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Careers Insights

May-Jun 2025 edition

Stay ahead of the fast-moving careers field, with a roundup of the latest research

Contents

About Careers Insights

Welcome to Careers Insights, the CDI's bulletin that includes the new research papers and reports that have been published over the past two months, which are particularly relevant to current and future policy and practice.

(NB: We strive to reference articles that are mainly in the public domain, but include important ones that are behind paywalls. These are denoted with an asterisk (*) before the title.

Research is critically important, and not just for academics. It helps career professionals to understand the needs of different clients to a greater depth. It describes the implications of political, economic, social or technological trends affecting the field. It also describes different models, theories and practices, and provides evidence on 'what works'.

This is a supplement to the CDI's Research Directory, which you can access in the Resources section of the CDI website. The Directory offers a wide collection of references to thousands of career-guidance related articles, reports, papers, books and open data sets. Previous editions of this bulletin are found here. We also support members on finding literature or evidence to support their own research.

Featured articles

We've highlighted some articles that we think are particularly relevant to current events in our sector.

#1. Acute global challenges with teenager career preparation found by the OECD

The OECD published the largest global study ever conducted on teenage career preparation. Overall career aspirations are increasing over time, but more numbers of students from lower socio-economic backgrounds are finding barriers to career success.

Many students have significant challenges e.g. 39% of students, aged 15, are unclear about their career expectations. 21% can be classified as 'misaligned' in their career thinking – expecting to work in a job that typically requires a university education, but not expecting to complete tertiary education. 33% would not agree that 'school has taught me things which could be useful in a job'.

The results show that career uncertainty is generally higher in developed economies, such as the UK, Germany and Finland (all with strong career services). This suggests that the fast changing economic and technology landscape in higher-skilled, developed economies could well be exacerbating young peoples' career challenges.

The OECD are to launch a new dashboard providing international comparators on career readiness and important benchmarks for the UK schools system.

OECD (2025), The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation, OECD Publishing, Paris (Link)

#2. Career outcomes and reflections from secondary education in Scotland

This report provides results from a national survey of young people, to gain insight into the status of career aspirations, career engagement and the role of career services. The sample (n=2,912) covers people who had left school in the previous 12 months.

The results provide a plethora of valuable insights, by virtue of mapping the post education career journey. Young people from the most deprived areas often have more complex post school journeys. After school, many students that did not follow their anticipated path had found new opportunities, while others were dissatisfied with initial choices. While 100% of graduates apprentices were satisfied with career progress, only 28% of unemployed felt the same way, and there was a sliding scale of satisfaction based on education-level, training and work destinations.
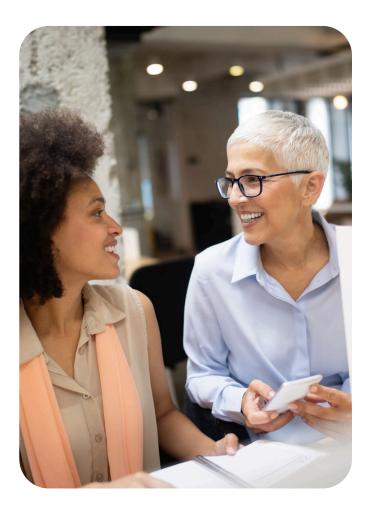
Skills Development Scotland (2025), Young People's Career Ambitions (YPCA) 2024. Briefing paper (Link)

#3. AI is being used by graduates for career planning, but it leads to career uncertainty.

New research shows the extent that graduates are using AI in their career planning: For instance, 10% of respondents had already altered their career plans due to AI. However, those who changed their plans because of AI were more likely to have felt uncertain about their careers (46%).

AI was being used by more than 1 in 3 for applications and CVs.

Shannon-Smith, M. et al (2025), Early Careers Survey 2025. Prospects Luminate (Link)

#4. 10 Priority sectors have been identified for skills development by Skills England

Skills England have produced their latest analysis on the demand for skills, with recognition that "rapid technological and green transitions are outpacing workforce skills, creating shortages in critical sectors."

Their analysis led to the prioritisation of 10 sectors for development, and a series of cross cutting initiatives. The 10 key sectors were:
1. Green Energy & Net Zero (e.g.) renewable energy (wind/solar), carbon capture, and retrofitting buildings.
2. Digital & Tech (AI, cybersecurity, cloud computing, data science).
3. Advanced Manufacturing (Robotics, automation, and semiconductor production).
4. Construction (tradespeople (electricians, plumbers) etc
5. Health & Social Care (Nursing, elderly care, and mental health)
6. Creative Industries (digital content, gaming, UX designers).
7. Life Sciences (Biotech, pharmaceuticals, and medical research)
8. Transport & Logistics (EV manufacturing, battery tech, and smart infrastructure skills)
9. Hospitality & Tourism (Skilled chefs, Management).
10. Professional Services (Legal, accounting. consultancy, ESG)

Policy development was felt to be needed in several areas:
• Upskilling Pathways: Expand apprenticeships, T-Levels, and modular courses.
• Local Skills Partnerships: Tailor training to regional industry needs.
• Flexible Learning: Promote lifelong learning via modular and online credentials.
• Employer Incentives: Tax breaks/funding for businesses investing in workforce development.

Department for Education (2025), Skills England: Sector evidence on the growth and skills offer. (Link)

Roundup

General career practice and profession

Theme	Reference	About
International comparison	CICA (2025), National Report Reveals a Committed, Capable Career Development Workforce Ready to Shape Australia's Future (Link). Full report found at Link.	A new publications from the Australian professional body provides a useful comparator to the situation with the UK career development workforce: "Drawing on detailed responses from n=734 career development practitioners across Australia, the survey paints a picture of a diverse, highly skilled profession working at the forefront of education, employment, and life transition," As with the UK, the workforce are highly trained and motivated, but experience career progression barriers. Career professionals give an average 8.1/10 average job engagement score and more than half expect the sector to improve over the next 5 years.
Theory & practice	Pickerell, D.A. (2025), When Did You Last Think About Theory? NCDA (Link)	The (US) author reviews the important role of career theories in practice, but describes how career development practitioners (CDPs) often rate theory as a low priority or struggle to apply it, with some operating unconsciously within theoretical models (e.g., trait-factor or developmental theories) without recognizing their foundation. Newer theories are described as being appropriate methods for contemporary economic and social contexts (i.e. volatile labour markets and clients with diverse backgrounds). The article advocates for greater practitioner engagement with theory, and generally usefully recaps the case for the benefits and approaches of applying theories that match the challenges at hand.
Morality in guidance discussions	Zwarg, C., Fladerer, M. P., Verdorfer, A. P., & Peus, C. (2025). Morality in careers: A systematic review, integration, and ways forward. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 104127. (Link)	By integrating moral capacities (e.g., moral maturation, moral condition) with career outcomes (options, success), the authors propose a novel framework that enriches both the fields of morality and career development - drawing on past literature. The authors acknowledge mixed findings; for example, both dark triad traits and moral traits are linked to career success in different contexts. They identify methodological limitations of past studies e.g., over-reliance on correlational data. However, the discussion on career counseling and measurement tools (e.g., moral identity scales) offers actionable insights for practitioners e.g. methods to explore moral frameworks with clients, a framework to address moral conflicts, handle ethical challenges, and craft careers in line with their values.

Primary education

Theme	Reference	About
School-readiness	Turner, C. (2025), 4 in 5 teachers warn government will miss 'school-ready' target. Published in Times Education Supplement (Link)	This research provides contextual insight for career learning in primary schools, and is summarised in this article in the TES: Young people (at age c5 years) are entering primary school in the UK unprepared due to a lack of quality, affordable childcare. In a 2,500 strong poll of teachers, 80% said they do not think the government is likely to meet its goal of 75% of children being "school-ready" by 2028. The results have implications for accounting for children's' readiness and capabilities for primary-level career education.
Nurturing skills and childhood development	Erasmus, C. J., & Willemse, A. (2025). Interventions that enhance nurturing care during early childhood development: A RE-AIM framework review. Journal of Early Childhood Research, 1476718X251339312. (Link)	The paper provides an insightful contextual understanding of welling in early childhood (aged c5+). Nurturing care interventions have proven to be an effective means of improving early childhood outcomes. This field provides some potential insights for primary-level career learning that could be explored further. For instance, 1) classroom interventions focusing on language and literacy skills, such as storytelling, reading aloud, and phonological awareness activities, significantly improve children's early learning outcomes. 2) Interventions that foster social-emotional skills, such as emotion regulation and peer interactions, contribute to better classroom behavior and long-term development. 3) Collaboration between teachers and parents enhances the consistency of nurturing care across home and school environments.
Digital technology	*Segal-Drori, O., & Abu Asaad, I. (2025). Young children's views of digital technologies in their lives. International Journal of Early Years Education, 1–15 (Link)	The research provides contextual insights into how children view the role of digital technologies. A sample of n-30 children aged 4 to 6 participated in in-depth interviews which included the children taking pictures and drawing digital devices at home. The interviews were analysed using content analysis. The findings yielded information regarding digital devices in children's day-to-day lives, and learning purposes of digital technologies, gender differences, digital devices as an opportunity for social interactions and restrictions on the use of digital technologies. The study illustrated risks with digital use at this formative age, but also illustrated potential opportunity to explore digital technology for learning purposes, if used in mediated ways.

Secondary education

Theme	Reference	About
Global landscape	OECD (2025), The State of Global Teenage Career Preparation (Link)	The OECD have published a key report which summarises the largest and most detailed study ever of teenagers' career aspirations and how they compare to labour market needs and skills shortages. The data shows that educational ambitions of students have increased over the last two decades. However, i) socio-economic background is playing a more important role than in the past, and ii) most jobs young people want remain out of reach. Questions are raised about the appropriate way of raising career aspirations. Students in the UK exhibit higher than average levels of uncertainty, reflecting other developed OECD nations.
Outcomes in Scotland	Skills Development Scotland (2025), Young People's Career Ambitions (YPCA) 2024. Briefing paper (Link)	This report provides results from a national survey of young people, to gain insight into the status of career aspirations, career engagement and the role of career services. The sample (n=2,912) covers people who had left school in the previous 12 months. Results include career satisfaction as a function of education and career outcomes, and (low) awareness of public career services.
Quality	The Careers & Enterprise Company (2025), Careers Impact National System Review (Link)	The Careers Impact System is a systematic continuous improvement process for careers in schools. This paper summarises key insights from the 2024/25 second National System Review (NSR) conducted by The Careers & Enterprise Company (CEC), conducted with 35 schools. Several findings included: i) CEIAG is being used a method to tackle socio-economic disadvantage, and ii) High-quality work experiences are particularly valuable for disadvantaged or vulnerable learners. Next steps included to strategically embed careers into schools.
Data	Department for Education (2025), Destinations of key stage 4 and 5 students: 2023 (Link)	In May, the latest data on student progression was published (with the last publication in October 2024), covering students going into apprenticeship, education and employment destinations, and 16 to 18 year-old students progressing to higher education or training. Results are presented in five documents for different cohorts. 93% of students that left key stage 4 were found in sustained education, employment & apprenticeships. 80% of students who left 16-18 study were in sustained education, apprenticeship or employment. 70% of level 3 pupils (e.g. those that studied A levels, tech levels and applied general qualifications) continued to a sustained education or training destination at level 4 or higher (such as degrees, higher apprenticeships and higher national diplomas) in the two years after completing 16 to 18 study.
Outcomes in Spain	Mann, A., J. Diaz and S. Zapata Posada (2025), "Career readiness in Madrid, Spain: Insights from a survey of young adults (19-26)", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 331, OECD Publishing, Paris, (Link)	This report is one of a series by the OECD into the nature and efficacy of country-wide or regional career systems. This study asked young adults in Madrid (19-26YOs) to reflect on career development activities as teenagers. While career guidance was viewed positively, with hindsight they also wished that they had received more support from their schools, particularly with regard to practical activities for integration into the working world. The research motivates greater exploration of the idea of readying students for workplace realities while in education.

Secondary education *continued*

Skills, confidence and action	Haenggli, M., Hirschi, A., & Marciniak, J. (2025). Navigating transitions: A longitudinal exploration of career decision-making process dynamics in adolescents. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 159, 104125. (Link)	This six- wave longitudinal study across 30 months investigated the interplay between career self management actions (i.e., environmental exploration), career knowledge (i.e., labor market knowledge), and attitudes (i.e., career decidedness) using a research sample of 1,132 students in 8th grade (13-14YOs) in Switzerland, The paper provides evidence into the nature of self-propagating states whereby increases in students' environmental career exploration led to greater career knowledge and career decidedness. Increased career knowledge and career decidedness, in turn, led to increased activity in environmental exploration. The implications of the study include that it is positive for career guidance to encourage environmental exploration as a contribution to fostering positive career attitudes (as well as the other way round).
Practice-policy gaps	Magee, M., Kuijpers, M., & Runhaar, P. (2025). What do we expect from career guidance in schools? A comparison of the intended results in national and school policy. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–22. (Link)	The paper concerns the gap between the intentions of career guidance policy and the realities, using reviews multiple case studies in a Dutch setting. Perspectives are drawn on the nature of gaps from multiple stakeholders. The approach in the study serves as a general method to investigate policy-practice gaps.

Further education, vocational training and apprenticeships

Theme	Reference	About
European progress	Cedefop (2025), Towards EU priorities in VET (Link)	This joint Cedefop-ETF policy brief provides an overview of vocational education and training (VET) policy developments from 2021 to 2025 in the EU-27, Norway, Iceland and five candidate countries (Albania, Montenegro, North Macedonia, Serbia, and Türkiye). It highlights countries' activities to advance EU priorities in making national VET systems agile, flexible, excellent, attractive, inclusive and quality-assured, with selected examples illustrating progress across EU Member States and candidate countries. Efforts are required to continue in several areas, such as increasing the attractiveness of VET pathways.
International comparisons	Field, S. (2025), A World of Difference. The Sutton Trust (Link)	This report compares the apprenticeships system in England with those in a range of other countries, from often cited examples like Germany and Switzerland, to a wider number of systems in economies more similar to our own, including recent changes in Ireland. Lessons include the value of early childhood investment, recruitment of top graduates into teaching, and the allocation of additional funds for disadvantaged students.
Historic reflections	Gatsby (2025) The Ghost of Provisions Past: How Can the Government Make a Success of Foundation Apprenticeships (Link)	As details emerge about the new Foundation Apprenticeships in the UK (*"a taster of work {with} a sharp focus on employability skills"*), Gatsby reviewed the "chequered" history of Level 2 training to extract learning from past problems: As a result of past events, Gatsby call for a distinct identity for the new vehicle, a focus on sectors with low education-attainment needs and to avoid risks of low take up amongst employers by running a concerted programme of activities.
Teaching	Cedefop. (2025). *The influence of learning outcomes-based curricula on teaching practices.* Cedefop research paper. Publications Office of the European Union. DOI: 10.2801/0800596 (Link)	The European Centre for the Development of Vocational Training (Cedefop) produced this new report to investigate how Learning Outcomes-based curricula are shaping teaching and learning in VET. Teachers often have autonomy in shaping their teaching content, but vague outcomes are found to limit effectiveness. Better alignment is needed between policies, school practices and teacher training. The report discusses how such alignment is attained.
Data	Department for Education (2025), Participation in education, training and employment: 2024 (Link)	The DOE published this latest data on national participation in education, training and employment figures for 16- to 18-year-olds. Higher participation rates were found compared to a year ago. However, 14.5% of 18 year olds and 4.5% of 16-17 year olds were NEETs, up 1.1%pts and 0.2%pts on the previous year.
	Department for Education (2025), Apprenticeships in England by industry characteristics: 2022 to 2023 (Link)	This publication is going to be the final data release in a series ongoing since 2017, showing the number and breakdown of apprenticeships undertaken in England: In the 2022/23 academic year, the number of apprenticeship starts in small employers decreased but marginally increased in larger employers. (The publication is to be discontinued to the inability to collect recent data).

Higher education

Theme	Reference	About
Outcomes	Abayasekara, N. (2025), How are universities supporting career-ready graduates? Universities UK (Link)	The article discusses the impact of the UUK's Access to Success Action Plan, using graduate outcome data. Recent results show 83% of respondents were in employment or unpaid work 15 months after graduation. Graduates also earn more than non-graduates who had the right qualifications to go to university but chose not to. However, a 4%pt gap remained in employment, and a c£1k gap in salary, between graduates who had been recipients of free school meals vs not. The article provides case studies on best practice for equipping students with career-readiness.
	van der Baan, N., Beausaert, S., Gijselaers, W., & Gast, I. (2025). How does career coaching in higher education help graduate employees adjust to the workplace?. Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning, 15(1), 93-111. (Link)	The study qualitatively evaluates a career coaching practice in higher education in the Netherlands. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with graduates who had participated in career coaching activities at a Dutch university (n= 12) to explore the value for workplace transitions. The main benefit for the clients was found to be the acquisition of reflection skills, which were attributed as most helping with adaptation to the workplace.
Student satisfaction	HEPI (2025), Student Academic Survey 2025. (Link)	The latest student academic survey has been published and shows that more students believe they receive good value (37%) than feel they receive poor value (29%) from their choice to pursue higher education. Students now often expect to work for pay while studying, and one of the most noteworthy results this year is that there are now more than two in three who do so (68%) - up from <50% three years ago. Numbers who would have made a different choice of institution remain low, but grew from 6% last year to 11% this year.
Guidance services for online degrees	Bunikowska, J., & Eskelinen, T. (2025). Guidance in an online degree programme: good practices and improvement recommendations. (Link)	This study explores the guidance needs of students in an online programme. The study is based on data gathered from interviews with teachers, administrative staff and student tutors in an online degree programme at the University of Eastern Finland. Positive aspects were found to be in place, but there was also a requirement for a structured framework to mitigate impacts of limited resources that caused some inconsistent delivery. Recommended elements of a service include: an orientation course, provision of personalised guidance, interactive course content, the early integration of career support, and the availability of well-being services.
Work-integrated learning	Business & Higher Education Roundtable (2025), Work-Integrated Learning in Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts:: Strengthening Career Pathways for Liberal Arts Students, and the Employers Who Need Them (Link)	This Canadian report discusses the under-representation of Social Sciences, Humanities, and Arts (SSHA) graduates in work, and the steps that Business & Higher Education Roundtable have taken via work-integrated learning programmes. This report reviews successful strategies for increasing student access to work integrated learning, and the positive responses by most employers when recruiting SSHA graduates.

Adults

Theme	Reference	About
Careers in organisations	Okon, S. E., Dakare, O., Akaighe, G. O., & Adebiyi, S. O. (2025). Organisational career growth and work engagement: a moderated mediated model. Career Development International, 30(3), 239-254. (Link)	This study in Nigeria examined the direct and indirect (via career resilience) effects of organisational career growth on work engagement. Data was collected from n=431 employees in the health sector. Organisational career growth has a positive influence on employee work engagement. The authors discuss how positive environments can be created for these conditions. The results provide valuable, generalisable considerations for coaches, and evidence for career professionals working in/with organisations for demonstrating the value of careers support in organisations.
	The Future Skills Centre (2025), Thriving Workplaces: A Dual-Client Approach to Career Services. (Link)	The Thriving Workplaces initiative is testing an innovative dual-client model in career services in Nova Scotia, Canada. (The dual clients are employers and employees). The project, implemented by five employment service providers, sought to improve employment outcomes by engaging both work seekers and employers in structured career navigation activities. Early reports were promising, with benefits for both clients and staff.
Career management	Grabarski, M. K., Kalyal, H., Konrad, A. M., Mouratidou, M., Shin, D., & Sullivan, S. E. (2025). Career empowerment: a qualitative exploratory investigation of perceived career control. Career Development International, 30(3), 255-271. (Link)	This qualitative study from Canada explored the notion of "Career Control" with n=31 participants from diverse occupational backgrounds. Thematic analysis of the interviews produced 7 important facets to the idea of career control - autonomy, impact, meaning, competence, clarity, growth and support. The results provide a framework for career professionals to apply when helping clients to improve feelings of control over their careers.
Career success	*Franklin, B., & Ayentimi, D. T. (2025). Enablers and drivers of contemporary careers: a qualitative inquiry. Career Development International, 30(3), 289-308. (Link)	This research, conducted in Australia with working adults, investigated the idea of contemporary career success. The study found a sense of fulfilment, the desire for continuous learning and need for stimulation as the key individual drivers reinforcing the shift towards contemporary careers. Social capital and networking, managerial support, mentorship, sponsorship and job crafting behaviours were found to be essential success factors. The outcomes help to contextualise motivations and choices.
Historical lessons on lifelong learning	LWI (2025), Lifelong learning and skills for longer lives (Link)	Participation in learning has fallen substantially since 2010 with large inequalities by age and socio-economic group. This research exercise provides an evidence base on the employment-related impact of lifelong learning on individuals, Lifelong learning was found to increase the likelihood of being in employment within two-and-a-half years of starting. Learners with prior Level 2 qualifications were found to suffer a short-term loss of earnings.
	LWI (2025), Learning the lessons (Link)	'Learning the lessons' looks at the history of learning and skills policy, going back to the late 19th century. The analysis leads to the conclusion that "learning and skills have been held back by too narrow a focus on learning for work and the publicly funded budget, along with increasing centralisation, constant chop and change, and lack of proper success measures. This has left the UK is middle of the pack internationally on essential and intermediate skills, holding back growth and opportunity."

Adults *continued*

Farmers	Toogood, C., Williams, F., & Nye, C. (2025). Exploring calling to farming careers in the United Kingdom: a scoping review. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–16. (Link)	This scoping review explores whether farming careers can be considered as a calling, and thus better understood through "Work as Calling Theory". The UK study identified evidence of calling in farming careers, including strong career commitment, identity ties to work, and motivations linked to purpose and passion. Barriers such as access to land, gender bias, and lack of career guidance were noted as challenges to living a calling. Positive outcomes included job satisfaction and pride, while negative aspects involved long hours and stress. The authors recommend tailored career guidance and policy interventions to support individuals pursuing farming careers.
Carers	Kramers, D.A. et al (2025), Working Carers: helping carers get into work, and stay in work. Institute of Employment Studies (Link)	This report examines the challenge with supporting carers to return to work and find sustainable employment. This multi-method research study involved collecting evidence from a range of stakeholders and providing case studies of effective practices. A lack of time, and a lack of control over their own time, was a particular barrier for carers in finding sustained employment. A series of policy recommendations was provided including making telephone appointments available, providing peer networks and signposting to career support.

Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers

Theme	Reference	About
Socio-economic	The Sutton Trust (2025), The Opportunity Index. (Link)	This analytic report provides the "most detailed ever look at the geography of opportunity and social mobility in England." The data examined how socio-economic background, geography and opportunity interact. Implications exist in terms of the nature and extent of barriers and disadvantages by region, and provide insights for regional adaptation of career systems.
Race/ethnicity	The Future Skills Centre (2025), Working with Black Communities. (Link)	The report examines systemic barriers faced by Black communities in Canada's education and labour markets. Case studies and data analysis were used to investigate issues and initiatives. Effective programs require Black leadership in design and decision-making. Programs must address intersecting barriers (e.g., mental health, childcare, racism) through wraparound services. Initiatives are promising that connect under-represented groups directly with sectors in which there is under-representation e.g. real estate.
Migrants	The Future Skills Centre (2025), Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (Link)	The Career Advancement for Immigrant Professionals (CAIP) program, initiated in Toronto, provides a model involving different forms of career support to address underemployment of skilled immigrant professionals. The programme provided career support and fostered change in organisations, and showed promise after its first year. Particular benefits included that immigrants better understood requirements for career progression.
Cultural contexts	Yao, C., & McWha-Hermann, I. (2025). Contextualizing career development: Cultural affordances as the missing link in social cognitive career theory. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 159, 104114. (Link)	This study examines the role of cultural sensitivity in career guidance and uses the well-known social cognitive career theory (SCCT) as the basis of these discussions. The study examines the interplay of cultural values and contemporary work values, using Chinese students as the sample (though the methodology has generic relevance). The results describe how culture shapes both opportunities and tensions in career development.
	*Gönültaş, M., & Kağnici, D. Y. (2025). Multicultural counselling supervision in Türkiye. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–18. (Link)	This Turkish study is in the context of general counselling but has applicability to the careers field through the considerations raised by multicultural career clients during research where their cultural contexts were explored.
Disability	Caslin, M. (2025). 'Give us more time' young disabled students experiences of career provision in English mainstream secondary schools. Support for Learning. (Link)	This project gave young people with an opportunity to reflect on their experiences of career support and highlight what they think professionals need to consider to meet the needs of disabled students. Workshops were conducted to elicit requirements. For young people, ensuring that they are supported and feel comfortable to share their needs was found to be essential. It is therefore an important learning goal for careers professionals, to enable students to articulate their needs in the labour market.

SEND	Mintz, J., & Shiner, R. (2025). Careers guidance in specialist settings in England - Moving towards career readiness? Findings from OFSTED research. Journal of Research in Special Educational Needs. (Link)	The aims of this study were to investigate careers guidance for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) in specialist provision in England. The study involved 12 research visits to special schools, pupil referral units, and specialist further education colleges in England in 2023. Findings indicate that the effective communication and liaison between the whole 'ecosystem' around the child are needed for careers guidance in specialist settings to be effective. This includes employers, local authorities, colleges, schools, families and parents.
EDI in workplaces	Orlando, K.M. and Cook, J. (2025), What works to promote employer action and behaviour change in relation to equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) (Link)	The Institute for Employment Studies conducted this rapid evidence assessment to explore effective approaches for promoting employer behaviour change in relation to EDI. Though efforts have been made by employers to prioritise EDI in recent years, challenges persist with resources, data, senior leadership commitment and confidence.
Neurodiversity	Latimer, C. et al (2025). The Employment Conundrum: An Analysis of Disparities in Hiring Practices and the Self-Identified Needs of Neurodivergent Students and Alumni. Neurodiversity. 3 (Link)	Using qualitative research and an employer survey, this US study identifies the prevalent barriers to employment that neurodivergent students experience and provides practical strategies for inclusion that can be assessed, measured for success, and integrated in the workplace. The majority of the respondents (92%) indicated that anxiety or nervousness is the most significant barrier to the interview process. In response to the question "I have the self-confidence to be successful in a job interview," 29% reported their response as "Strongly agree" and 56% reported "Agree." Nevertheless, 50% of the respondents identified a lack of confidence to succeed in an interview as the second greatest barrier impacting applicants during an interview. Suggestions are made for navigating interviews for candidates, while providing employers with inclusive interviewing techniques.

Economics and labour market influences

Theme	Reference	About
Employers	Department for Work & Pensions (2025), Employers Survey (Link)	The survey of >8k responses reports on the experiences of employers: Over half (53%) of those that tried to recruit staff had found instances where they'd been unable to find suitable staff. Employment of older workers (aged 50 or over) has increased since the 2022 survey (84% said they employed this age group in 2024 compared to 73% in 2022). Employers reported barriers supporting staff with illnesses or disabilities.
Economy	Ghosh, S. and Sharma, M. (2025), Labour Market Statistics, May 2025. Institute for Employment Studies. (Link)	Labour market data was published for the first time since the rise in National Insurance contributions and the increase in the National Living Wage, prompting a review by the IES. Over the past five years, the workforce has shrunk by 1.3 million people due to increased economic inactivity. Long-term ill health remains the leading cause of inactivity. There are growing 18-24year old NEET of particular concern. Policy changes are anticipated to be amplifying cost pressures in challenged sectors like hospitality. The data clearly show that structural inequalities are not only persistent but, in some cases widening.
Labour market & skills gaps	Skills Development Scotland (2025), Economy, People and Skills (Link)	This report provides the latest state of play in Scotland. LFS figures show the unemployment rate increased to 4.2% (+0.4 pp), but so too did employment (+0.9 pp). Cost pressures are reported by both businesses and felt by citizens. Impacts of attempts from the UK Government to reduce immigration were uncertain.
	Department for Education (2025), Skills England: Sector Evidence on the growth and skills offer. (Link)	Skills England published analysis and engagement with sectors on the growth and skills offer and the skills-needs assessments for 10 priority sectors. Rapid technological and green transitions are outpacing workforce skills, creating shortages in critical sectors.
Skills gaps in health	Careers & Enterprise Company (2025), Examining the skills gap: Inspiring young people to take up careers in health and social care. (Link)	This report was the culmination of stakeholder input from NHS trusts, social care providers, industry experts and young people to identify skills shortages in the health sector. A series of challenges were noted: Many young people view the sector as "low-paid" or "stressful," unaware of progression routes or diverse roles.. There is also a lack of work experience opportunities, limited career education in schools, and misconceptions about qualifications needed. Recommendations include earlier exposure to sector roles via school-employer partnerships during career education.
	Teodorescu, H. (2025), How are universities delivering the future NHS workforce? Universities UK. (Link)	In the context of the Government's imminent publication of a 10 Year Health Plan, this paper reviews data on the health workforce pipeline, exploring what is required for a future sustainable NHS workforce. In 20230, the Health Foundation had estimated that, in order for the NHS workforce to grow in line with the country's needs, the proportion of first-year higher education students in England training to be NHS clinical professionals would need to increase by 50% (to 125,700 students) in 2031–32. Drops were reported in recent recruitment rates for certain parts of the sector, particularly nursing, which are creating acute challenges. The article calls for a joined up approach between HEIs and government.

Economics and labour market influences continued....

AI impacts	Gunderston, M. (2025), Can AI Mitigate Our Labour Force Problem, Fraser Institute (Link)	This Canadian study examines different sectors and the labour forces shortages within them. AI is projected to be able to resolve many of the labour force shortages by 2035, highlighting the extent of the impact it is anticipated to have in coming years in developed economies. Impacts are expected to vary by sector. Greatest gains are expected in healthcare (diagnostics, admin), manufacturing (predictive maintenance), and professional services (data analysis).

AI and technology in careers

Theme	Reference	About
Online groupwork	Cardello, L. (2025), Fostering a Sense of Community in Online Career Counseling Courses (Link)	This practitioner article for the National Career Development Association in the US discusses reflections on developing a sense of community in online groupwork. A strong sense of connection among students and instructors enhances engagement, motivation, and learning outcomes while reducing isolation. The article suggests methods like virtual introductions, interactive discussions collaborative activities (e.g., virtual escape rooms), and informal community spaces (e.g., GroupMe) to foster interaction.
AI in career planning	Deckker, D., Sumanasekara, S., & Uludag, K. (2025). AI as a bridge: How technology facilitates educational and workforce transitions in a digital era. (Link)	The (UK) paper explores how Artificial Intelligence (AI) serves as a bridge between education and workforce readiness, addressing challenges in skill development, accessibility, and career transitions. A number of applications are discussed in the role of AI across the transition process, covering candidates use of AI-driven adaptive learning platforms, skills-gap assessments and recruitment tools.

AI can act to both bridge digital divides and widen them in different contexts. The author calls for ethical AI frameworks in education and hiring and public-private partnerships to scale inclusive AI access. |
| | Shannon-Smith, M. et al (2025), Early Careers Survey 2025. Prospects Luminate (Link) | Prospects Luminate's Early Careers Survey 2025 reveals how AI is reshaping the career landscape for students and graduates, impacting everything from job applications to long-term career plans. For instance, "10% of respondents had already altered their career plans due to AI. Those who changed their plans because of AI were more likely to have felt uncertain about their careers (46%) compared with those who had not made changes (37%)." Also, "AI was widely used by candidates applying for jobs. Around 39% of applicants used AI to edit a CV or cover letter, 30% to write one from scratch, and 29% used it to prepare for or practice interviews." |

Health and wellbeing

Theme	Reference	About
Youth	Kartol, A., & Üztemur, S. (2025). Let me check my phone: smartphone addiction and its links to life satisfaction and psychological resilience. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–12. (Link)	This study provides contextual insight, in examining the mediating role of psychological resilience between smartphone addiction and life satisfaction in university (n=324) Turkish students. As the level of smartphone addiction among university students increased, their life satisfaction and psychological resilience decreased. In addition, psychological resilience was found to significantly mediate between smartphone addiction and life satisfaction.

Careers and the environment

Theme	Reference	About
Skills	Bradley, P., Whittard, D., Green, L., Brooks, I., & Hanna, R. (2025). Empirical research of green jobs: A review and reflection with practitioners. Sustainable Futures, 100527. (Link)	This paper conducts a systematic scoping review of empirical research on green jobs, combined with focus groups involving public sector practitioners, to identify research priorities and gaps. The review analyzed 142 studies, categorising them by focus areas such as job creation, green skills, regional impacts, and employee attitudes, while also highlighting under-researched topics like just transition and gender studies. The focus groups revealed five key priorities for future research: green jobs metrics, employment and skills planning, just transition, breaking barriers to green jobs, and the broader green economy. Practitioners emphasised the need for interdisciplinary approaches, better measurement of social and environmental impacts, and strategies to address skills gaps and equity in the transition. A notable finding was the lack of academic research on dispelling myths about green jobs, which practitioners identified as critical.

What we missed last time!

In this section, in future, we'll mention papers or reports that were pointed out to us, and we didn't include last time. Do let us know if you see we've missed something in this edition, and we will include it next time!

Theme	Reference	About
Hea;th	ReWage (2025), The case for creating healthy jobs (Link)	This ReWAGE Evidence Paper presents research that identifies what aspects of jobs are linked to workers ill-health and what aspects of jobs maintain or enhance worker health Low-paid, insecure, or high-strain jobs correlate with chronic conditions (e.g., cardiovascular disease, musculoskeletal disorders). Poor autonomy, excessive demands, and job insecurity increase risks of depression/anxiety. Workers in "low-control" jobs face 50% higher mortality risk (vs. high-control roles).
Happiness	Salazar-Altamirano, M. A., Galván Vela, E., Ravina-Ripoll, R., & Sánchez-Limón, M. L. (2025). Happiness management and workplace well-being: Evolution, key insights, and future directions. A systematic review. (Link)	This extensive systematic review covers the 'evolution of Happiness Management' in workplace contexts from 2010 to 2024, Positive Psychology and the Job Demands-Resources Model are the most frequently applied theories. However, limited research exists on SMEs and the gig economy, inconsistencies in measurement methods, and a lack of longitudinal studies assessing the long-term impact of workplace happiness. Differences between workplace happiness and job satisfaction are described, leading to the view that different strategies are required to tackle each. The authors suggest that understanding these effects requires multi-disciplinary research. Discussions on differences between attaining workplace happiness, well-being and job satisfaction offer useful consideration for coaches working with adults and/or employers. However, these considerations could also inform careers work in education, by motivating young people to consider different sorts of intrinsic reward that a career can offer them.

If you see a paper that you want including, then please contact stephen.plimmer@thecdi.net.

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