

Editorial: From *On the Horizon* to *Learning Futures and Emerging Technologies*

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For three decades, *On the Horizon* (OTH) provided a valuable forum for exploring emerging trends in education, technology and society. Its title invited scholars to look outward toward developments that were only beginning to appear at the edges of institutional awareness. Its editors, reviewers and contributors, cultivated a community interested in foresight, innovation and the evolving nature of learning. The scholarly community who sustained OTH created a space where emerging ideas could be explored with intellectual curiosity and intellectual generosity. The groundwork they established makes this next phase possible.

In recent years, however, the landscape of learning and technology has shifted dramatically. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), data infrastructures, immersive environments and networked knowledge systems are reshaping how learning is created, delivered and experienced. Developments are unfolding at a pace that is forcing educators and institutions to reconsider how learning is created, supported and evaluated.

This acceleration pace of change has also challenged what we mean by the “horizon.” The horizon served as a metaphor for developments that were approaching but not yet fully realised. It pointed to signals of change that required attention and interpretation. Today, many of those developments are no longer distant. With the rapid emergence of generative and adaptive AI, educators, learners, institutions and policymakers have all been pushed toward the horizon at once. We now navigate changes that arrive in real time rather than slowly appearing at the edge of view. At the same time, AI is beginning to reshape how knowledge, itself, is produced, shared and validated.

If that horizon has moved closer to the present, the task of scholarship must also shift. Our responsibility as researchers and practitioners is to examine what lies beyond it. Starting with this issue, we mark a moment of evolution. *On the Horizon* is now rescoped and retitled as *Learning Futures and Emerging Technologies* (LFET). The new title reflects a clearer focus on the transformations shaping education, work and human development today and in the decades ahead.

The explicit emphasis on *learning futures* highlights the importance of exploring possible, probable and preferable trajectories for education and lifelong learning. Futures thinking and strategic foresight provide ways to examine long-term transformation and to consider how educational systems might respond to social, technological and economic change. These transformations also challenge assumptions about where education takes place, as learning increasingly occurs across networks, communities and digital environments that extend beyond traditional institutional boundaries.

At the same time, *emerging technologies* reflects the growing influence of digital and intelligent technologies on learning ecosystems. In particular, AI reshapes knowledge production, assessment, creativity and the organisation of work. These developments invite

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deeper inquiry not only into the capabilities of emerging technologies in education, but also into their ethical implications, governance challenges and potential impact on equity and the realisation of human potential. Technologies may reshape the conditions of learning, but the futures we realise will ultimately depend on the choices educators, institutions and societies make about how they are used.

LFET therefore seeks to foster interdisciplinary scholarship that connects technological innovation with educational theory, futures studies and social responsibility. The journal welcomes a range of contributions. These include conceptual and theoretical analyses of learning futures, empirical studies examining the implementation and impact of emerging technologies, foresight-oriented research using scenario development or horizon scanning and critical perspectives addressing the philosophical and policy implications of technological transformation in education. We are particularly interested in work that bridges disciplines, questions technological determinism and explores how emerging technologies might support more inclusive and human-centred futures for learning.

The six articles that follow in this first issue under the new title reflect many of these themes. Together they explore how AI and digital technologies are shaping contemporary educational practice and how researchers are beginning to examine their broader implications.

[Soomro et al. \(2026\)](#) considered the impact of AI on academic work, asking whether the growing use of AI tools in higher education empowers faculty or contributes to new forms of workplace pressure and stress. [Adiarti et al. \(2026\)](#) examined developments in digital literacy within early childhood education, reviewing patterns and trends in the literature and identifying key challenges and directions for future research.

[Mohareb and Al-Qayyem \(2026\)](#) investigated the use of generative AI tools including ChatGPT, Gamma and Autopilot in academic assignments, exploring how these technologies influence student performance and learning processes. [Singh et al. \(2026\)](#) provided a longitudinal literature review of research on massive open online courses (MOOCs), analysing two decades of scholarship to identify key determinants influencing the adoption of these platforms.

[Duong \(2026\)](#) explored the role of generative AI within entrepreneurial education, examining how university entrepreneurial climate and attitudes toward digital entrepreneurship shape students' intentions to pursue entrepreneurial activity. [Haverila et al. \(2026\)](#) extended the information acceptance model to better understand how students adopt AI-supported educational technologies and how such adoption relates to learning outcomes.

Taken together, these contributions illustrate the diverse questions now emerging as educators and researchers navigate learning futures shaped by rapid technological change.

In this sense, the journal's new identity reflects both continuity and renewal. It honours the intellectual curiosity that characterised OTH while recognising that the questions before us have become more complex. As technological change accelerates and societal uncertainty deepens, creating a sense of "present" that is fleetingly transient in nature, understanding the future of learning requires both rigorous research and imaginative foresight.

The horizon once helped us identify what was coming. Today, many of those developments have already arrived. *Learning Futures and Emerging Technologies* continues to look outward, with a clearer focus on the futures of learning now taking shape. We invite researchers, practitioners and policymakers to explore and imagine those futures with us.

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