

# Innovations in AI for Higher Education



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## Introduction

Higher education institutions today face unprecedented challenges—from [grasping for a foothold on the enrollment cliff](#), to the rising cost of education, to connecting learning with career outcomes. These obstacles, along with managing workforce shortages and budgetary constraints, are challenging colleges and universities to navigate in an uncertain future.

In addition, the rising cost of attending college leads many potential students to question if college is the right path for them, or if they can build skills through alternative paths that align with the job market. According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), from 1980 to 2020, the cost to attend college has increased by 180% due to increased student support services, changes in state and local funding, and the overall economic climate. Among undergraduates, 33% are not completing their degree program, according to the [Education Data Initiative](#). This leads to reduced employment rates, lower wages, and challenges returning back to college to complete their education. Students need to make the connection between higher education and a flourishing career with better financial outcomes.

Higher education institutions need to find solutions to not only help control costs, but to also improve student experiences. Workday sees the immense potential in providing innovative solutions for colleges and universities by leveraging technology and the integration of AI. With best-in-class, intelligent applications from Workday, you get:

- **Personalized experiences:** Elevate administrative finance, HR, and student experiences at your college or university by empowering the people who serve your students, and optimize the skills, strengths, and talents of your staff and faculty.

- **Efficient process automation:** Automate repetitive tasks to minimize errors, cut costs, and boost operational efficiency. This also helps maintain compliance, ensure data privacy, and reduce risk.
- **Faster data-driven insights:** Provide administrators with intelligent insights and recommendations to inform decision-making, optimize workforce allocation, and enable them to focus on and speed up critical tasks.

These innovations are deeply embedded in our solutions, driven by our commitment to the priorities of higher education. Our true-cloud architecture and intelligent data core eliminate the data silos and outdated processes of legacy ERP systems. Plus, Workday is a leader in [responsible AI](#), so you can benefit from these innovations with confidence.

Learn more about these three areas of innovation, and see how you can move your institution forward.



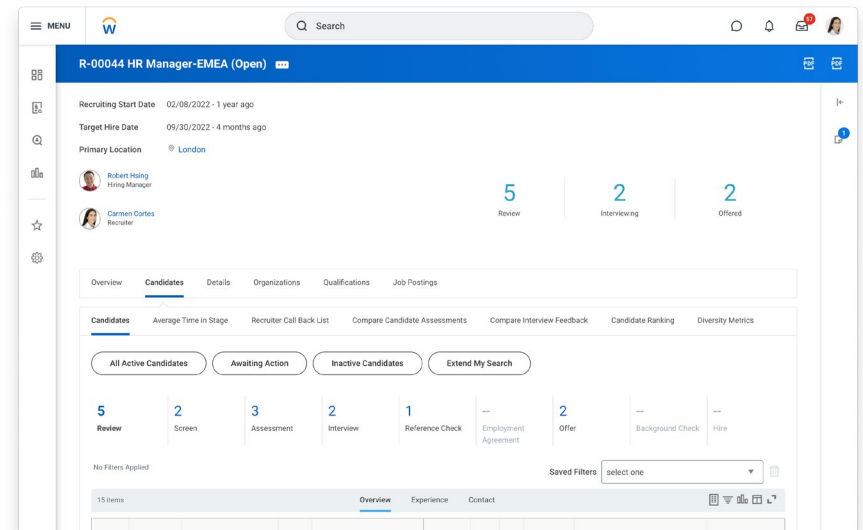
## Personalized experiences.

With Workday, so much more is possible for higher education than ever before—more personalized experiences for staff and faculty, improved insights to help optimize finances, and better agility.

Workday AI improves experiences for colleges and universities by leveraging deeper understanding of behaviors across students, faculty, and staff. This behavioral data provides the full picture of more targeted engagements with key stakeholders. For example, you can surface relevant, timely information to students during their academic journey. As users engage with the system, valuable data required for customization and automation is captured.

Workday also engages the institutional workforce by personalizing the career journey for staff and faculty. It all starts with skills—the new currency that’s the basis for everything in the world of work. At Workday, we’ve found that successfully implementing a skills-based approach to talent can be difficult to scale without the right technology. People may use different words to describe a skill, and very different skills can be described using the same word.

**Workday Skills Cloud** takes the guesswork out of the process by matching workers to gigs, jobs, mentors, and learning opportunities. The power of Workday Skills Cloud is brought to life when combined with other Workday applications, such as Workday People Analytics, giving you insight into the existing skills of your staff and faculty to drive meaningful experiences that solve challenges and deliver insights at scale. Workday Skills Cloud, along with Workday applications, allows you to understand the skills you have and how they relate to one another. And then you can automatically inventory skills for candidates, job requisitions, and other areas that measure and match skills across these areas to create more personalized paths for skills development and advancement. You can see this in action through the Workday Talent Marketplace and Career Hub, which deliver recommended tasks, personalized opportunities for reskilling, and learning content.



Workday Recruiting—candidate skills match.



## Efficient process automation.

In higher education, operational efficiency is particularly crucial for administrative tasks. Automating repetitive administrative tasks using AI revolutionizes higher education by streamlining processes and ensuring accuracy across operations. Workday harnesses the power of AI to automate routine and predictable processes within university and college settings. This automation leads to tangible benefits, enhancing efficiency while putting people first when it comes to decision-making and oversight.

For example, intelligent automation in **Workday Student** could reduce administrative burdens surrounding transfer articulation tasks, provide proactive credentialing, and automate the creation of academic requirements by surfacing insights that support state credential initiatives.

Of all the business areas within an institution, finance sees the most impact from touchless automation, using AI capabilities such as anomaly detection and optical character recognition (OCR) scanning to automate processes that were traditionally manual, time-consuming, and error-prone. Journal insights in Workday uses machine learning (ML) to detect anomalies or irregularities and then compare them to other entries for similar transactions. Anomalies are flagged in real time, so users can correct potential reconciliation issues as they happen to streamline closing periods, instead of waiting to manually reconcile during the closing period.

Anomaly detection can be applied to a variety of use cases in workforce management, such as hours submissions for Workday Time Tracking. Charges in Workday Student Finance could also benefit from anomaly detection, such as identifying errors in clerical entry in the flow of work, preventing data entry inaccuracy, and improving efficiency. This empowers higher education institutions to reduce repetitive tasks and focus on more strategic initiatives that drive productivity and student success.

## Faster data-driven insights.

Workday is committed to empowering higher education with data-driven insights that guide strategic decision-making. With challenges in recruiting and retaining talent in higher education, AI serves as a valuable partner in this endeavor, offering intelligent recommendations that optimize decision-making in areas such as intelligent planning and candidate skills match. AI-driven insights in Workday are particularly beneficial in staff and faculty planning and resource allocation. By comparing historical data with AI-driven forecasts, higher education strategic planners can anticipate demands and skills gaps, and allocate resources effectively. **Intelligent planning** compares an AI-driven forecast with a planner's own forecast, and alerts the planner when inputs fall outside normal or historical ranges. Outlier reporting provides an easy way to identify anomalies, decrease planning cycle times, and immediately surface potential problems.

Another example for higher education is **candidate skills match for recruiting**, which uses AI to intelligently match candidates to open job positions. Human resources receives a list of candidates who have applied for the position and the strength of their match, as well as details of the match factors that informed the results. This allows university or college HR teams to focus their time on the right candidates based on skills and expertise, improving the overall student experience.

In addition, at Workday we are continuously exploring how matching and recommendations within **Workday Student** can better connect the dots and identify new opportunities, such as suggested minors for students or recommended optimal course meeting patterns.

Discover real Workday customer results.

Western Governors University unlocks actionable insights with Workday People Analytics.



# Delivering AI ethically for higher education.

As AI gains prominence in higher education, maintaining the ethical and responsible use of AI is paramount. Institutions that choose to leverage AI realize significant benefits. However, as legislation for governing AI continues to emerge, it is crucial that higher education institutions develop rigorous policies and safeguards to manage the risks associated with AI. That's why Workday has implemented a [Machine Learning Trust program](#) that specifically addresses how we use AI, with a laser focus on ethics and customer trust.

**Workday commitment to ethical AI.**

 Amplify Human Potential	 Positively Impact Society
 Champion Transparency and Fairness	 Commit to Data Privacy and Protection

Workday upholds explainable AI principles to provide higher education customers with complete transparency into how our ML models are designed and function, as well as control over how customer data is used within our models. This begins by providing detailed fact sheets to help customers understand how our models function and how the data in their build is used, what outcomes to expect, how the models were trained and tested overall, and how we address bias. This information is readily available to all customers for each machine learning solution posted on Workday Community. Additionally, we provide insight within the Workday user experience into the factors that influenced a prediction or recommendation. For example, the candidate skills match use case provides a list of candidates who have applied for a job and their match score per the job requirements. Insight into scoring is available for each candidate, listing their skills that match the required skills, the skills they have that aren't listed on the job but should be considered, and the required skills they lack. This insight is invaluable for the recruiter to make a more accurate and informed decision.

This transparency enables higher education leaders and administrators to better understand and validate how AI is used to produce recommendations. We also prioritize data privacy and protection for students, faculty, and staff, ensuring that their data is handled securely and in compliance with regulations. Our commitment to ethical AI in higher education is unwavering, and we continue to champion responsible AI adoption across the higher education industry.



## Continuing to innovate for higher education.

There are many more AI and ML advancements ahead for finance, HR, and student management systems. At Workday, we're excited to be at the forefront of these advancements, helping our customers increase agility and progress beyond the siloed, underutilized data of yesterday's ERP solutions.

The journey of AI innovation is ongoing and holds immense potential. We are dedicated to pushing the boundaries of AI's impact, enabling institutions to provide superior student experience, streamline operations, and drive higher education forward. Our commitment to innovation remains steadfast, and we look forward to continuing our collaboration with higher education partners to achieve new heights in operational excellence.

To explore how Workday can revolutionize higher education through AI, visit our [website](#).

For more insights, read our blog and watch our video "[Q&A: How Will Artificial Intelligence Impact the Role of the CHRO?](#)"

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