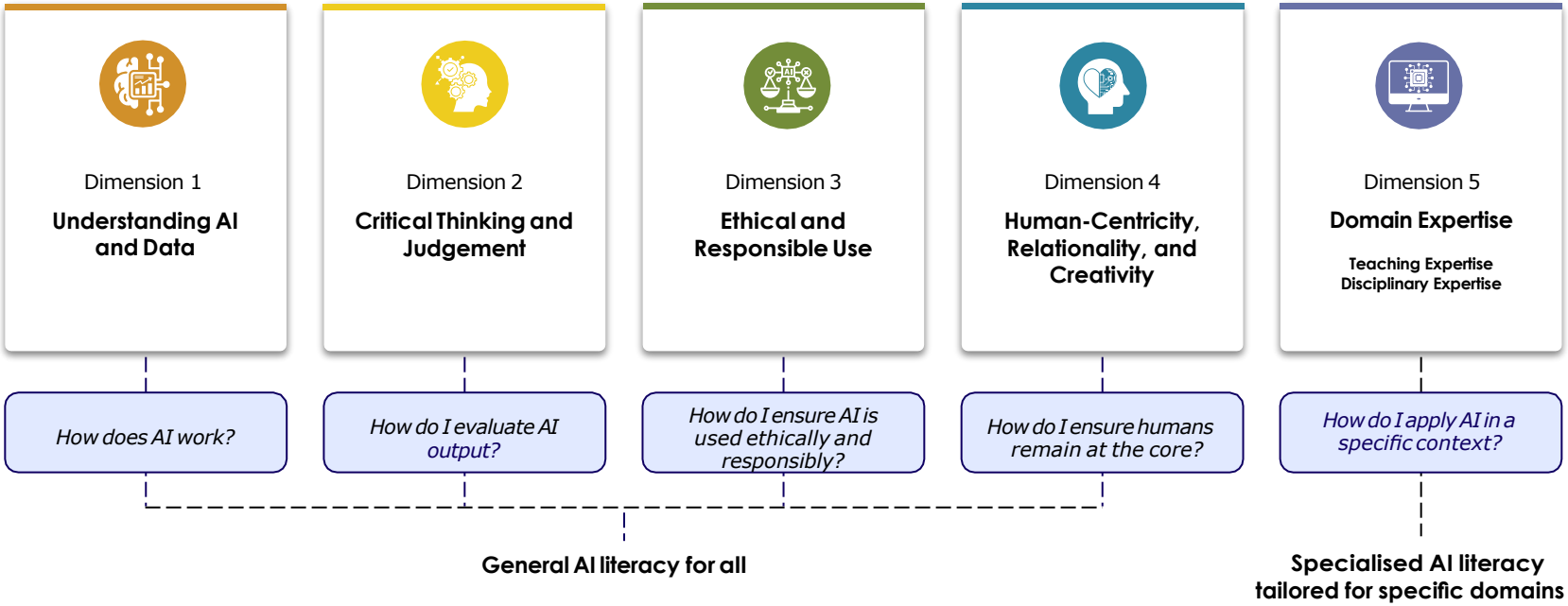
5 Dimensions of the USask AI Literacy Framework (draft)

AI Literacy (Digital Education Council, 2025): *The essential knowledge and skills needed to understand, interact with, and critically assess AI technologies. AI literacy includes the ability to use AI tools effectively and ethically, evaluate their output, ensure humans are at the core of AI, and adapt to the evolving AI landscape in both personal and professional settings.*



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5 AI Literacy Dimensions Defined

Literacy Dimensions	Definition
Understanding AI and Data *How does AI work?*	Encompasses understanding how AI systems work, the principles of data collection, processing, and interpretation, and the implications of AI-generated output. Proficiency in this area enables individuals to critically engage with AI tools, assess their capabilities and limitations, and make informed decisions about their use.
Critical Thinking and Judgement *How do I evaluate AI output?*	Focusses on the ability to evaluate AI-generated content, discern biases, and apply logical reasoning when using AI in decision-making. It includes skills such as verifying sources, identifying misinformation, recognising limitations in AI-generated insights, and ensuring that human judgment remains central to AI-supported processes. Critical thinking ensures that AI is used as a tool for augmentation rather than blind reliance.
Ethical and Responsible AI Use *How do I ensure AI is used ethically and responsibly?*	Covers the ethical considerations and governance frameworks necessary for responsible AI adoption. It includes understanding AI ethics principles (such as fairness, transparency, accountability, and privacy), recognising potential risks (such as bias, discrimination, and misinformation), and implementing responsible AI use practices (such as modifying use based on environmental impacts and respecting intellectual property). It also involves navigating regulatory and institutional guidelines to ensure compliance and integrity in AI applications.
Human-centricity, Relationality, and Creativity *How do I ensure humans remain at the core?*	Emphasises the importance of human skills in an AI-driven world, including empathy, adaptability, communication, lifelong learning, and mindset. As AI automates tasks, human-centred skills become critical in maintaining ethical decision-making, fostering inclusive and diverse AI practices, and ensuring AI aligns with societal values. It also includes managing AI's impact on human interactions and well-being in educational and professional environments.
Domain Expertise *How do I apply AI in a specific context?*	Focusses on the specialised knowledge and skills required to understand, assess, and manage the impact of AI within a specific staff role in a unit. It includes the ability to critically evaluate AI applications used for accountabilties, adapt AI tools to enhance workflow, and navigate work-place specific ethical, regulatory, and operational challenges.

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USask AI Literacy Framework

Competency Level

Literacy Dimensions	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3
Dimension 1 **Understanding AI and Data**	AI and Data Awareness	AI and Data in Action	AI and Data Optimisation
Dimension 2 **Critical Thinking and Judgement**	Question AI Output	Evaluate AI Output	Challenge AI Output
Dimension 3 **Ethical and Responsible Use**	Understand Risks	Apply Responsible Practices	Shape Responsible Practices
Dimension 4 **Human-Centricity, Relationality, and Creativity**	Awareness of Human-AI Interaction	AI as Collaborative Tool	Develop Human-Centred AI Practices
Dimension 5 **Domain Expertise - Career Readiness**	Applied AI Awareness	AI Application in Professional Contexts	Strategic AI Leadership

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Dimension 1: Understanding AI and Data

	Level 1 AI and Data Awareness	Level 2 AI and Data in Action	Level 3 AI and Data Optimization
Description	Staff develop a basic understanding of AI concepts, how AI systems function, and the role of data in AI decision-making.	Staff can select AI tools for real-world tasks, understand how AI models work, and assess the role of data in AI performance.	Staff critically engage with AI systems, assess their technical capabilities, and strategically integrate AI into decision-making.
Examples of Competencies	• Define AI and its key components (e.g. machine learning, automation). • Identify common AI applications in daily life and work. • Understand the basics of how AI processes data to generate output.	• Explain how AI models process data and generate output. • Identify factors affecting AI performance, such as data quality. • Understand how to apply AI tools to automate or support professional tasks.	• Compare different AI models and their applications for work tasks. • Integrate AI into workflows for enhanced efficiency. • Communicate AI system capabilities and limitations to others.
Examples of Actions for Progression	• Engage with foundational AI training materials, including introductory tutorials and professional learning. • Learn basic data concepts, such as structured vs. unstructured data, and how AI systems process information. • Explore and experiment with how AI systems use training data. • Experiment with widely available AI tools (e.g. AI chatbots, translation tools, and recommendation systems) to observe how they function.	• Conduct comparative analysis of different AI models to evaluate their accuracy and limitations. • Use AI-driven analytics tools to extract insights from permitted datasets. • Learn about data management systems and how AI interacts with structured datasets. • Work with datasets in AI applications, focusing on improving data quality for better AI performance.	• Lead projects involving AI integration, ensuring effective use of data pipelines and model selection. • Lead discussions or training sessions on AI integration, ensuring stakeholders understand AI strengths and limitations. • Contribute to institutional or policy discussions on AI and data governance. • Develop strategies for handling large datasets and improve AI performance for the institution.

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Dimension 2: Critical Thinking and Judgement

	Level 1 Question AI Output	Level 2 Evaluating AI Output	Level 3 Challenge AI Output
Description	Staff can identify key evaluation criteria for AI output and understand that AI-generated content may contain biases or errors.	Staff critically assess AI-generated content using established evaluation criteria and identify biases or inconsistencies.	Staff demonstrate expertise in evaluating AI-generated outputs, interrogating AI's reasoning processes, and assessing AI's impact on their teams.
Examples of Competencies	• Understand the importance of verifying AI-driven insights with human judgement. • Understand basic evaluation criteria for AI-generated content, such as accuracy, consistency, and source reliability. • Identify common inconsistencies or biases in AI-generated content.	• Apply evaluation frameworks to assess the validity of AI-generated insights. • Identify and articulate all significant biases or inconsistencies in AI-generated output. • Compare AI-generated information against multiple independent sources for verification.	• Apply logical reasoning to understand how AI generates responses, analyze the strengths and weaknesses of different AI models and their output, and effectively build upon them. • Effectively leverage AI capability to enhance critical thinking skills. • Recognize and manage the nuanced impacts of AI in complex situations.
Examples of Actions for Progression	• Compare AI-generated content with verified sources to identify discrepancies. • Engage professional learning about where AI-generated information led to errors or misinterpretation. • Explore AI tools to assess their reliability and accuracy.	• Assess AI-generated output in a professional or work setting. • Engage in discussions on AI evaluation methodologies. • Apply AI assessment frameworks to real-world scenarios.	• Conduct independent evaluation of AI tools, comparing their output across multiple sources for consistency and accuracy. • Refine evaluation methodologies based on exposure to new AI advancements and emerging best practices. • Apply advanced AI evaluation frameworks in policy contexts, as appropriate

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Dimension 3: Ethical and Responsible AI Use

	Level 1 Understand Risks	Level 2 Apply Responsible Practices	Level 3 Shape Responsible Practices
Description	Staff understand fundamental AI ethics principles and can recognize potential risks, such as bias, misinformation, and discrimination.	Staff apply ethical principles and frameworks to evaluate and mitigate risks associated with AI use in work.	Staffs demonstrate expertise in evaluating, shaping, and advocating for ethical AI policies, governance frameworks, and institutional best practices.
Examples of Competencies	• Define key AI ethics principles (e.g. data security, fairness, transparency, accountability, privacy). • Recognize how AI systems can perpetuate bias and inequality. • Identify ethical concerns in AI-driven decision-making (e.g. hiring, surveillance, law enforcement, data security).	• Assess AI systems for compliance with ethical standards and legal frameworks. • Identify and mitigate risks related to bias, discrimination, and data privacy in AI applications. • Implement strategies to ensure fairness and accountability in AI decision-making.	• Critically evaluate ethical implications of AI adoption at an institutional or societal level. • Contribute to the development of AI governance frameworks and ethical AI policies. • Provide guidance on ethical AI adoption in professional and/ or policy environments.
Examples of Actions for Progression	• Participate in professional learning on AI ethics and responsible use • Reflect on personal experiences using AI tools and consider ethical implications. • Analyze a real-world case study where AI ethics were challenged, such as biased hiring algorithms or misinformation spread by AI • Engage in discussions on ethical dilemmas involving AI decision-making.	• Test a variety of AI applications at USask responsibly. • Reflect on and apply USask guidelines for the ethical implementation of AI. • Apply ethical AI principles in project development or policy analysis.	• Draft or contribute to ethical AI guidelines within an organization, academic institution, or regulatory body. • Publish research, reports, or policy papers analyzing ethical AI challenges and solutions. • Conduct workshops or training sessions on ethical AI adoption. • Collaborate with AI ethics advisory groups or contribute to national or international policy discussions.

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Dimension 4: Human-Centricity, Emotional Intelligence, and Creativity

	Level 1 Awareness of Human-AI Interaction	Level 2 AI as Collaborative Tool	Level 3 Develop Human-Centred AI Practices
Description	Staff members have a foundational understanding of how AI affects human decision-making, communication, and emotional intelligence.	Staff members integrate human-centered skills into AI-assisted environments and choose when not to use it, including to preserve relationality or inclusion.	Staff advocate for human-centered AI approaches, ensuring AI remains a tool that complements rather than replaces human skills.
Examples of Competencies	• Recognize how AI influences human behavior, decision-making, and interactions. • Identify situations where AI lacks human sensitivity or is inappropriate socially (e.g. AI-generated feedback, automated decision-making). • Understand the importance of empathy and adaptability in AI-augmented environments.	• Apply effective communication strategies and human-in-the-loop strategies when using AI tools in professional settings. • Identify opportunities to enhance human-centered collaboration with AI • Assess AI tools to ensure inclusivity for different user groups.	• Develop AI-driven workplace policies that safeguard human agency in decision-making. • Establish guidelines for using AI in professional environments that ensure AI complements, rather than replaces, human interaction and creativity. • Evaluate the impact of AI in human-centered roles.
Examples of Actions for Progression	• Observe how AI influences human interactions. • Reflect on personal experiences when using AI-powered communication tools (e.g. chatbots, virtual assistants). • Engage in discussions on the limitations of AI in recognizing human emotions and context. • Explore the psychological and social impact of AI in human interactions.	• Try human-centered AI practices and determine their impact on collaborations, people and the work. • Participate in collaborative projects where AI is integrated into human-driven decision-making. • Analyze the impact of AI on workforce skills and creativity and propose strategies for maintaining essential human abilities.	• Lead research or policy development on the role of emotional intelligence in AI-driven work environments. • Create training programs focused on balancing AI integration with human-centric skills. • Engage with industry or academic stakeholders to define best practices for human-AI collaboration. • Create reports or guides advocating for human-centered AI principles in education, governance, or business.

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Dimension 5: Employment Expertise Example – revise as a unit

	Level 1 Applied AI Awareness	Level 2 AI Application in Professional Contexts	Level 3 Strategic AI Leadership
Description	Individuals develop a basic understanding of how AI is used in their specific field and can identify relevant AI tools and applications.	Individuals can effectively use AI tools to support tasks, optimise workflows, and improve decision-making within their field.	Individuals develop advanced expertise in AI applications within their workflows.
Examples of Competencies	• Identify preferred USask AI tools • Know USask AI Guidelines for staff	• Prompt AI tools to create content, insights or analysis, and evaluate the quality of what is generated.	• Uses AI to significantly improve workflow across the whole unit or department. • Anticipates future needs and sees connections to emerging trends in AI. • Supports the informed decisions of others
Examples of Actions for Progression	• Explore and experiment with job-specific AI tools.	• Implement AI-powered solutions in professional workflows, assessing their impact on efficiency and accuracy.	• Evaluate the impact of AI on the unit over time, determining merits and issues.

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AI Literacy Framework for Staff

University of Saskatchewan

Literacy Dimensions	Competency Level: Level 1 Baseline	Level 2 Expected	Level 3 Forward-looking
Dimension 1 **Understanding AI and Data**	Recognise AI's role in my work. Understand basic AI concepts and how AI systems use data.	Use AI tools to support productivity. Understand AI limitations and biases.	Engage with AI implementation, optimisation, or customisation in work. Strong technical understanding of AI models.
Dimension 2 **Critical Thinking and Judgement**	Understand the importance of verifying AI-driven insights. Recognise when AI -generated content may oversimplify or misrepresent.	Understand and apply evaluation criteria for AI-generated content, such as accuracy, explainability, bias, and source reliability.	Critically analyse the strengths and weaknesses of different AI models and their output in various contexts.
Dimension 3 **Ethical and Responsible Use**	Recognise ethical risks such as bias, misinformation, and loss of USask intellectual property.	Apply ethical AI principles in workplace decision-making. Use AI tools responsibly while maintaining USask data security.	Contribute to AI ethics discussions is workplace teams and the larger USask context.
Dimension 4 **Human-Centricity, Relationality, and Creativity**	Recognise how AI affects communication, creativity, and human skills, and understand when human oversight is needed when using AI.	Use AI as a collaborative tool to enhance creativity and problem-solving. Develop adaptability in AI-driven environments.	Support peers to focus on human-centred skills when using AI, ensuring that AI is used as a complementary tool.
Dimension 5 **Career Readiness**	Identify AI trends and their impact on your specific job. Understand how AI is changing your industry and professionals.	Use AI tools for field-specific tasks (e.g. AI for data analysis in business, AI-assisted research in sciences, AI for content creation).	Develop AI augmentation strategies for enhancing work and decision-making in professional settings.

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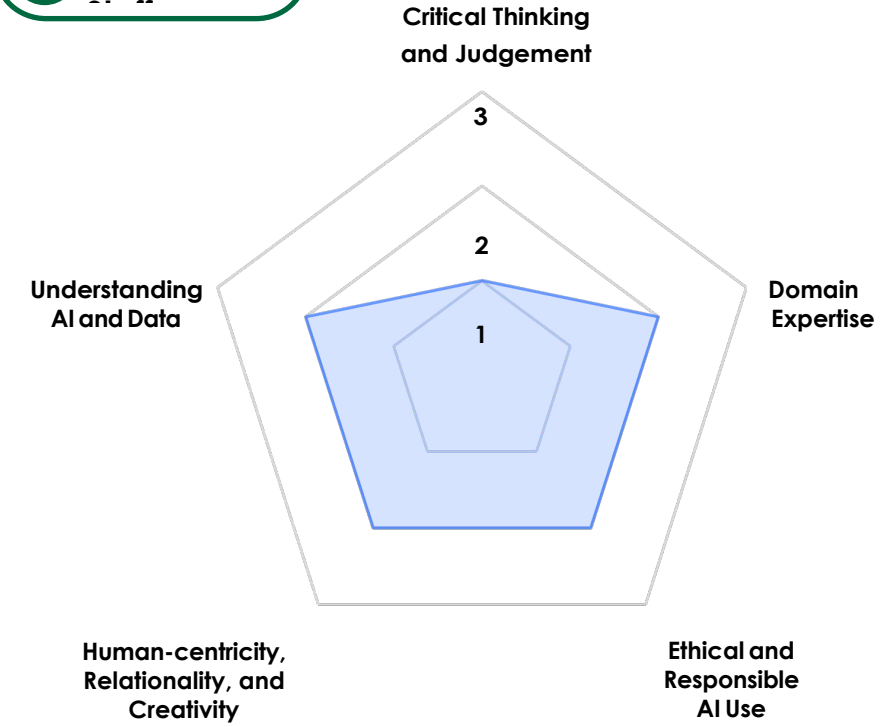
Ideal Framework Mastery for USask Staff

AI Competency Profile



Staff Framework Mastery

Staff should aim for the following mastery levels of the Literacy Framework:

Understanding AI and Data

0 1 2 3

Staff should be able to use AI tools for learning and productivity, and understand AI limitations and biases.

Critical Thinking and Judgement

0 1 2 3

Staff should be able to understand and apply evaluation criteria for AI-generated content, such as reliability and accuracy of source content.

Ethical and Responsible AI Use

0 1 2 3

Staff should apply ethical AI principles in coursework and research, and use AI tools responsibly while respecting data classifications.

Human-centricity, Relationality, and Creativity

0 1 2 3

Staff should use AI as a collaborative tool to enhance creativity and problem-solving, and be adaptable in AI-driven environments.

Domain Expertise: AI for Accountability

0 1 2 3

Staff should be able to identify AI trends and the impact on their specific roles or accountabilities, as applicable.

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