

What's possible with AI in people and HR

Evidence current to mid-2026.

A clear breakdown of where AI does and does not fit across the core tasks of a people and HR team. A practical starting point, not the last word.

Where AI is mature: strong fit today

Proven and available today. AI does the bulk of the work and your team reviews it.

Function	The job today	With AI
Job ads and position descriptions	Turn a rough brief into an accurate, inclusive ad	AI drafts from the brief; your hiring manager checks pay and requirements and owns the words
Policies, handbooks and induction content	Write and update policies and induction material	AI drafts and restructures; your HR manager checks every entitlement against current law
Interview questions, scorecards and scheduling	Build the questions and scoring guide, coordinate calendars and panels	AI drafts the questions and rubric and books the slots; your hiring manager edits and runs the interview
Reference-check templates and questions	Build the referee question set, then conduct the check before the offer	AI drafts the template and the questions to probe interview concerns; you conduct the check and own the call
Training and learning content	Build courses, learning paths and quizzes from source material	AI drafts the modules and paths; a subject-matter expert checks the facts before staff see them
Survey and exit-interview analysis	Read every comment, group the themes, summarise for leadership	AI clusters the themes and drafts the summary; your HR manager checks it and guards anonymity

Where AI is emerging: consider piloting with a human gate

Promising but not yet proven at this scale. AI assists and your team stays in the loop, so trial it on a contained scope first.

Function	The job today	With AI
CV screening and shortlisting	Read every application, filter, build a shortlist	AI summarises and extracts; you decide, nobody is auto-rejected
New-starter paperwork and onboarding	Collect tax, super, bank and contract details, set up access	AI captures and runs the workflow; your team checks right-to-work and pay setup before first pay
Employee questions (leave, policy, entitlements)	Answer repetitive questions from policy and the system	AI handles logistics; for pay, leave or award questions it cites the source and routes to your HR team
Employment contracts and letters	Draft offers, variations and agreements from templates	AI drafts from the template; your HR manager or a lawyer checks and signs
Performance review and feedback drafting	Turn notes and feedback into fair, specific review text	AI drafts from real inputs; your manager owns the rating and the conversation
Workforce reporting		

Function	The job today	With AI
	Pull headcount, turnover, absence and diversity into reports	AI assembles the report and commentary; your HR manager checks the figures and definitions
Interview note-taking	Take notes in the interview, write them up against the rubric	AI transcribes and drafts the notes, with consent; your hiring manager owns attribution and the assessment

Where AI is not ready or suitable today: keep with people

These stay with people, either because the tooling is not reliable enough or because controls and compliance rule it out.

- **Award interpretation and the pay calculation.** Stays in payroll software built on a rules engine. Classification, gross-to-net, super and Single Touch Payroll (STP) are unforgiving, and underpayment is now a criminal offence. Payday Super commenced 1 July 2026, so super now aligns to each pay cycle and errors surface faster. AI can flag anomalies, not run the calc.
- **Hiring, ranking and reject decisions.** Independent testing shows AI screening carries race and age bias, the employer carries the discrimination liability, and reading a candidate's face or emotions is not valid. You decide, and nobody is filtered out unseen.
- **Workplace investigations and grievances.** Assessing credibility, weighing evidence and making findings is judgement, bound by procedural fairness. AI can organise the documents, not reach the finding.
- **Redundancy selection and consultation.** Who is made redundant, and a genuine consultation, are legal-judgement calls under the Fair Work Act. AI can draft and organise, never choose.
- **Attrition and flight-risk prediction.** No reliable model at a small employer's data scale, and it risks labelling people on proxies for age, gender or caring duties. The call stays with you.

Worth weighing: for any of these, the upfront setup (loading your policies, awards and templates, agreeing the review steps) is a one-off, separate from the ongoing effort, which on the strong-fit items is mostly review. The time that comes back goes to the conversations and the calls AI cannot make: the candidate who needs a real read, the employee with a grievance that needs procedural fairness, the pay query that needs a human to check the award clause.

One honest gap for performance drafting: an AI-generated review can read as fair and specific even when the manager's input notes are thin. The line manager still needs to own the actual assessment, not just approve the AI's version of it. The document matters, and the conversation with the employee matters more.