**Creative workshop – a learning and assessment future with AI assistants**

Generative AI technologies have become increasingly powerful. They can access real-time information via the web and filter content in sophisticated ways. They are also able to learn the style, interests and perspectives of individuals. The launch of personalised AI assistants emerged in a number of settings:

- Workplaces, in the form of email-focused AIs that would read, digest, summarise, and even respond to the deluge of communications that office workers were receiving, all tailored to the company, the role and the person they were trained to assist.
- Personal AI assistants designed by start-ups in response to widespread corporate use of advanced chatbots for customer service.
- Automated writing support and translation systems, which ushered in a new age of flawless communications.

Before long, these separate systems began to converge. The hottest tech companies were holding out the promise of the perfect personal assistant: it was always on, it knew everything, and it could manage your digital world in almost limitless ways. From responding to friends' posts on social media, to booking travel and making appointments, to producing a perfectly tailored presentation for a new client, to advising on an ongoing conflict in the neighbourhood, these AIs have become more and more integrated into daily life. For those who can afford the high-end, verified versions, they can also help seamlessly navigate an increasingly complex landscape of financial and civic interactions.

In Scotland, as in other countries that enshrined the OECD principles for AI into law, things have moved a little more slowly. Many innovative and ethical companies, think tanks and social enterprises are drawn to working in these countries, but ensuring responsible and trustworthy applications of these technologies takes time. However, the benefits of this slower pace meant that some of the more significant failures, data breaches and social impacts seen elsewhere affected citizens less, and there is therefore now more willingness to trust and experiment at personal, community and civic levels.

Now, because of the data these systems gather, the digital version of each individual has become more and more rich, detailed and convincing. Their activities are transparent, if you have time to monitor their outputs. Sometimes people forget to listen to their daily briefings or unexpectedly run into someone, and this leads to awkward real-life conversations amongst family, friends, and co-workers who realise, too late, that the AI has been communicating on their behalf. Filters and apps to manage human-AI relationships are regularly launched and updated. Frequent decisions are required about what to do yourself and what to delegate.

One of the most controversial developments in this technology has been in the recent introduction of powerful AI assistants for very young children. Children's lives have long been tracked and quantified, and educational toys and technologies were already sophisticated enough to be considered intelligent in the way they could interact with children in personalised ways. But, with the launch of the biggest AI company's "Little Life" service, questions that were already being asked have become more urgent. Do these technologies smooth over the textures of life in damaging ways? What is the future for a generation of children who have such assistance at their side every moment of the day?

And this doesn't even begin to describe what has been going on in formal education…

**In this session**, you and your group will imagine some possible consequences of this future for the education system in Scotland – with a particular emphasis on the impacts on assessing and measuring learning. You will explore these from the perspective of one of the following people:

1. A P5 teacher in a large, popular primary school. The school prides itself on its data arts curriculum.

2. A 14 year old who hates school and prefers to focus on their hobby of making and selling custom-made skateboards.

3. A parent of two children, aged two and five. The older child had significant health issues in the first few years of their life and didn't get their "Little Life" account until this year, while the younger child already has one.

4. A headteacher in an independent secondary school where most students board at least part of the school year. The school is a popular choice for parents from around the world who want their children to receive intensive, personal tutoring.

5. A university lecturer in biology, teaching large undergraduate classes as well as supervising PhD students and running a research lab.

6. A 45 year old university student with severe dyslexia. They are studying part time for a psychology degree because they want to change careers to become an educational psychologist.

7. A 9 year old who enjoys writing stories and poems. Their family immigrated to Scotland two years ago and their English is still developing.

Start with a discussion in your group about what this future might be like, and might feel like for this person (about 15 minutes).

Then, consider the following questions (and make some notes to share back to the full group):
1. What AI technologies and practices do you think are significant for this person and their relationship to education?
2. What are the exciting and positive aspects of this educational future from this perspective?
3. What are the concerns and risks?
4. What questions does your group have?

We will come back together to discuss your group's key ideas and observations.