

GENERATIVE AI AS A SPARRING PARTNER IN PROJECT MANAGEMENT CASES: A FOUR-STAGE ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK

Avazdurdieva Safargul Turaevna

Graduate School of Business and Entrepreneurship

Master of science, Project Management

Tel.: +998 99 818 27 90

e-mail: s.avazdurdieva@gmail.com

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Annotation. The article discusses how generative artificial intelligence affects case-based teaching in project management. Since chatbots can write case memos quickly, a written memo may no longer show what a student has understood. Based on a review of the literature, the author proposes a four-stage assessment framework in which AI use is allowed and declared, and the main part of the grade is given for an oral defence with a changed case condition. The framework has not yet been tested and is proposed for a pilot study.

Keywords: generative artificial intelligence, case method, project management education, oral assessment, academic integrity, AI literacy, higher education in Uzbekistan.

Annotatsiya. Maqolada generativ sun’iy intellektning loyihalarni boshqarish fanlarida keys asosida o’qitishga ta’siri ko’rib chiqiladi. Chat-botlar keys tahlilini tez yoza olgani sababli, yozma ish talaba nimani tushunganini har doim ham ko’rsatmaydi. Adabiyotlar tahlili asosida muallif sun’iy intellektdan ochiq foydalanishga ruxsat beriladigan to’rt bosqichli baholash modelini taklif qiladi. Bahoning asosiy qismi keys sharti o’zgartirilgan og’zaki himoyaga beriladi. Model hali sinovdan o’tkazilmagan va pilot tadqiqot uchun taklif etiladi.

Kalit so’zlar: generativ sun’iy intellekt, keys usuli, loyihalarni boshqarish ta’limi, og’zaki baholash, akademik halollik, sun’iy intellekt savodxonligi, O’zbekiston oliy ta’limi.

Аннотация. В статье рассматривается влияние генеративного искусственного интеллекта на кейсовое обучение в дисциплинах по управлению проектами. Поскольку чат-боты быстро пишут разбор кейса, письменная работа не всегда показывает, что понял студент. На основе обзора литературы автор предлагает четырёхэтапную модель оценивания, в которой использование ИИ разрешено и декларируется, а основная часть оценки приходится на устную защиту с изменённым условием кейса. Модель пока не апробирована и предлагается для пилотного исследования.

Ключевые слова: генеративный искусственный интеллект, кейс-метод, обучение управлению проектами, устное оценивание, академическая честность, ИИ-грамотность, высшее образование Узбекистана.

In October 2025 Uzbekistan adopted Presidential Decree PF-189 on the further development of artificial intelligence technologies [1]. In February and March 2026 the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Innovation organised a short AI literacy course for university teachers [2], and 16 universities were instructed to open AI laboratories [3]. At the same time,

many students already use chatbots in their coursework, often with personal accounts and low-cost student plans.

This creates a problem for case-based teaching in project management. In a typical case, students read about a project with a delay, a budget overrun or a new request from the sponsor, and write a short memo with a recommendation. Today a general-purpose chatbot can prepare such a memo, with a risk list and a revised schedule, in about a minute. As a result, the memo alone may no longer show what the student has understood. Cotton et al. point to the redesign of assessment as one of the main responses to this situation [4].

My professional experience in international logistics and project coordination has shown me how important it is to adapt decisions when project conditions change. For example, while coordinating the delivery of approximately 3,000 containers of solar panels from China to Uzbekistan within three months, I had to monitor schedules, communicate with different stakeholders, and respond to operational challenges. This experience influenced my interest in using AI tools in project management education, where students should learn not only to prepare project plans but also to analyse risks, evaluate alternatives, and explain their decisions.

The aim of this paper is to propose an assessment format for project management cases in which the use of AI is allowed and declared. This conceptual study reviews recent literature on generative AI, authentic assessment and project management education to develop a four-stage assessment framework. The framework is proposed for pilot testing and has not yet been empirically validated.

A full ban on AI tools seems difficult to enforce outside a supervised classroom, and graduates are likely to use the same tools at work. A short device-free task in class may also give limited evidence, because students can prepare their answers with a chatbot in advance. Perkins et al. suggest that teachers should state openly which level of AI use is allowed for each task [5]. Following this idea, the framework allows AI in most of the written work and asks students to describe how they used it.

In the proposed format the chatbot acts as a sparring partner, which is close to the role of a critical mentor described by Mollick and Mollick [6]. The student asks the model to find weak points in the plan, for example missing risks or unrealistic deadlines. However, the written stages have a limitation, since a model can also help to revise the memo and to explain the changes. For this reason, the last stage is an oral defence (Table 1).

Table 1

Four-stage format of an AI-assisted project case

Stage	What the student submits	Role of AI	What the teacher assesses
1. Initial position	Short risk map and preferred option	Allowed, declared	Main risks identified
2. AI-assisted analysis	Dialogue with the model acting as a critical committee member	Critic	Which objections were accepted or rejected, and why

3. Final memo	Recommendation with checked sources and a note on AI use	Allowed, declared	Accuracy of data and sources
4. Oral defence	5 to 7 minute discussion after one case condition is changed	Not used	Ability to adjust the decision

The oral defence could carry about half of the case grade. During the defence the teacher changes one condition of the case and asks the student to reconsider the decision, for example: "The project budget has been cut by 20%. Would you keep the same recommendation?" Other changes may include a six-week delay by a key supplier, the withdrawal of support by a local hokimiyat, or a larger scope with the same deadline. Such questions may help the teacher to see whether the student understands the links between scope, time and cost. Sotiriadou et al. report that interactive oral assessment can support academic integrity and develop communication skills [7].

Project management cases are well suited to this kind of change. According to Flyvbjerg, nine out of ten megaprojects have cost overruns, and overruns of up to 50% in real terms are common [8]. This suggests that changes in budget, schedule and scope are a regular part of project work, so practising re-planning is relevant for future project managers.

The framework has several limitations. Chatbots may give outdated or invented information, especially about local regulations. Therefore, figures and legal references taken from AI should be checked in primary sources such as lex.uz, which is in line with UNESCO guidance [9]. AI tools also work less well in Uzbek, so students who write in Uzbek may receive weaker feedback. Oral defences take time as well: about ten minutes per student, or roughly four hours for a group of 25. For this reason, the format may be more practical for two or three key cases per semester. Finally, the expected effects described above have not been tested yet.

Generative AI does not remove the need for the case method, but it changes how case work can be assessed. The proposed framework combines open use of AI in the written stages with an oral defence based on a changed scenario. Whether this combination gives a more reliable picture of student learning should be checked in a pilot study.

Based on the above, the following proposals are made.

1. To test the four-stage format in one project management course during one semester and compare the results with groups assessed only by written memos.
2. To prepare in advance a set of scenario changes for oral defences, including budget cuts, delays, scope changes and stakeholder conflicts.
3. To ask students to add a short note on AI use to every written case assignment.

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