

Human in the Loop

Teaching AI collaboration as a graduate skill

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THE GAP WE KEEP MISTAKING FOR A TOOLING PROBLEM

AI fluency is a core graduate skill.

Most students treat it as a **one-way transaction**.

Type a request. Take the output. Move on.

THE DEFAULT PATTERN

Student
prompts



AI
delivers

One direction. The conversation is over before it begins.

WHAT WE WANT INSTEAD

THE FLUENT PATTERN

Student
asks · refines

AI
drafts · questions

Both sides shape the answer. That's the human in the loop.

WHERE THIS CAME FROM

FOBI CareersFest 2026

90-minute online workshop

Mastering AI Prompt Writing

Arden University · 26 March 2026

THE COHORT

01 Undergraduate business students

Year 1 to final year, Arden cohort.

02 Mixed AI confidence

From daily users to first-time prompters.

03 Widening-participation learners

Many first in family at university.

04 Several mature students

Returning to study alongside work.



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What we taught and what we got back

Round 1: what students wrote on instinct, before any teaching.

THE 3-PART PROMPT FORMULA

Context • Task • Output

• MINIMAL

"yes"

VOTER RESPONSE • ROUND 1

• VAGUE REQUEST

"ask my manager for a day off for a hospital appointment"

VOTER RESPONSE • ROUND 1

• STRUCTURED

"Act as a recruiter. List essential technical skills, software (CRM, SEO, social), and soft skills for a Marketing Assistant in 2026. Note must-haves vs. nice-to-haves."

VOTER RESPONSE • ROUND 1

Same room. Same scenario. No teaching yet.

After teaching: what changed

Round 2: same students rewrote one prompt.

WHAT IMPROVED Role · Format · Iteration · Reasoning

ROLE · FORMAT

"I am a business student. I want to know what skills needed for a marketing assistant role at H&M. Give me clear, bullet point skills relevant to the role."

ROUND 2

ROLE · TONE

"As an assistant manager attending an AI prompt course, politely ask my manager for a day off and how I can compensate."

ROUND 2

ITERATION

"For Q1, [continued] tell AI what I expected. Based on the draft, revise the instructions again until I get a good response."

ROUND 2 · ITERATIVE

REASONING

"Compare with good emails sent for a day off. Show how important this appointment is."

ROUND 2

They picked up **role, format, iteration, reasoning** — the moves that actually shape an answer.

They were already there.

Several students were prompting with sophistication before we taught anything.

JP

Jenny Pham in the workshop chat

So basically, a bad question equals a bad answer.

said before any teaching slide landed

So the question changed.

FROM *how do we teach students to prompt AI?*

TO **how do we teach them to *think* with AI?**

What kind of relationship is this?

Tool

one-way transaction
prompt → output → done
student outsources thinking
judgement happens after, if at all

Collaborator

iterative dialogue
prompt → critique → refine
student stays in the loop
judgement runs through every turn



Darina workshop participant

AI is a tool, not a replacement for my own work.

the student framing — exactly the gap we're naming

What collaboration actually looks like

How I actually use Claude

MY CLAUDE PROMPT

I want to **[YOUR TASK]** so that **[WHAT SUCCESS LOOKS LIKE]** .

First, read the uploaded files completely before responding.

DO NOT start executing yet. Instead, ask me clarifying questions so we can refine the approach together step by step.

Only begin work once we've aligned.

CLAUDE'S REPLY

 Claude

Happy to help — before I draft anything, a few questions so I get this right:

1. **Audience.** Who's reading this — and what do you want them to do after?
2. **Tone.** Closer to a warm internal note, or a polished external piece?
3. **Constraints.** Length, format, anything I shouldn't say?
4. **What you've tried.** Is there a draft I should react to, or starting fresh?

Once I have these, I'll sketch a short outline first — then we'll write.

Claude doesn't run off and execute. It asks back, and the conversation begins.

I don't need the perfect prompt. I need one that opens a conversation.

I run a tighter version of this in Claude Cowork. Happy to talk after.

Thank you

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IF YOU'RE TAKING ONE THING HOME MONDAY

Grade the thinking. Teach the dialogue. Build literacy in lecturers first.

SELECTED REFERENCES

Mollick, E. (2024). *Co-Intelligence: Living and Working with AI*. WH Allen. Selwyn, N. (2024). On the limits of AI in education. *Learning, Media and Technology*, 49(1).



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