# Moving Past AI Shame: A Discussion Guide

*Practical resources for navigating AI use in academic settings*

## Understanding AI Shame - Two Perspectives

### Academic Perspective: “AI Shaming in Academia”

*Summary of Louis Jere’s article on AI stigma in higher education*

**Definition:** AI shaming is the stigma or criticism directed at academics who use AI tools, seen as undermining the ideal that scholarship should be entirely “human intellect-driven.”

**Real Examples from Academia:** - Researchers rejected from journals after editors discovered AI use for brainstorming - Junior academics accused of cheating for using AI to polish writing - Faculty hiding their AI use from tenure committees

**Types of AI Shamers Identified:** - **Traditionalists** – Value established methods, resist change - **Technophobes** – Fear technology and AI generally - **Elitists** – See AI as threat to status or expertise - **Luddites** – Fear disruption to academic livelihoods - **Misunderstanders** – Don’t grasp AI capabilities, default to sci-fi fears

**Consequences of AI Shaming:** - Stifles innovation in research methods - Wastes effort on repetitive tasks - Creates underground usage without best practices - Disadvantages early-career researchers

**The Bold Transparency Approach:** Louis Jere openly used ChatGPT while writing about AI shaming, advocating for normalising disclosure as a path forward.

### Workplace Perspective: Fortune/Canva Study (2025)

*How AI shame manifests in professional settings*

**Key Findings:** - 70% of knowledge workers use AI weekly - 63% fear being seen as incompetent or lazy - Most hide their AI use from colleagues - Creates “readiness gap” between expectation and support

**The Pattern Across Sectors:** Both academia and industry show similar patterns of shame, secrecy, and missed opportunities for collaborative learning.

## Reframing Our Relationship with AI

### From Shame to Partnership

**Traditional View:** “Real scholarship is purely human intellect” **Alternative View:** “Scholarship is human intellect directing appropriate tools”

**Traditional View:** “Using AI is cheating” **Alternative View:** “Using AI without disclosure or understanding is problematic”

**Traditional View:** “AI threatens academic integrity” **Alternative View:** “Hidden AI use threatens integrity; transparent use enhances it”

**Traditional View:** “AI will replace academics” **Alternative View:** “AI augments academic capabilities for those who master it”

### Questions for Reflection

Rather than prescribing how to think, consider: - What tools do you already use that were once controversial? (calculators, spell-check, citation managers) - How is AI different from or similar to these tools? - What would responsible, transparent AI use look like in your discipline? - How might AI free you to focus on higher-level academic work?

## Moving Forward: A Collaboration Mindset

### Proposed Actions (from the literature)

**Individual Level:** - Experiment with one small task - Document and share your process - Practice transparent disclosure - Shift from “human vs. machine” to “human + machine”

**Department Level:** - Create safe spaces for AI experimentation - Share both successes and failures - Develop discipline-specific guidelines - Educate about actual AI capabilities (vs. sci-fi myths)

**Institutional Level:** - Establish clear, supportive policies - Provide training and resources - Recognise AI literacy as professional development - Support “post-digital academic writing” practices

### Key Message from Research

Both academic and industry research conclude: AI should be seen as an **augmenting partner**, not a replacement. Overcoming shame requires honesty about use, curiosity about possibilities, and willingness to evolve practices.

## Resources & References

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* (Lichtenberg, N. (2025, August 29). “AI shame” is running rampant in the corporate sector—and C-suite leaders are most worried about getting caught, survey says. Fortune. https://fortune.com/2025/08/29/what-is-ai-shame-readiness-gap-training-artificial-intelligence/)[https://fortune.com/2025/08/29/what-is-ai-shame-readiness-gap-training-artificial-intelligence/]
* Canva Workplace Study on AI Adoption (2025)
* [TEQSA on Generative AI](https://www.teqsa.gov.au/guides-resources/higher-education-good-practice-hub/gen-ai-knowledge-hub)

**Support:** - Contact: michael.borck@curtin.edu.au - Companion website: [to be added] - Prompt library: [to be added]

*Questions? Contact: michael.borck@curtin.edu.au* *Version 3.0 - September 2025*

*Drawing on both academic and industry research on AI shame*

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