

Submission to the Productivity Commission's inquiry into AI and Data

I have recently completed a PhD looking at generative text and how it affects authorial intent. I am also a parent of two teenagers and I have deep concerns about how AI tools are affecting the learning and teaching environment for them and their peers.

My daughter (in year 9) showed me some work from a group project she is working on with a classmate, who had clearly used a large language model write the text. Using LLMs mean students don't properly learn and waste teachers time by making them arbitrate over whether a student actually wrote and understand the work they submit. Kids will always look to take shortcuts but using an LLM to help learning is like using a forklift at the gym instead of lifting the weights yourself.

Kids at school need to learn critical thinking but these technologies only encourage cutting and pasting, masking the gaps in their abilities. In ten years time when these students are in the workforce what will their skills be? Platitudes from companies with commercial interests claiming AI is the future of learning do not care about the deskilling of an entire generation.

We desperately need regulation to govern this technology and need to stand up to corporations telling us to accept AI as inevitable. Strong action taken now will be hugely beneficial In the long term when the actual value of this technology is seen as being nowhere near the hype that currently surrounds it.

Yours, Paul