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AI & THE EXTERNAL QA HERE NATIONAL BOLOGNA EVENT

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WHAT IS AI, AND WHY DOES IT MATTER FOR QA?

- AI systems like ChatGPT are increasingly used in higher education for writing, tutoring, grading, and advising
- Capabilities now include advanced reasoning, multilingual feedback, and simulated conversation
- But: Are these systems just tools, or are they reshaping how we learn, teach, and assure quality?

A few examples of AI tools in HE…

General AI Assistants (for Learning & Support)

- **ChatGPT (OpenAI)** – tutoring, writing, translation, reasoning
- **Claude (Anthropic)** – private study assistant with longer memory and less hallucination
- **Google Gemini** – real-time web-enhanced support
- **Perplexity.ai** – AI with source citation, useful for critical engagement
- **Pi (Inflection AI)** – conversational, empathetic AI coach for student well-being

Writing & Academic Integrity

- **GrammarlyGO / Quillbot** – paraphrasing, editing, clarity suggestions
- **Turnitin with AI Detection** – plagiarism + GenAI detection
- **ZeroGPT / GPTZero** – basic detectors for AI-generated content

Assessment and Feedback

- **Gradescope** – AI-assisted exam grading and comment banks
- **Cadmus** – secure, AI-enhanced assessment environment (detects writing shifts)
- **EvaSys** – AI-supported student feedback analysis for QA purposes

Teaching Support & Course Design

- **Curipod** – AI-powered interactive lesson creation
- **Khanmigo (Khan Academy)** – AI tutor and teacher assistant
- **Sana Labs** – personalized learning recommendations for students

Institutional / QA-level tools

- **UNIwise (WISEflow)** – digital exams with AI monitoring options
- **Caktus.ai (for admin use)** – document summarization, planning assistance
- **QBot (Microsoft Teams for Education)** – AI chatbots integrated into learning environments

Experimental or In-House Models in HEIs

- **Institution-trained Chatbots** (e.g. Uni-specific Claude/GPT models)
- **Custom dashboards for QA reporting** using **LLMs with analytics layers**

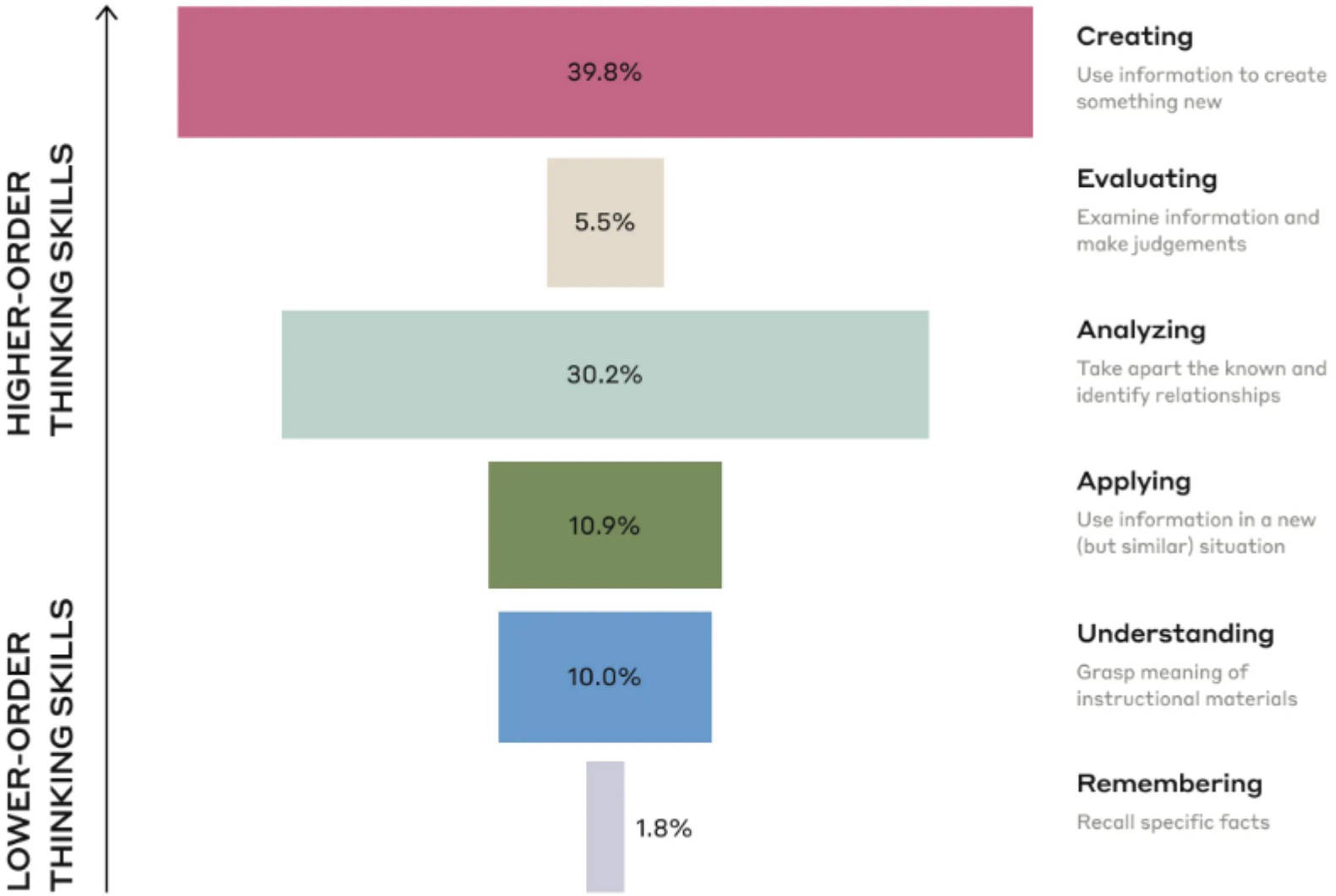
Source: ChatGPT

AI'S IMPACT ON LEARNING: THE COGNITIVE RISK

The Double-Edged Sword of AI in HE

- Humans tend to avoid mental effort → while AI offers scalable support, it also risks diminishing critical thinking and learning effort
- When AI offers immediate answers, students bypass deep thinking
- Jaan Aru warns: if we delegate too much, we may lose our cognitive edge, not gain one
- Ted Chiang: Reading a GenAI solution ≠ thinking through a problem
- Klemencic (Harvard): GenAI reduces peer interaction, reflective thinking, and cognitive persistence

Claude's skills on Bloom's Taxonomy



Source: https://www.anthropic.com/news/anthropic-education-report-how-university-students-use-claude

QA AGENCIES: WHERE DO WE STAND?

- ENQA workshop in Tallinn, Estonia (June 2025)
  - 1. Understanding the implications of AI for higher education institutions, and
  - 2. Considering its responsible use in external quality assurance practices

- Most agencies only monitor AI use in HEIs, rarely engage directly
- Little to no strategic integration of AI in QA processes
- Autonomy of HEIs, and lack of regulation hinder action
- What does the ESG say?
- There's an urgent need for agencies to shift from oversight to stewardship

RADISSON
MEETINGS

HOW AGENCIES ARE ENGAGING (TALLINN FINDINGS)

- Some are facilitating national discussions and ethical codes (e.g., QAA)
- A few integrate AI into institutional reviews and other EQA-related activities (NOKUT, QQI, AQU Catalunya, ANVUR)
- Limited action: mostly reactive, not strategic
- Need for a broader redefinition of the QA mission in the AI age

Challenges for HEIs in Adopting AI:

1. Lack of institutional strategies, policies, or frameworks
2. Misuse, academic fraud, unequal access to licensed tools
3. Resistance or fear due to unclear ethical boundaries
4. Absence of staff training or AI literacy development

EXAMPLES OF GOOD PRACTICE (BUT STILL ISOLATED)

- Support for the institutional AI policies + Codes of Ethics
- AI guides and personal learning chatbots
- Assisting the assessment redesigns for authenticity and integrity
- HE staff/student AI training initiatives
- Shared repositories and equity-driven tool distribution

THE TEN PRINCIPLES FROM TALLINN

1. AI must serve strategic goals, not drive them
2. Respect ethics in HE provision, academic autonomy, and sustainability in use
3. Ensure transparency of AI use
4. Protect data and require consent
5. Ensure equitable access to AI
6. Promote AI literacy and regular training
7. Use AI only when fit for purpose
8. Keep human judgment central
9. Encourage innovation – with caution
10. Review principles regularly to stay relevant

THE RISK OF FRAGMENTATION

- Without shared principles or collaboration, the QA sector faces:
  - Disjointed practices across the EHEA
  - Ethical inconsistencies
  - Innovation in isolation
- Coordination is essential to ensure responsible and inclusive AI use!

THE (FUTURE) ROLE OF QA AGENCIES

- QA should evolve to:
  - Develop and evaluate AI-related institutional strategies
  - Promote critical and ethical use of AI
  - Embed AI into quality frameworks on a principal/value-based level (not prescriptive or limiting to the current AI tools and practices)
- Move from reactive to proactive leadership in the sector

And, examples of what agencies can do related to their own work in EQA:

1. Publish internal AI strategy
2. Train reviewers and staff
3. Share examples, co-develop principles, and fund/support experiments
4. Maintain human oversight as AI scales

THANK YOU!