

The GPT Surprise — Stanford's Code in Place Randomised Trial of GPT-4 Chat for 5,831 Learners in 146 Countries

AI in Education · Good practice · United States of America

Quality score: 60/100

Evidence strength: Moderate

Summary

In a free online Stanford coding course, randomly offering GPT-4 chat to 3,581 of 5,831 active learners lowered exam participation, homework and section attendance on average, yet adopters scored better on exams; participation rose for learners from low-HDI countries.

Key dimensions

Dimension	Score
Evidence of learning impact	2/3
Equity & inclusion	2/3
Transparency, ethics & data protection	2/3
Teacher capability & pedagogy	1/3
Scalability & sustainability	2/3

Evaluated by C-NAPSE

Data sources

[C-NAPSE web research](#) — accessed 2026-10-03

[Stanford University — Code in Place](#) — accessed 2026-10-03

[Stanford \(author-hosted PDF\) — The GPT Surprise](#) — accessed 2026-10-03

[arXiv — The GPT Surprise \(Nie et al.\)](#) — accessed 2026-10-03

[ACM Digital Library — Learning @ Scale 2025](#) — accessed 2026-10-03

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