a great deal.

2.7 Attitudes

Students reported mixed feelings about AI use. Results presented in *Figure 8* suggest that the largest proportion indicated avoiding AI for principled reasons (56%), followed by using AI despite feeling conflicted (45%) and little or no tension when using AI (28%). This suggests that while some students are relatively comfortable using AI, many experience reservations or avoid AI.

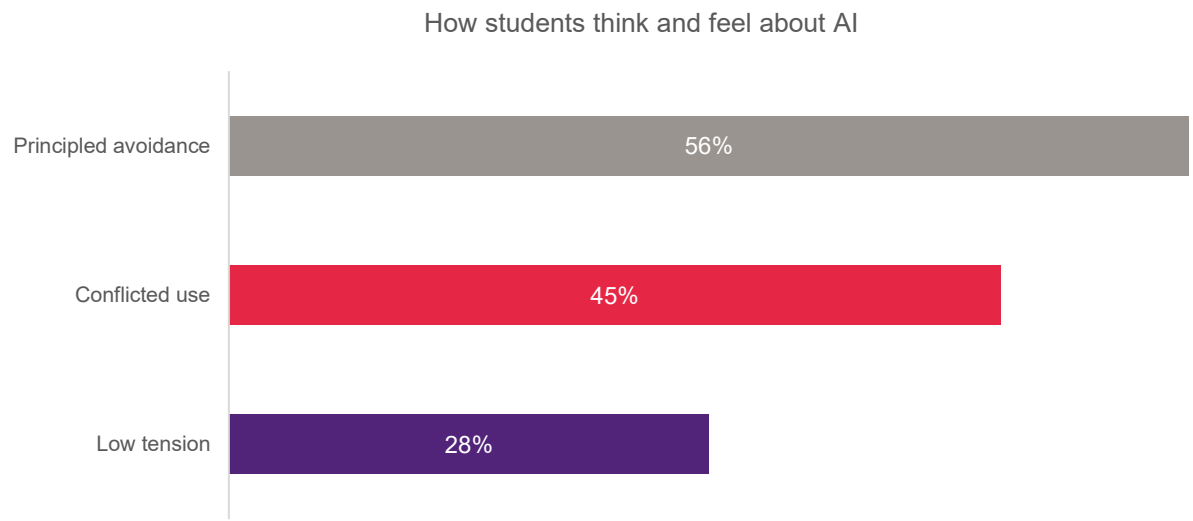


Figure 8. This figure presents students' attitudes regarding AI use (see Questions Q5.1-Q5.3 in Appendix A). Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Avoidance for principled reasons (principled avoidance) was the attitude with the highest agreement, followed by using AI despite feeling conflicted, while relatively few students reported experiencing little or no tension.

2.8 Sophistication of engagement for learning

The most common advanced practice was verifying AI outputs (67%), followed by using AI to identify knowledge gaps (50%) and as a “study buddy coach” (44%) as shown in *Figure 9*. More than one-third of students reported adaptive practices such as sustaining AI conversations (27%), customising AI behaviour (26%), and choosing fit-for-purpose AI tools (26%). Lower proportions reported more technical or specialised practices, such as designing chatbots or agents (7%). Overall, the findings suggest that sophisticated AI use is most evident in critical and reflective practices, while more technical AI practices remain less common.

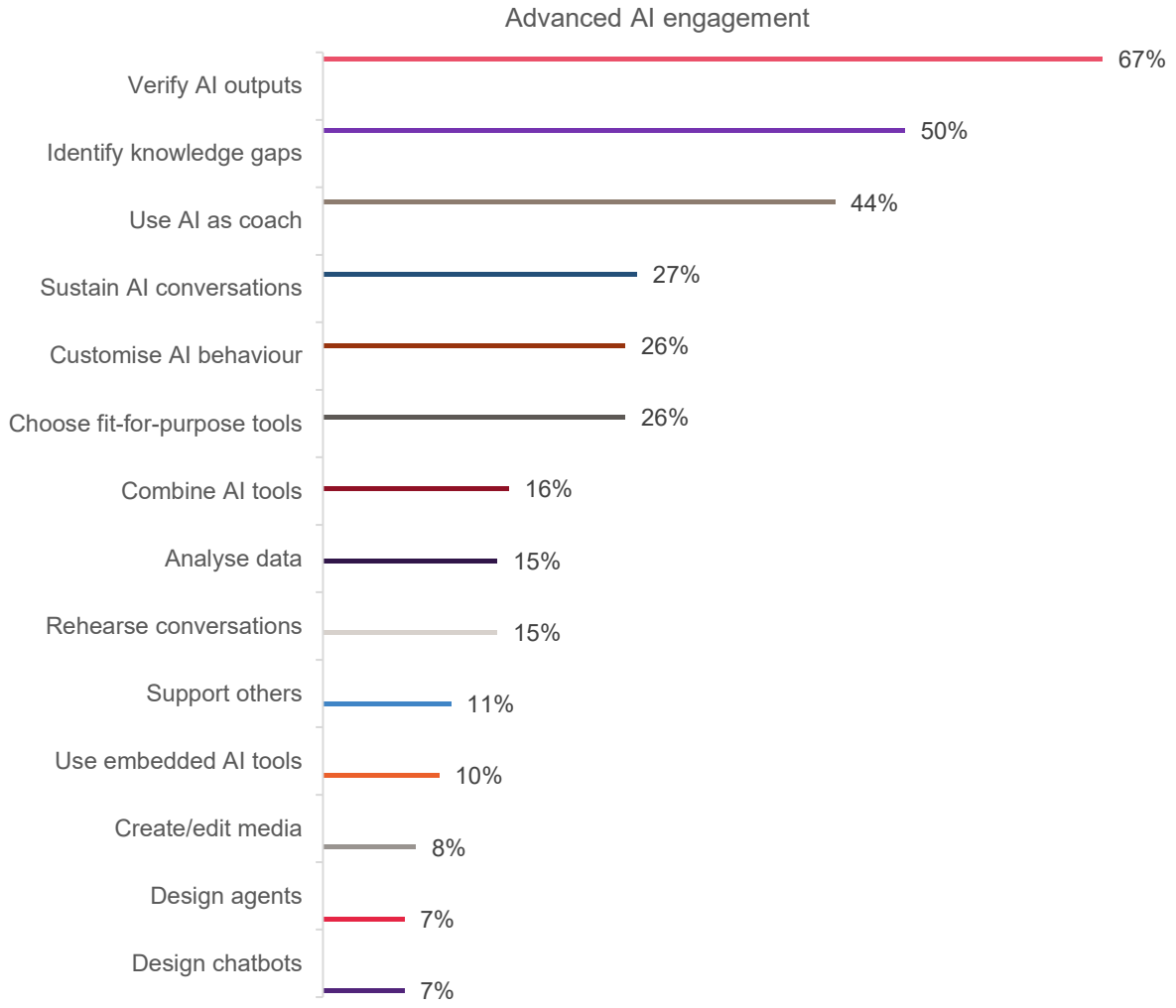


Figure 9. This figure presents students’ self-reported engagement in advanced AI practices (see Questions Q6.1-Q6.14 in Appendix A). Percentages represent students who selected “A great deal” or “A lot” for each practice, except using AI as a coach, which represents those who selected “Somewhat agree” or “Strongly agree”. Engagement was strongest in critical and reflective practices, particularly verifying outputs and identifying knowledge gaps, while technical and specialised practices were less common.

2.9 Assessment contexts

Students were asked about their AI use in assessments when it was explicitly permitted and when it was not allowed. Results presented in *Figure 10* suggest that when permitted, 39% of students reported using AI 'sometimes', while 37% used it 'most' or 'all of the time'. In contrast, 30% used AI 'sometimes' when it was not allowed, and only 8% did so 'most' or 'all of the time'. These results suggest that clear permission substantially increases AI use, while most students limit or avoid its use when it is prohibited.

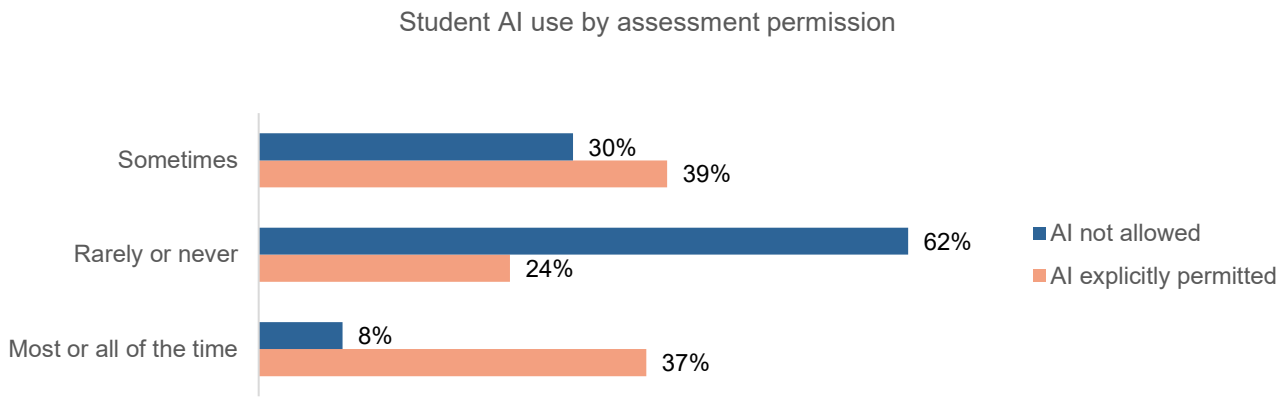


Figure 10. This figure presents students' self-reported frequency of AI use in assessments when AI was **explicitly permitted** and when **AI use was not allowed** *(*see Questions Q7.1 and Q7.2 in Appendix A*)*. "Most of the time" and "Always" responses were combined. Students used AI substantially more often when explicitly permitted and generally limited or avoided AI use when it was not allowed.

While most students limit or avoid its use when it is was not allowed, it is also important to understand how these different assessment conditions shape students' experiences and perceptions of assessment quality. As shown in *Figure 11*, students reported more positive assessment experiences when AI use was restricted than when it was allowed across all measures. The largest gaps were in perceptions of whether assessment could assess or show true capability. This suggests that students perceive restricted AI assessment contexts as better supporting authentic capability demonstration, while AI-allowed contexts are viewed more positively for supporting learning and work quality than for evidencing true capability.

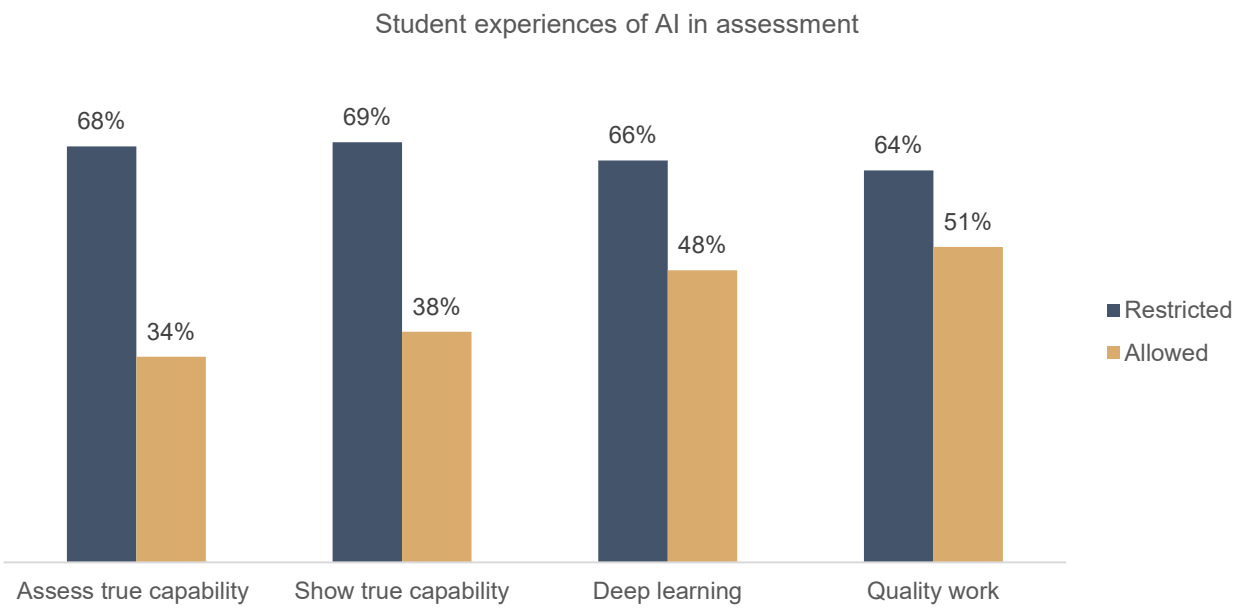


Figure 11. This figure presents students' agreement that assessment tasks support authentic capability, deep learning, and high-quality work when AI use is **restricted** or **allowed** (see Questions Q8.1-Q8.8 in Appendix A). Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Students reported high agreement regarding learning capabilities across all measures when AI use was restricted, with the strongest differences relating to the assessment and demonstration of true capability.

In terms of assessment design, the strongest view was that assessment should ensure students are not dependent on AI (74%), followed by concern that allowing AI may devalue the degree (48%), as depicted in *Figure 12*. Fewer students felt that restricting AI shows a lack of trust (31%) or that assessment should ignore AI in design (24%). Overall, the findings suggest that students place greater importance on assessing their capabilities independent of AI and maintaining the value of qualifications than on allowing AI involvement in assessment.

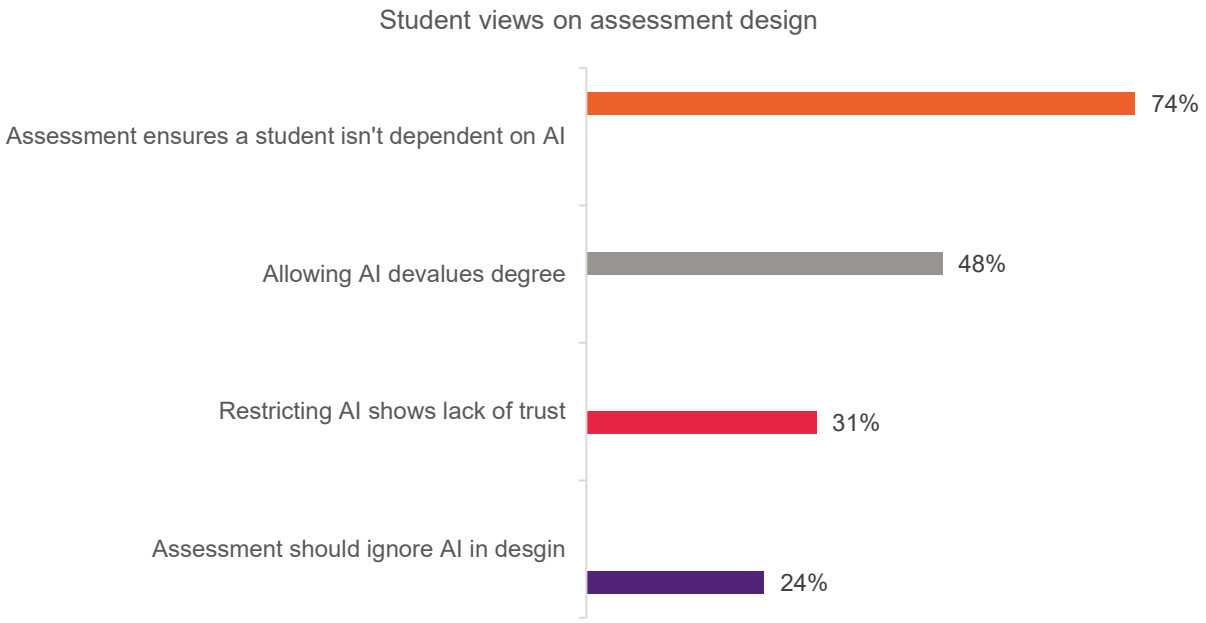


Figure 12. This figure presents students' agreement with statements about AI and assessment design *(*see Questions Q9.1-Q.9.4 in Appendix A*)*. Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Students preferred assessments that would enable them to demonstrate their capability independent of AI. At the same time, fewer supported ignoring AI in assessment design or viewed AI restrictions as indicating a lack of trust.

3 Insights by Faculty

Following the full analysis of responses across the dataset, the results indicate that student engagement with AI varies across faculties. At a descriptive level, BEL and EAIT generally reported higher levels of AI engagement, confidence, and motivation to use AI for study support, while HASS tended to report lower levels across these measures. These patterns were also observed alongside differences in students' perceptions of guidance and support; however, they should not be interpreted as evidence of a direct relationship**, especially considering that there were variations in distribution of demographic groups across faculties, as shown in** *Table 2*. The findings presented **in the current section** provide a high-level summary, with a more detailed examination of faculty-level differences and associated factors provided in the remainder of this section.

Despite relatively high AI use in some faculties, perceived university guidance for AI use in studies remains low. When such guidance is aggregated by faculty, it ranged from 33% to 42%, with the UQ-wide average of 36%. Guidance for AI use in future careers was even lower, ranging from 20% to 32%. This suggests that students are engaging with AI, but many may not feel they are receiving enough faculty-level guidance on how to use AI appropriately in their studies or future professional contexts.

The pattern also suggests a possible relationship between confidence and motivation. BEL recorded higher levels of both motivation (52%) and confidence (50%), while HASS recorded the lowest results for both measures (24%). This may indicate that students who feel more capable of using AI are also more likely to see AI as a useful study support tool.

Assessment-related findings add further nuance. Reported AI use when not allowed in assessment was low across faculties, ranging from 4% to 12%, suggesting that non-permitted use was reported by only a minority of students. At the same time, most students viewed AI assessment rules as reasonable, with agreement ranging from 53% to 61% across faculties. This suggests that students are not necessarily rejecting rules around AI use; rather, they may need clearer and more consistent guidance on the responsible use of AI.

Views on assessment design may also indicate there is an opportunity for more AI-aware assessment approaches. Only a minority of students agreed that assessment should be designed without considering AI, with agreement ranging from 18% to 29%. HASS reported higher agreement with ignoring AI in assessment design, while BEL and EAIT reported lower agreement. This pattern may suggest that faculties with lower student AI confidence and use are more likely to support assessment designs that do not consider AI, whereas faculties with stronger AI engagement may be more open to AI-aware assessment design.

Overall, the findings suggest an opportunity to strengthen faculty-level AI guidance, build student confidence, and support clearer, more consistent expectations for appropriate AI use in study and assessment. Targeted support may be particularly valuable for faculties with lower confidence and lower AI engagement, while faculties with stronger engagement could help identify and share examples of effective practice to support broader implementation.

3.1 Demographics

Demographics	BEL	EAIT	HASS	HMBS	Science
First in family	18%	16%	17%	18%	17%
Not first in family	82%	84%	83%	82%	83%
Aged 18-24	74%	83%	81%	74%	80%
Aged 25+	26%	17%	19%	26%	20%
Domestic	64%	79%	81%	83%	74%
International	36%	21%	19%	17%	26%
Undergraduate	68%	79%	84%	73%	78%
Postgraduate	32%	21%	16%	27%	22%
No disability	81%	79%	62%	69%	65%
With disability	13%	15%	32%	26%	31%
Prefer not to say	6%	6%	6%	5%	4%
Single degree	70%	68%	65%	95%	81%
Double degree	30%	32%	35%	5%	19%
No equity maker	37%	48%	38%	40%	34%
One equity maker	28%	32%	38%	42%	37%
Multiple equity maker	35%	20%	24%	18%	29%
Man	50%	60%	20%	27%	35%
Woman	49%	38%	71%	70%	59%
Other genders	1%	3%	9%	3%	6%
English	62%	73%	81%	80%	73%
LOTE	38%	27%	19%	20%	27%
Non-indigenous	99%	99%	98%	99%	98%
Indigenous	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Study in-person	66%	64%	83%	61%	65%
Study online	10%	14%	4%	15%	15%
Study hybrid mode	24%	22%	13%	24%	21%

Table 2. This table presents students' demographic characteristics by faculty. Cell colours are scaled across the full table, with green indicating higher percentages, yellow indicating mid-range percentages, and red indicating lower percentages. Percentages are calculated from a total sample of 2,817 UQ students.

3.2 AI Use

3.2.1 Guidance

The survey did not ask a separate faculty-specific guidance question, however a faculty-level breakdown of students' perceptions of sufficient AI guidance has been detailed. Faculty-level perceptions of sufficient AI guidance were relatively consistent across both studies and future profession.

Results presented in *Figure 13* suggest that students' agreement about sufficiency of faculty guidance for AI use in studies ranged from 33% to 42% with BEL reporting the highest proportion of students who felt there was sufficient guidance (42%), followed by EAIT (36%), HMBS (35%), HASS and Science (both 33%).

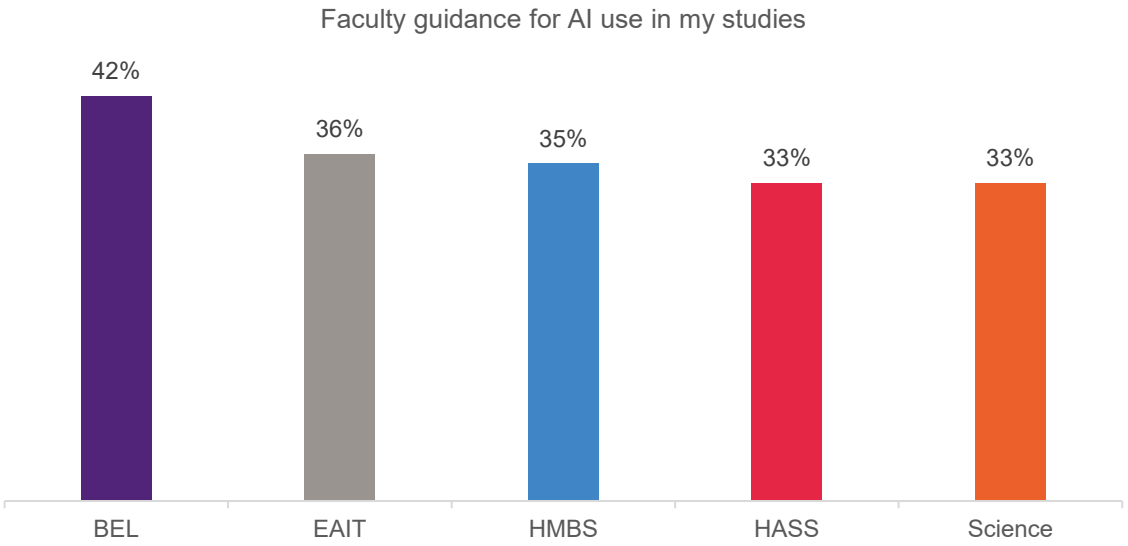


Figure 13. This figure presents students' agreement that they received sufficient faculty guidance on using AI in their studies, by faculty *(*see Question Q4.1 in Appendix A*)*. Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree".

For faculty guidance for AI use in future profession, results were slightly lower overall, ranging from 20% to 32%. Results presented in *Figure 14* suggests that BEL again reported the highest result (32%) followed by HMBS (28%), above UQ average of 26%, EAIT and Science (25% and 24% correspondingly), and HASS (20%). Overall, the findings suggest that perceptions of AI guidance were broadly similar across faculties but remained mostly below the UQ-wide average. This indicates a continued opportunity to strengthen faculty-level guidance for AI use in studies and future profession.

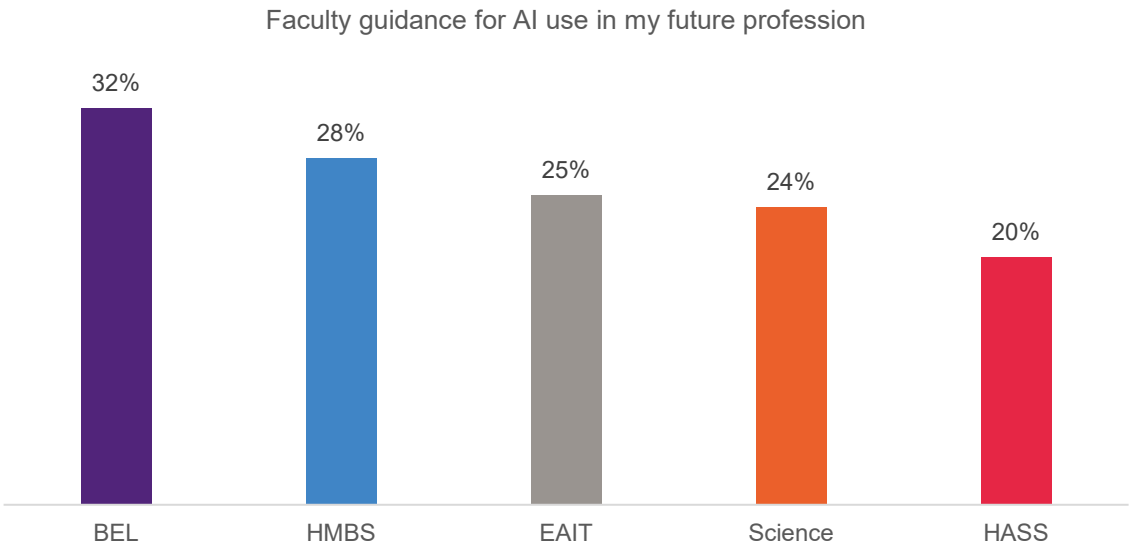


Figure 14. This figure presents students' agreement that they received sufficient faculty guidance on using AI in their future profession, by faculty (see Question Q4.2 in Appendix A). Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree".

Perceived guidance was consistently stronger for study use than for future professional use, with BEL students reporting the highest agreement in both contexts.

3.2.2 Study

Weekly or daily AI use for university study was highest in BEL (78%) and EAIT (69%), both above UQ-wide average of 57%. Results in *Figure 15* indicate that HMBS (55%) and Science (52%) were slightly below UQ average, while HASS reported the lowest level of regular AI use (32%). Overall, the findings suggest uneven adoption of AI use across faculties, with particularly strong engagement in BEL and EAIT.

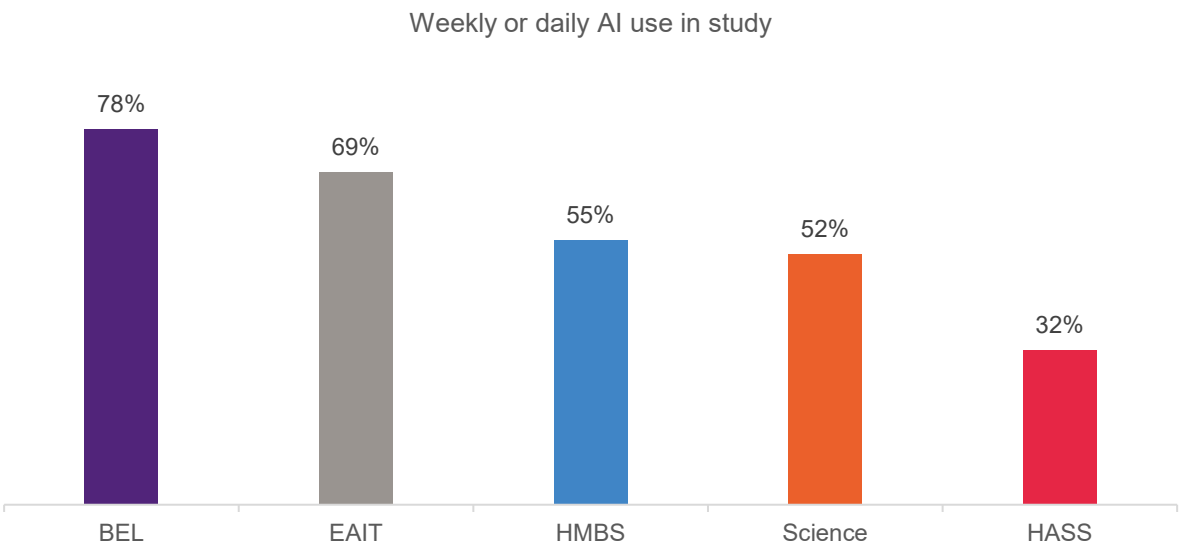


Figure 15 This figure presents students' regular use of AI for university study by faculty (see Questions Q3.1 in Appendix A). Regular use was defined as daily or weekly use. AI use varied substantially across faculties, with the strongest engagement among BEL and EAIT students and the lowest among HASS students.

3.2.3 Confidence for study

Students' confidence in using AI for study varied across faculties. *Figure 16* shows that such confidence ranged from 27% to 62%. BEL had the highest proportion of students who felt increasingly capable of using AI for their studies (62%), followed by EAIT (55%). Around 42% of students at HMBS felt confident using AI for studies, while HASS recorded the lowest (27%). Overall, the findings suggest uneven distribution of confidence in AI use across faculties.

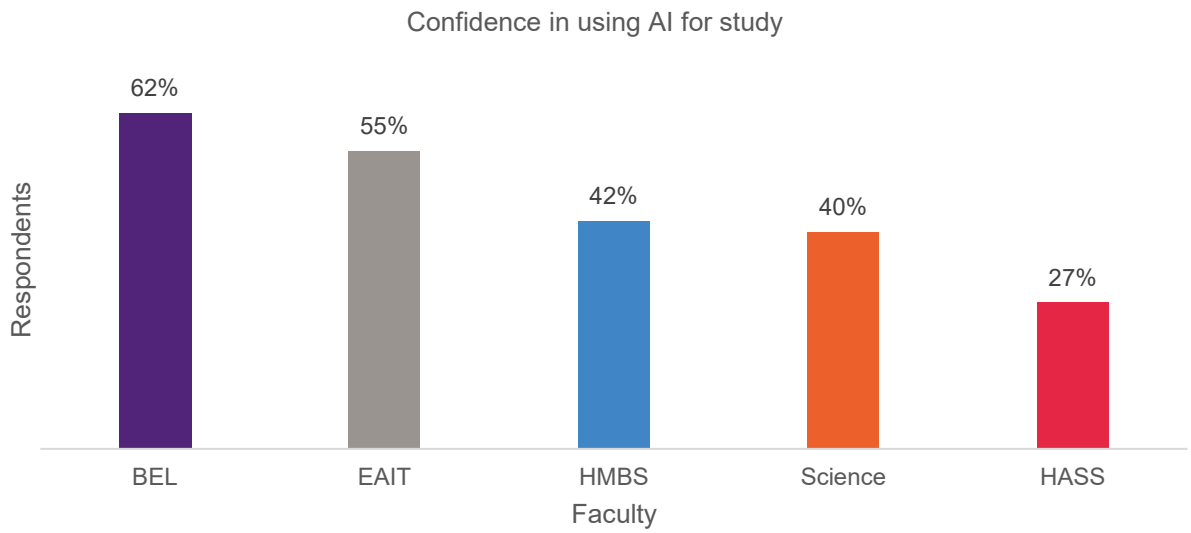


Figure 16. This figure presents students' agreement that they felt increasingly capable of using AI for university study, by faculty (see Questions Q11 in Appendix A). Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Perceived capability varied substantially across faculties, with the highest agreement among BEL and EAIT students and the lowest among HASS students.

3.2.4 Making study easier

Motivation to use AI because it makes study easier varied across faculties, ranging from 25% to 55% as shown in *Figure 17*. BEL recorded the highest proportion of students who were motivated by this reason (55%) while HASS reported the lowest results at 25%. This pattern broadly aligns with confidence in using AI for study (see *Figure 16* above). BEL recorded the highest results for both motivation (55%) and confidence (62%), while HASS recorded the lowest results for both measures (25% and 27% respectively). This suggests that confidence may be linked to students' motivation to use AI to make study easier, although further analysis would be needed to confirm the relationship.

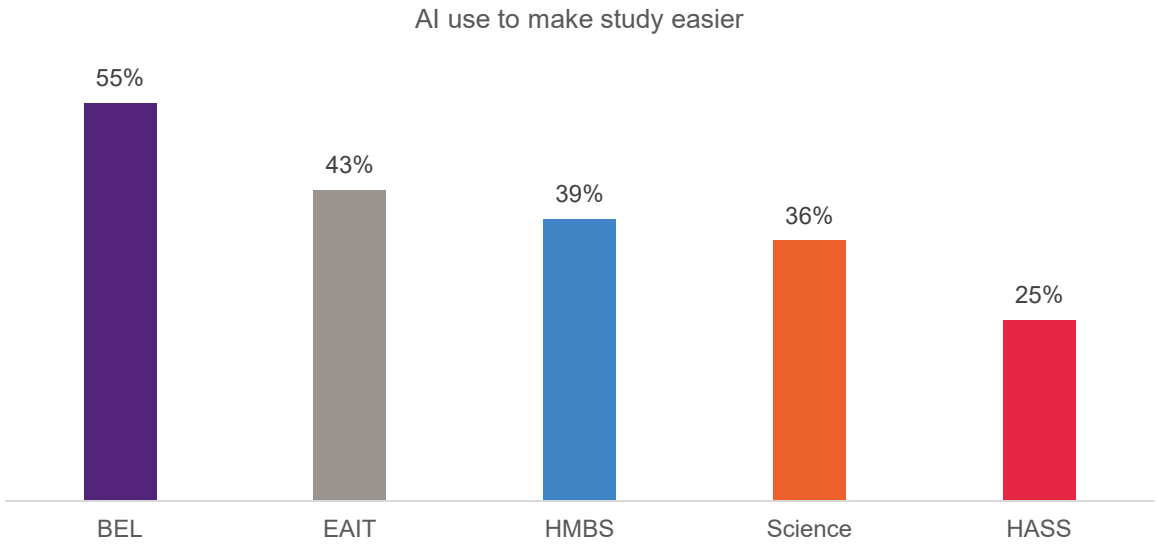


Figure 17. This figure presents students' motivation to use AI in their studies because it makes studying easier, by faculty (see Question Q1.1 in Appendix A). Percentages represent students who selected "A great deal" or "A lot". Motivation varied across faculties, with the highest levels among BEL students and the lowest among HASS students.

3.2.5 When not allowed in assessment

Reporting of AI use when not allowed in assessment was relatively low across faculties, ranging from 4% to 15%. Results presented in *Figure 18* indicate that BEL recorded the highest proportion (15%), while HASS recorded the lowest (4%). Overall, the findings suggest that non-permitted AI use was reported by a minority of students, with only modest variation among faculties.

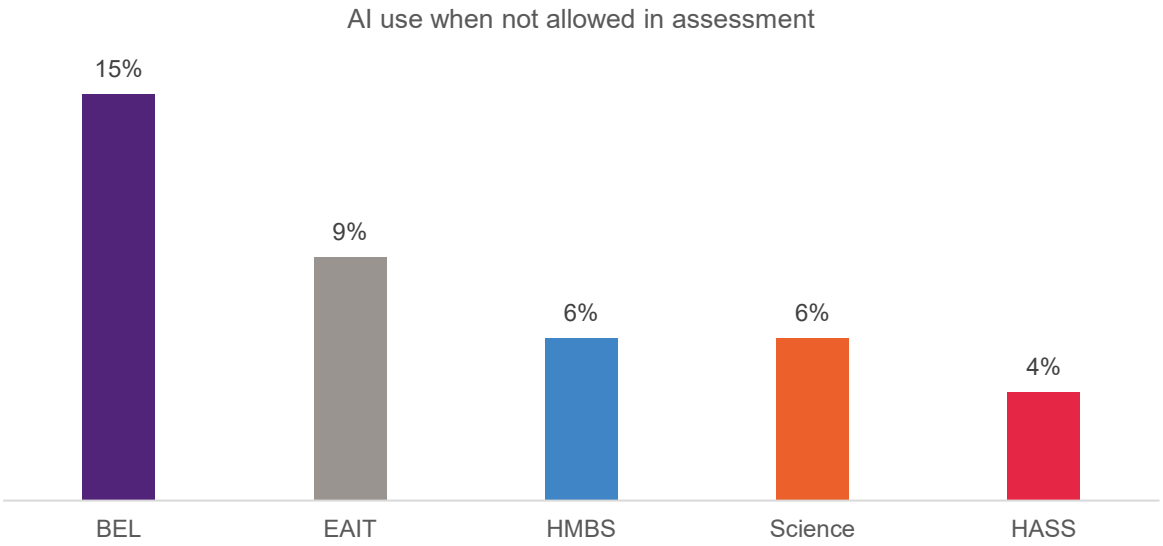


Figure 18. This figure presents students' use of AI in assessments when AI was not allowed, by faculty (see Question Q7.1 in Appendix A). Percentages represent students who selected "Most of the time" or "Always". Such use was uncommon across all faculties but was most prevalent among BEL students and least prevalent among HASS students.

3.3 Views

Student views around AI rules in assessment and how much they ignored AI in assessment design were captured.

3.3.1 AI rules in assessment

There was a consensus among students across faculties that current AI rules in assessment are reasonable, with agreement ranging from 58% to 69%, as shown in *Figure 19*. HMBS reported the highest agreement (69%), while HASS reported lowest (58%). Overall, most students viewed the University's AI assessment rules as reasonable.

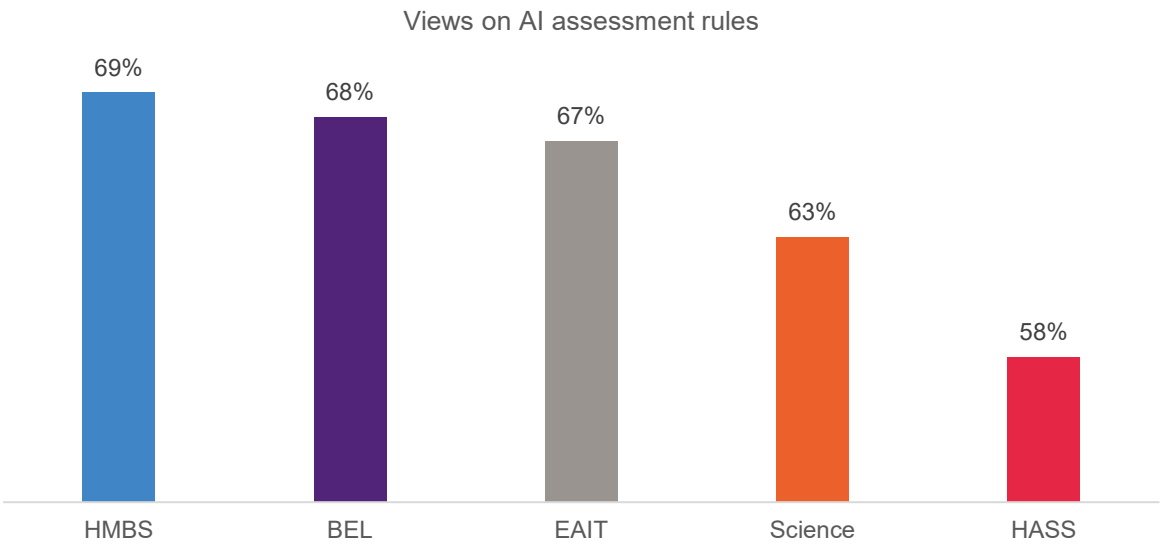


Figure 19. This figure presents students' agreement that the University's rules regarding AI use in assessment are reasonable, by faculty (see Question Q9.5 in Appendix A). Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Agreement was consistently high across faculties, although HASS students reported comparatively lower agreement.

3.3.2 Ignoring AI in assessment design

Student agreement that assessment should be designed without considering AI was relatively consistent across faculties, ranging from 20% to 32%. *Figure 19* shows that HASS reported the highest agreement (32%), while BEL and EAIT reported the lowest agreement (both 20%). Overall, the findings suggest that only a minority of students supported ignoring AI in assessment design.

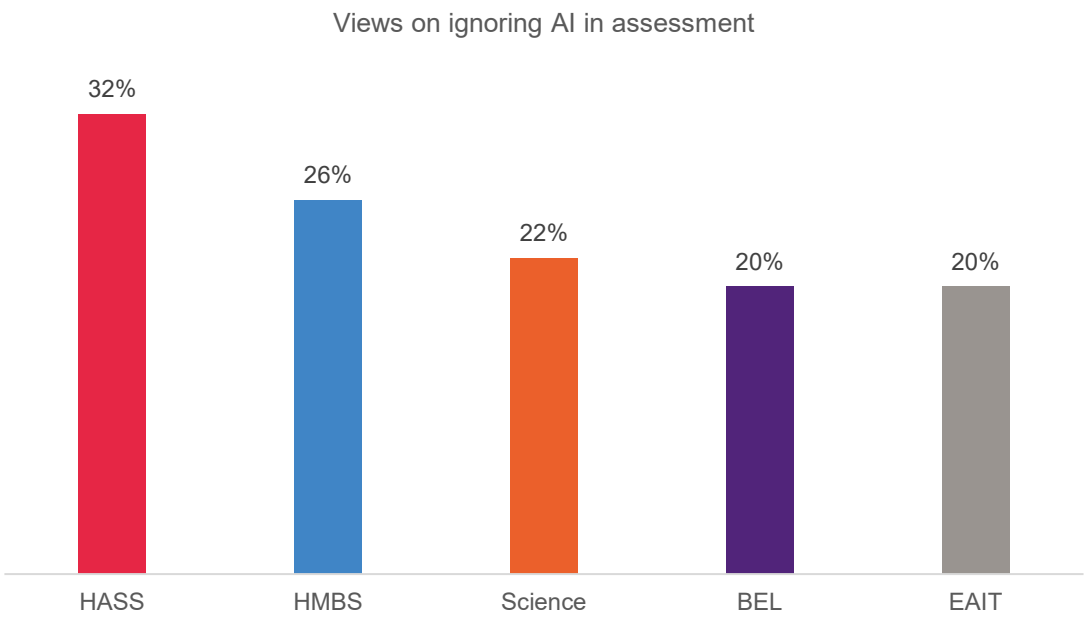


Figure19. This figure presents students' agreement that assessment should be designed without consideration of AI use, by faculty (see Question Q9.4 in Appendix A). Agreement was defined as selecting "Somewhat agree" or "Strongly agree". Agreement was relatively low across all faculties, although HASS students were more likely to support this view.

4 Changes in AI use since 2024

Several changes can be observed in how UQ students engage with AI since the 2024 survey was run.

4.1 AI Use

Between 2024 and 2026, UQ students' overall use of AI for study increased from 81% to 86%, while weekly or daily use rose more sharply, from 41% to 57%. At the same time, trust in AI outputs declined slightly: the proportion who trust what AI generates fell from 25% to 23%, while those who do not trust what AI generates increased from 52% to 58%. This suggests growing caution or critical awareness despite increased AI use.

4.2 Purpose

The most common study tasks remained editing or improving writing (65% to 67%) and generating ideas and examples (unchanged at 63%). Use increased for step-by-step learning (50% to 60%) and finding information or conducting research (48% to 54%); getting feedback on work entered the top five in 2026 at 50%. Use for accessibility challenges declined from 16% to 12%.

4.3 Reasons

Motivations shifted modestly toward efficiency: using AI because it makes things easier increased from 31% to 39%, makes things faster from 41% to 48%, and helps overcome blocks from 40% to 45%. Perceived improvements in work quality remained similar (24% to 25%), while enabling otherwise impossible tasks declined slightly (22% to 21%).

4.4 Assessment contexts

Concerns about assessment rules declined but remained high: worries about breaking university rules fell from 90% to 84%, and those worried a lot dropped more sharply from 61% to 46%. Reported use of AI when not permitted was largely unchanged: 39% to 38% for at least once, and 7% to 8% for frequent use.

4.5 Confidence for study

Confidence in using AI effectively increased substantially: confidence using AI effectively in studies rose from 24% to 35%, and confidence using AI effectively in a future profession increased from 17% to 26%. This points to growing perceived capability, even as trust in AI-generated outputs remains limited.

5 Analytical notes

Although 2,870 survey responses were received, 53 were excluded during data cleaning due to incomplete or insufficient response patterns. The remaining responses were included in the final dataset. Excluded responses were primarily those from respondents who did not complete the demographic questions and did not progress beyond the first survey item, together with a small number of responses containing substantial missing data.

Percentages were calculated using respondents who answered the relevant item. The response categories combined for each percentage, such as “Somewhat agree” and “Strongly agree”, are shown in the table below. Item response rates were calculated against the full 2026 analytical sample of 2,817 respondents. For subsections with multiple items, *Table 3* below shows the relevant response count or range and response rate.

Report subsection	Measure or items	Categories used to calculate reported percentage	Responses (n)	Response rate
Reasons for using AI	Reasons or motivations for using AI	A great deal; A lot	2,680	95%
Barriers to using AI	Factors discouraging or preventing AI use	A great deal; A lot	2,640	94%
AI use by purpose	Frequency of AI use for study, work and personal purposes	Less Often; Monthly; Weekly; Daily	2,817	100%
University guidance	Guidance for using generative AI in studies and future profession	Based on response categories reported for each item	2,440	87%
University guidance	Use of specialised university AI chatbots and university-provided access to AI	Based on response categories reported for each item	2,440	87%
Attitudes	Conflict, tension and principled avoidance associated with AI use	Somewhat agree; Strongly agree	2,623	93%
Sophistication of students’ engagement with AI	Advanced AI practices	A great deal; A lot	2,413	86%
Sophistication of students’ engagement with AI	Use of AI as a study buddy, colleague or coach	Somewhat agree; Strongly agree	2,413	86%
Assessment Contexts	Views about AI’s implications for assessment and degrees	Somewhat agree; Strongly agree	2,534	90%
Assessment Contexts	Perceived quality, learning and capability when AI was allowed or restricted	Somewhat agree; Strongly agree	2,534	90%
Confidence for Study	Whether students’ generative-AI capability was increasing	Based on response categories reported for the item	2,413	86%
AI Rules in Assessment	Frequency of AI use in assessments where it was explicitly permitted/not allowed	Any use: Always/Most of the time/About half the time/Sometimes; Frequent use: Always/Most of the time	2,474	88%

Table 3. This table presents the response rates, and question option values used to calculate the agreement and report the percentages for each report subsection. Percentages were calculated using respondents who answered the relevant item, with item response rates calculated against

the full sample of 2,817 respondents. For subsections containing multiple items, the table reports the applicable response count or range.

Appendix A: Survey questions used in the report

This table presents the full phrasing of each survey item included in the analysis, together with the abbreviated labels used in report figures and charts.

Question Reference	Report Section	Full item phrasing	Shorthand used in chart
Q1.1	**Reasons for use**	I am motivated to use GenAI in my studies because it: - Makes things easier	Makes things easier
Q1.2		- Makes things faster	Makes things faster
Q1.3		Improves the quality of my work	Improves the quality of my work
Q1.4		- Helps me get unstuck / overcome blocks	Helps me get unstuck / overcome blocks
Q1.5		- Helps me do things I could not do otherwise	Helps me do things I could not do otherwise
Q1.6		- Helps me overcome accessibility challenges (e.g., transcribing audio because I have a hearing impairment)	Motivation Accessibility Support
Q1.7		- Improves my English language skills	Improves my English language skills
Q1.8		- Improves my grades	Improves my grades
Q1.9		- Reduces my stress	Reduces my stress
Q1.10		- Is enjoyable	Is enjoyable
Q1.11		- Helps me feel more confident	Helps me feel more confident
Q2.1	**Reasons to avoid using AI (barriers)**	I limit or avoid using GenAI in my studies because: - It can be inaccurate or make things up	Accuracy concerns
Q2.2		- I want to do it myself	Independence
Q2.3		- I have ethical concerns	Ethical concern
Q2.4		- I am worried about breaking my university's rules	Rule compliance
Q2.5		- I am worried about the privacy of my own data	Data privacy
Q2.6		- It can't do what I need it to do	AI capability
Q2.7		- I can't afford access to good GenAI tools	Affordability

Q2.8		- I don't have access to good GenAI tools	Tool access
Q2.9		- I don't know how to use it confidently	User confidence
Q2.10		- I don't know what tools to use	Tool knowledge
Q3.1	**Where students use AI**	How often do you use GenAI tools for the following reasons: - For university study	University study
Q3.2		- For work	Work
Q3.4		- For personal reasons	Personal reasons
Q3.5		I have used specialised AI chatbots provided by my university (e.g., Role-play conversations, Writing feedback, Reflective dialogues).	Use of University-provided chatbots
Q4.1	**Guidance for using AI**	My university provides me with enough guidance to use GenAI effectively in my studies.	Guidance for study
Q4.2		My university provides me with enough guidance to use GenAI effectively in my future profession.	Guidance for future profession
Q5.1	**How students think and feel about AI**	To what extent do you agree with the following statements? - I use AI despite feeling conflicted about it	Use AI despite feeling conflicted
Q5.2		- I experience little or no tension when using AI	Little/no tension when using AI
Q5.3		- I try to avoid using generative AI for ethical, personal or principled reasons	Avoid AI for principled reasons
Q6.1	**Advanced AI engagement**	How accurately do the following practices describe your uses of GenAI? - I fact check or verify the outputs produced by GenAI	Verify AI outputs
Q6.2		- I can sense when I don't really understand what GenAI produces	Identify knowledge gaps
Q6.3		For me, GenAI isn't just a tool, it's more like a "study buddy", colleague or coach.	Use AI as coach
Q6.4		- I've had extended conversations with GenAI that were helpful	Sustain AI conversations
Q6.5		- I prompt chatbots to change their default settings/ behaviour	Customise AI behaviour
Q6.6		- I choose specific GenAI apps for different purposes	Choose fit-for-purpose tools
Q6.7		- I combine different GenAI apps to get better results	Combine AI tools
Q6.8		- I use GenAI to analyse data (e.g., numerical or textual)	Analyse data
Q6.9		- I use GenAI to help me practise potentially challenging conversations	Rehearse conversations

Q6.10		- I help others get better results with GenAI	Support others
Q6.11		- I use GenAI embedded within software apps (e.g., writing, spreadsheets, coding)	Use embedded AI tools
Q6.12		- I use GenAI to generate/edit non-textual media (e.g., images, audio, video, or diagrams)	Create/edit media
Q6.13		- I design my own agents (e.g. to perform tasks on files, or talk to other agents)	Design agents
Q6.14		- I design my own chatbots	Design chatbots
Q7.1	**Student AI use by assessment permission**	How frequently do you do the following: - I use GenAI to help me with part or all of an assessment when I am not supposed to	When AI use is not allowed
Q7.2		- I use AI in assessments when it is explicitly permitted	When AI use is explicitly permitted
Q8.1	**Student experiences of AI in assessment**	When an assessment task allows me to use AI: - I can produce high quality work	AI allowed: Produce high-quality work
Q8.2		- I can learn deeply	AI allowed: Learn deeply
Q8.3		- I can show my true capability	AI allowed: Show true capability
Q8.4		- Markers can assess my true capability	AI allowed: Markers assess true capability
Q8.5		- I can produce high quality work	AI restricted: Produce high-quality work
Q8.6		- I can learn deeply	AI restricted: Learn deeply
Q8.7		- I can show my true capability	AI restricted: Show true capability
Q8.8		- Markers can assess my true capability	AI restricted: Markers assess true capability
Q9.1	**Student views on assessment design**	How strongly do you agree with the following statements? - Assessment should ensure a student is not dependent on AI	Assessment ensures a student isn't dependent on AI
Q9.2		- Allowing AI use in assessment devalues my university degree	Allowing AI devalues degree
Q9.3		- Restricting AI use in assessment shows a lack of trust in students	Restricting AI shows lack of trust
Q9.4		- Assessment should be designed without any consideration of AI use	Assessment should ignore AI in design
Q9.5		To what extent do you agree with the following statements? - My university's rules regarding the use of AI in assessment are reasonable	AI assessment rules are reasonable
Q11	**Confidence in using AI for study**	I feel increasingly capable in using GenAI for my university studies.	Confidence in using AI for study

Appendix B: Comparison of 2024 and 2026 data

Comparison of 2024 and 2026 data for all four universities

Data on the next page compares survey results from 2024 and 2026. The horizontal bars show results from the combined four-universities, while the vertical marker indicates the corresponding result for The University of Queensland (UQ) only.

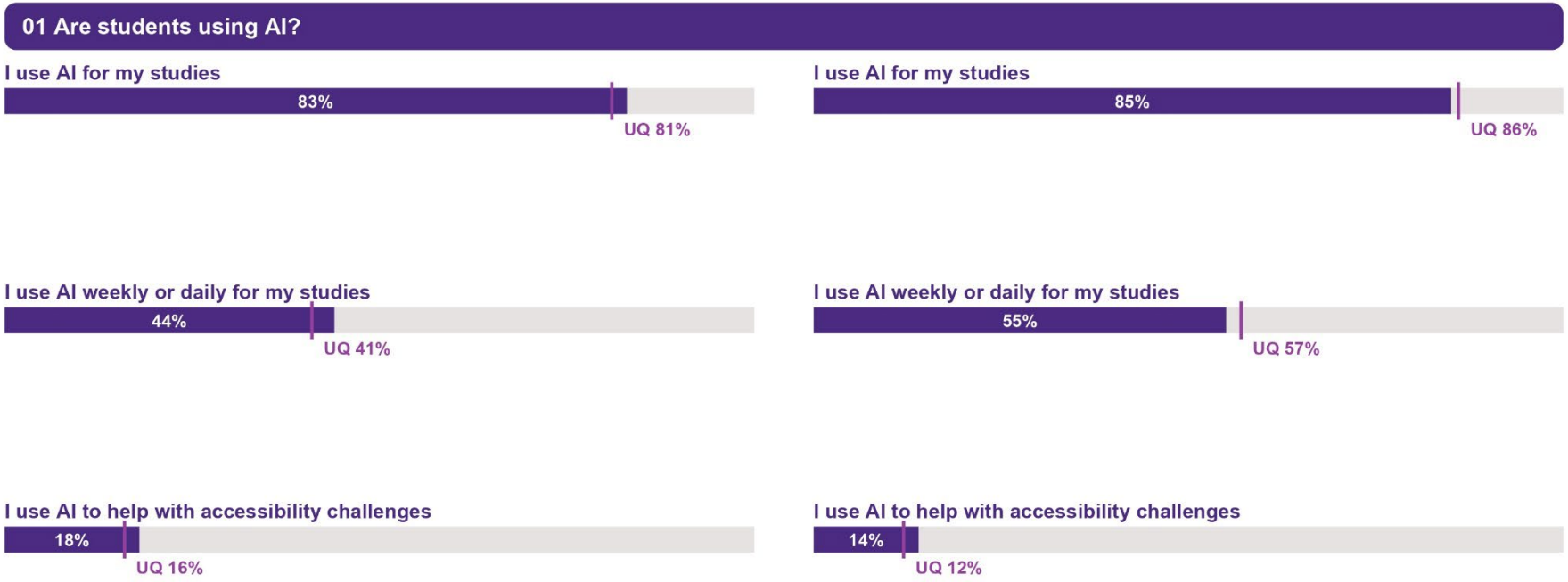
Student Perspectives on AI in Higher Education: 2024-2026 Comparison

Participants

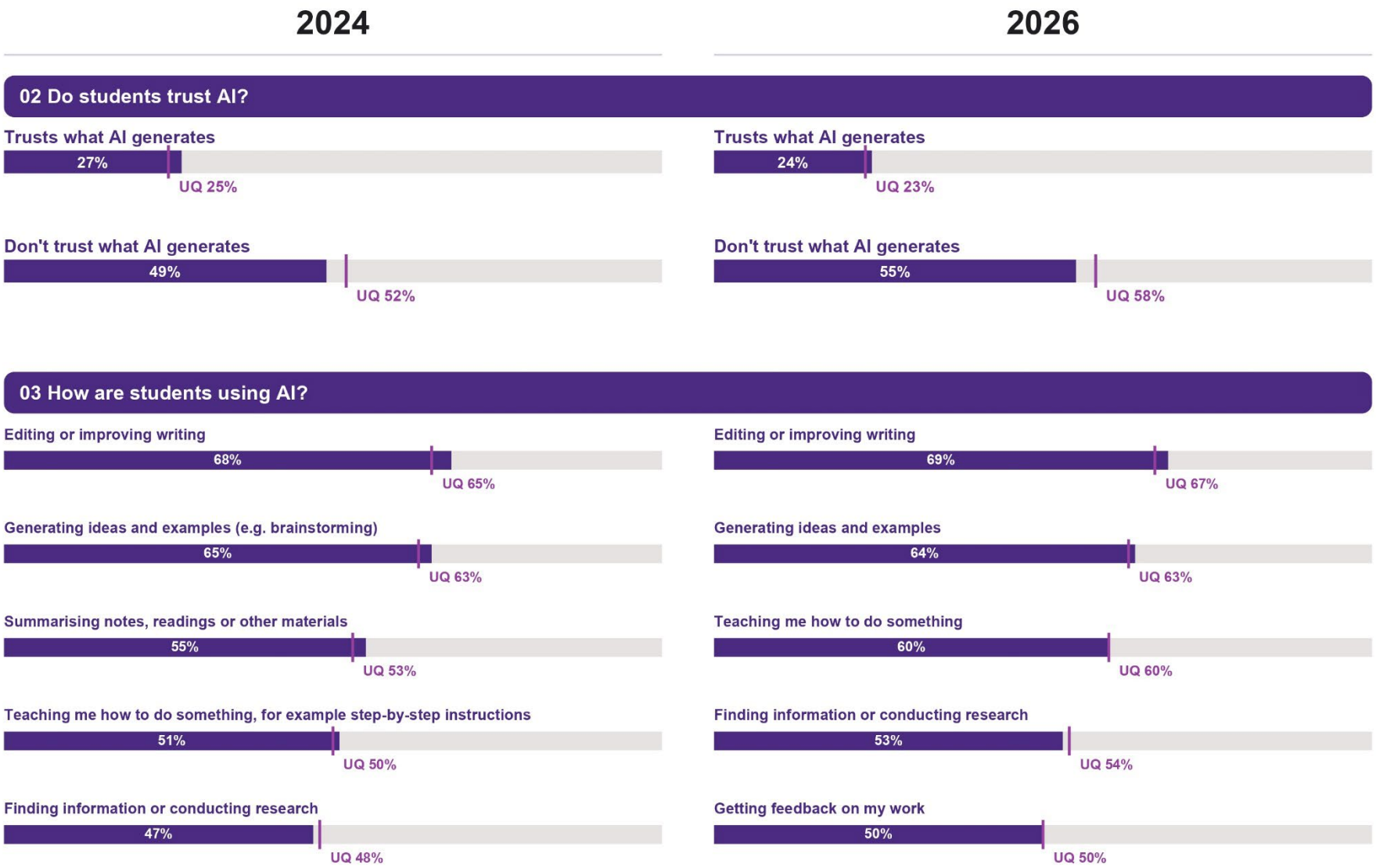
10222 students from 4 universities completed a survey (March-July 2026) on the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in their university studies.

Total survey responses (10222 students) | UQ survey responses only (2817 students)

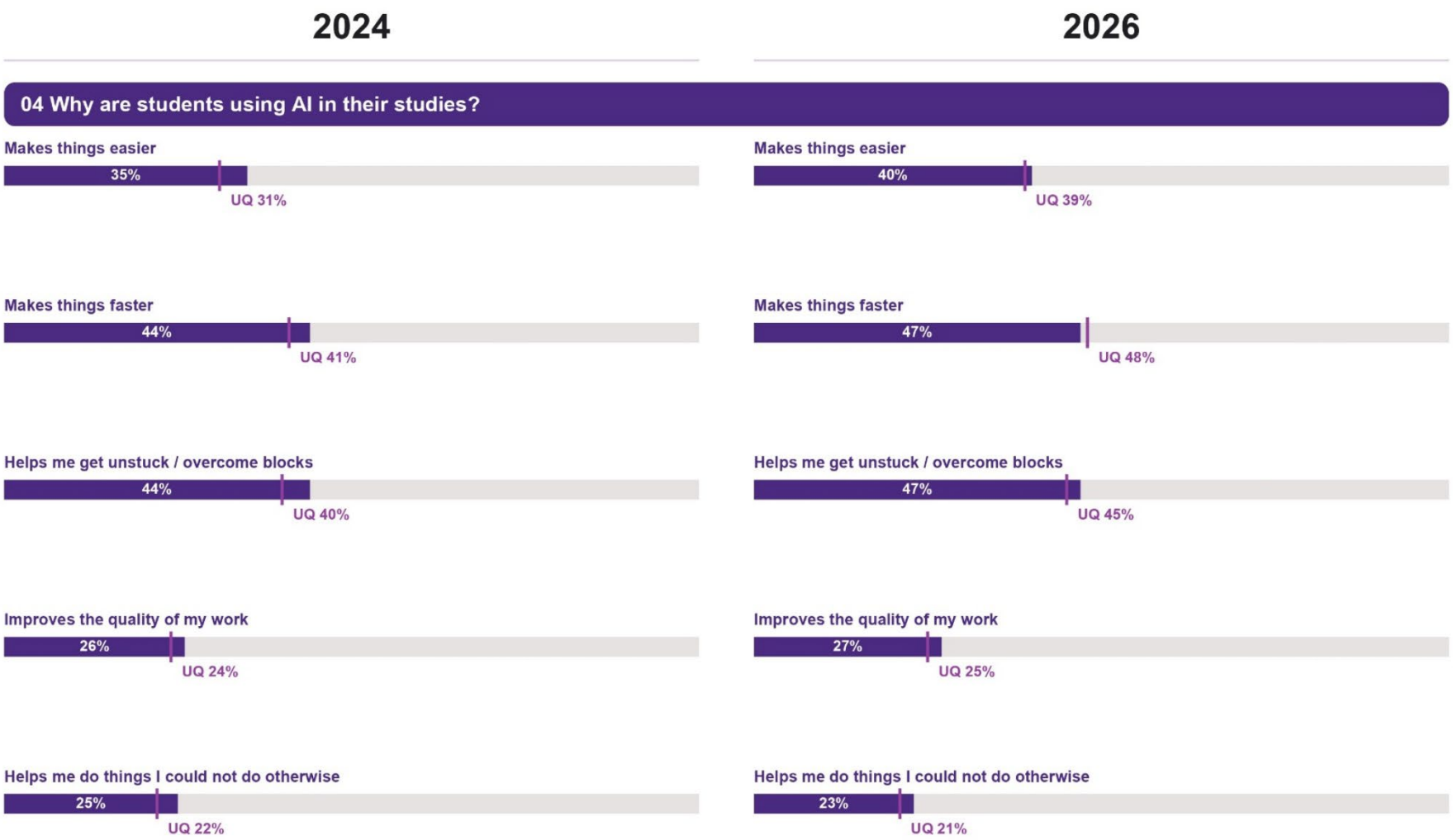
01 Are students using AI?



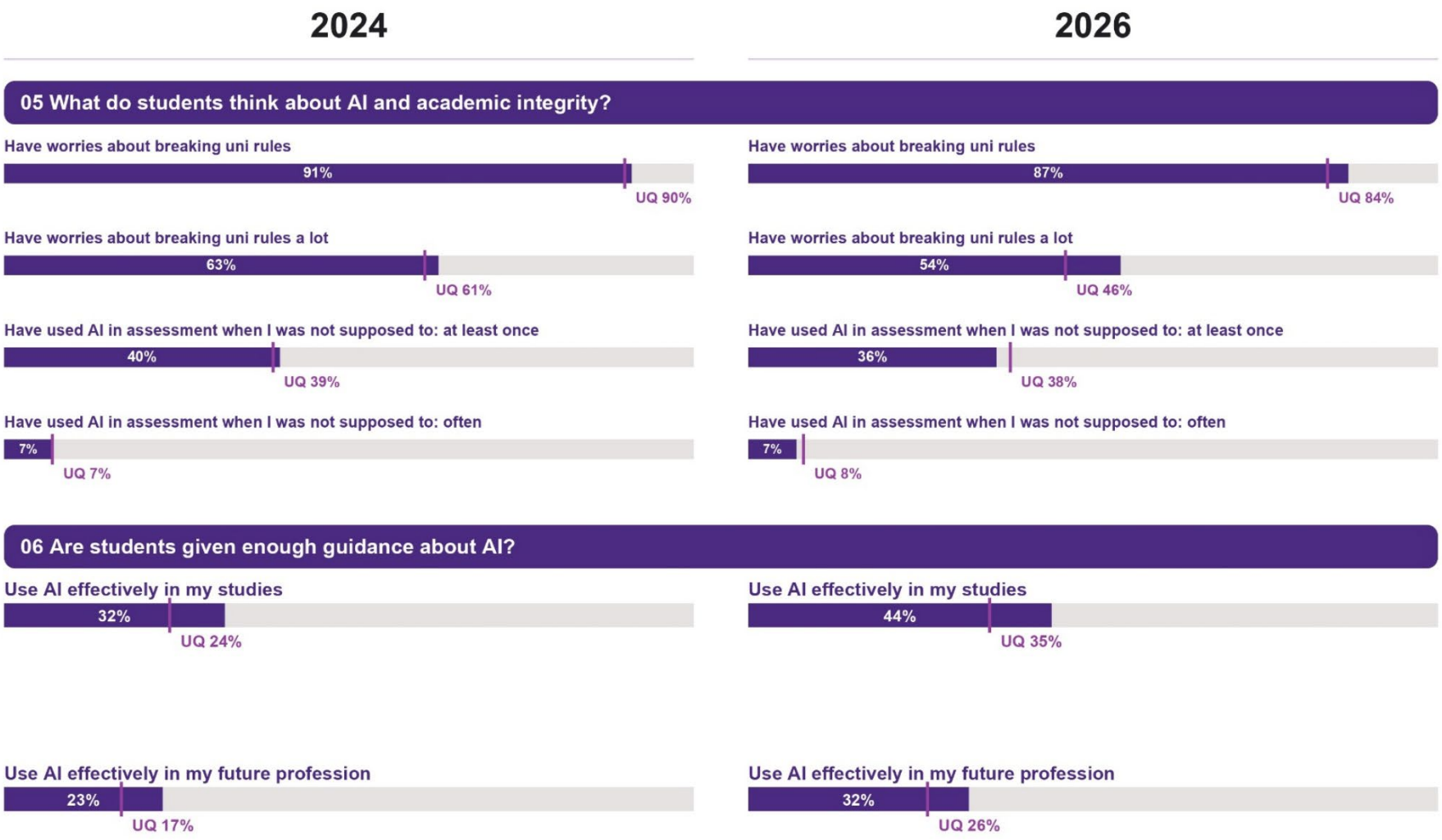
Student Perspectives on AI in Higher Education: 2024-2026 Comparison



Student Perspectives on AI in Higher Education: 2024-2026 Comparison



Student Perspectives on AI in Higher Education: 2024-2026 Comparison



THE UNIVERSITY OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA

CREATE CHANGE

Contact details

Lead through Learning Program
E leadthroughlearning@uq.edu.au
W uq.edu.au

CRICOS Provider Number 00025B