

Breakout Session 1

AI as a Tool: Benefits and Pitfalls

Breakout Session Format

We will separate into four small groups of 4 - 5 people

We're going to get Claude to pick the groups!

Arrange your chairs into little circles towards the corners of the room

~30 minutes of discussion, around 10 minutes on each talking point

~15 minutes to summarise all the groups' thoughts

We're going to ask an LLM for their thoughts on the topics too!

Topic: AI as a Tool

Topic 1 (all groups): What are the benefits of AI in daily life?

(starter ideas: using LLMs as knowledge tools, computer vision, automation)

Topic 2 (all groups): What are the corresponding pitfalls of AI in daily life?

(starter ideas: dangerous advice, edge cases, over-reliance, humans redundant?)

Topic 3 (one scenario per group): See handouts

Scenario 1: AI-Assisted Parent

Scenario:

A parent uses AI tools daily — a smart speaker answers their child's homework questions, a recommendation algorithm curates their child's YouTube feed, and a grammar/writing assistant helps the child with essays.

Discuss:

Where is this helpful, and where could it undermine the child's learning?

Who is responsible when the AI gets something wrong?

Scenario 2: Health Conscious Consumer

Scenario:

Someone uses an AI-powered app to photograph their meals and track nutrition, a wearable that monitors heart rate and sleep, and a chatbot for initial health advice before deciding whether to see a GP.

Discuss:

How much should people trust AI with health decisions?

What happens when the AI reassures someone who actually needs medical attention — or causes unnecessary anxiety?

Scenario 3: The Job Applicant

Scenario:

Someone applies for jobs and uses AI to tailor their CV and write cover letters. Meanwhile, the companies they're applying to use AI to screen applications, analyse video interviews for sentiment and confidence, and rank candidates.

Discuss:

Is this a level playing field or an arms race?

What's fair, and what's lost when both sides are using AI?

Scenario 4: Neighbourhood Watch

Scenario:

A local council introduces AI-powered CCTV with facial recognition to reduce crime, smart traffic lights that adapt to congestion using computer vision, and an automated system for triaging complaints and allocating council resources.

Discuss:

Where's the line between a smarter community and a surveilled one?

Who decides how these systems are used, and who gets to challenge them?

All Groups Summary

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