

AI IN TEACHING AND LEARNING

Making Shadow AI Visible

A 20-minute staff discussion to understand how AI is already being used across a school or college, why people are using it and where clearer guidance or support may be needed.

Purpose

AI may already be used in lesson planning, differentiation, translation, revision, research, accessibility, administration and assessment-related work. Some of that use may sit outside agreed systems, policies or organisational oversight.

This activity helps a staff team make current practice visible before deciding what should be encouraged, reviewed or changed.

STARTING PRINCIPLE

This is a conversation about practice, not compliance.

By the end of 20 minutes

- 1 Map current use**
Identify tools, features and common use cases.
- 2 Understand the need**
Ask what problem staff or learners are trying to solve.
- 3 Agree next steps**
Separate useful practice from areas that need checking or change.

Tip: Anonymous responses can help surface experimentation that staff may otherwise be reluctant to discuss.

S Sense Check

Question and verify AI outputs.

A Assess Data

Consider what information is being shared.

F Follow the Flow

Understand where data, instructions and trust travel.

E Evaluate Actions

Consider consequences and human oversight.



FACILITATOR GUIDE

20-minute run sheet

TOTAL TIME: 20 MINUTES

Keep the first half exploratory. Tool approval, policy decisions and detailed risk assessment can follow after the group understands what is actually happening.

0-3 min

STEP 1

What counts as AI use?

Ask where AI might already appear in the working day. Include obvious chatbots as well as AI features built into search, productivity tools, learning platforms and devices.

Prompt examples: planning, differentiation, translation, summaries, images, presentations, revision, accessibility, search and administration.

3-8 min

STEP 2

What are we already using?

Individually or in pairs, name AI tools or AI-enabled features people have tried. For each example, capture what they were trying to achieve and whether it helped. Personal experimentation counts.

Ask: What tool or feature? What was the task? Did it help: yes, partly, no or not sure?

8-13 min

STEP 3

Apply AI SAFE

Choose one or two real examples from the discussion. Work through Sense Check, Assess Data, Follow the Flow and Evaluate Actions. Focus on the task, the data involved, the systems involved and the consequences.

Use the worksheet on page 3.

13-17 min

STEP 4

Find the opportunities

Ask what current AI use is telling you about staff or learner needs. Repeated experimentation may point to an unmet need rather than simply a tool-selection issue.

Look for themes such as workload, accessibility, additional learning needs, differentiation, translation, revision, research or feedback.

17-20 min

STEP 5

Agree three next steps

Finish with KEEP, CHECK and CHANGE. Record one practice that appears useful, one issue that needs further investigation and one practice or process that should change.

Use the action sheet on page 4 and assign follow-up responsibility where needed.

FACILITATION NOTE

Do not turn the mapping stage into a test of whether colleagues already know every rule. The quality of the exercise depends on people being willing to describe real practice, including experiments they are unsure about.

STEP 3

Apply AI SAFE to one real example

Choose an AI use that has already surfaced in the discussion. Work through the four questions together. The aim is not to produce a risk score. It is to make the important judgements visible.

AI TOOL / FEATURE OR USE CASE

S Sense Check

- What is the AI helping us to do?
- How will we know whether the output is accurate, appropriate and useful?
- Is AI supporting thinking, or replacing an important part of it?

NOTES

A Assess Data

- What information is being shared with the AI system?
- Does it include personal, confidential, learner or unpublished material?
- Could the same task be completed using less data?

NOTES

F Follow the Flow

- Which AI service, feature or platform is involved?
- Is it managed by the school or college, or a personal/public service?
- Can it access files, email, accounts or other systems?

NOTES

E Evaluate Actions

- What happens because of the AI output?
- Could it influence feedback, assessment, communication or a decision?
- Where does meaningful human judgement and oversight remain?

NOTES

One last question: would we be comfortable explaining this AI use to a learner, parent, colleague or school leader?



STEP 5

From discussion to action

Capture the outcome without turning the exercise into a compliance audit. The three headings help separate useful practice from uncertainty and issues that need a clear change.

KEEP

What current AI practice appears useful, proportionate and educationally appropriate?

CHECK

What needs further investigation, guidance, safeguarding, assessment or data protection review?

CHANGE

What should stop, change or move to an approved process or service?

Optional: simple AI use register

A lightweight register can help leaders understand which tools are being used, for what purpose and where follow-up is needed. Keep it proportionate and review it as tools and practice change.

Welsh context: Hwb recommends education settings understand and map existing AI use.

AI tool / feature	Who uses it?	What for?	Approved?	Data involved?	Further action

The goal is to move from unseen AI use to informed AI use.

Use what you learn to shape policy, professional learning, procurement and safer classroom practice.

AI SAFE

Sense Check
Assess Data
Follow the Flow
Evaluate Actions

