

# Global Manus AI in Higher Education Sweep

2 May 2026

This report presents the findings of a global sweep for institutional deployments of Manus AI in higher education. Given the product's novelty, the sweep was designed to establish a baseline rather than to catalogue an extensive list of confirmed deployments.

## Background and Product Context

Manus is an autonomous AI agent developed by Butterfly Effect, a company founded in China and now headquartered in Singapore. It was publicly launched on 6 March 2025 and was notable for being among the first general-purpose AI agents capable of executing multi-step tasks autonomously – going beyond conversational responses to take actions such as browsing the web, writing code, and producing documents.<sup>1</sup> Its name derives from the Latin word for “hand”, reflecting its positioning as an agent that acts, not merely advises.

The product's corporate trajectory has been turbulent. In December 2025, Meta Platforms agreed to acquire Manus for more than \$2 billion.<sup>2</sup> However, in April 2026, China's government blocked the acquisition, citing technology security concerns and foreign investment rules.<sup>3</sup> As of the date of this report, Manus remains an independent product under Butterfly Effect, though its long-term ownership is unresolved.

## The Manus Campus Programme

Manus operates a dedicated **Campus Programme** ([manus.im/edu](https://manus.im/edu)), which provides students and academic institutions with early access to AI capabilities and research privileges. Students can obtain a “Campus Pass” by verifying a university email address, which grants access to Manus at a discounted or free tier.<sup>4</sup> The programme is structured as an individual student benefit rather than an institutional site licence – universities do not procure Manus centrally; instead, eligible students self-enrol using their institutional email credentials.

This model is structurally different from the campus-wide enterprise deployments documented for ChatGPT Edu, Microsoft 365 Copilot, Google AI Pro, and Claude for

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<sup>1</sup> Manus. (n.d.). Manus: Hands On AI. <https://manus.im/>

<sup>2</sup> Mickle, T. (2025). Meta Buys AI Startup Manus for More Than \$2 Billion. *The Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/tech/ai/meta-buys-ai-startup-manus-adding-millions-of-paying-users-f1dc7ef8>

<sup>3</sup> Associated Press. (2026). China blocks Meta from acquiring startup Manus as global AI race intensifies. <https://www.wfxrtv.com/science/ap-science/ap-china-blocks-meta-from-acquiring-ai-startup-manus/>

<sup>4</sup> Manus. (n.d.). Campus program. <https://manus.im/edu>

Education. There is no evidence of any university having signed an institution-wide agreement with Manus or its parent company as of 1 May 2026.

Manus also operates a **Fellow Programme**, a competitive cohort-based scheme for students and early-career professionals. The Summer 2026 batch, announced in April 2026, attracted approximately 10,000 applications for more than 50 places.<sup>5</sup> This is a talent-development initiative rather than a campus licensing arrangement.

## Domain Dork Search Results

Searches across .edu, .ac.uk, .edu.au, .ac.nz, and related academic TLDs returned no evidence of institutional IT service pages, provost announcements, or IT procurement notices describing a campus-wide Manus deployment. The product does appear in academic commentary – notably a March 2025 piece from Arizona State University’s *Future of Being Human* project, which evaluated Manus’s autonomous task-execution capabilities<sup>6</sup> – but these are research observations rather than deployment announcements.

## Conclusion

No confirmed *institutional* deployments of Manus AI in higher education were identified by this sweep. The product’s current higher-education footprint is limited to individual student access via the self-serve Campus Pass programme. This baseline finding is consistent with the product’s stage of development: Manus launched in March 2025, its corporate ownership remains unresolved following the blocked Meta acquisition, and it has not yet developed the institutional sales infrastructure that characterises the other products in this series of sweeps.

This report should be revisited in a subsequent sweep (suggested: November 2026) to assess whether the resolution of the Meta acquisition, or a change in Manus’s go-to-market strategy, has produced institutional deployments.

## References

See the footnotes.

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<sup>5</sup> Manus. (2026). The Manus Fellow Program Summer 2026 Batch is now open. LinkedIn. [https://www.linkedin.com/posts/manus-im\\_the-manus-fellow-program-summer-2026-batch-activity-7453101489339932673-4fVn](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/manus-im_the-manus-fellow-program-summer-2026-batch-activity-7453101489339932673-4fVn)

<sup>6</sup> Arizona State University. (2025). When Agentic AI Takes Charge – First impressions of Manus. <https://futureofbeinghuman.asu.edu/2025/03/22/manus-first-contact/>