



BranchED AI Compass

Domain-to-Practice Guide

Domain 3

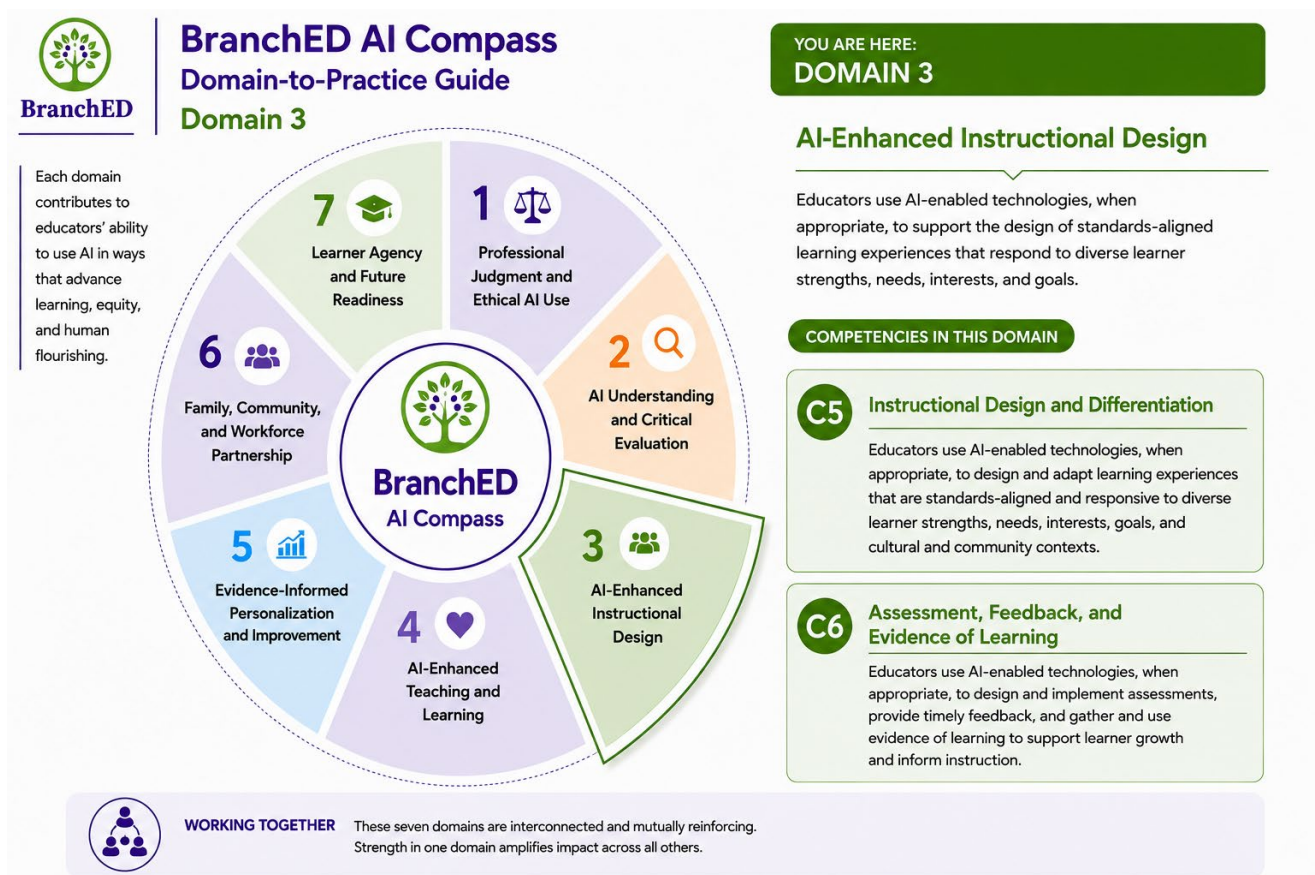
This guide¹ helps teacher educators support teacher candidates' (TCs) readiness for an AI-enabled world. It translates the BranchED AI Compass domain and competency language into concrete learning experiences, evidence sources, and course- and clinical-design decisions that teacher educators can incorporate into existing preparation experiences. The sections below show how the domain's competencies work together and provide practical guidance to help TCs develop and demonstrate the knowledge, skills, dispositions, and professional judgment reflected in the AI Compass.

How the Competencies Work Together

The competencies within this domain are distinct but interdependent. Instructional Design and Differentiation focuses on using AI to expand and adapt learning opportunities in response to standards, goals, and student strengths and needs. Assessment, Feedback, and Evidence of Learning focuses on ensuring that assessment remains valid and that student thinking remains visible when AI is available. Together, they help TCs design coherent learning experiences in which instruction and assessment reinforce one another.

A Note on Policy and Context

AI use takes place within institutional, professional, and educational contexts. Teacher educators and teacher candidates should be familiar with and adhere to applicable program, institutional, school, district, state, and other relevant policies and guidance related to AI use, data privacy, approved tools, academic integrity, and professional practice. The AI Compass and accompanying resources are intended to support the development of AI readiness and informed professional judgment within these contexts; they do not establish or supersede institutional or district policy.



¹ The development and design of this guide was assisted by ChatGPT.

Domain 3: AI-Enhanced Instructional Design

Educators use AI-enabled technologies to strengthen planning, differentiation, assessment design, learner support, communication, documentation, and workflow while maintaining rigorous and meaningful learning experiences.

This domain brings together competencies that help TCs use AI to strengthen instructional design while keeping standards, students, rigor, and meaningful evidence of learning at the center. Read the competencies as connected parts of coherent instructional practice: use AI selectively to expand and adapt learning opportunities in response to student strengths and needs while designing assessment and feedback practices that preserve valid, visible evidence of what students know and can do.

Each competency section below explains the distinct contribution of that competency. The later domain-level sections consolidate development activities, readiness indicators, evidence sources, and Compass connections so teacher educators can see how the competencies work together in practice.

Competency 5 | Instructional Design and Differentiation

AI Compass Competency

Instructional Design and Differentiation: Educators use AI-enabled technologies, when appropriate, to support the design of standards-aligned learning experiences that respond to diverse learner strengths, needs, interests, goals, linguistic and cultural assets, community contexts, and lived experiences.

What This Means for Teacher Candidate Development

For teacher candidate development, this means learning to use AI selectively to strengthen, not automate, instructional planning and differentiation. TCs should anchor instructional design in standards, learning goals/objectives, HQIM, when available, other adopted instructional materials, and knowledge of students and context. From that foundation, they can determine whether and how AI adds value by helping generate options, adapt supports, or expand access while preserving rigor, relevance, and responsiveness to student strengths, needs, interests, goals, linguistic and cultural assets, community contexts, and lived experiences.

***Design Principle:** Start with standards and real students; use AI to expand possibilities, not to replace instructional judgment.*

In Practice

For TCs, this competency means using AI selectively to strengthen, not automate, planning and differentiation. TCs should anchor instructional design in standards, learning goals/objectives, high-quality instructional materials (HQIM), when available, and knowledge of students. From that foundation, they can determine whether AI adds value by helping generate options, adapt supports, or expand access while preserving rigor, relevance, and responsiveness to actual student assets and needs.

Why This Matters

AI can rapidly generate lesson plans, materials, examples, and differentiated options, but speed can create generic or poorly matched instruction if educators do not anchor design in real students and meaningful goals/objectives. TCs need to use AI as a design partner while retaining responsibility for pedagogical quality and contextual fit.

What Teacher Candidates Need to Know & Understand

- Standards, learning goals/objectives, student evidence, and knowledge of context should drive instructional design; AI-generated options are inputs to professional decision-making.
- Differentiation should respond to student strengths, needs, interests, goals, linguistic and cultural assets, community contexts, and lived experiences without lowering expectations.
- AI can expand design options and efficiency but may produce generic, stereotyped, inaccessible, or contextually inappropriate materials.
- Every AI-supported design decision still requires educator review for alignment, rigor, relevance, accessibility, accuracy, and student fit.

What Teacher Candidates Need to Practice

- Using appropriate student and contextual information to define design requirements before prompting or using AI, while protecting student privacy and following applicable policies for data use.

- Generating multiple instructional options with AI and selecting, adapting, or rejecting them based on standards, learning goals/objectives, adopted instructional materials, and student needs.
- Reviewing AI-generated materials for rigor, accessibility, cultural and linguistic responsiveness, and contextual relevance.
- Explaining how AI-supported adaptations preserve the intended learning while improving access or responsiveness.
- Using AI, when appropriate, to adapt HQIM, scripted curricula, or other adopted instructional materials in response to student and contextual needs while preserving the materials' learning goals, rigor, coherence, and instructional intent.

Competency 6 | Assessment, Feedback, and Evidence of Learning

AI Compass Competency

Assessment, Feedback, and Evidence of Learning: Educators use AI-enabled technologies to support authentic assessment design, formative feedback, progress monitoring, and evidence collection while ensuring validity, transparency, and meaningful demonstrations of learner thinking in AI-enabled environments.

What This Means for Teacher Candidate Development

For teacher candidate development, this means learning to design and use assessment practices that produce credible evidence of student learning in AI-enabled environments. TCs should determine when and how AI can appropriately support their own assessment design, formative feedback, progress monitoring, and evidence collection, while also designing assessments that allow students to demonstrate their own knowledge, thinking, reasoning, and performance when AI tools are available.

***Design Principle:** Design assessment so that evidence of student learning remains credible and student thinking remains visible in AI-enabled environments.*

In Practice

For TCs, this competency means designing and using assessment practices that produce credible evidence of PK–12 student learning in AI-enabled environments. TCs should learn to determine when and how AI can appropriately support their own assessment design, feedback, and progress monitoring, while also designing assessments that allow PK–12 students to demonstrate their own thinking, reasoning, and performance when AI tools are available.

Why This Matters

When students have access to AI tools that can generate polished products, some traditional assignments may provide less reliable evidence of students' own knowledge, reasoning, and performance. TCs need to think carefully about what counts as credible evidence of learning in AI-enabled environments, rather than focusing only on detecting or preventing AI use. They also need to use AI-supported feedback or data in ways that preserve assessment validity and educator judgment.

What Teacher Candidates Need to Know & Understand

- Assessment validity depends on whether the evidence collected supports the intended inference about student knowledge, skill, reasoning, or performance.
- AI availability may require redesigning tasks, evidence sources, or assessment processes so student thinking remains visible.
- AI can support formative feedback, progress monitoring, and evidence organization, but generated feedback or conclusions require educator review.
- Transparency about appropriate AI use and the evidence expected from students supports fairness and meaningful interpretation.

What Teacher Candidates Need to Practice

- Identifying what an assessment is intended to reveal and determining whether AI could obscure that evidence.
- Redesigning tasks to make student reasoning, process, explanation, performance, or application more visible.
- Using AI-supported feedback or student progress information as one input while reviewing it for accuracy, appropriateness, and student fit.
- Communicating clearly what AI use is permitted, how it should be documented, and what students must demonstrate themselves.
- Determining whether and under what conditions student work or data may be entered into an AI-enabled tool, consistent with applicable privacy requirements and program, school, or district policies.

Ways to Develop the Domain

Teacher educators can develop this domain by giving candidates repeated opportunities to apply the connected competency practices. The experiences below show how each contributes to the domain as a whole.

Learning Experience	Primary Focus	How It Builds the Competency
Begin with the Student	C5	Provide a learning goal/objectives and a rich student/context profile. TCs define design requirements first, then use AI to generate possibilities and justify what they keep, revise, or reject.
Generic to Grounded	C5	Give TCs a generic AI-generated lesson. They revise it using specific student strengths, language resources, interests, community context, and evidence of need.
Audit the Adaptation	C5	TCs examine AI-generated differentiated materials for unintended simplification, stereotypes, accessibility barriers, or loss of rigor and improve them.
Can We Still See the Learning?	C6	Give TCs an assessment that AI can complete convincingly. They identify the intended evidence and redesign the task so student thinking remains visible.
Feedback Under Review	C6	Provide AI-generated feedback on student work. TCs evaluate, revise, and decide what should be delivered, withheld, or supplemented by human feedback.
Make the Expectations Visible	C6	TCs draft transparent AI-use and evidence expectations for an assignment and explain how those expectations support validity and fairness.

Indicators of Developing Readiness

These indicators describe how readiness across the domain may develop over time. They should be interpreted across multiple forms of evidence rather than as a rubric for scoring a single learning activity. Teacher educators can use evidence gathered across coursework, clinical experiences, simulations, reflections, and authentic performances to identify where TCs are developing and where additional practice opportunities may be needed.

Developmental Level	Observable Indicators
Emerging	Uses AI mainly to generate plans, materials, or feedback quickly, with limited connection to standards, student evidence, rigor, or the validity of assessment evidence.
Developing	Uses AI to generate or adapt instructional and assessment options and considers some student needs and evidence, but differentiation may be generic or assessment may not consistently preserve visible student thinking.
Ready	Begins with standards, goals/objectives, and knowledge of students; uses AI selectively to expand design options; critically adapts outputs for rigor and fit; and designs assessment so intended learning remains visible, and AI expectations are transparent.
Extending	Uses AI flexibly to support a sophisticated, asset-based design what and robust evidence of learning, anticipates unintended consequences, iterates using evidence, and helps others strengthen coherent AI-enabled instruction and assessment.

Possible Sources of Evidence

Teacher educators may draw on multiple sources to understand how a TC is developing this domain, including:

- AI-supported lesson or unit plans
- Before/after design artifacts and differentiation rationales
- Student-profile or contextual analyses
- Redesigned assessments and assessment rationales
- AI-use and evidence expectations
- Feedback analyses, oral defenses, and clinical planning artifacts

Try It in Your Course

Use these prompts to identify one practical opportunity to strengthen this domain in an existing course or clinical experience.

Where do these connected competencies already show up in my course or clinical experience?

My idea:

Where could TCs more explicitly connect AI-supported instructional design with valid evidence of student learning?

My idea:

What existing assignment, learning experience, or assessment could be adapted so candidates practice both responsive design and assessment redesign?

My idea:

What evidence could I collect to understand whether TCs are using AI to strengthen design without losing rigor, student fit, or assessment validity?

My idea:



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