

CONNECTION, RECONFIGURED: REIMAGINING TEACHING AND LEARNING WITH AI

16 – 18 November 2026 | University of Cape Town

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WE INVITE PAPERS THAT RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING THEMES:



1. Relationships and the Relational

How is generative AI reshaping the relationships through which learning happens – between students and educators, among peers, between supervisors and postgraduate students, and between students and knowledge itself? What does AI make possible relationally, and what does it put at risk? What kinds of human connection, mentorship and belonging are we committed to protecting?



2. Student Agency and Voice

Students are not passive recipients of an AI-transformed curriculum – they are daily navigators of a landscape that educators are still catching up with. This theme centres student perspectives, experiences and expertise. How are students actually using AI? What tensions, pressures and possibilities do they encounter? How can we design learning environments that strengthen student agency rather than diminish it?



3. Equity, Access and the Uneven Landscape

“AI in education” is not a uniform experience. Access to AI tools differs across economic lines, disciplines, institutions and countries. In a South African and African context, the question of who benefits from generative AI – and who is left behind, or rendered invisible in its training data – is urgent. This theme examines the structural conditions of AI adoption and asks what an equitable approach to AI in higher education would actually look like.



4. Critical and Ethical Perspectives

TLC2026 actively invites critique. We welcome theoretical, philosophical and empirical work that examines the risks, limitations and harms of generative AI in education – including questions of bias, surveillance, environmental cost, intellectual property, and the commodification of knowledge. A harm reduction framing is one productive way into this territory: rather than debating whether to use AI, how do we minimise harm while navigating a landscape that is already transforming around us?



5. Disciplinary Identities and AI

AI does not look the same from every discipline. For example, its implications for a student of law, engineering, creative writing or medicine are distinct. This theme invites discipline-specific perspectives on how AI is reshaping the practices, values and ways of knowing that define a field – and asks what it means to educate students into a discipline in an age when AI can simulate much of its surface knowledge.



6. Co-creation, Collaboration and Social AI

Not all AI use is solitary or substitutive. This theme explores AI applications that enhance human-to-human collaboration – ‘social AI’ that brings people together rather than replacing their interactions. It also examines pedagogies of co-creation with AI: how do we design learning experiences where AI is a genuine partner in knowledge-making, and what are the implications for authorship, originality and intellectual ownership?



7. The Future of the University

Behind every specific question about assessment or curriculum design lies a larger one: what are universities for? What human skills and capabilities will be valued in future in a context where AIs are able to accomplish increasingly complex tasks? This theme invites bold thinking about institutional purpose, the evolving role of the academic, and the kind of graduates – and human beings – that universities are trying to shape.



8. Wild Card Submissions

Other teaching and learning innovations of interest to the UCT teaching community.