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Evaluating an institutional response to generative artificial intelligence (GenAI): Applying Kotter's change model and sharing lessons learned for educational development

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Abstract

Since the launch of ChatGPT in November 2022, there has been a dawning understanding in the higher education sector of ways Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) tools can challenge the traditional roles of academic teaching staff (e.g., Chan & Tsi, 2023) and support learning by students. For example, Mike Sharples in Sabzalieva and Valentini (2023) identifies ten roles that ChatGPT can play which would all support student learners. Media and sector concern has focused on whether GenAI use by students would disrupt the integrity of degrees and awards and there is a good deal of debate on how to adapt assessment, learning outcomes and curricula to reflect and reward unique human competences associated with a discipline or subject and embrace students' use of GenAI.

Educational development colleagues have been at the vanguard of leading higher education provider reactions and responses to the widespread availability and capabilities of GenAI. This case study reflects on a year of action to lead teaching staff and students as well as institutional policy and practice through a series of steps to enable rapid, proportionate and robust change. We apply Kotter's (1996) eight stage change model to reflect on the activities, achievements and challenges to date. We do not purport to have finished but rather can see, one year in, that increasingly activity is more embedded into structures, routines, the practice of others, and our work as educational developers. We reflect forward too on the ways we will act next to 'make change stick' and on our own personal, professional journeys as educational change leaders, all of whom were new appointments in the educational development centre. We chart how we have been able to innovate and to lead complex educational change at pace.

Keywords: artificial intelligence, GenAI, educational development, Kotter's change model, assessment

Introduction

Higher Education institutions (HEIs) face constant change; sometimes this is driven by internal factors and desires for improvement in practice, and sometimes it is driven by external factors, such as the neoliberal pressures of globalisation and marketisation on the sector. In an environment of seemingly perpetual change, the sector also needs to be vigilant for unexpected major disruptions to 'business as usual' caused by black swan events. These are described by Taleb (2008), as rare, difficult to predict, and having a significant impact on the status quo. Recent changes to the pace of technological development, and global crises, like the COVID-19 pandemic, are black swan events that have demonstrated that HE is as vulnerable as other sectors to such disruptors.

In HE, senior leaders worked fast to sustain core services during the COVID-19 pandemic including the shift to emergency remote teaching. Contactless teaching was largely achieved due to multi-talented teams including educational developers, IT experts and teaching colleagues, working to put in place digital and distance solutions to previously hands-on learning interactions. There has been much written about the period including literature reviews such as Santandreu Calonge et al. (2022). Following the tentative return to the 'new normal', the teaching and learning frontline breathed a sigh of relief until the next disruptor appeared: Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI). ChatGPT, one of the text-based GenAI tools released for open access use in 2022, reached 100 million users in only two months, making it the fastest growing consumer application in history at the time (Hu, 2023). This hyperbolic growth far outstripped the standard pace of change in a university context (Barnett, 2011). Teaching and learning leaders described the pace of change as "too rapid, unlike anything the sector has seen (including the COVID-19 pivot to emergency remote teaching)" (Liu et al., 2023, p. 7).

With GenAI engines becoming increasingly powerful, and the incorporation of GenAI features into standard software, such as Microsoft's Copilot or Adobe's Firefly, HEIs need to consider the impacts of widespread GenAI availability for students and staff use on educational processes and practices. Educational developers are at the forefront of institutional responses to GenAI, having earned their role in supporting institutions to deal with major disruption to teaching, learning and assessment during the COVID-19 pandemic (Potter, 2023). However, leaders of teaching and learning identified change fatigue and resistance to change as pressing challenges in their institutions (Liu et al., 2023, p. 5). As a result, the advent of available GenAI tools needs to be managed carefully to balance the short-term requirement for immediate response with the longer-term likelihood of transformational change to education.

Managing constant change has become part of the role of educational developers, enabling HEIs to react and respond appropriately and meet the needs of students, staff and other stakeholders. As much as educational developers are part of the institution, and therefore vulnerable to the deluge of change, they also function as a connection between those establishing institutional policy and those putting it into practice. Educational developers are well-placed to support colleagues as they contextualise the changes, challenges and advantages of GenAI. They can ensure key outcomes and activities are not 'lost in translation' between those determining policy and those enacting it as they act as a 'critical friend' to the academy (Handal, 2008). Educational developers can flag the needs of teaching staff and students in strategic fora and contribute to the balanced development of institutional policies to safeguard standards, students and staff.

Educational developers need to be conversant with institutional priorities and strategies for academic processes and practices, and in many cases will be important stakeholders and project leaders for innovation and change across institutions. They work across and between disciplines and other institutional silos to drive best practice and exploration in pedagogy. With this enmeshed and intra-articulating position in the university, it is important that educational developers build and nurture reflective practice, balancing their horizon scanning with developing the soft skills (especially communication and collaboration) necessary to operate in volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) environments of change. VUCA is a commonly used acronym in the business world. It encapsulates four very distinct challenges that vary based on the extent to which they describe how much is known about a situation and how well the outcomes of any actions that are taken can be predicted (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014).

Professor John Kotter developed his eponymous change model in *Leading change* (1996), and it has been a staple for managing large-scale change in complex organisations ever since. Within HE contexts, Kotter's

change model has been used to report and analyse change cycles within healthcare and nursing education (Springer et al., 2012), engineering education (Kang et al., 2020), business schools (Calegari et al., 2015) and in more general approaches to organisational change in universities (Wentworth et al., 2018). Using the eight stages of Kotter's change model (Table 1) allows for proactive management of change and the ability to retrospectively reflect on the process of change and change project outcomes.

Table 1 Kotter's change model

	Stage
1	Creating an urgency
2	Forming powerful guiding coalitions
3	Developing a vision and strategy
4	Communicating the vision
5	Removing obstacles
6	Creating short term wins
7	Consolidating gains
8	Anchoring change in corporate culture

This paper explores the initial change response in a UK university to GenAI through the contributions and reflections of three educational developers working as part of a cross-institutional task force. Kotter's change model is used to structure reflections on the process of change. The paper also includes insights from the authors' systematic reflections on their academic practice during the process of change and describes three areas for further development to enhance the delivery of future change projects. The aims of this paper are to answer the two questions: (i) has the rapid response to GenAI in the case study university been an effective change process? and (ii) what do educational developers do when they support change in their institutions?

Institutional context

This case study is located in a small (14,000 students), teaching-intensive, broad-based university in the North West of England, UK. The authors all work in the central Educational Development Centre (EDC) that was launched in April 2022 to be the creative catalyst for curriculum design, educational enhancement and academic practice developments in the university. The authors encompass the head of the EDC who joined the university for the EDC launch, the leader of the digital education team who started in role one year later and a seconded academic working fractionally in the EDC from January 2023. In that month, there was widespread media coverage about the proliferation of AI tools, including the challenges GenAI could pose for education. Driven by curiosity and concern, the seconded academic undertook a broad SWOT analysis about GenAI in the context of HE. They detailed the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats to current educational practices in the University as a result of the capabilities and availability of GenAI tools. In early February 2023, the authors and representatives from Quality, Registry, Library and Information Services, the three academic Faculties and the Academic Skills team formed a pan-university Artificial Intelligence and Assessment working group (AI & AWG). An action plan for the group was written by the head of the EDC, informed by the SWOT analysis. The action plan was approved for delivery by the University's Academic Leadership Group (ALG) and was framed around three distinct phases (Table 2).

Table 2 Phased approach for managing GenAI change

Phase	Actions
0-3 months	• Create video and text-based resources to develop GenAI awareness and understanding among staff and students. • Establish Faculty Working Groups (FWGs) with representatives from each department to provide peer learning and support. • Teaching staff review their planned in-year assessment tasks to ensure academic integrity can be upheld.
3-6 months	• Develop a four-step framework to review, modify and secure assessment against misuse of GenAI for the next academic year. • Develop video and text-based resources and run workshops and drop-in clinics to support the review and revision of assessment. • Update the Academic Integrity Policy.
6-9 months	• Launch a student Moodle module and accompanying staff guide to develop critical GenAI literacies across the institution. • Embed guidance on the use of GenAI within every assessment brief. • Develop guiding principles on the use of GenAI.

Applying Kotter's 8 stage model of change to the institutional GenAI response

1. Creating an urgency

A sense of urgency was created from media stories, email lists, social media and blog posts (e.g., Stokel-Walker, 2022). This raised awareness of GenAI across the university: it was clear that AI is here to stay. Existing communication channels and meetings were used to spread awareness of the scale and gravity of the situation. The early development of the action plan and the establishment of the AI & AWG demonstrated the urgency and the institutional intent to respond in a proportionate, timely and well measured way.

The dominant early discourse was about the threat to academic integrity in assessment (and by inference the integrity of the awards being made as a university) which heightened the alarm and need for defensive actions alongside establishing what 'misuse' of AI tools looked like in a range of assessment tasks and contexts. It was not possible to watch and wait to identify how other institutions would respond but rather, swift action was needed. Spreading awareness of the potential threats of GenAI use within assessment and establishing processes to prevent or detect misuse needed to happen at speed in order to be effective and work within pre-published deadlines for assessment; this inevitably created a sense of pressure on the AI & AWG and urgency to deliver.

The group also needed to drive the momentum beyond the initial short-term guidance and fixes. This was helped by requests for support from early adopters of GenAI and faculty working groups (FWGs) who raised questions that created an urgency for the AI & AWG to answer. This often required the group to quickly and efficiently agree a position statement which in turn led to the development of the guiding principles. The demand for timely support from colleagues at the frontline of teaching offered thought points about some of the challenges arising both theoretically and practically as the AI & AWG aimed to support all colleagues to effectively to use GenAI in their teaching, learning and assessment.

2. Forming powerful guiding coalitions

Even before the AI & AWG was formed, many of the initial members had been speaking with one another about the need for collective and swift action. The action plan was initially to be delivered by eight colleagues from five areas of the university who were committed to the idea of a coalition to deliver the nine-month action plan. Their early conversations, often in smaller groups, had led them all to the realisation that their involvement was inevitable. Those colleagues, and others that joined as the group grew, shared a collective sense of responsibility and interest to better understand the immediate challenges and longer-term opportunities of GenAI and were united by two things. First, each member had role-related 'power' to help tackle the challenges and this transcended the considerable variation in seniority among members of the AI & AWG. Second, everyone shared a common feeling of unease as their leadership was not, in the first instance, based on detailed technical knowledge or understanding of GenAI and its potential within HE. In many ways, the result was shared leadership (*sensu* Pearce & Conger, 2003, p. 1) described as "the dynamic, interactive influence process among individuals in groups for which the objective is to lead one another to the achievement of group or organisational goals".

After the first meeting of the AI & AWG it became clear that the majority of the work to deliver the action plan would happen in sub-groups, at speed to meet tight deadlines and outside of the periodic whole group meetings which happened every 6-8 weeks. Sub-groups worked at speed on different aspects of the action plan which resulted in shared ownership of decisions and outputs and these achievements were celebrated in the whole group meetings. The result was an environment where individual contributions were valued, however the interdependency of member's contributions were visible and necessary. The early establishment of trust and confidence in one another, based on role-related power to deliver and a collective investment of effort to grow in technical knowledge and gather sector-wide insights, was crucial to the effectiveness of the group. There was open, respectful and constructive sharing among members of their concerns, views and knowledge, which differed greatly and created a vibrant learning community, both in meetings and through the online Teams platform.

3. Developing a vision and strategy

From the initial SWOT analysis to identify threats and opportunities for GenAI in HE, the AI & AWG outlined their action plan and reported on progress to the senior leaders' group, ALG, at two-month intervals. The ALG delegated responsibility for the vision and strategy to the AI & AWG and provided oversight and encouragement. ALG demonstrated the importance of senior staff who lead and manage (HE) to create the conditions that facilitate change and to provide support for those involved in making it happen (Devecchi & Potter, 2020, p. 197). The action plan detailed work that needed immediate attention (e.g., in-year assessment) and those areas that could arguably wait (e.g., supporting innovation using GenAI). Taking a phased approach to delivery enabled the group to focus their attention and energies on the most relevant needs of the university. The vision and the strategy shifted over time as the members of the group developed their GenAI literacy and could see the future potential of GenAI.

The guiding principles that emerged from the creation of resources to develop GenAI literacy for students and staff are representative of and unify a wide range of voices across the university and are an explicit example of how vision and strategy was emergent, tentative, developed and shared following consensus being reached in the AI & AWG. Considerable thought was invested in deciding the extent to which guiding principles would devolve agency to subject areas to enable them to make local decisions about GenAI whilst upholding the guiding principles of the whole university, drawing on existing university strategies and values. Representatives of frontline teaching staff on the AI & AWG and empathy for the diverse teaching contexts of the others were at the heart of drawing out the vision alongside prioritising support for all colleagues at each step. Members of the AI & AWG gave a voice to colleagues' lived experiences and allowed the expression of the likely impact of the guiding principles on their practice and in their contexts. The mix of professional services staff and academics was invaluable to debate and develop a solid strategy which could balance the needs of different members of the university staff in order to effectively address the needs of students.

4. Communicating the vision

Across the nine-month period, all communications and outputs the AI & AWG shared with the university community were date stamped and came with clear warnings about their provisional nature owing to the fast-moving landscape. The 'voice of the university' that emerged in guidance, resources and communications to staff aimed to be honest and constructive in offering frameworks and advice on how to proceed despite the uncertainties. The approach towards students was to offer a clear set of expectations regarding academic conduct and insight into the pros and cons (ethics, data privacy, limitations and more) of using GenAI. Crucially, the approach to students, although occasionally centrally co-ordinated from the AI & AWG, was largely devolved to subjects and departments and recognised the need for communications and conversations about GenAI between staff and students within local learning contexts.

With the focus of most communication from the AIn& AWG firmly focused on teaching staff, particularly during the early phases of the action plan, the vision shared was one of enabling individual and collective learning (for example on what is GenAI and what are the concerns relating to it and assessment) and then decision-making and action (for example to review and update assessment and curricula). The three academic-led FWGs were key to the communication approach. FWGs allowed teaching staff to find peer support and raise concerns when responding to the AI & AWG requests for local action. Heads of Department were asked to nominate colleagues for the FWGs and were tasked to ensure that reviews of

assessment practices were undertaken. In this way Heads were asked to assimilate the central objectives as their department goals. They were then supported to exercise their leadership as influencing and/or motivating others to achieve those departmental goals (Bryman, 2007). The AI & AWG members met with Heads, and others such as Programme Leaders, to communicate the plans and expectations of them and their colleagues. This cascade approach was supplemented by an open workshop for individual members of staff to attend. Common to all these interactions was the opportunity to raise and ask questions and contribute further insights to the developing community expertise on GenAI.

5. Removing obstacles

Removing obstacles to change is important to make the process of change as simple as possible. Being transparent and open about what was known and knowable about GenAI throughout the change process was important to build trust between the AI & AWG and colleagues in departments. The transparent and honest approach ensured everyone understood we were all learning at the same time. It helped frontline teaching staff understand better what was or was not possible to issue as guidance throughout the phases of change: they recognized the instability and provisionality of knowledge. Within that context, the AI & AWG set a tone of encouragement and support for teaching staff who could feel overwhelmed and discouraged ('there's nothing we can do to secure our assessments against misuse of AI'), disengaged and dismissive ('I don't think these are relevant skills or tools for students in this subject'), or to temper enthusiasm with information about some of the ethical, data privacy, inclusion and other challenges to adopting the use of (specific) GenAI tools. They guided action by others that had authenticity and integrity in their context while adhering to the university's emerging guiding principles. The AI & AWG members were able to use the obstacles (issues and concerns) raised by the university community to shape their guidance, resources and communications. Each obstacle was a learning point informing their leadership.

Removing barriers to understanding the implications of GenAI was particularly important and the amount and type of support required varied across the institution. The unknown can create fear and uncertainty which can be challenging to manage. FWGs helped to identify 'cold spots' where departments or teams were engaging slowly or struggling to understand what GenAI could mean to their subject area. Offering timely support such as workshops, extraordinary meetings, video-based and written information gave colleagues multiple opportunities to learn more about GenAI through a range of media. One senior leader noted the sense of calm across the university in respect of the changes being implemented: perhaps a testament to the ways the AI & AWG and its outputs were relatable as they supported staff to embed change.

6. Creating short-term wins

The AI & AWG resolutely focused on delivering the action plan. Held to account by senior leaders on the ALG, and with urgency created by internal timelines such as end of year assessment and committee deadlines for approvals processes, there were numerous short-term wins when tasks or phases on the action plan were completed. Frequently the 'race against the clock' mitigated against any sense of success when, for example, the release of early guidance was not as fast as had been planned. Some short-term wins were not so evidentially time bound. The FWGs were established as a space for staff in cognate disciplines to share knowledge and concerns and learn together. Success here was measured in more subtle ways. For example, reach was measured as attendance by all departments, value to attendees was inferred as the conversation changed in the FWGs as GenAI awareness and literacy grew among attendees and the

impact was reported as attendance and conversation which led to specific actions in local department contexts. These actions were fed back to the AI & AWG and allowed the group to evaluate the extent to which the tasks on the action plan were leading to real changes to the practices of teaching staff within departments. This feedback loop and similar ones; for example, informal feedback on the usefulness of guidance and resources and amendments to practices and policy, had the effect of motivating the AI & AWG group members. This was an important need. AI & AWG members' actions were open to the scrutiny of their peers in the university. Mostly the work being done was ahead of any guidance or insights being received from sector bodies or shared in institutional networks. AI & AWG were looking closely to their networks and social media channels to benchmark practice and, at different junctures, when it became clear that the group's activities were sector-norm and proportionate to address the perceived and real risks of GenAI, or even sector-leading, those moments too were received as short-term wins.

7. Consolidating gains

Reflection on every phase was paramount in order to progress and consolidate gains. Identifying what had worked well and less well and implementing changes to improve success helped to build the confidence of AI & AWG members. For example, while planning the communication approach had been a secondary consideration during the first phase of the action plan, it was quickly noted and during subsequent phases communication plans were developed in parallel with resources and guidance. This saved time and effort in the later phases of the action plan.

It was possible to ascertain how GenAI understanding was developing within departments from the regular updates to AI & AWG by the FWG leaders. FWG meetings helped to identify good practice and areas which required additional supportive intervention (e.g., briefings, workshops). Routinely reporting these updates at the periodic whole group meetings of the AI & AWG allowed information to come from all areas of the university and for targeted further support or refinement of the future plans to consolidate gains. AI & AWG recognized that it was more important to update colleagues with information we *did* have in a timely manner even if there were gaps (e.g., 'this will be forthcoming'), rather than wait for the information to be complete. This allowed colleagues to be appraised of progress and aware of the next steps which built trust. Trust and openness were also built through actions such as the open call for colleagues to review the GenAI literacy resources.

8. Anchoring change in the corporate culture

As the final phase of activity ended it was clear to the AI & AWG members that (i) there was more that could be done to exploit the opportunities for GenAI, and other narrower use AI tools, to transform learning, teaching and assessment, and (ii) there was a need to monitor the impact, reach and value of the resources and guidance they had created on staff and students' behaviour and routines. At its last meeting, the AI & AWG determined how they could anchor ongoing support for change into the established work routines of individuals and/or into the business of service areas and committees. Examples included adding a standing item to faculty learning and teaching committee on GenAI to replace the FWG and the EDC members established a project to collect and disseminate practice from across the university and sector.

The AI & AWG also made a number of unanimous decisions on GenAI and HE, outside their initial remit, including deciding not to engage in the 'arms race' of adopting the use of AI writing detection tools, electing to retain guiding principles in favour of developing a policy and choosing to explore institutional

licensing of a GenAI tool. These decisions were relatively easy to reach based on the guiding principles. This consensus among group members exemplifies Fullan's (2015, p. 39) description of shared vision or ownership as "more of an outcome of a successful change process than a precondition of success". Across the duration of this change project, members of the AI & AWG had overcome their limited technical knowledge and confidence to lead and were able to demonstrate collective unity, or shared vision and ownership, based on technical insight and self-confidence. As the group met for the last time, celebrating the completion of the activities and tasks on their action plan, the group chair noted that they might be asked to come back together as an expert panel to support future institutional decision-making and change bringing their expertise to the service of the university again.

Personal, professional reflections on our academic practice – how are we changed?

In applying Kotter's (1996) change model retrospectively to review the work of the wider AI & AWG group, we have had an opportunity to consider our personal and professional development journeys as we worked together on our first joint project, the university's response to GenAI. Here we individually and collectively reflect on what we have learnt about educational development and our academic practice as educational developers. Initially we wrote our individual reflections within a single document where the commonalities and differences in our lived experiences were able to be clearly seen as the narrative accounts sat next to each other. Together, we discussed the insights we had shared. We were inspired by vignettes of diverse academic developers (Special Issue of IJAD titled 'Our academic development stories', 2019), we noted the similarities in our own experiences specifically, the frequent highlighting of the value of building academic communities, relationships, trust, and a sense of belonging in academic development work where conversation is key to exploring the complexities that exist (Sheffield & Serbati, 2022). The EDC leader and the seconded academic reflected on the importance and value of informal conversations among small sub-groups of the AI & AWG for both support and making progress. The sub-groups worked in ways akin to the significant networks reported by Roxå and Mårtensson (2009) as crucial for academic teachers to develop their teaching based on privacy, mutual trust and intellectual intrigue. Within the AI & AWG and sub-groups, there was a willingness to be both vulnerable (to not know all the answers and to need to learn and apply new learning fast) and courageous. We propose this was partly enabled by the privacy of the group for closed conversations before 'going public' with resources and guidance for others, the mutual trust and respect among its members and the intellectual intrigue felt about GenAI.

The seconded academic (who also continued to work part time as an academic outside the EDC) reflected on the way in which their substantive academic role shaped their ways of working as an educational developer. For example, by carefully and empathetically considering the nature and timing of information they would want from the central university to support agentic decision-making and action in relation to the use of GenAI with their own students and programmes. Dawson et al. (2010) describes empathy as a core competency for later career stage educational developers; however, this new entrant to the profession was deploying empathy and reflection from the outset as an educational developer on this project.

HE's relationship with edtech has always been characterised by a cyclical response to disruptive external influences of evolving technology (Concannon et al., 2023, p. 1) and the author who leads the digital education team reflected that the speed with which GenAI tools were being developed and their widespread availability was a challenge even to them. They shared:

> […] it is part of my work life to research and explore new technologies as they emerge, evaluating their potential impact and use within education. I am often on an early adopting wave, I also

> frequently spend time interpreting, glossing and translating for others. […] when faced with a problem as nebulous as GenAI, and with as far-reaching challenges to standard practice, [sometimes the response needs to be] "well, we just don't know yet". GenAI development has meant working in a group that recognises that we are going to be learning as fast as we can, and most of the time that will be fast enough to support colleagues.

Increasingly educational developers are leaders and implementers of change when institutions deal with black swans (Potter, 2023) or tackle wicked problems (Dietz et al., 2022). HEIs and educational developers need to reconceptualise their approach to addressing problems by adopting a mindset that adequately considers the thorny nuances that belie simple solutions (Dietz et al., 2022). Bass (2022) encourages educational developers to have a 'wicked problem mindset' and to adopt three stances: *the wide view*, building increasingly diverse coalitions, amplifying increasingly diverse voices, and taking in the widest range of (inter)disciplinary perspectives; *the long view*, asking how the work we do in the short-term might shape the longer-term; and *the critical view*, finding ways to support and advance the known best practices while also being a source of professional and institutional self-reflection and creative disruption. As a group of educational developers, we have embraced each of these three stances working within the AI & AWG and working with and for our wider constituencies of academic colleagues and students. While we might not yet be fully confident to assert that we are "skilled at navigating shifting and unstable terrain" (Huisjer et al., 2020, p. 91), we can reflect on and conclude that our academic practice is changed and probably enriched for the better as a result of both the activity of leading an institutional response to GenAI and our personal and collective reflections.

Looking ahead: Three ways our academic practice will develop to support educational change

Following any project or process, there will be some element that hindsight can improve. The retrospective review using Kotter's change model and the reflections on our academic practice have led us to identify three key areas to build into our involvement in future change processes. In turn, we now explore the importance for educational developers to sustain effective communication, track the impact of their work and set their eyes on the future by building endurance and continuity within their HEIs.

Communication

Projects can thrive with clear communication. Effective communication in this case study was apparent from the early buy-in of senior leaders (ALG) to the need for change, from FWG discussions and the success of department heads acting as change agents to enable local adoption of new practices. Despite the success, progress towards goals was uneven across the university. To build on success and embed the changes further, there needs to be further support for collaborative alliances within and between faculty groups and professional services at the university, so that colleagues can share growing expertise (Vlachopoulos, 2021). It was clear throughout, that optimising communication was vital and even messages to manage expectations about the timing and availability of further help and support were valued. Learning from the experiences, educational developers need to take full advantage of existing communications networks and platforms and to provide frequent opportunities for closing the feedback loop with staff, for example, through fora and groups that predate the change process as well as those initiated to support it. These actions would further improve the "distributive" approach to change, allowing the core team, in this case the AI & AWG, to share the ownership of key outcomes with a broader array of stakeholders (Brown,

2014, p. 213), which will enable localised departments and units to feel increased agency within the institutional approach (Barnett, 2011).

Tracking impact

This case study has detailed the changes from an emergency response to GenAI to the exploration of how to incorporate change into the culture and standard business practice of the university. At this point in the change cycle the importance of tracking the benefits, success factors and impact and celebrating wins are apparent. For example, the next immediate areas for this approach are to monitor the reach, value and impact of the phase three resources – the student Moodle module and staff guide to develop GenAI literacies. By tracking impact and benefit of this work, the AI & AWG will be able to adjust and improve on their change management approach for the future.

Bamber and Stefani (2016) called on educational developers to have the courage and leadership and to articulate the tangible and intangible outcomes and effects of their professional practice. Increasingly HEIs and educational developers are determining their approach to evaluate impact as part of the planning process for projects and change initiatives. Setting goals and 'backward mapping' to identify pre-conditions for achieving a goal are steps in the theory of change model: now used widely to track the impact of student success initiatives and with much to offer educational developers. For example, in the context of this case study, sharing practice examples or local case studies would be one way to generate evidence of (the effectiveness of) action and to provide guidance and encouragement to others. This benefits the change process by ensuring there is a localised vision within the wider central change process (Barnett, 2011) because case studies provide evidence of what worked and what could be improved, so that others in the future can build on tested approaches.

Building endurance and continuity

Future change is inevitable and therefore it is crucial to build endurance to the mill of change. Educational developers can help HEIs to develop a sense of continuity of practice, process and policy and leaders to draw strength and inspiration from key values and principles to tackle the next wave of black swans and wicked problems. Kezar and Eckel (2002) reported that change strategies were more successful in HEIs that were culturally coherent, and where change was aligned within the culture although Brown (2014) cautions that engaging in cultural work is harder than redesigning systems and policies. There are no easy fixes to deliver wholescale change at speed and endurance for the race and a sense of continuity and congruence can help.

Educational developers should continue to scan the horizon, collaborate with others outside their HEI and flag coming threats or opportunities to senior leaders and other colleagues. In these ways they are enacting their social change agent role by bringing their outward-focused awareness to support internal alliances, which are crucial to embed endurance in the face of change. By deepening existing alliances with peers outside their home HEI and by building solid working relationships across the hierarchy and the university community, educational developers can continue to push the boundaries of possibility based on sound pedagogy and support colleagues to plan and deliver engaging teaching, learning and assessment – no matter the nature of the next change on the horizon.

Conclusions

Using Kotter's change model, this paper has presented a detailed micro-level analysis of the educational change process at one university as it managed the impact of GenAI on teaching, learning and assessment. Case studies can be powerful narratives against which to juxtapose personal experience and readers are invited to reflect on the extent to which the local context of their institution's culture shaped their institutional change strategy in response to GenAI and compare that to the experience of the educational developers drawn out here.

The authors' roles as educational developers no doubt shaped the narrative of the case study; however, some key findings transcend roles. For example, that rapid change is possible and helped by empathetic, shared leadership when there is a fine balance between central guidance and local input from those who are affected by the changes being implemented. This is particularly enabled by forming strong coalitions across the academic community (Vlachopoulos, 2021).

Finally, the educational developer authors equate their experience of the change process, at least in part, to their role as bridge builders or brokers (O'Toole et al., 2022) between and across departments and faculties to bring professional services staff and teaching staff together. In this way, they took the wide view of building diverse coalitions and amplifying diverse voices (Bass, 2022) as they built empathetic connections, demonstrated an understanding of the teachers' needs, and communicated the value of new practices and policies (Liu et al., 2023). Ultimately, if unpredictable events continue to stimulate change responses in HEIs, among the most significant work to be done by educational developers is to build trusting partnerships based on transparent, accountable, and shared leadership and to contribute actively to a culture where everyone is united towards a common goal.

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