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The role of student voice in reimagining pedagogic practice in the heat of Generative AI: law and legal education

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ABSTRACT

In the era of rapid growth of Generative AI, it is hard not to notice excitement and expansion of its use. At the same time, concerns stemming from an inconsiderate reliance on Generative AI also arise. The objective of the first part of this research paper is to identify elements (advantages, challenges, limitations, risks) of the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence in legal practice (including law firms, courts, case law) and research. In the second part, we focus on legal education: through collaborative multi case studies supported with other data collection sources (e.g. surveys/questionnaires), we explore gaps and uncertainty in the existing knowledge of students, by testing their understanding of important theories (e.g. academic integrity compliance, proper and effective use of AI) and seeking their view on the way forward, with the utmost aim of improving our pedagogic practice. After reflecting on the steps that legal practice has taken in relation to AI, the aim is to show how this shapes legal education and research, and that, through our, student and lecturer intervention, it can be the other way around.

Keywords: Generative AI, future legal education, legal research, future legal practice, student voice

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1 INTRODUCTION

Artificial Intelligence (AI) aims to train a machine or a system, e.g. a computer to think, act and perform like a human with the objective to ultimately obtain human-kind capabilities (Microsoft, 2023; Chesterman and Taylor, 2023; Hamilton, 2023; Rodriguez, 2023; Law Society, 2023). It identifies patterns in data and definitions and automates decisions, through some built-in machine-learning algorithms (Defining Artificial Intelligence, www.ncsc.gov.uk). The rules are then kept in a trained Model (Defining Artificial Intelligence, www.ncsc.gov.uk). Moreover, what is noteworthy nowadays, is the constant introduction of new AI advancements that not only imitate the human brain but also outperform human capabilities.

However, AI lacks the capability of reasoning, feeling, applying common sense to a factual scenario (Defining Artificial Intelligence, www.ncsc.gov.uk). Hence, the risk of generating unpredictable and unreliable automated responses still exists. Now the time has come for Generative AI, or the, alternatively called, 'large language models' to touch upon the legal sector and legal education as well. In a nutshell, Generative AI models can rapidly produce compelling essays on a vast array of subjects, just on the basis of a few prompts/keywords given by the user (Defining Artificial Intelligence, www.ncsc.gov.uk). In more technical terms, the National Cyber Security Centre has defined them as "Large Language Models (LLMs) that use algorithms trained on a huge amount of data, turning relationships between pieces of data into probabilities to predict sequences of text (or increasingly other content) in response to user prompts" (LLM, www.ncsc.gov.uk).

ChatGPT (Conditional Generative Pre-trained Transformer) is a form of Generative AI technology (created by OpenAI). ChatGPT is a platform that someone may use in order to gain knowledge just by asking questions and starting a discussion. Based on the use of deep learning, it can produce 'human-like text' (https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/blog-post/chatgpt-and-large-language-models-whats-the-risk). The popularity of ChatGPT has ignited the adoption of various Generative AI assistants and models in different professional sectors, companies, and even law firms, confirming that AI is for everyone to use. For instance, there are some more specific Generative AI platforms designed and particularly used by law firms such as Allen&Overy, DLA Piper, Dentons and Travers Smith LLP. Also, to date numerous articles have been written about the advantages, challenges and limitations of ChatGPT in education (Beckingham et al., 2025; Essien et al., 2025; Memarian et al., 2023; Mogavi, 2024; Pradana, 2023; Ajevski, 2023).

2 METHODOLOGY

This article has a combined focus on the use of AI in law and legal education, as they are interrelated. The reasons as to how and why are explored, first doctrinally, and then through a case study approach, to capture the "lived experiences" of participants monitoring "authenticated anecdotes", in line with how Simons (2009) theorises the case study approach.

The premise of this research lies in our understanding that the mission of Higher Education extends to ensuring that AI is used for the common good (as underlined by Fengchun and Holmes (2023) and recently re-emphasised by Peter Hartley et al. (2025). In this paper, the lessons learnt from our doctrinal research (Van Hoecke, 2013) into the use of AI in the legal sector have informed, in an application of a case study approach (Simons, 2009; Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 2013; Gomm et al., 2000; Ridder, 2017; Siems & Sithigh, 2012; Käss, 2024), the questions of surveys, to hear the

students' use and perceptions around AI, academic integrity and its ethical use. Hence, starting from the legal sector, we will delve into the legal education pedagogy applications and use of AI, which is where transferrable skills of the future are formed. How Gen-AI is used in legal practice and the relevant lessons learnt, need to make law academics reconsider how to train the future lawyers avoiding these pitfalls. This is why research of legal practice comes first. The aim is to delineate how from the perceptions and patterns of now, we can empower the legal student and legal practitioner of tomorrow. Therefore, the next aim is to invite the students to reflect and make suggestions on how higher education can better envelop its effective and safe use in a collaborative/participatory spirit (Bamford & Moschini, 2025). As we shall see, better digital literacy can empower student agency (OECD, 2019). According to OECD's Future of Education and skills 2030 Concept Note, 'when students are agents in their learning, they are more likely to have "learnt how to learn"-an invaluable skill that they can use throughout their lives'.

The research methodology therefore involved doctrinal research (Van Hoecke, 2013) and a case study approach (Simons, 2009). The latter involved two questionnaires via Microsoft forms: one structured and one semi-structured, shared among postgraduate law cohorts at two London higher education institutions, offering law courses both on campus and online. One of them is a Russell-Group institution and the other is a post-92 institution, meeting diversity and aspiring for greater representation. Ethics clearance has been obtained. The survey questions are detailed in the figures' section of the paper. The research design has been inspired by the findings of Part 1 on legal practice: therefore, the questions of Survey 1 focus on aspects of academic integrity, Gen AI perceptions and use as well as transparency of Gen AI use. The questions of survey 2 seek the voice of students and recent graduates on what is needed for positive change. Convenience sampling to fill out the anonymous surveys was used by invitation.

More specifically, the paper aimed to get the students' perspective, so that the students as collaborators can evaluate the Universities' role in clarifying risks, opportunities, and the better use of Generative AI. Having the students' perspective is an early process of student engagement-partnership (Healey et al., 2014). According to Healey et al (2014), this is a process that helps us understand students' perceptions (Healey et al., 2014); it also fosters critical evaluation and leads to a fresh outlook in learning and teaching in modern higher education (Healey et al., 2014).

Law students were invited to analyse the results with suggestions for the future. It is also not accidental, that for the creation of large language models (the Generative AI tools), lawyers cooperated with computer scientists (Goodman, 2023). Collaborations between law firms and legal tech vendors is also noteworthy (DLA Piper, Travers Smith LLP, Dentons). For this reason, recent IT graduates from other universities were also invited to anonymously offer their own perspective as former students and current tech specialists/professionals. This was decided to help add diversity in the sample, and a more expert evaluation of AI use of the recent past and present.

The Microsoft Surveys ensured anonymous responses. Participation was entirely voluntary. The first questionnaire (Survey 1) was a structured one. In the second semi-structured questionnaire (Survey 2), the results of the first questionnaire were presented for reflective peer-evaluation (on this participatory perspective see Bamford & Moschini, 2025), with questions on them, and feedback on future directions of how University can envelop and hone AI skills. Descriptive statistics were used for the presentation of the results of the first survey, and thematic analysis, as per Braun and Clarke (2006), was used for the analysis of the findings of the open-ended questions of Survey 2.

3 RESEARCH FINDINGS ON THE USE OF CHATGPT FROM LEGAL PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

First and foremost, research into primary sources shows decided cases[3] where for the first time judges referred to the use of ChatGPT (*Ayinde -v- London Borough of Haringey, and Al-Haroun -v- Qatar National Bank* [2025]; *Zzaman v Revenue and Customs Commissioners* [2025]***;*** *Pro Health Solutions ltd v ProHealth Inc* [2025]***;*** *Trevor Lee Oakley v Information Commissioner* [2024]; *Qasim Latif v The Commissioners for His Majesty's Revenue and Customs* [2024]; *Harber v Revenue and Customs Commissioners* [2023]; *HLHP Oriental Food Ltd, Re* [2023]; *Mata v Avianca* [2023]). Of particular interest is the recent case *Ayinde,* where the use of Generative AI in court proceedings and the legal consequences is discussed. In a similar vein, another relevant case is *Santander UK PLC v Thomas Anthony Carlin, Maxine Karon Hughes* [2023], where the judge referred to some answers submitted to him by the defendant, after the latter used ChatGPT. In general, there are judgments issued in the UK and in other parts of the world, emphatically proving and showing the application of AI to court proceedings, especially when one or both parties is unrepresented (e.g. *Zzaman v Revenue and Customs Commissioners* [2025]; *Pro Health Solutions ltd v ProHealth Inc* [2025]; *HLHP Oriental Food Ltd, Re* [2023] or when some judges themselves have utilised ChatGPT as a form of legal assistance in their decisions.

It is worth mentioning the *Thaler v Comptroller-General of Patents, Designs and Trademarks* Supreme Court judgment [2023]. The case concerns two applications made under the Patents Act 1977. The relevant question here was whether the AI machine DABUS could be characterised as an 'inventor' for the purposes of ss.7 and 13 of the Patents Act 1977. If so, this would equate DABUS to a 'person'. However, it was held that sections 7 and 13 of the Act, and the entire Act, allow only one interpretation, and the straightforward answer is: an inventor within the meaning of the 1977 Act must be a natural person, and DABUS is not a person at all (*Thaler* [2023]). The court clarified that a patent may be granted only to a person with legal personality, not a machine (*Thaler* [2023]). More than that, section 7 does not confer on any person a right to obtain a patent, for any new product or process created or generated autonomously by a machine, such as DABUS, solely because the person who claims that right owns the machine (*Thaler* [2023]). Although the Supreme Court acknowledges that the significance of these questions is, due to the latest revolutionary advances in AI technology, greater nowadays than at the time that this case's applications were made, it was emphasised that this case's appeal had a more limited scope (*Thaler* [2023]). More precisely, it is treated as being more focused on the appropriate interpretation and application of the pertinent provisions of the 1977 Act to the applications made by Dr Thaler (*Thaler* [2023]). In other words, whereas it was recognised that the recent AI breakthroughs urge an answer to such questions which are indeed more important and topical than ever, the aforementioned case was concerned with something more specific, that was enclosed in Dr Thaler's precise applications and contentions.

However, for future reference, it is worth noting what the Supreme Court stated in paragraph 52: "It follows but is important to reiterate nonetheless that, in this jurisdiction, it is not and has never been Dr Thaler's case that he was the inventor and used DABUS as a highly sophisticated tool. Had he done so, the outcome of these proceedings might well have been different." (*Thaler* [2023])

[3] Case names are written in italics, as this is the usual practice in legal writing.

If we expanded this wording and applied it to the ChatGPT/Generative AI context (treating ChatGPT as a sophisticated tool), would this make its generated/created works original and capable of being copyrighted?

More recently, the EU 'AI Act' (Regulation 2024/1689) entered into force on 2024, August,1. The EU AI Act categorises and regulates AI depending on the risks involved. More specifically, a classification of a prohibited, high risk or general-purpose AI has for the first time been illustrated and followed. Most of the regulated obligations and requirements concern the providers of high-risk AI systems, irrespective of whether these are based within the EU or in a third country and provided that these systems are to be placed within the EU market or their output is to be used within the EU quarters. A few provisions relate to AI systems presenting limited risks, whereas minimal risk appears to be left unregulated. It is important to note that for the providers of General Purpose AI, it is imperative that they create a policy that respects the Copyright Directive and that they publish a proper and detailed summary of the data/content they have used in order to train the General-Purpose Model. They need to keep a record of any identified risks, any adversarial testing and report serious risks.

The UK Government has not yet developed a generally applicable regulatory framework for AI. In March 2023, the UK Government published a white paper promoting its 'pro-innovation approach to AI regulation' (The AI White Paper, 2023). The values that should be safeguarded in all sectors are:

1. Safety, security and robustness
2. Appropriate transparency
3. Fairness
4. Accountability and governance
5. Contestability and redress

They also need to make sure that their systems are adequately immune to cybersecurity attacks.

Moving on to the relevant secondary sources that were identified, it is particularly noteworthy that there are a lot of Bar Journals that delve into the use of large language model tools, such as ChatGPT, and into Generative AI's general implications. Evidently, the legal sector has already been influenced by the AI advances or alerting that it will definitely be influenced. It is also significant, that the SRA, the UK's Law Society, Gazette i.e. the Law Society's magazine in the UK, and the American Bar Association have almost daily coverage and offer constant insights on the new AI advances, their advantages and pitfalls. More notably, in January 2024, the UK's Bar Council issued a paper entitled "Considerations when using ChatGPT and Generative artificial intelligence software based on large language models"(Bar Council, 2024).

3.1 Legal sector-Findings about positive outcomes of AI use

The help that Generative AI models, such as ChatGPT, provide in drafting contracts, conducting research and automating many aspects of legal work is immense (LexisPSL, 2023). It can play the role of a legal assistant. According to a recent survey (Thomson Reuters Institute, 2023; see also The

Law Society Report, 2018; Chesterman et al., 2023), more and more law firms are willing to incorporate or even build AI tools, but with a more targeted/specialised legal knowledge e.g. case law and precedents (Legal Futures, 2023). This will be done in an effort to enable lawyers to draft and summarise contracts, draft clauses more easily and conduct research. Generative AI has a stress relief effect and has increased productivity benefits saving time for tasks that require critical judgment, and thus enhancing potential competitive advantage (Rodriguez, 2023; Smartt, 2023; Legal Futures, 2023). The first AI-based law firm has been approved by the SRA in the UK (www.sra.org.uk/garfield-ai, 2025).

Moreover, it has been noted that AI could be used when lawyers deal with costs. This will of course require training the machine on the opposite rules and precedents in the costs' sector (Legal Futures, 2023). But, still, the fact that lawyers can plainly type queries to which ChatGPT responds is indeed revolutionary (Hamilton, 2023).

3.2 Legal sector-Findings about risks as seen through examples of improper use of ChatGPT/Generative AI

One of the most repeatedly stated risks of using ChatGPT is said to be misinformation due to hallucination (Bedford et al, 2025; Mollick and Mollick, 2023; Murphy, 2023; Tafur et al., 2023). In the recent *Harber v Revenue and Customs Commissioners* (2023) *case*, there was reference to a report by the SRA according to which ChatGPT is prone to mistakes. The results generated by ChatGPT might be "plausible but incorrect" (*Ayinde* [2025]; *Zzaman v Revenue and Customs Commissioners* **[**2025]; *Harber* [2023]).

In terms of "hallucination" and "misinformation", in the aforementioned Irish case *Santander*, ChatGPT seemed unable to recognise or correct the misuse by one of the defendants, in one of his questions, of the phrase 'cast dispersions' rather than 'cast aspersions' (*Santander UK Plc v Carlin* [2023]). There are additional incidents, where for example, source references produced by ChatGPT were not existent or pertinent to the discussion topic or had only recent date sources from 2021–23 (Smartt, 2023). It has also been witnessed that fake citations can also be generated by ChatGPT and as a result, lawyers have been fined after using fictitious citations in a court filing (*Harber* [2023] and Pugh, 2023). Creating non-existent case law to support legal arguments is one of the spotted erroneous effects of the ChatGPT system (*Ayinde* [2025]; Goodman, 2023). As it will be seen in the surveys below, students have confirmed coming across fictitious results as well.

Another concern is the perception that AI 'does not have personal opinions, beliefs or feelings', a statement that was particularly proffered by the aforementioned defendant in *Santander*. Some studied commentators have also admitted that throughout their research in order to obtain a more hands-on practice by using the tool, there was a persistent sub-conscious presumption, even when witnessing inconsistent and conflicting responses being generated, that ChatGPT would tell only the 'truth', because it is something like an encyclopaedia or a search engine (Stojanov, 2023).

This point of view is very much worrying, as it is evident that ChatGPT is a human creation. Biased results might be generated due to the fact that the model's creators and trainers are human beings. As highlighted by the Bar Council considerations, "LLM AI systems are not concerned with concepts like 'truth' or accuracy" (Bar Council, 2024, p2).

In terms of the aforementioned biased results that may be produced by the platform, it has been submitted that there is not much cultural diversity or that there are areas or cultures that are under-represented or un-represented. Thus, there are still things missing.

Also, there are many intellectual property issues as well as legal challenges to be addressed (Appel et al., 2023). For example, the data that is used may come from a range of sources, including the open web. It has therefore been reasonably commented that the quality of an AI model is very much dependent on the data that is available for it to learn from. This might mean that copyrighted work has also been used to build the various models as many copyrighted literary papers, texts, images have been used for machine learning (*Getty Images (US) Inc v Stability AI Ltd* [2025]; *Getty Images (US) Inc v Stability AI Ltd* [2023]*; Andersen v Stability AI Ltd Case* 3:23-cv-00201; Boo, 2013).

It is important to stress that Generative AI systems such as ChatGPT are trained through a particular process: the existing works/materials (texts, images, pictures, written works) will be taken, and then, these will be re-configured and a new text/work/picture/image of the same kind will be produced based on the users' wanted instructions (Tan, 2023). What is really unfortunate, and thus, even more worrying, is that the companies that have created these Generative AI tools have not disclosed the databases that have been used to train the 'machines' (Tan, 2023). As a result, risks of privacy abuses lurk behind the use of Generative AI tools (Guardian, 2023).

Furthermore, there are more concerns regarding GDPR especially around the processing and movement of people's personal data (AI Act, 2024; European Data Protection Board, 2023; Goodman, 2023). The temporary ban of ChatGPT in Italy in April 2023 over privacy concerns was noteworthy (Bertomeu et al., 2025). In general, a situation of a conflict is remarked, as a platform/tool that is created to bring some benefits to the society might be using copyrighted work.

Another reported problematic issue is that ChatGPT does not have current awareness, as September 2021 is the cut-off date of the dataset that the tool is built on (Murphy, 2023).

An alarming characteristic of the current version of ChatGPT that is free to use is the fact that from the moment individuals start interacting with the platform, they renounce any rights to any data they might have inserted/typed in (Murphy, 2023). This is something that lawyers should always bear in mind because client data, confidentiality and security are of paramount importance (Tafur & Kuzniacki, 2023; Rodriguez, 2023). It therefore needs to be boldly emphasised that whatever someone feeds in when using ChatGPT will be retained and stored within the system/bank of data, and it can then resurface in order to respond to prospective relevant questions of other users (LexisPSL, 2023).

Moreover, it is stressed that digital literacy should be a subject that needs to be taught. As shown below, this is the purpose of the surveys used: to hear the student needs around better awareness on Generative AI at university and then at work.

If today's cases flag that lawyers and litigants should be warned of the possibility of fictional results/cases/citations generated by AI (e.g. *Ayinde* [2025]) then this makes imperative the need to train law students now, to prevent severe consequences.

The case of a judge who admitted having used the tool as a form of assistance in the effort to obtain a summary of an area of law (Castro & Hyde, 2023), generated the need for urgent digital literacy training in the profession. Also, a judge in the city of Cartagena admitted that he used ChatGPT to

resolve a dispute and make a ruling. More specifically it has been reported that the aforementioned judge asked questions and included the full responses provided by ChatGPT in the judgment issued (Colombian judgment, see references).There are debates as to whether judges should mention that they have used ChatGPT in their decisions and counterarguments. The judges were never expected to disclose the use of legal secretaries in this process, and the use of ChatGPT could be considered as similar: these debates are feeding a new era of discussions (Murphy, 2023).

However, some of the challenges of such an undisclosed use raise questions as to: contingencies of mistakes made by the tool, the failure of the machine to spot serious errors and the issue of apportionment of responsibilities (e.g. will there be repercussions for the judge/lawyer who used it (Bar Council, 2023)? Will ChatGPT be accountable or the technologist who made it (Murphy, 2023)? Another burning question that arises is whether the various AI writing tools used by law firms will lead to the replacement of paralegals and legal assistants or trainees (Smartt, 2023).

Whether AI should be perceived and recognised as an author and whether the produced work should be seen as original, capable of being copyrighted or to the contrary, as a reproduction of copyrighted materials without permission, is still questioned (Tomlinson et al., 2023). It has been supported by some that the produced work, due to the constant emergence of even more updated and advanced versions of Generative AI tools, could be characterised as 'transformative' work that can be protected by copyright law (Tomlinson et al., 2023).

On another note, some companies have developed software that will be able to spot AI-generated text or a text that is a krama of AI and human (Sokol, 2022).

3.3 Legal education- Current perceptions on implementing Large Language Models

More precisely, two trends were identified in the literature. One shows that there are authors that feel positive and optimistic about this new technology but advise that we should all proceed with great caution to the integration of the tool in education. On the other hand, there are also other authors (e.g. Stojanov, 2023), who are sceptical about the use of ChatGPT and Generative AI tools in education. But even the sceptical legal scholars at the same time recognise that it is time for us all to move forward.

For shy and reserved students, who find the classroom an intimidating environment, starting a conversation with ChatGPT feels better, and it can be a liberating learning experience (Stojanov, 2023). As students may pose the same question or elaborate on one as many times as they would want, they can start gaining a more active role in the learning process (Stojanov, 2023; see also Bast, 1994; Baxter et al., 2020; dos Santos et al., 2020).

Generative AI can support the well-known active learning, technology-based and enquiry-based learning, that also follows Vygotsky's (1978) socio-cultural theory of human learning (effected through the interaction and collaborative dialogue with the Generative AI tool as a more knowledgeable other) (Stojanov, 2023).

In broad terms, most of the studied authors are found to be in favour of incorporating this new technology (ChatGPT) into education. AI is considered a revolutionary technological tool, it should be adapted and used with caution, while retaining the important responsibility of verifying the accuracy of outputs of AI (Abrahams, 2023; Bar Council, 2024).

It has also been highlighted by many, that the adoption of AI will not leave lawyers and legal educators without work or that they will not need to amend their teaching drastically.

4 CASE STUDY ON ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PROPER USE OF AI

We decided to conduct a multi-case study (Simons, 2009; Eisenhardt, 1989; Stake, 2013; Gomm et al., 2000; Ridder, 2017; Siems & Sithigh, 2012; Käss, 2024) seeking to hear the students' voice, and identify the students' understanding of academic integrity and the proper use of AI in different environments with diverse students' identities (Yin, 2018). We used surveys/questionnaires as a data collection method with qualitative and quantitative results (Eisenhardt, 1989 and Yin, 2018).

Our utmost aim was to test our theory from the doctrinal research (Van Hoecke, 2013) in Part 1 (that Generative AI is a revolutionary tool that is widely used, not always disclosed and can lead to fictional results) and identify potential patterns, gaps (Ridder, 2017) in knowledge; the next step was to interpret feedback not just from the lecturer but also the student perspective towards enhancing AI literacy in Higher Education (following the partnership approach of Healey et al., 2014).

Below are the figures, describing the majority of the questions asked and the number of the responses that each question option received. The respective full questions are listed in Figure one. Figure 2 is a graph showing the question numbers, the options and the responses per University and module. In University A, and Module 1, 46% of the asked participants/students responded. In University B, in Module 4, 31% of the asked participants/students responded, in Module 3, 27% of the asked participants/students responded and in Module 2, 17% of the asked participants/students responded.

Figure 1: Survey 1 questions and answers

Survey 1 results	University A (Module 1)	University B (Module 2)	University B (Module 3)	University B (Module 4)
1. Do you know what academic integrity means?				
Yes	8	14	10	8
No	1	0	1	0
A little	2	2	2	0
I am not sure	0	0	0	0
2. Would you like some further University guidance so that you can obtain a better understanding of what academic intgrity means?				
Yes	3	6	6	6
No	8	10	7	2
3. Have you made a practice submission to the dedicated practice Turnitin link before the final submission to check your Turnitin similarity score?				
Yes, once	1	6	2	5
Yes, every time	4	7	6	1
Less than half of the times	1	1	0	1
Never	5	2	5	1
4. In relation to Question 3, how often have you made changes to your final answers after checking your practice Turnitin similarity score?				
Every time	3	4	1	1
Once	0	1	4	3
Less than half of the times	4	3	3	2
Never	4	8	5	2
5. Do you think using Chat GPT, Copilot or some other form of Generative AI in an assessment/exam is allowed by the University?				
Yes	1	6	0	1
No	7	6	8	5
Maybe, I am not sure	3	4	5	2
6. Have you ever used ChatGPT, Copilot or some other form of Generative AI in your assessments/exams?				
Yes	1	7	1	3
No	10	9	12	5
7. Do you think that ChatGPT or other generative AI tools can give inaccurate responses?				
Yes	7	15	N/A	7
No	4	1	N/A	1

Survey 1 results	University A (Module 1)	University B (Module 2)	University B (Module 3)	University B (Module 4)
8. Are you prepared to put in extra research and time to ensure that the ChatGPT or other Generative AI result is correct/accurate and aligned with your values?				
N/A I don't use ChatGPT or other Generative AI tools	5	7	N/A	2
No	2	2	N/A	1
Yes	4	7	N/A	5
9. Do you trust the Generative AI tools more than your own judgment?				
Yes	0	0	N/A	1
No	9	15	N/A	7
Other	2	1	N/A	0
10. Have you mentioned using Generative AI in your footnotes, bibliography or at some dedicated place in your submission?				
Yes	0	2	0	2
No	3	6	11	2
Not always	0	2	0	2
I have never used Generative AI	8	6	0	2
11. Are you willing to declare the use of ChatGPT or other Generative AI, at the end of your work?				
Yes	4	8	N/A	3
No	4	3	N/A	2
Maybe, I am not sure	3	5	N/A	3
12. Would you like some further guidance on the definition and uses of AI?				
Yes	6	13	7	7
No	5	3	4	1
13. Do you think that academic integrity is enhanced by following a referencing system in written academic work, eg OSCOLA?				
Yes	8	15	N/A	8
No	3	1	N/A	0
Other, please specify	0	0	N/A	0
14. When citing academic work according to OSCOLA, if you are discussing someone else's opinions in your own words, do you need a footnote with the publication details?				
Yes, always	10	16	10	6
No, this is only necessary when using quotation marks	0	0	0	1
No, if this is also my opinion	0	0	0	0
I do not know, I am confused	1	0	1	1

In addition to the Figures above, the responses to some ranking questions are discussed forthwith.

In University B, across all modules (Modules 2, 3 and 4), most students prioritise teaching materials prepared by the module leader and library online sources when researching and preparing for an assessment. In Module 2, and in answering whether they are happy with the generated results, those that have used Generative AI tools said that they have used it for grammar, better understanding of an assessment topic, and most of them seem to be aware of its limitations and inaccurate responses.

88% of the participants responded that learning/knowledge is more important to them rather than just the completion of their degree. In Module 4, similarly as in the module above, the greatest majority responded that they are not happy with the AI-generated results. Learning/knowledge is more important to them rather than just the completion of their degree.

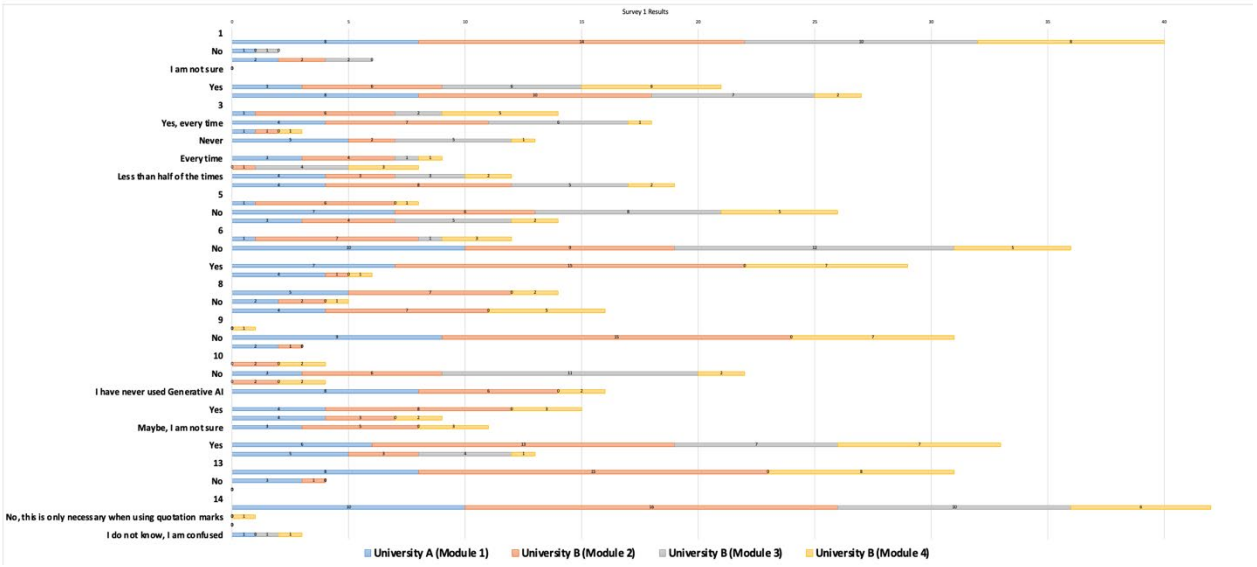

Figure 2: Graphical interpretation of Survey 1

In University A, the popular sources are the same as above. 73% of the respondents' rate learning/knowledge as more important to them than completion of their degree, whereas for 27% of the respondents it is the other way around. On the question about whether they have used ChatGPT and whether they are happy with the results, the majority of respondents answered that they have not used it.

4.1 Students as collaborators reflect on the survey results

Survey 2 shares the responses of Survey 1 (See Figure 1, 2) to the respective respondents of Universities A and B. It was also anonymous and was distributed to the same students seeking their own analysis through 6 open-ended questions. From University A, one anonymous response was received, while 6 responses were collected from University B's respondents. Here is what respondents/students collectively noted. The first question asked students for their view on any identifiable patterns. One theme emerging was the lack of honesty in relation to the disclosure of Generative AI use. One observation was that perhaps answers have not been entirely truthful, spotting mismatches in the responses. A second theme emerging from the responses is related to Generative AI literacy and academic integrity respectively. More specifically, a pattern identified was that AI has uses that perhaps students do not realise, such as spell-check. A participant noted that students are aware of AI, but most do not use it for assessment. Another respondent noticed a pattern of academic integrity and self-integrity when completing an assignment, while another one concluded that it is a necessity to learn about the proper use of Generative AI that respects academic integrity. Two more students noted uncertainty around proper use of AI, the correct use in academic settings and the academic rules, and when and how usage should be disclosed. A third theme emerging from

the responses related to confidence in using Generative AI tools. More notably, a student submitted that students who use AI are confident in its use and the rules, but those who do not, convey a general reluctance. Within the main takeaways, which was the next question, the following themes were identified: the growing use of AI in assessment but a lack of complete trust in its accuracy and confusion about whether it is actually allowed; integrity; the use of AI for a better understanding of the modules and assessed activities; the expansion of use with a note that many lack guidance on its ethical use, the benefits of AI, but that it should not be the first port of call for substantive material.

In the next question asking for anything surprising in the findings about the use of Generative AI, the following themes were observed: AI is not a solution, but a tool not to be used in academia; AI is a reality and its proper use is essential in academic and professional contexts; AI has become surprisingly common in academic studies. There is a theme regarding concerns about disclosing the use of Generative AI tools. More notably, there was an elaborate comment on the belief that more people use it but are afraid to admit it for fear of judgement or criticism, with an important remark about what else could be asked in the survey. Another emerging theme was the unequal access to Generative AI tools. More specifically, the same response mentioned the issue of unequal access to these Generative AI tools, due to lack of training on their use or awareness of advanced models, noting an affordability aspect and the gap between those who can and cannot pay for premium versions. Indeed, recent literature (Upsher et al., 2025) emphasises that although GenAI can be a tool to minimise digital inequality, it may also widen the "digital divide" (Davis, 2025; Božić, 2023), especially as premium GenAI versions are subject to a fee (Illingsworth, 2023). We agree with Davis (2025) and Božić (2023) that it is the University's responsibility to offer digital literacy, prevent disadvantages among students and strengthen AI as an employability skill (Foltynek et al., 2023).

In their answer to the questions about specific actions to be taken and student support for a better understanding of ethical use of AI, students brought up the theme of more specific good practice examples and workshops. They made the following recommendations: the importance of clarifying that the Generative AI results should be checked for their accuracy/validity; clear guidelines; workshops on proper use of Generative AI; sharing best practice examples including referencing; quick guides and a mini module on examples/scenarios at the beginning of the course, and generally more accessible information on academic rules in relation to AI. A multiple-choice quiz after a lecture to ensure students understand the information, and clear indication of what counts as academic misconduct have been requested for student support. There was also a suggestion of deducting marks for improper use of AI.

Next, on the question about new strategies/approaches to be implemented on the basis of the results of survey 1, students suggested a theme of a more positive approach towards good use of AI. Examples offered in the responses mention: making use of AI part of regular discussions in class, sharing examples of good and improper use, the initiative of offering students practice tasks so that AI can be explored without pressure; making sure that students can name their sources; access to AI advisors for guidance on appropriate usage in coursework; encouraging AI as a skill rather than focusing on its negative aspects, e.g. through a grade incentive for proper declarations of AI use in assessments.

The final but critical question was about the potential role of students for developing an action plan. In the theme of the student role, we received insightful proposals. More specifically, respondents/students advocated for being transparent and engaging in one's work, highlighted that

students must have an active participatory role in learning how to use AI tools and declare its use in specific assessment scenarios. Another student has recommended that students can be contributors in the action plan by sharing their experiences, identifying common challenges and offering to act as peer mentors/ambassadors to promote responsible AI use. Similarly, another student suggested that students can offer feedback on what is confusing them, helping test out new tools and encourage each other to use AI responsibly.

Finally, a recommendation was for students to cross-reference what they think AI can be used for or not, against the experience and/ or opinion of academics. To conclude, this point leads back to the aim of our research: students can be collaborators in the effort and duty to train them on effective academic and overall appropriate use of AI for university and for work. It is important to have students as teammates in this journey, as it is probably less effective to anticipate the needs or possible gaps of knowledge compared to receiving questions/feedback that feeds forward.

In terms of proposed strategies/approaches that we can implement on the basis of the findings, a theme that arose was the need for new and updated rules and regulations.

There were also two responses to Survey 2 (sharing results of Survey 1 from both Universities A and B), by computer specialists (recent graduates of other Universities working in other organisations) to collect their views, as they are knowledgeable in the technology of AI, but can also understand the student perspective. As for patterns spotted from the survey responses, the theme of academic integrity and transparency of Generative AI use came up again. It was observed that students are hesitant to mention the use of AI tools in their assessment probably because they are not fully aware if this is allowed by Universities; they seem to understand academic integrity, but oddly they are not all keen on finding out whether the use of Generative AI figures in the latest policy updates. In relation to takeaways, students are found to be vigilant in using AI in assessments due to the concern of plagiarism (see more on plagiarism in Bamford & Sergiou, 2005). The theme of student agency emerged as it was noted that on the positive side, students do not fully rely on generated outputs, exercising critical thinking. Furthermore, on specific actions, the theme of further guidance emerged: the need for drop-in sessions for AI questions was suggested, along with specific updates of library and other guides for research, with clear allowances of AI use.

These should also be clearly indicated in module learning materials. Student support was advised to offer specific instructions on what is allowed in studying, researching and writing under each module. The contributed responses around the theme of the student role in developing an action plan, are eye-opening: on the one hand, it is important to hear the students' voice, but with a pinch of salt as it is not guaranteed that the responses are always transparent and honest; student representatives can be helpful in collecting honest opinions and offer updates/requests to the appropriate board. On the other hand, it was also submitted that students are the ones that use Generative AI the most, so they are best suited and it is important to include them in the forward thinking and decision-making on these matters. An idea was to encourage students to collaborate on projects that explore creative or research-based applications. There was also a suggestion to introduce an AI ethics module as well as innovative process-based assessments (e.g. oral presentations/ annotated drafts/reflection pieces) so that AI use issues/ advantages can be discussed.

5 CONCLUSION AND FINAL THOUGHTS

We adopted a research process that understands the particularities of legal practice and education. We monitored the Generative AI phenomenon as an educational innovation (as the latter is understood by Simons 2009), with multiple data and multiple perspectives collected and evaluated.

We are convinced that the Generative AI-specific perceptions, uses and capabilities foreground another pathway where the law school can instil and hone important digital literacy, digital fluency, digital research skills ensuring academic integrity, digital equality, critical thinking (these issues are largely discussed in a general higher education context by Beckingham et al 2025), and co-agency.

Quite reasonably, it has been stated that "Humans With AI Will Replace Humans Without AI" (Harvard Business Review, 2023): an expressed concern has, thus, to do with the competitive advantage of people with AI knowledge compared to those with no AI knowledge.

According to Healey et al. (2014 p7) "partnership in learning and teaching is a way of staff and students learning and working together to foster engaged student learning and engaging learning and teaching enhancement." We must teach the students how to use Generative AI appropriately, ethically (Saunders et al 2025), with discipline and transparency (Tomlinson et al., 2023). We as academics need to lead by example (by, for example, acknowledging the use of Generative AI in our teaching, reading and assessment materials) and level up our methods of assessment and evaluation of the students' performance by incorporating different methods.

Our suggestion is for an embedded in the curriculum introduction of legal students to Generative AI according to their level of study and to educate them on the limitations and risks of AI tools.

Generative AI itself will become connected with the pedagogy of law. Research indicates that altering the learning contexts with technology is a dynamic learning activity (Bower, 2019). Also, guided learning has been proved to lead to better comprehension and performance (Vygotsky, 1978).

Academics should be trained on Generative AI first, so that they can expertly advise on relevant University policies and educate students. As highlighted by the surveys, the university needs to take more action in student information, support (e.g. Acceptable Usage Policy, academic guidelines, elaborate assessment criteria) and offer more student contact time.

Some instances of impulsiveness and lack of digital literacy were evidenced in the first part of this research paper in the legal sector. This shows that the law school has to contribute to the development of digital literacy of its future graduates and legal practitioners. Research in itself is a skill, but it is also a process where methodologies have been developed to separate scientific perspectives from random ones. Facilitation and speed are key, but the time saved should be reinvested into research. Generative AI can form a step, but it should never be the only step towards an answer. This is what our law students should be taught from their first year, so that they can build awareness, digital literacy, research methodology and then a critical and informed approach to independent thinking and problem-solving.

Then future research should evaluate the student use of AI after these steps are taken, and examine the rates of AI use, while asking for student satisfaction on AI skill-building.

The future law school should follow a measured and balanced approach, that is enlightening and educational at its core, but also proactive in skill-building, reflecting the pioneering breakthroughs that the world is experiencing.

This will help bring into effect what we said at the beginning: reflecting on the steps that legal practice has taken in relation to AI, the aim is to show how this shapes legal education and research, and that, through our, student and lecturer intervention, it can be the other way around. In effect, the university can lead in Generative AI literacy and competency, as an empowering transferrable skill for legal scholars and practitioners.

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