

## Universities as Risk Organisations: Business Communication, AI, and the Governance of Future Workforce Skills

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### Abstract

Universities occupy a contradictory position in the age of generative artificial intelligence: they are simultaneously the institutions charged with preparing graduates for an AI-transformed workforce and organisations whose communication about AI is oriented primarily toward managing reputational and regulatory risk. This paper traces that contradiction to a governance architecture in which institutional communication functions primarily as risk management, shaping which future workforce skills universities commit to developing and which they systematically neglect. Drawing on critical realism, institutional theory, and critical policy sociology, the study applies Bacchi's What's the Problem Represented to Be? (WPR) framework to a corpus of twenty-one policy documents spanning national regulatory texts and institutional AI policies from Turkish universities. Three dominant problem representations are identified: AI as a national competitiveness risk, as an academic integrity threat, and as a pedagogical transformation challenge. Each shapes how universities communicate about AI to students, staff, and regulators, yet none translates global workforce competency demands into operative institutional commitments. A structural gap is documented between the World Economic Forum's Future of Jobs competency framework and Turkish higher education AI governance, explained through the twin logics of risk-averse institutional communication and legitimacy-seeking under coercive regulatory pressure. Five of the ten WEF core competencies most critical for AI-augmented workplaces are entirely absent from all twenty-one documents; those that appear are invoked in vision statements, without curriculum or assessment consequences. The competency gap is the product of a policy regime that selects for competencies amenable to documentation and compliance auditing, systematically excluding those developed through sustained pedagogical engagement. The study contributes to business communication scholarship by demonstrating that this regime, rather than any deficit of policy knowledge or ambition, is what constrains graduates' preparation for an AI-transformed workforce, and that closing the gap requires redesigning governance structures rather than refining institutional communication.

**Keywords:** universities as risk organisations, generative AI, business communication, institutional legitimacy, workforce skills, Turkish higher education, policy document analysis

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