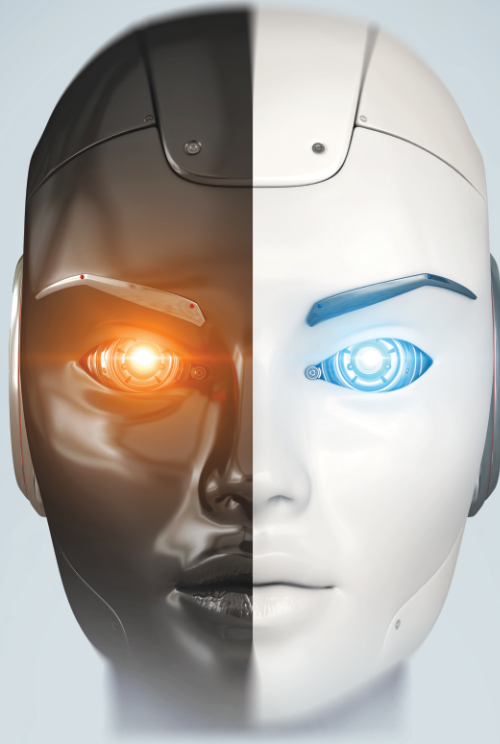


Post Roundtable Report



Ethical and Responsible use of **Generative AI**

in Pakistan's
Higher Education Institutions

Wednesday, 3rd June 2026

Conversations



@Foothills

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Ethical and Responsible use of Generative AI

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Supervised by

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Prepared by

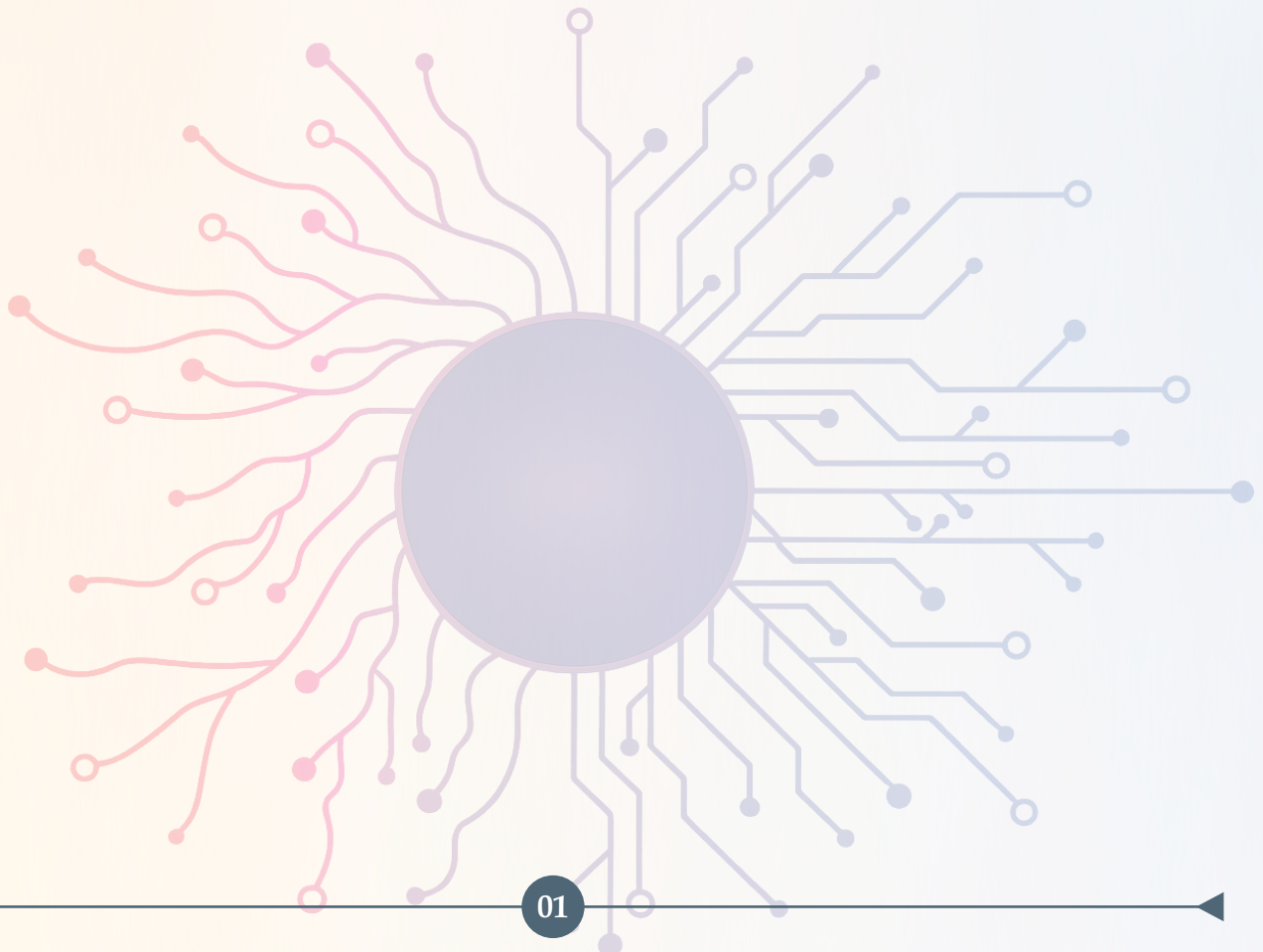
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Senior Research Scholar, Internal Security Studies Branch, ISSRA

Disclaimer: The discussion and report have followed Chatham House rule. The statements, facts and opinions by speakers do not constitute the official policy of ISSRA/NDU.

CONCEPT NOTE

The Higher Education Commission has issued a draft framework on the ethical use of Generative AI in Higher Education Institutions. It recognises the growing role of tools such as ChatGPT in teaching, research, and administration while emphasising academic integrity, transparency, and responsible use. The framework encourages universities to develop institutional policies, raise awareness, and establish oversight mechanisms to ensure the ethical use of AI. Internationally, universities are increasingly adopting structured approaches to integrating AI in education. Organisations such as UNESCO advocate a balanced approach that promotes innovation while

maintaining ethical safeguards. Best practices include transparent disclosure of AI-assisted work, integration of AI literacy into curricula, redesigning assessments to promote critical thinking, and developing institutional governance frameworks for responsible AI use. This Round Table will examine the Higher Education Commission's framework in light of evolving global practices. The discussion will focus on possible refinements, including clearer guidance on academic use, disclosure mechanisms, capacity-building for faculty and students, and suitable assessment models. The aim is to develop practical recommendations to improve the clarity and implementation of the AI policy in higher education institutions in Pakistan.



Key Takeaways

- Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping academic integrity, global economies, and human behaviours by outsourcing cognitive skills and logical reasoning to machines. The students have already adopted AI, so the reactive regime of prohibition, containment, or policing is bound to fail.
- According to Stanford University research, Automated AI detection tools like Turnitin rely on 'perplexity' and are scientifically flawed due to systemic linguistic biases. Relying solely on these automated detectors creates ethical and structural vulnerabilities.
- AI use is sometimes seen as taboo in Pakistan, which creates widespread confusion that undermines academic transparency vis-à-vis technological advancements.
- The fear or ban approach to AI is due to the generational gap between students and senior administrators. It is evident because some senior teachers could not even log in to their basic university portals during the recent digital drives.
- The HEC's AI framework establishes five pillars for the effective use of AI. However, its implementation is decentralised across universities, without clear guidelines, creating institutional uncertainty.
- AI is rapidly evolving. Therefore, any HEC policy must be flexible, inclusive, and designed to embrace the technology rather than restrict it. To prevent the policy from lagging behind advancements, its formulation requires cross-sector dialogue and a broad range of expertise. However, limits for its ethical use and a code of conduct may be defined.
- National AI governance must stand on six clear principles. These are total transparency about tool use, keeping humans accountable, protecting non-native writers, ensuring data privacy, designing fair exams, and teaching students about AI mistakes and hallucinations.
- Universities should integrate epistemological training within their core curricula, focusing directly on the cultivation of the 5Cs (critical thinking, creativity, communication, collaboration, and coordination) to understand what constitutes truth and how to acquire it.
- To preserve research quality in the AI era, universities should adopt hybrid assessment frameworks such as the Partitioned Thesis, Two-Lane, or Chinese Pillar models. These frameworks strategically separate AI-assisted tasks from human-only critical analysis alongside real-world impact.
- HEC should look beyond the classroom to align higher education with shifting economic realities. So, the graduates must be prepared for an AI-driven market that increasingly values prompt engineering, continuous quality improvement, and cognitive adaptability over traditional formal degrees.

Summary of Proceedings

- Historical technologies, such as the typewriter or Word Processor, were used for simple tasks. They kept human thinking intact. The authors had to build their own logic and ideas offline.
- Generative AI directly targets human thinking. It automates writing, summaries, and analysis. This creates a risk where machines replace human minds. This practice ruins personal intellectual character.
- AI tools work like a text calculator. They help speed up work but require solid subject knowledge to check for mistakes. Without basic subject knowledge, students cannot judge whether the AI output is correct or incorrect.
- Consequently, a wide gap has emerged between mere “AI users” and true “AI thinkers”. Higher education must focus on deeply understanding the technology rather than just using it to generate text.
- Global data from the Higher Education Policy Institute 2025 and The Guardian show that 92% of university students use ChatGPT. However, only 33% have received proper training. 53% of students favour clear ethical rules. Also, 73% of students want professors to give clear course boundaries in the syllabus.
- AI tools have become a new source of learning for young people. Students find AI-generated data more reliable than parents or professors. This makes top-down bans useless. Paid AI tools also create a gap between rich and poor students. This inequality is worse in underdeveloped areas with low internet connectivity.
- With the induction of AI, data privacy has also emerged as a major vulnerability, as student assignments and research drafts are regularly uploaded to detection websites without protection or disclosure.
- The HEC has provided a broad AI framework and asked the universities to develop localised policies for themselves. Different institutions follow different rules. This policy vacuum forces many teachers to rely on international guidelines rather than local frameworks, underscoring the policy's weakness.
- Survey data from Islamabad highlights this disconnect: 100% of students want to use AI without restrictions, while 74% of teachers bypass HEC guidelines to follow European rules, and only 34% of faculty members have even read the HEC framework.
- Senior faculty members in Pakistan often discourage AI usage. Instead of blocking it, academic committees need to adapt to this technological revolution. However, AI use should be openly declared in the research methodology section for transparency.
- Ultimately, the critical question for HEC and university leadership is whether they choose to actively guide this structural evolution or continue ignoring a transformation that has already taken place.

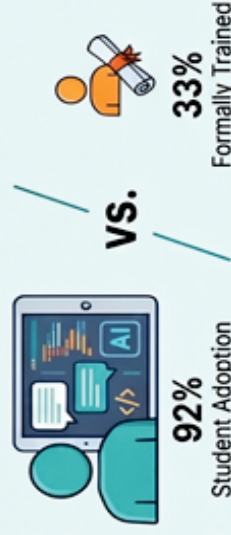
- Any policy adopted by HEC to regulate AI should be formulated with the spirit of embracing and encouraging the emerging technology rather than restricting or discouraging its use.
- The fixed AI policy is more likely to lag behind the advancements. Therefore, the policy should be inclusive rather than exclusive. It must be flexible enough to adapt to rapid technological advancements and should not become outdated as it is implemented.
- A degree-seeking culture that promotes generative AI encourages students to treat it as an alternative to critical thinking. This practice shifts the institutional focus away from genuine knowledge acquisition. So, the universities need to protect critical thinking. They should add structured instruction in critical and independent thinking to the syllabus before students start using AI tools.
- The universities should not ban AI. Instead, professors must add clear AI statements in every course syllabus to show the exact rules. Grading must shift to the actual writing process by checking version histories, rough drafts, and student reflections.
- Universities can adopt the hybrid assessment method while shifting grading metrics to prioritise the learning process over the final textual product.
- The Partitioned Thesis Model divides the thesis into two parts. The first is the Innovation Layer, where students can use AI for data mapping and literature reviews. The second is the human-only Nobility Layer, where AI cannot write results, discussions, or conclusions.
- In the two-Lane assessment system, Lane 1 consists of supervised writing exams and oral vivas. Lane 2 involves students using AI, with teachers grading their prompts and providing feedback on their logic and improvements.
- The Chinese Pillar Model from Chongyang Normal University evaluates three things. It examines the final physical product, the original human input, and the real-world commercial value within a continuous quality improvement system.
- The job market now looks for prompt engineering skills instead of degrees. The market will pick those people who know how to write excellent AI prompts. Employers value practical AI skills such as prompting and data handling. Strict academic rules on AI can reduce the global competitiveness of local students.
- Looking ahead, Pakistan needs to develop national AI infrastructure, such as data centres. Although this raises environmental concerns due to massive energy and water requirements for cooling, sustainable solutions must be explored to support this economic shift.

Beyond the Ban: A Framework for AI in Pakistani Higher Education

Shifting from a surveillance-based "detection" model to a literacy-led "enablement" framework for Generative AI.

THE REALITY GAP & THE DETECTION TRAP

92% Adoption vs. 1-in-3 Trained

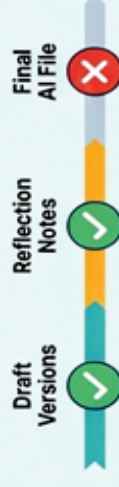


THE ROADMAP TO AI ENABLEMENT

Redesign, Don't Police



Prioritise "Process over Product"



Grade draft versions and reflection notes rather than just the final AI-generated file.

Focus on the Five 'Cs'

Shift curricula toward Communication, Collaboration, Creativity, Critical Thinking, and Coordination.



PROGRAMME

Time	Event
1030-1100	Arrival of Guests/ Registration at NDU Conference Room
1100-1105	Tilawat
1105-1115	Welcome Note by DG ISSRA
1115-1120	Introduction by the Moderator
1120-1135	Evaluating HEC's AI Policy Professor Muhammad Ali Nasir, Advisor (Research & Innovation) HEC How can Pakistan's emerging AI governance framework in higher education be assessed in terms of clarity, adaptability, and institutional applicability beyond regulatory intent?
1135-1150	Global AI Education Practices Professor Duncan Pritchard, Director, Centre for Knowledge, Technology & Society, University of California, USA What lessons can Pakistani higher education institutions draw from global AI adoption practices in curriculum design, assessment models, and academic integrity frameworks?
1150-1205	Way Forward Professor Zubair Iqbal, Vice Chancellor, Bahauddin Zakariya University (BZU), Multan What should be the strategic roadmap for integrating generative AI in higher education institutions in Pakistan, particularly in terms of faculty capacity-building, assessment redesign, institutional governance, and ethical safeguards?
1205-1320	Interactive Session
1320-1330	Wrap up / Closing Remarks
1330-1335	Group Photograph
1335 onwards	Lunch / Dispersal

PHOTO GALLERY





