



# Teachers turn to AI to personalise student learning

by Brett Henebery (<https://www.theeducatoronline.com/k12/authors/brett-henebery>) 26 Aug 2024

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With 60% of Australian teachers already using various types of AI-driven technologies in their classrooms, this growing proliferation has big potential to help mitigate the issue of workforce and resourcing shortages in schools nationwide.

The trick is seeing where it's making the biggest impact, and how this success can be scaled up so more schools can benefit and, hopefully, alleviate the enormous pressures being placed upon teachers across Australia.

Research has shown a growing demand for more personalised instruction which allows teachers to tailor their lessons to each student, and in turn, allows students to achieve success at their own speed.

One company helping schools achieve this is Education Perfect (EP), the largest education technology platform in Australia and New Zealand. Currently, the platform is used by more than 1.4 million students and 50,000 teachers.

Lia de Sousa, Head of Learning Resources at Christ Church Grammar School, is a teacher who has seen the far-reaching impact of this technology firsthand.

In her role overseeing two school libraries and tailoring digital content to students across the Senior School, de Sousa has used adaptive digital tools to help differentiate content, and ease some of the burden of providing insightful, one-on-one

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Her personal philosophy regarding the use of technology in schools is that it “should be a tool used when most effective or when it meets a specific need.”

“The relationship between a teacher and their students [and peers] is paramount to academic success, as well as being vital to their general wellbeing and ability to connect with the school environment,” de Sousa told *The Educator*.

de Sousa said edtech’s potential to be impactful in the classroom depends on a teacher’s confidence with the technology and their ability to utilise it to its fullest potential.

“Where I’ve seen the strongest impact is with the use of adaptive digital tools [we use Education Perfect at our school] that adjust content based on students’ responses,” she said.

“This has been particularly effective in helping lower school students master key skills and content, such as the correct use of apostrophes or embedding quotes in essays.”

de Sousa said students can repeat activities, learn from mistakes, and progress to more challenging content at their own pace or as directed by a teacher.

“Adaptive tools also provide teachers with an instantaneous snapshot of class and individual student performance on a specific topic,” she said. “This data is incredibly valuable for informing future lessons and targeting specific skills with certain students.”

de Sousa said tools like Education Perfect also allow teachers to measure growth (or lack thereof), further informing decisions about learning activities and resources.

“Additionally, these tools are time-efficient, freeing up teachers to spend more one-on-one time with students and to focus on lesson planning,” she said.

“Another major way I’ve seen educational technology make a significant impact is through the use of assistive tools, such as online screen readers and research coaches.”

de Sousa pointed out that with an increase in students with learning difficulties, tools like these help make learning equitable for everyone by providing automated differentiation for any class and any student.

## **Towards a symbiotic relationship with AI**

Early trials of EP’s new AI-powered feedback tool (<https://www.theeducatoronline.com/k12/news/new-ai-tool-gives-students-instant-tailored-feedback/284739>) have shown that it is tightening the learning loop for students and producing improved learning outcomes.

Shane Smith, Co-Founder, Education Perfect said while it’s early days yet, EP is already seeing the potential of this tool to improve learning outcomes by providing real-time, personalised feedback to students.

“Feedback from our user-base shows that 92 percent of students found the AI feedback helpful, 85 percent learned more, and 83 percent felt motivated to improve their answers,” Smith told *The Educator*.

Most crucially, says Smith, there has been a 20% improvement in student results after using the tool.

“That being said, AI is evolving rapidly, and we envision it becoming an even more integral part of the learning process, particularly in strengthening the collaboration between teachers and students,” he said.

“The initial focus will be on reducing administrative burdens and more effectively automating repetitive tasks, allowing teachers to focus on personalised instruction and meaningful student interactions.”

Smith noted that AI is also addressing emerging challenges in classrooms by offering more inclusive, accessible learning experiences by adapting to individual student needs in real-time.

“Ultimately, AI will have huge benefits in helping to support teachers drive personalised learning, and creating a more dynamic learning environment that encourages continuous improvement,” he said.

“Our vision for AI in education is one where machine, student, and teacher work together to achieve the best learning outcomes.”

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