

DEVELOPING AN INSTITUTIONAL AI IMPLEMENTATION FRAMEWORK FOR ENGLISH SCHOOLS: A PRACTICE-INFORMED MODEL FOR SYSTEMIC ADOPTION



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Abstract:

As Generative Artificial Intelligence (GenAI) becomes increasingly embedded within educational contexts, school and college leaders face the challenge of moving beyond reactive tool adoption toward coherent, ethically grounded institutional strategy. While existing scholarship has largely concentrated on classroom applications and technical capabilities, comparatively little attention has been paid to organisational GenAI implementation in K–12 settings. This paper introduces the AiEd Certified Framework for English schools and colleges, proposed as both a practice-oriented tool and a conceptual model for analysing institutional AI adoption.

The framework was developed through an embedded, collaborative research process situated within an education charity working with a Multi-Academy Trust (MAT). Development combined a narrative synthesis of academic and grey literature on GenAI use, governance, and digital transformation in education, with sustained iterative dialogue between the lead researcher and two senior practitioner co-authors operating across trust leadership and digital pedagogy roles. This process prioritised ecological validity within the structural, regulatory, and cultural conditions of the English school system.

The resulting model conceptualises institutional GenAI implementation as staged organisational development across five interdependent elements: AI Literacy, Policies and Ethics, Tools and Systems, Digital Pedagogy, and Community and Collaboration. Each element is articulated through a developmental pathway ('Explorer', 'Practitioner', 'Innovator'), framing implementation as progressive organisational integration rather than isolated technological competence.

This paper details the conceptual foundations and design rationale underpinning the five-element architecture and staged progression model. Illustrative analysis is drawn from early implementation in schools undertaking certification, including documentary submissions from the first four institutions to complete the initial stage. These cases are used to explore how institutional GenAI implementation is interpreted and operationalised within the framework.

This paper contributes a transferable implementation scaffold to the emerging field of GenAI adoption in compulsory education. The framework is offered as a provisional theory of institutional GenAI implementation intended to inform further empirical research, comparative studies, and longitudinal validation across diverse educational systems.

Keywords:

GenAI, AI, K-12, Leadership, Educational management, AI literacy, framework, educational strategy, implementation.