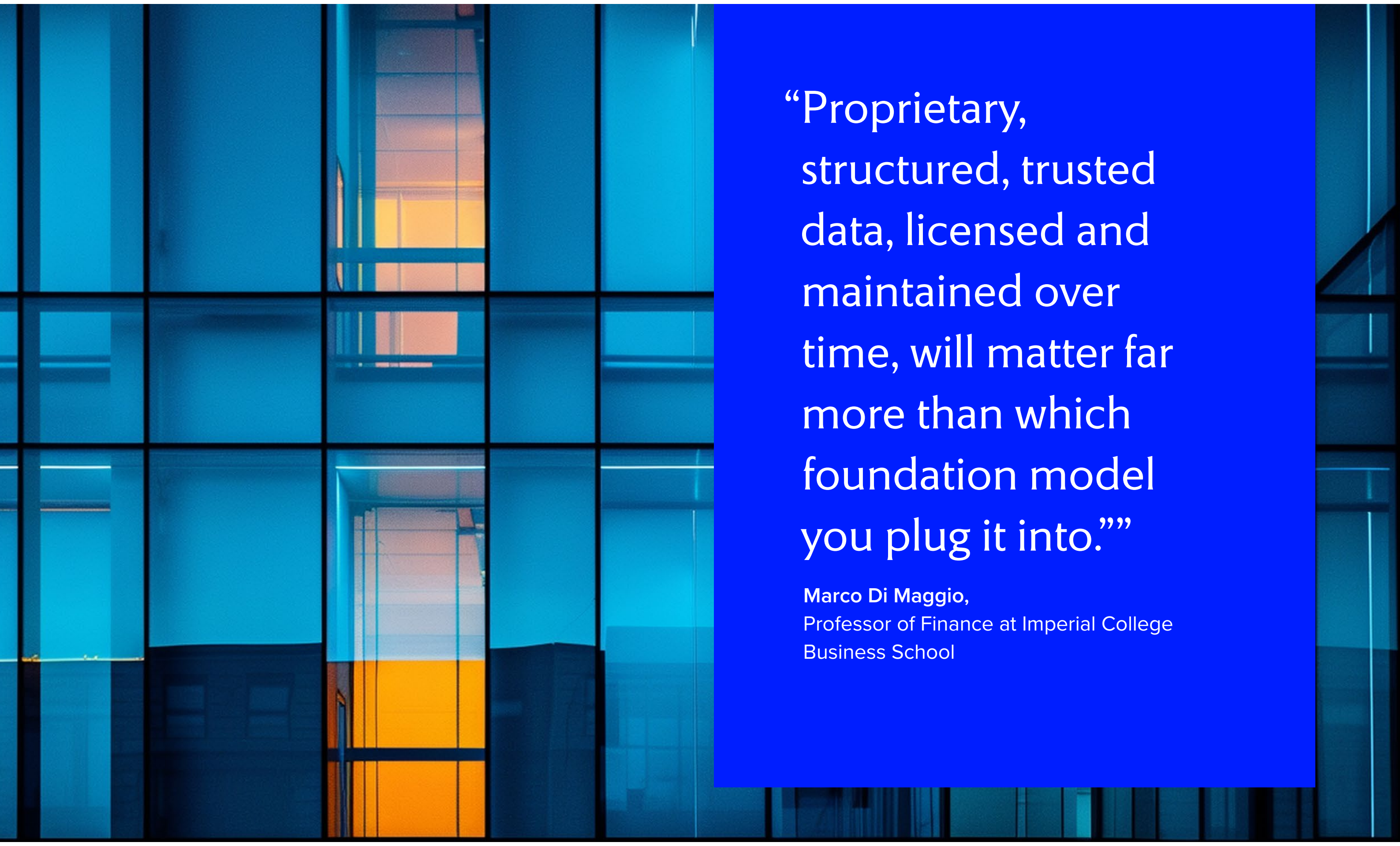
How AI could rewire the investment banking workflow

From drafting pitchbooks to monitoring compliance, AI agents trained on trusted financial data could transform the way banks work, shifting analysts away from number-crunching towards higher-value insight

LSEG

Investment banking has long served a complex cocktail of high-value judgment and labour-intensive industriousness. Facing clients are boardroom advice, strategy and customer relationships. Beneath lies a thick stratum of repetitive work involving gathering data, checking filings, scrubbing data for complex models and reviewing documents.

That invisible labour has, historically, offered a training ground for junior bankers and built the operational backbone of the industry. But artificial intelligence is now altering the dynamic, reshaping workflow, increasing competition by demanding stronger differentiation, and redefining organisational structures.



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Professor of Finance at Imperial College Business School

“AI is like a flywheel that will massively speed up existing processes and, maybe, create some new opportunity,” says Carlo Campajola, Lecturer in Artificial Intelligence and Financial Analytics at the Institute of Finance and Technology, UCL. “AI agents are generally excellent at automating document reviews and drafting, so I expect a lot of that work to be taken off the desks of humans.”

A recent Bank of England and FCA survey found that 75 per cent of UK financial services firms were already using AI. McKinsey has estimated that gen AI could lift labour productivity growth by 0.1 to 0.6 per cent annually until 2040.

The end of banking's apprenticeship model?

As the AI wave gathers pace, the first impact is likely to be on the heavy lifting that defines the apprenticeship phase of banking, which AI agents are adept at taking on. Mahmoud Khliefat, Global Head of Investment Banking at the London Stock Exchange Group (LSEG), argues that AI's value begins with tackling "wood chopping" – the painstaking gathering and preparation of data. "You need to dig into filings and annual reports," Khliefat says. "Having an agent do this is empowering, but it is most effective when these agents adapt to not only sourcing the data but to handling it according to the rules and preferences of the bank, team or even the senior banker you work with."

Yet much of the information bankers need remains insufficiently structured for machines to retrieve autonomously. The European Central Bank has warned that AI systems are particularly vulnerable to data quality problems, while the IMF has highlighted explainability, market concentration and herding among the principal financial stability risks.

Data, not models, will define the winners

All of this suggests the ultimate contest in financial services AI may come down to high-quality, trustworthy data. Marco Di Maggio, Professor of Finance at Imperial College Business School, says: “In finance, the model is a commodity. The data is the franchise. Proprietary, structured, trusted data, licensed and maintained over time, will matter far more than which foundation model you plug it into.”

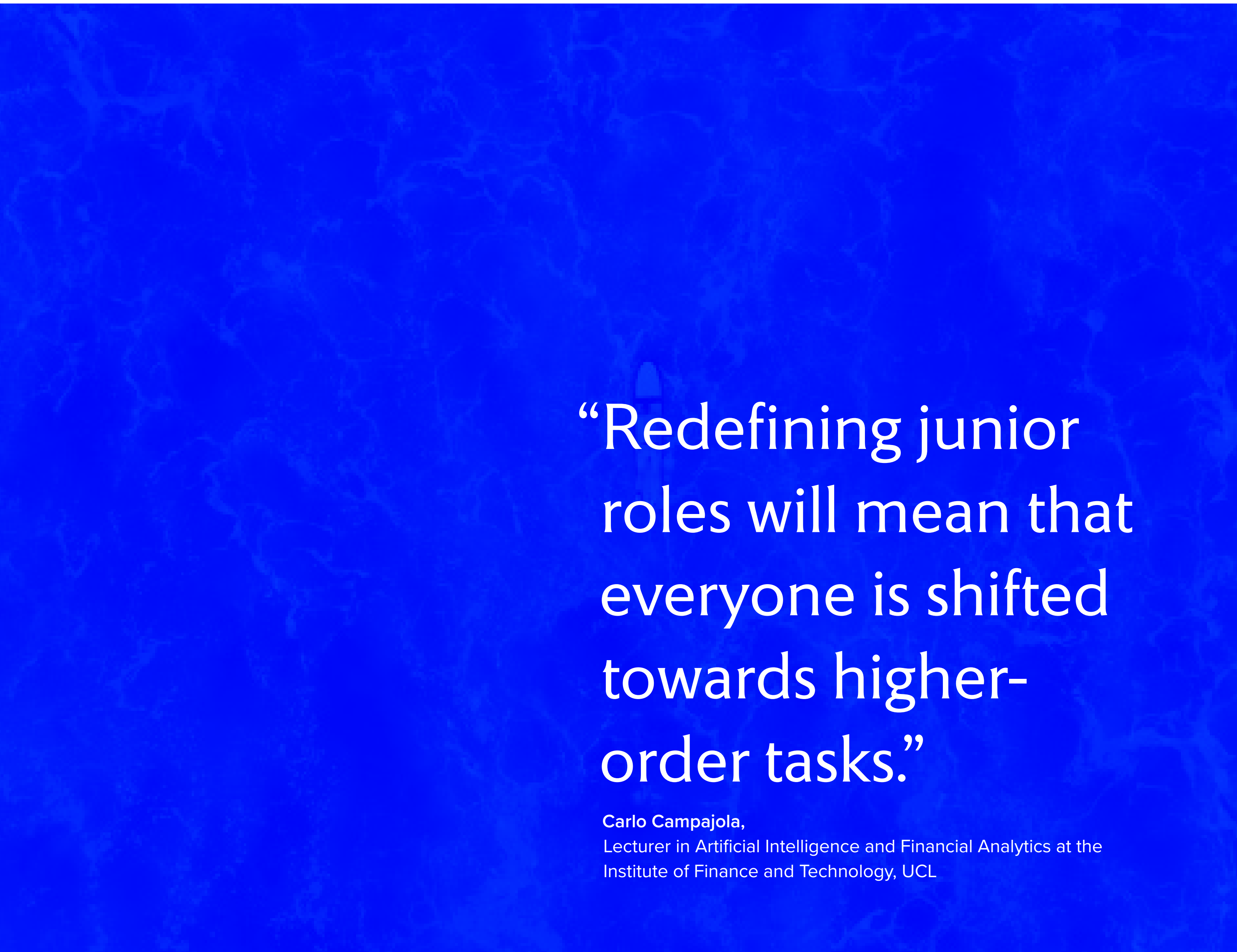
Against that backdrop, data providers such as LSEG, whose transformation from exchange operator to data and analytics platform has accelerated since the acquisition of Refinitiv, a financial markets data provider, are moving increasingly centre stage. During the first quarter of 2026, LSEG’s Data & Analytics division generated more than £1bn in income, 5.1 per cent higher than the same period in 2025. Across the group, total income reached a record £2.42bn, 9.8 per cent up on the same quarter a year ago – a result partly driven by demand for AI-enabled financial data services.

Khliefat says AI agents fuelled by trustworthy data and insights, and operating in an open ecosystem that connects internal systems with productivity tools and terminals, are quickly evolving to deepen analysis and improve quality, format information for re-use and preserve an auditable trail. This can turbocharge the advice provided by banks in ways not necessarily possible or apparent before. In regulated markets that is critical: LSEG says roughly 90 per cent of its Data & Feeds revenues come from proprietary data and solutions, or from activities protected by intellectual property, technology or infrastructure advantages.

From pitchbooks to platforms

More broadly, Khliefat describes a quickly evolving landscape in which trustworthy data becomes easier to query using the resources that bankers already have, from Excel and PowerPoint to enterprise software environments. “For a senior banker to be able to get some of this data on their own is going to change the dynamics of traditional use cases around deal pitches, pitchbooks and the like,” he says.

This matters because investment banks still operate through functional silos. Research, advisory, syndicate and client coverage often sit on separate systems, with expert intermediaries acting as gatekeepers to data. AI embedded in shared workflows could lower those barriers, allowing further differentiation based on banks’ product outreach and internal intelligence, even if regulation preserves some formal separation.



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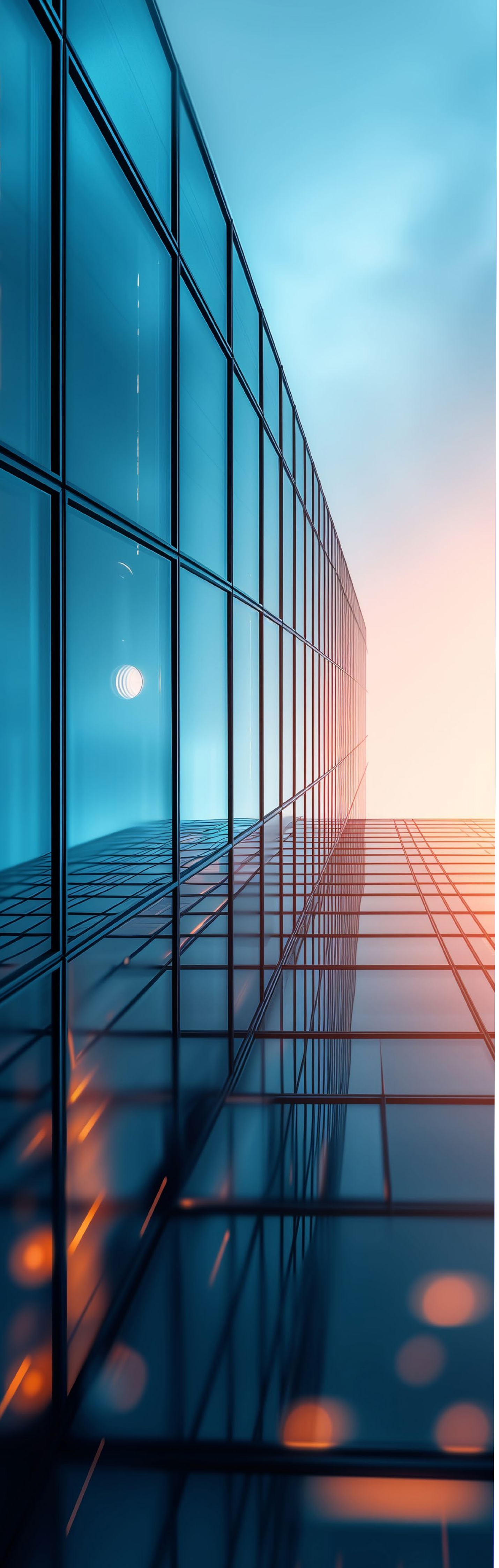

LSEG's strategy reflects this shift towards "data everywhere" workflows, where financial datasets, layers of intelligence and agents can be embedded directly into enterprise software environments in addition to being accessed through terminals augmented with agents to support various workflows. Among other things, LSEG has signed long-term data and workflow contracts worth £1.9bn, reflecting strong demand for integrated data infrastructure in financial services.

Compliance and risk may be the other early winners. Today's supervisory model is often periodic and sample-based. AI makes continuous monitoring more plausible, screening communications, transactions and counterparties in real time rather than after the fact.

As for junior bankers, if fewer careers begin with endless grunt work, banks will have to rethink how to impart judgment. Campajola argues that tomorrow's junior banker may be defined less by the ability to build a model from scratch than by the ability to supervise an AI workflow and challenge its outputs intelligently. "Redefining junior roles will mean that everyone is shifted towards higher-order tasks," he says.

Ultimately, the future may look more hybrid than revolutionary, with AI handling preparation, comparison, quality enhancement and monitoring while humans retain responsibility for interpretation, negotiation and accountability. In that world, the competitive edge will be defined not so much by the model, but by the ability to most effectively embed trusted, auditable data and insights into the workflow.

Find out more about LSEG's AI strategy

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