

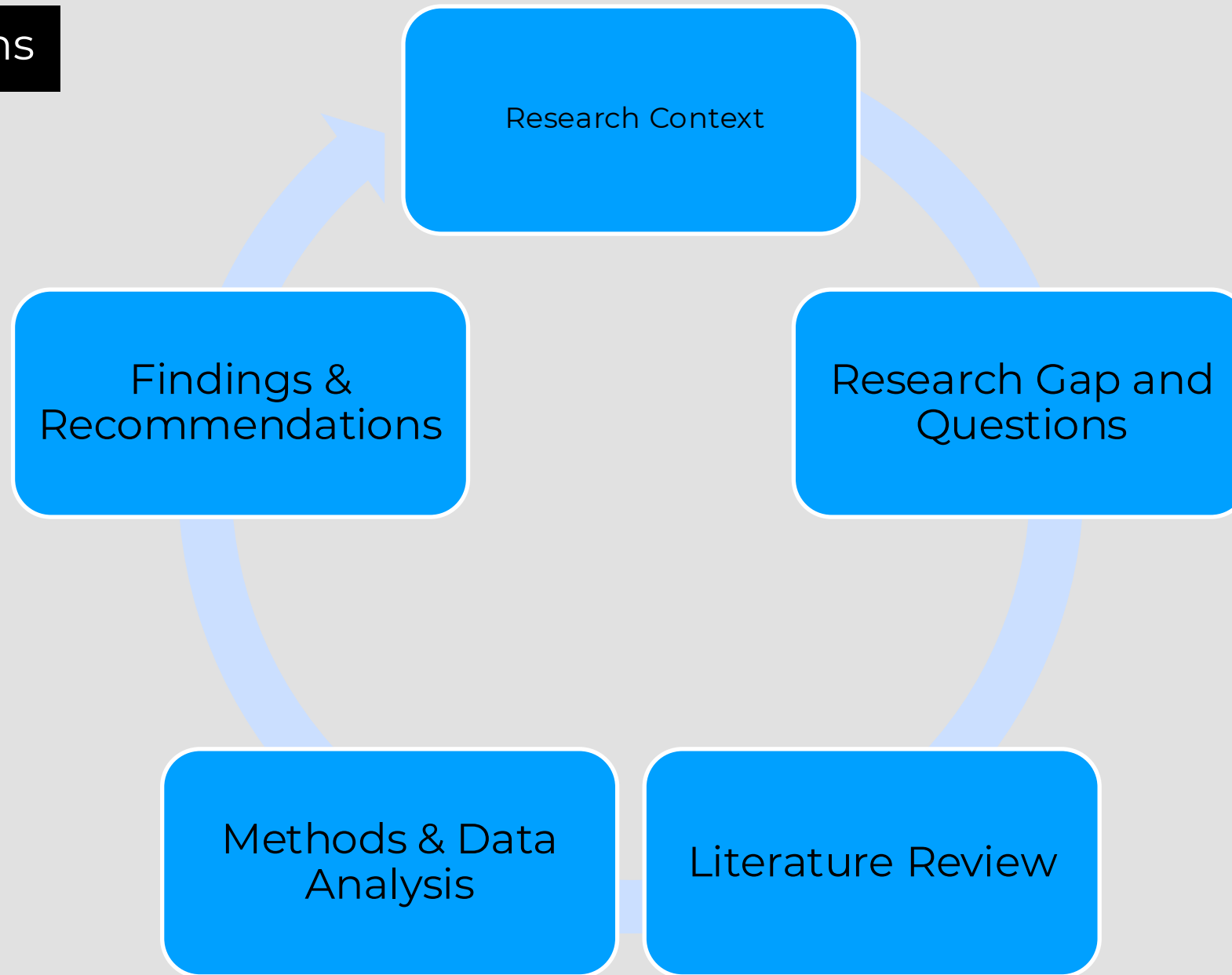
Your Smartest Co-worker? AI in Work Integrated Learning

AI as Codriver

Dr Becky Quew-Jones - Principal lecturer
Sue Banger- Senior Teaching Fellow

YOUR TIME.
YOUR PLACE.

Session Aims



Context of Research

- Research conducted in the Context of Degree Apprenticeships

DAs offered an alternative route into higher education (Evans and Cloutier 2025)

combining employment with employer-defined standards (Garnett and Reynier 2024)

embedding learning within authentic workplace practice (Tismal and Rosamond 2026).

Two key shifts....

- AI skills required in the workplace
- Impact of defunding Business Degree Apprenticeships

AI reshapes workplace roles (Moscardini et al. 2020) learner-employers must understand how AI can enhance their learning, increasing employer value through work-based outcomes.

Removal of key business degree apprenticeships such as Chartered Manager (Chowen, 2026), alongside restrictions affecting the Senior Leader standard for learners over 25 (Department for Education, 2026)

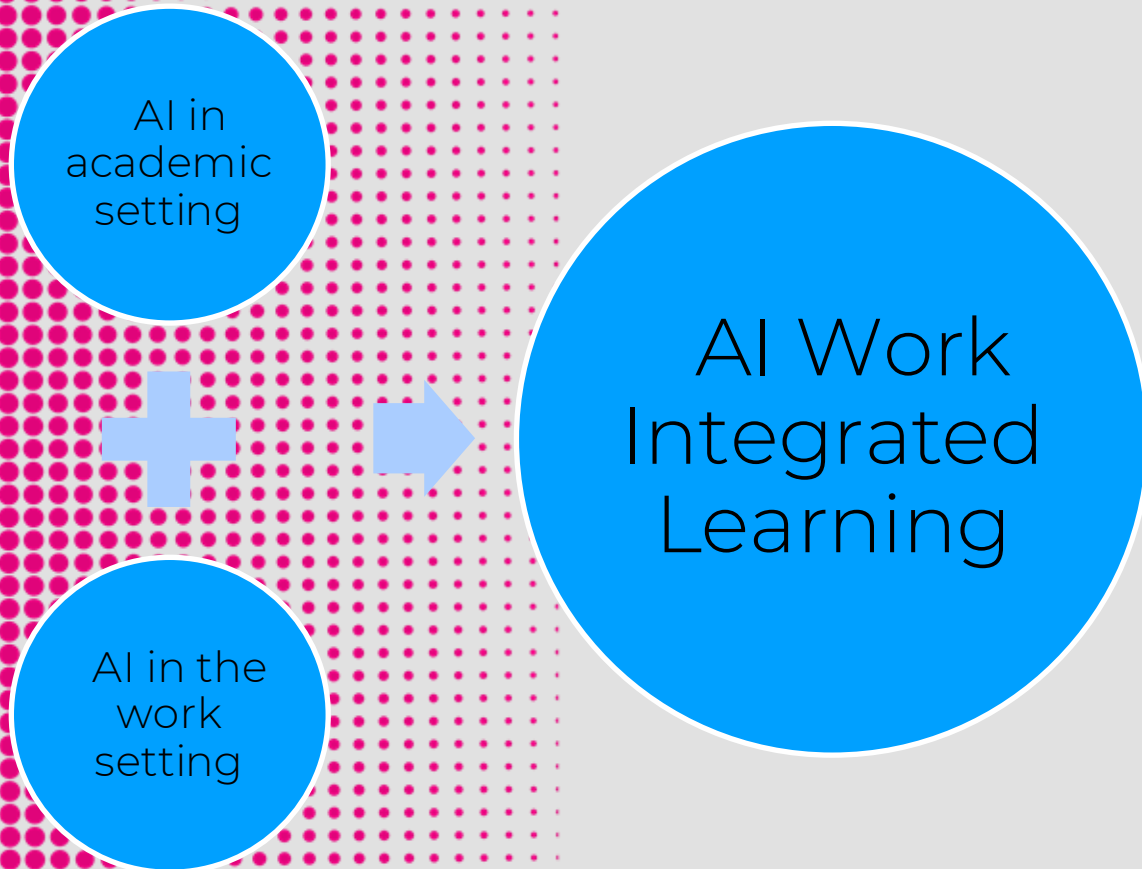
Repurpose the learning!!

- **Management Education** - AI integration in management education offers opportunity and challenge (Valcea and Hamandi 2024); reinforcing HEIs to prepare students for AI driven workplaces (Chiu 2024, Department of Education 2025)
- **Work Integrated Learning** – valued by employers as highly as traditional degrees (Civile et al. 2026; Lester, 2025).
 - Can AI support the individual learning and lead to greater workplace impact?
- **Apprentices are diverse** – is AI seen as a disruptor? or a ...
 - valuable resource for **personalised learning** (Zawachi-Richter et al, 2019)
 - **enhancing engagement** and **collaboration** (Cotton et al, 2024),
 - expanding **critical thinking skills** (Guo & Lee, 2023)
 - **higher-order thinking, creativity** and **problem-solving** (Memmert and Tavanapour 2023; Jackson 2025)
 - **BUT** WIL pedagogies (Lillis & Bravenboer 2020); experiential learning (Fabian et al., 2022), reflection (Rowe et al 2020) are human centric..
- **Whose responsibility?** - Persistent tensions between employers and educators regarding resources and responsibility exist (Fabian et al. 2022)



Currently, literature is sparse for the impact of AI in WIL and within the context of Degree Apprenticeships. The study positions AI as a mechanism for shaping AI principles, strengthening professional judgement and sustaining ethical, practice-focused learning.

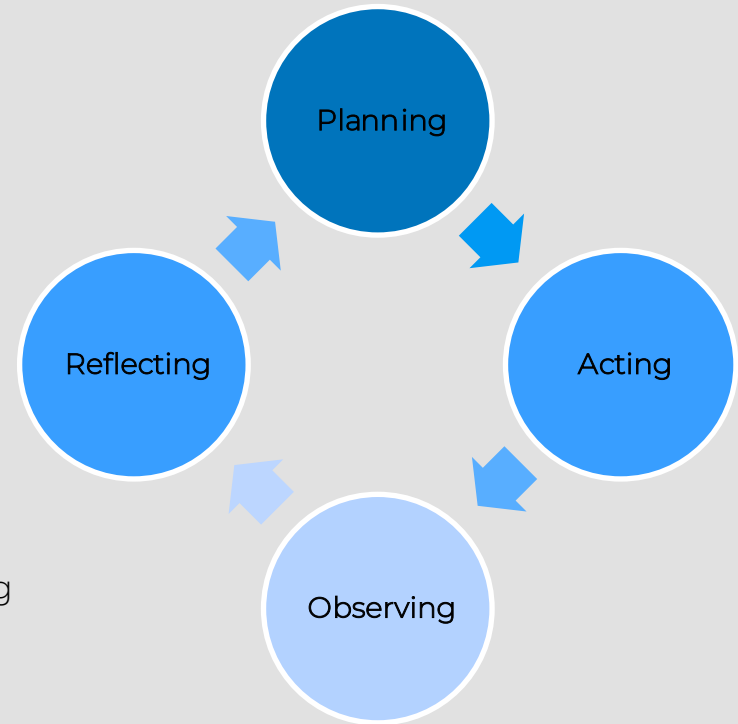
Research gap – "Our Wicked Problem"



- What challenges do work-integrated educators face in supporting AI use across workplace and study settings?
- How can educators embed AI guidance to support meaningful, ethical learning with workplace impact?
- How can collaborative inquiry through ALS support shared practice and transferable approaches within Work-integrated learning

Methods & Data Analysis

- Action orientated research used qualitative methods with a focus on Action Learning Sets
- Co-create knowledge and solutions collaboratively with educators.
- Action Learning style questions to resolve wicked problems
- Data analysis - thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2022)



Three Sets to support iterative inquiry

Action Learning Set 1

What are the wicked issues for AI as a tool in supporting Work-Integrated Learning?

Action Learning Set 2

What opportunities does AI offer to support Work-Integrated Learning?

Action Learning Set 3

What models support AI as co-driver in Work Integrated Learning?

What educator said...



“I don't know where safe spaces are and also where our liability is if we give them a tool causing disclosure.” (TT3)

TT3 noting: ‘I had conversations of what’s your organisation’s policy around AI, none knew.’

TT3 declared: ‘the dangerous thing is we are being assumed to be experts and to want to be experts.’

TT11 questioned: ‘How can we get staff to be competent... knowing what’s best practice... to coach students...?’

TT1 observed: “many differences in terms of age demographics... way they use AI.”

‘I love all questions... it’s thought-provoking... (it shows) how many different areas need to be addressed.’ (TT1)

Five Themes

TO SUPPORT AI IN WORK-BASED EDUCATION

Rebalancing AI competence

Making policy work for AI in practice

Authentic assessment design

Educator confidence and capability
in AI practice

AI and environmental
sustainability in practice

AI Co-driver Role	Examples	Benefits for Learners
Sense-making Partner	Explaining theories, terminology, and frameworks in simpler language; personalised explanations linked to workplace context	Makes complex concepts accessible; bridges gaps between academic study and workplace practice
Administrative Support	Summarising large volumes of workplace data; analysing consultation feedback; filtering sentiment	Reduces administrative overload; frees up time for higher-order thinking, discussion, and judgement
Inclusivity Enabler	Adapting explanations to different needs and levels; supporting varied learning preferences	Makes learning inclusive; enables wider participation regardless of background or confidence level
Research Support Tool	Supporting exploration of basic concepts; showing how to prompt effectively; summarising and synthesising articles	Builds research confidence; supports independent inquiry and critical engagement with sources
Data Synthesiser	Summarising large quantities of data; synthesising information for specific purposes	Helps learners manage information overload; supports clearer insight and decision-making
Ideation Partner	Generating ideas; exploring different perspectives; prompting discussion around advantages and disadvantages	Encourages deeper thinking; expands perspectives; supports creativity and problem-solving
Writing and Expression Coach	Supporting learners to structure arguments and articulate ideas; improving clarity and academic tone	Helps learners communicate ideas clearly and coherently; improves academic writing skills
Formative Assessment Guide	Using structured prompts (e.g. AST prompts) to guide learning and reflection	Provides scaffolding for learning; supports ongoing development rather than just final outputs
Feedback and Critique Partner	Drafting critiques; testing understanding; formative assessment support	Supports learners to refine work before submission; builds confidence and independence in evaluating their own work
Reflective Assistant	Using AI to support reflection and self-development; unpacking workplace experiences; linking practice to theory; mapping evidence to KSBs	Helps learners make sense of what they are learning at work; strengthens reflective depth; supports articulation of knowledge, skills, and behaviours

"In an AI-enabled world, effective learning is not about avoiding AI, but about learning to co-drive with it—critically, ethically, and creatively." AI

Practical Teaching Recommendations

- **Position AI as a codriver** – supports thinking, not shortcuts; learner stays in control
- **Agree policies and boundaries early** – co-create AI use with employers e.g. line managers and learners
- **Start at induction** – build AI skills from day one (“learn to drive early”)
- **Keep dialogue ongoing** – regular reflection on how AI is used and shaping learning
- **Redesign assessment** – focus on process, judgement, and transparency of AI use
- **Build educator confidence** – practical support to embed AI meaningfully
- **Develop critical judgement** – question, evaluate, and improve AI outputs
- **Embed ethics & human value** – responsible use, human skills, and sustainability awareness

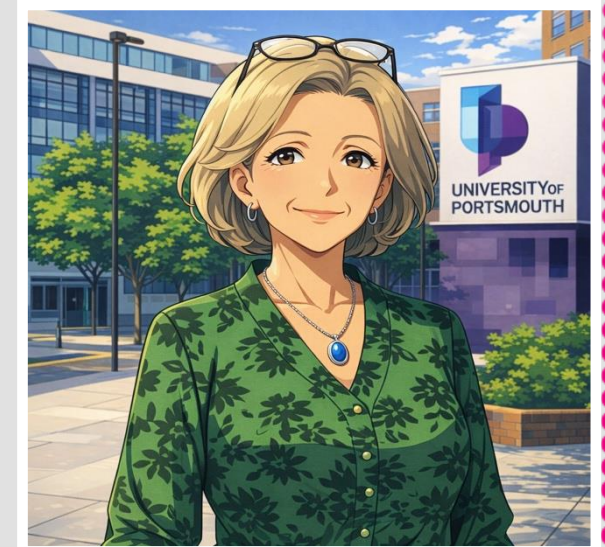


Further Questions or discussions



Dr Becky Quew-Jones
Becky.quew-jones@port.ac.uk

Sue Banger
Sue.banger@port.ac.uk



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