

AI integration and usage in higher education Survey of academic staff

REPORT

This report summarises the results of a survey conducted within the Erasmus+ Cooperation Partnership project “Empowering Higher Education through Artificial Intelligence Integration - EHEAI”, aiming to explore the integration and use of artificial intelligence in higher education from the perspective of academic staff.

The survey was carried out **between November 2025 and February 2026** and targeted teachers and researchers across partner countries and beyond. It was designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data on current practices, experiences, perceptions, and institutional readiness related to the use of AI in teaching and learning.

The aim of the survey was to gather insights into how artificial intelligence is currently used in academic work, including teaching, assessment, research, and administrative tasks, as well as to identify perceived benefits, risks, ethical concerns, and future expectations. In addition, the survey sought to assess the level of institutional support, availability of policies and guidelines, and training opportunities related to AI integration in higher education.

In total, the survey collected **453 responses** from academic staff representing a wide range of disciplines, institutions, and countries. Respondents included teaching staff, researchers, and personnel involved in academic activities, with representation from **61 higher education institutions** across Europe and beyond, 20+ countries.

The survey followed a structured questionnaire covering several key areas, including familiarity with AI tools, frequency and purposes of use, types of tools applied in teaching and academic work, perceived benefits, risks and ethical concerns, institutional policies and support mechanisms, and expectations regarding the future impact of AI on teaching practices.

This report provides a synthesis of the main findings of the survey, offering an overview of current trends, challenges, and opportunities related to the integration of artificial intelligence in higher education.

1. Respondent profile and demographic overview

Participants represented a wide range of countries and higher education institutions, ensuring diversity in age groups and academic fields.

In terms of **disciplinary background**, respondents represent a wide range of academic fields. The largest share comes from Social Sciences, Business and Law (34.4%), followed by Information Technology and related fields (17.2%), Engineering and Manufacturing (10.2%), and Education and Pedagogy (8.4%). Additional representation is observed from Humanities and Arts, Natural Sciences and Mathematics, Health and Welfare, and Agriculture-related disciplines. This distribution ensures that the survey captures diverse perspectives on AI use across different academic domains.

Regarding **age distribution**, respondents are relatively evenly spread across different age groups, with a slight concentration in mid-career stages. The largest groups are aged 43–50 (26.3%) and 35–42 (24.5%), followed by 51–59 (23.6%).

This is further confirmed by **teaching experience** data. More than half of the respondents (54.2%) report having more than 10 years of teaching experience, while 19.9% have 6–10 years and 17.6% have 3–5 years of experience.

The survey also demonstrates a broad **international reach**. Respondents represent 61 universities across multiple countries. The highest number of responses was collected from project partner countries - **Italy** (139), followed by **Lithuania** (59), **Latvia** (58), **Germany** (55), **Slovenia** (51), and **Spain** (50). Additional responses were received from a range of other countries, including Austria, Poland, Czech Republic, Slovakia, Finland and several non-European countries.



453 respondents



61 universities



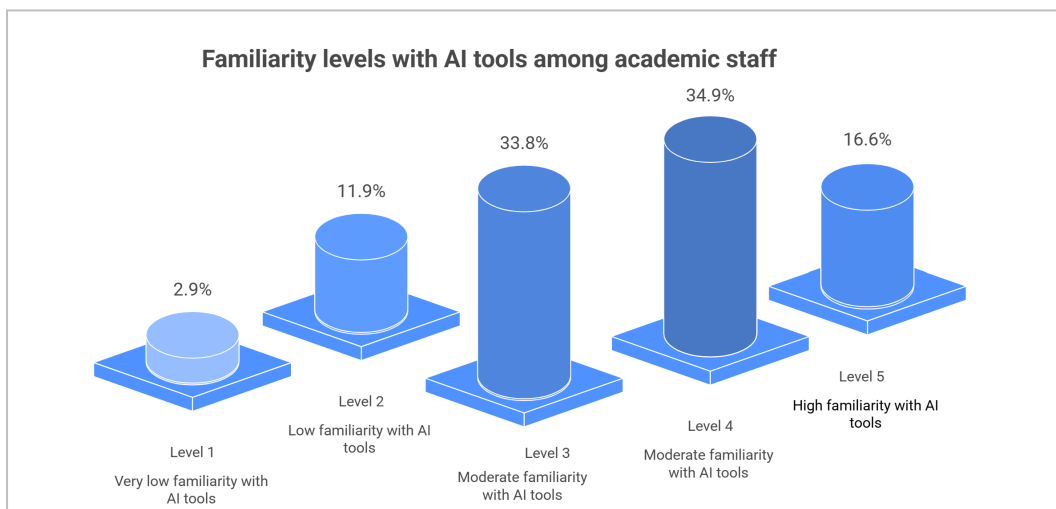
20+ countries

2. AI usage patterns and applications in teaching

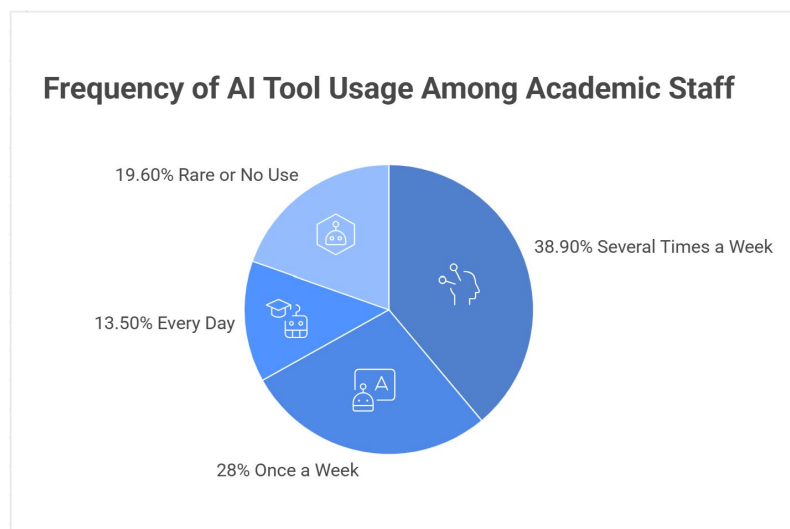
The results indicate that respondents generally demonstrate a moderate to high level of familiarity with artificial intelligence tools. The largest groups rate their **familiarity at level 4 (34.9%)** and **level 3 (33.8%)**, showing that the majority of academic staff feel reasonably confident in understanding and using AI tools.

A smaller but still significant share of respondents (16.6%) report a high level of familiarity (level 5), indicating advanced knowledge and experience with AI. In contrast, only a limited proportion of respondents assess their familiarity as low, with 11.9% selecting level 2 and just 2.9% indicating very low familiarity (level 1).

Overall, the distribution suggests that while **deep expertise in AI is not yet universal**, most academic staff possess at least a basic to intermediate level of understanding.



The results indicate that AI tools are already widely integrated into academic work. A significant proportion of respondents report **regular use of AI**, with **38.9% using AI tools several times a week** and **28% using them once a week**. Additionally, **13.5% of respondents use AI tools every day**, demonstrating that for a notable share of academic staff, AI has become part of routine professional practice. Only a relatively small proportion of respondents report rare or no use of AI tools.



The survey results show that AI tools are used for a wide range of purposes in teaching, covering both core pedagogical activities and supporting tasks.

The most common use of AI relates to content creation and communication. The highest share of respondents (64.7%) use AI for **translation**, followed by 58.1% who use it for **preparing teaching materials** such as reading materials and texts. **Writing support** is also widely reported, with 53.4% of respondents using AI to improve emails, reports, and course descriptions. Additionally, 45.5% use AI for **preparing presentations**.

Assessment-related uses are also significant. Around 44.6% of respondents use AI for **generating quizzes, tasks, or assignments**, while 15.2% use it for **providing feedback** and 9.9% for **evaluation**. This indicates that AI is already supporting assessment processes, although its role in formal evaluation remains more limited.

AI is also used to support **learning and research activities**. Around 38.6% of respondents report using AI for research, including data analysis, while only 21% use it to **support students' learning**. **Visual content creation**, such as preparing videos or generating images, is reported by 23.6% of respondents, showing moderate adoption of more advanced AI functionalities.

Administrative and organisational uses are also present, with 27.2% of respondents using AI for tasks such as communication, scheduling, or document preparation. **Plagiarism detection** is used by only 20.3% of respondents, indicating a more specialised application of AI tools.

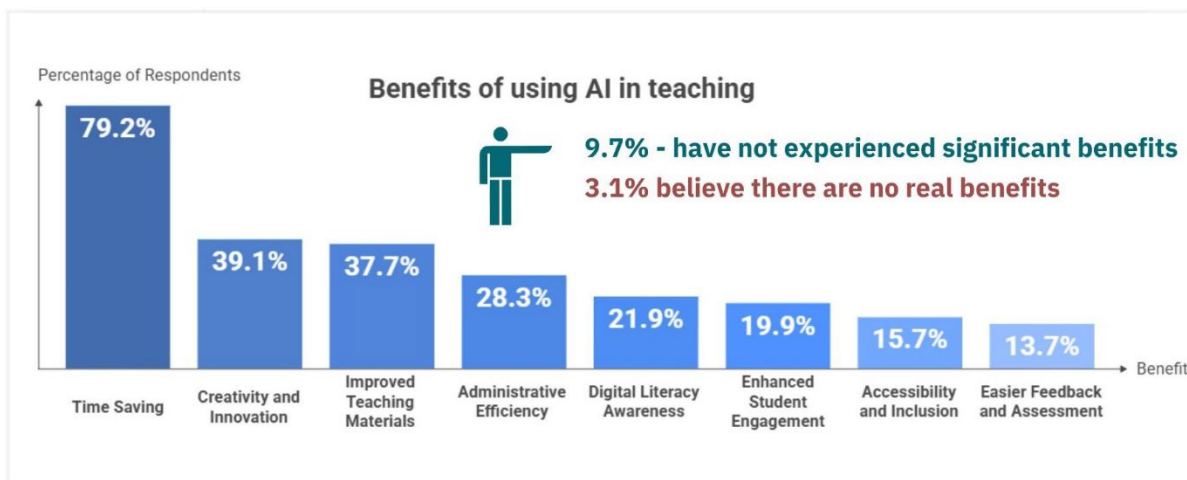
Overall, the findings demonstrate that AI is primarily used for content creation, communication, and efficiency-related tasks, while its use in assessment and evaluation remains more cautious.

Respondents identify several **benefits of using AI in teaching**, with **time savings** as the most significant (79.2%), particularly in preparing materials, grading, and feedback.

Other key benefits include **support for creativity and innovation** (39.1%) and **improved quality of teaching materials** (37.7%). Respondents also highlight improved **efficiency in administrative tasks** (28.3%) and **increased awareness of digital and AI literacy** (21.9%).

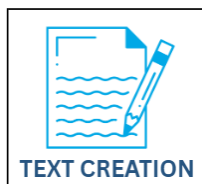
Additional benefits include enhanced student engagement (19.9%), better accessibility and inclusion (15.7%), and easier feedback and assessment (13.7%).

A smaller share of respondents (9.7%) report not having experienced significant benefits, while only 3.1% believe there are no real benefits.



3. Usage of AI tools

Respondents reported using different AI tools depending on the specific purpose and task, indicating a pragmatic and task-oriented approach to AI adoption in academic work.



AI generative tools for text creation

The results show a strong dominance of a limited number of generative AI tools used for text creation. By far the most widely used tool is **ChatGPT**, reported by **86.1%** of respondents (390 responses), confirming its central role in supporting text-based academic tasks.

The second most used tool is **Google Gemini** (formerly Bard), used by **33.1%** of respondents (150 responses), followed by **Microsoft Copilot**, reported by **29.1%** (132 responses). While these tools are widely used, their adoption remains significantly lower compared to ChatGPT.

A smaller proportion of respondents use other tools such as **Perplexity AI (13.2%)** and **Claude (9.5%)**, indicating moderate diversification in tool usage, particularly for information retrieval and content generation.



Writing assistance and grammar correction tools

The results show a more fragmented use of writing assistance tools compared to generative AI tools. The most widely used tool is **Grammarly**, reported by **38.4% of respondents** (174 responses), followed by **Microsoft Editor at 29.1%** (132 responses).

Other tools are used to a lesser extent, including Google Docs AI features (13.9%) and LanguageTool (9.3%). QuillBot (3.8%) and Wordtune (0.9%) show limited adoption. Notably, **30.7% of respondents report not using any writing assistance or grammar correction tools.**

Overall, the findings indicate moderate adoption, with no single dominant tool and a strong reliance on integrated solutions within existing software environments.



AI tools for creating presentations and visual materials

The results show relatively lower adoption of AI tools for creating presentations and visual materials, with **nearly half of respondents (46.6%) reporting that they do not use any AI tools for this purpose.**

Among those who do use such tools, the most common are **Canva Magic Write** or related Canva AI features (23.4%) and **Microsoft Designer** (22.3%), indicating a preference for tools integrated into familiar design and presentation environments.

DALL·E is used by 11.5% of respondents for image generation, while **Gamma.app** is reported by 8.6%, showing moderate use of more specialised visual content tools. Other tools such as SlidesAI (4%) and Beautiful.ai (2%) are used only by a small proportion of respondents.

The findings indicate that while AI tools for visual content creation are available, their adoption remains limited compared to text-based tools, and many academic staff still rely on traditional methods for preparing presentations.

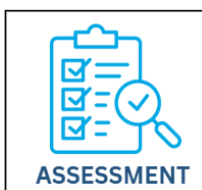


Plagiarism and AI-content detection tools

The results show limited and fragmented use of plagiarism and AI-content detection tools, with **more than half of respondents (54.7%) reporting that they do not use any such tools.**

Among those who do, **Turnitin** is the most widely used tool, reported by 19.9% of respondents, confirming its position as the leading solution in this area. **GPTZero** follows with 12.1%, indicating growing interest in tools specifically designed to detect AI-generated content.

Overall, the findings indicate that the use of plagiarism and AI-detection tools is not yet widespread, and many academic staff either rely on alternative methods or do not systematically use such tools in their practice.



AI tools for assessment, grading, and feedback

The results show very limited use of AI tools for assessment, grading, and feedback, with a large majority of respondents (**69.5%**) reporting that they **do not use** any AI-based tools for these purposes.

Among those who do use AI, **ChatGPT** is the most common tool, reported by **23.6%** of respondents, indicating that general-purpose AI tools are preferred over specialised solutions. Microsoft Copilot is used by 8.6%, while Google Classroom AI features (3.3%) and other integrated AI tools (3.8%) are used by smaller shares.

4. Risks and ethical concerns

Respondents express considerable concern about students using AI tools to complete assignments. In total, **65.2% report being concerned**, including 25.2% who are very concerned and 40% rather concerned. About a quarter (24.5%) remain neutral, while only a small share report low or no concern.

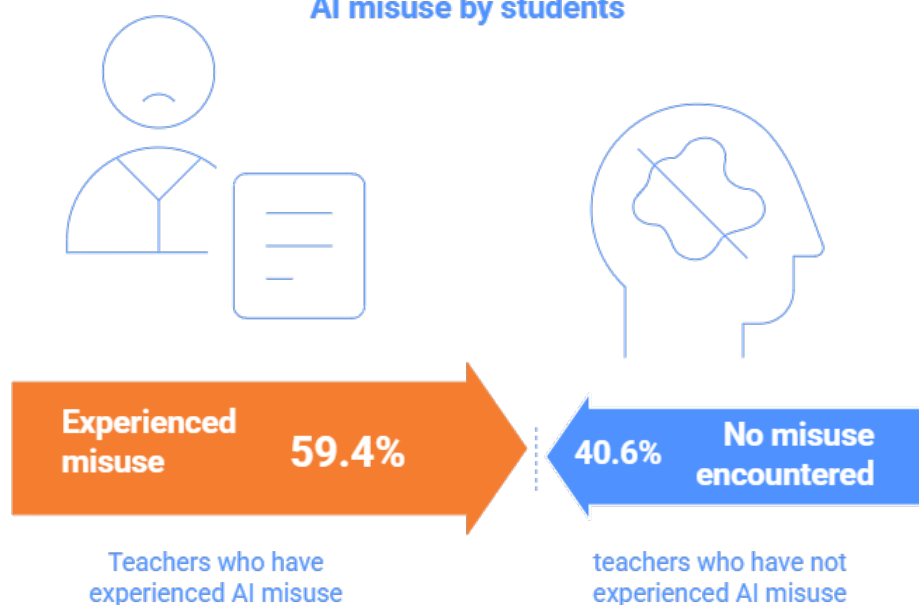
The main perceived risks are strongly related to **learning quality and academic integrity**. The most frequently identified risk is **loss of critical thinking (83.4%)**, followed by **academic dishonesty (62.5%)**. Other major concerns include **bias and misinformation (54.3%)** and **over-reliance on technology (51.2%)**.¹

Additionally, **40% of respondents highlight cognitive impairment**, while **32% point to data privacy issues**. Only 1.5% report not seeing any risks.

Survey show that concerns are primarily focused on the impact of AI on students' thinking skills, independence, and integrity.

The results indicate moderate levels of confidence among respondents in **detecting AI-generated student work**. The largest group (**42.4%**) rates their **confidence at a medium level (3)**, while 23.2% report higher confidence (level 4). A smaller share (4.4%) feel very confident (level 5). At the same time, a notable proportion report low confidence, with 21.2% selecting level 2 and 8.8% level 1.

AI misuse by students



Made with Napkin

In parallel, a majority of respondents (59.4%) report having encountered cases of AI misuse by students, while 40.6% have not.

The most frequently reported issue relates to students submitting fully or partially AI-generated work as their own, including essays, seminar papers, and even bachelor's or master's theses. In many cases, this involves copy-paste use of AI outputs without modification, critical reflection, or proper disclosure.

A second major theme is the lack of critical understanding. Respondents highlight that students often cannot explain or justify the content they submit, indicating superficial engagement with the material and over-reliance on AI tools.

Another common issue concerns inaccurate or fabricated information, particularly hallucinated references, incorrect citations, and misleading or non-existent sources. This is frequently linked to students not verifying AI-generated content before submission.

Misuse is also observed in assessment contexts, including the use of AI during exams or for completing programming assignments, where students generate solutions they do not understand.

Additionally, several responses point to non-transparent use of AI, where students fail to acknowledge or disclose the use of AI tools, raising concerns about academic integrity and authorship.

Overall, the findings suggest that while AI misuse is already a common experience, confidence in detecting it remains moderate, indicating a gap between exposure to AI-related challenges and the ability to effectively address them.

5. Institutional readiness and support

The results indicate that institutional policies on AI use are present but not consistently clear or well communicated.

A majority of respondents (42.8%) report that their institution has guidelines or policies related to AI use, while 38% are unsure about their existence. At the same time, 16.1% state that no such guidelines are in place, with a small share indicating that policies are still under development or only partially implemented.

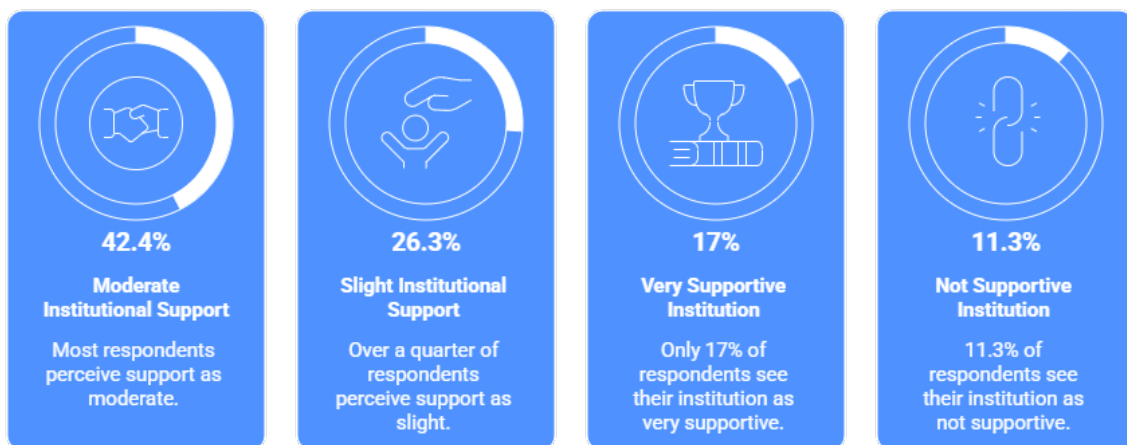
This uncertainty is further reflected in perceptions of policy clarity. **The largest group of respondents (36.4%) rate institutional policies as moderately clear** (level 3). However, a substantial proportion report low clarity, with 21.2% selecting level 2 and 15.9% level 1. In contrast, only 19% perceive policies as clear (level 4), and just 7.5% rate them as very clear (level 5).

The findings suggest that while many institutions have begun developing AI-related policies, their visibility, clarity, and implementation remain inconsistent, contributing to uncertainty among academic staff.

The results show that institutional training on AI is unevenly distributed. While 29.1% report regular training and 26.7% have attended introductory sessions, a significant share either rely on external training (9.9%) or have not received any training at all (24.3%). Another 9.9% indicate that training is still under development.

In terms of institutional support, most respondents perceive it as moderate (42.4%) or slight (26.3%). Only 17% consider their institution very supportive, while 11.3% see it as not supportive at all, indicating that support structures remain limited and inconsistent.

Institutional Support Perception



Made with Napkin

The responses highlight several key areas where institutions are expected to strengthen support for responsible AI use.

The most frequently mentioned need is the development of clear institutional policies and guidelines, including rules on acceptable AI use, academic integrity, and transparency requirements for both students and staff. Respondents emphasize the importance of consistent standards across courses and departments.

A second major theme is training and professional development. Many respondents call for regular workshops, practical training sessions, and guidance materials to help educators understand how to use AI effectively and ethically in teaching.

Another important area is the provision of approved tools and technical infrastructure. Respondents suggest that institutions should offer access to reliable, secure, and institutionally supported AI tools, reducing reliance on unverified external platforms.

Support for pedagogy and assessment redesign is also highlighted. This includes guidance on adapting assignments, developing AI-resilient assessment methods, and promoting critical thinking rather than passive AI use.

Additionally, respondents stress the need for awareness-raising and student guidance, including clear communication about responsible AI use, ethical considerations, and academic integrity.

6. Future

The results show a strong expectation that AI will significantly influence teaching practices. A clear majority of respondents (74.4%) believe that **AI will lead to substantial changes** within the next five years, while 18.5% are uncertain. Only a small share do not expect significant impact, indicating a broad recognition of AI's transformative potential in education.

Most respondents believe that assessment methods will need to adapt significantly, with 39.1% rating this at level 4 and 30.9% at level 5. Similarly, respondents expect their disciplines to evolve, with 44.2% indicating a high level of change (4) and 25.2% a very high level (5), confirming a broad anticipation of transformation driven by AI.

Responses indicate that teaching practices are expected to change primarily through increased efficiency, integration of AI into everyday teaching, and shifts in pedagogy.

A dominant theme is **time saving and automation** - respondents frequently mention faster preparation of teaching materials, automated processes, and reduced administrative workload ("save time", "speed up", "make many processes automatized"). This is expected to allow more focus on interaction and practical work.

Another key trend is the **integration of AI into teaching and learning** processes. Respondents note that AI will become a common or even primary tool, embedded across all stages of teaching, including material creation, feedback, and student support.

Pedagogical changes are also strongly emphasised. Many responses indicate a shift towards more interactive, discussion-based, and student-centred approaches, with increased use of oral exams, practical tasks, and collaborative learning, while traditional homework and written assignments may lose relevance.

Personalisation is another recurring theme - AI is expected to support tailored learning paths, adaptive feedback, and better identification of student needs, while teachers' roles shift towards facilitation and learning design rather than content delivery.

Finally, respondents highlight the need to **adapt assessment and address ethical use**, including redesigning assignments, guiding students in responsible AI use, and responding to increased AI use by students

TEACHERS' REFLECTIONS ON AI IN EDUCATION



"We teachers need to re-educate ourselves in effective teaching that integrates AI - otherwise we risk becoming dead weight, spending huge amounts of energy just to collect crumbs. In the past, we used to walk; today we have a "helicopter" (AI) that can take us farther and faster. But if we don't know how to fly it, where will we take our students? Nowhere. The world is already in the air. Students are trying the helicopter, often without a big-picture view, and they may end up going in the wrong direction. That's why we need to become expert pilots".

"AI is a resource, and risks should not block its use but must be recognised and managed".



"I've been using AI for about a year now and am constantly discovering new ways to use it, even in research. The available tools are getting better every week".

"If AI becomes seen as a perfect or unbeatable problem-solver, some learners may lose motivation to engage deeply with intellectual work. This is not a technological problem, but an educational one. Our task will be to help students understand that human learning has value far beyond outperforming a machine - it is about curiosity, understanding, judgment, social intelligence, and the ability to shape meaning".



"Technology is not good or bad, it's how you use it that makes the difference!"