



# Careers Insights

Jan-Feb 2025 edition

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



## About Careers Insights

Welcome to Careers Insights, the CDI's bulletin that reports on new research papers and reports that have been published over the past few months that are particularly relevant to the issues in contemporary policy and practice.

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 related articles, reports and papers, as well as summaries.

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(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 (\*) in the title)



# Contents

<b>About Careers Insights</b>	02
<b>Contents</b>	03
<b>Featured articles</b>	04
#1. Progress in primary career education	04
#2. Insights from T-levels	04
#3 The case for learning amongst career professionals	04
#4 The value of careers support to wellbeing	04
<b>Roundup</b>	05
General career practice	05
Primary education	05
Secondary education	06
Further education, vocational training and apprenticeships	07
Higher education	07
Adults	08
Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers	09
Economic & labour market influences	10
AI, technology and careers	10
Health and wellbeing	11
Careers and the environment	11
<b>What we missed last time!</b>	11



## Featured articles

We've highlighted four articles that are particularly relevant to current issues in the careers world.

### #1. Progress in primary career education

This publication provides insights on the impact of career-related learning in primary schools, from Wave 2 of The Careers & Enterprise Company's "Start Small; Dream Big pilot", which covers hundreds of thousands of pupils in 419 schools in England.

One of the objectives of this program is to reduce gender stereotypes. Significant progress was demonstrated: "Girls showed increased interest in typically male dominated sectors. There was a 30% increase in interest levels in Business and Finance, and notable rises in Sport and Fitness (15%), Digital (14%), and Law (13%). In addition, schools saw a 20% improvement in girls' career knowledge, alongside a 50% increase in their understanding of employer expectations and salary insights. This brings girls on a par with boys' knowledge levels. School careers provision and leadership commitment improved. Employers also valued working with primary pupils and want to do more.

Careers & Enterprise Company (2025), *Insight Briefing 2: The promise of primary* [Link](#)

### #2. Insights from T-levels

Various insights have emerged from T-levels over the past several months. This included a publication commissioned by Gatsby to understand the destinations of T-level students across Construction, Digital, Education and Health & Science.

Overall, 574 students progressed to higher education (47% of the overall sample), 341 students to employment (28%) and 133 students progressed to an apprenticeship (11%). 164 students (14%) progressed to another destination, which included gap years, further education courses and students looking for work or an apprenticeship.

Boniface, R., and G. Whalley. *Analysis of T-level Students Destinations*. Gatsby, 2025. [Link](#)

### #3 The case for learning amongst career professionals

A study in Estonia was published that was novel for its focus on understanding the relationships between the engagement levels of career development professionals in learning and their capabilities.

The findings indicated that rapid professional development to the more advanced competency profile stages was positively associated with frequent attendance of varied workplace learning practice opportunities.

Pata, Kai, et al. "The Role of Attending Workplace Learning Practices in Career Paths of Career Specialists." *Vocations and Learning* 18.1 (2025): 1-22 [Link](#)



### #4 The value of careers support to wellbeing

There have been a number of papers in the past discussing how career guidance supports wellbeing. In a systematic review, this paper from Canada provides evidence of the effect from 35 data samples. The authors specifically identified five components that require incorporation in career counselling to support wellbeing: the decision process, cognitive restructuring, written exercises (occupational analyses), individualised feedback on career choice, and attention to decreasing potential obstacles.

Career counselling is proposed as a valuable tool for classes of occupation related wellbeing/health issues.

Milot-Lapointe, F., and Nicole A.. "A Meta-Analysis of the Effectiveness of Individual Career Counseling on Career and Mental Health Outcomes." *Journal of Employment Counseling* (2025) [Link](#)

# Roundup

## General career practice

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Models &amp; practice</b>	Arthur, Nancy, Roberta Borgen, and Mary McMahon. "Career Development Practices: What Theories and Models Have to Offer" <i>Canadian Journal of Career Development</i> 24.1 (2025): 85-105. <a href="#">Link</a>	The paper discusses how career models relate to practice, with regard to how they can be applied. Eight foundational themes emerged that support theory-driven practice, which the authors argue will improve the outcomes from practice. Ideas are also offered for aligning practice with professional standards and guidelines.
<b>Handling client self-depreciation</b>	Voutilainen, L., and Sanna V.. "Responding to the client's self-deprecations in career guidance." <i>Discourse Studies</i> (2025): 14614456241308973. <a href="#">Link</a>	Using conversation analysis of video-recorded data, the authors show how career professionals handle a common situation, where clients are self-deprecating. The technique is illuminated whereby the counsellor skillfully reframes the situation to a positive end, so that the client's assessment of themselves is presented in a more positive or neutral light.
<b>Learning and development of CDPs</b>	Pata, Kai, et al. "The Role of Attending Workplace Learning Practices in Career Paths of Career Specialists." <i>Vocations and Learning</i> 18.1 (2025): 1-22. <a href="#">Link</a>	The paper provides research and analysis into the role of workplace learning on competences of career specialists. The findings indicated that rapid professional development to the more advanced competency profile stages was positively associated with frequent attendance of varied workplace learning practice opportunities.

## Primary education

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Impact</b>	Careers & Enterprise Company (2025), <i>Insight Briefing 2: The promise of primary</i> . <a href="#">Link</a>	Early insights are provided on the impact of career-related learning in primary schools from Wave 2 of The Careers & Enterprise Company's "Start Small; Dream Big pilot", which covers hundreds of thousands of pupils in 419 schools in England. Results showed: Gender stereotypes fell – particularly among girls, School careers provision and leadership commitment improved, Employers valued working with primary pupils and want to do more.

## Secondary education

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Outcomes</b>	Careers & Enterprise Company (2024), <i>Student career readiness in 2023/24</i> <a href="#">Link</a>	(Although published in late 2024, we thought this was worth highlighting). During the 2023/24 academic year, c250k students from over 1,000 secondary education institutions completed the Future Skills Questionnaire (FSQ). A number of insights were shown that illustrate both the effectiveness of secondary career guidance and broader employability education. Some skill areas to further improve included speaking, listening, leadership and teamwork.
<b>International systems</b>	OECD (2025), <i>What Shapes Pathways and Transitions?: A Comparative Perspective on Learners' Trajectories through Upper Secondary Education in Wales</i> , OECD Publishing, Paris <a href="#">Link</a>	This OECD study examined career transitions of students in different OECD countries, for the application of learnings in Wales. The report is useful for policy makers and researchers interested in developing the wider career system based on best practices.
<b>Work experience</b>	Careers & Enterprise Company (2024), <i>Employer Standards for Careers Education – One year on</i> . <a href="#">Link</a>	(Although published in late 2024, we thought this was worth highlighting): Launched in 2023 by The Careers & Enterprise Company, the Employer Standards aim to improve the quality and impact of employer engagement in careers education. 811 employers from a wide range of sectors and sizes had self-assessed against a set of standards, providing a range of insights and a business case to expand the programme. Evidence was provided, for instance, that showed “meaningful opportunities”, such as careers talks, mentoring and workplace visits lead to more sector interest and applications.
<b>Work experience</b>	Career Wales (2025), <i>Tailored Work Experience Project report published</i> <a href="#">Link</a>	Results are presented from research in Wales on The Tailored Work Experience (TWE) Project, which aimed to support Year 11 students in finding positive pathways after school. Of the surveyed students, 85.26% continued into positive post-16 destinations. 90.5% of learners felt they knew what they wanted to do after Year 11.
<b>Team learning</b>	Draaisma, Aniek, and Marjan Vermeulen. “Small-scale collective learning in large-scale innovation: the role of collective teacher learning and leadership in implementing school-based career guidance.” <i>British Journal of Guidance &amp; Counselling</i> (2025): 1-14. <a href="#">Link</a>	Set in the context of Dutch vocational education, the paper provides a case study and broader discussion on fostering innovation and team learning to the ends of supporting student outcomes.

## Further education, vocational training and apprenticeships

Theme	Reference	About
<b>T-level destinations</b>	Boniface, R., and G. Whalley. Analysis of <i>T-level Students Destinations</i> . Gatsby, 2025. <a href="#">Link</a>	Gatsby have published the latest results on T-level student destinations, providing insight into the successes thus far, and additional support needs that may be required for some students.
<b>T-level experiences</b>	Dabbous, D. et al (2024), Student Voices: what are students saying about their experiences of T Levels? Edge Foundation <a href="#">Link</a>	(Although this report was published in Dec '24, we thought it worth including). The experiences of >200 T-level students and staff are gathered and discussed. The insights highlight the transformative potential of T Levels, especially in fostering career confidence and practical expertise, but also point to challenges with consistency in delivery.

## Higher education

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Graduate employability</b>	Wahab, Md Hasan Shimum, et al. "Graduate employability: A bibliometric analysis." <i>Global Business and Organizational Excellence</i> 44.2 (2025): 38-57. <a href="#">Link</a>	This paper provides a meta review of papers between 1981 and 2023 on graduate employability to find the most influential papers, and thereby offers a useful consolidated review for further work in HE. There were also broadly four themes: (1) the attribution of broader skills to career enhancement; (2) the significance of generic skills (interpersonal, problem-solving, and communication skills); (3) the need for work-related training and employer engagement; and (4) the need for improved curriculum design.
<b>Employability capital</b>	*Donald, W.E.. <i>Developing Employability Capital in University Students: A Practical Guide</i> . Taylor & Francis, 2025. <a href="#">Link</a>	William Donald of the University of Southampton has consolidated research in the area of career capital, making strong use of the Career Capital Growth model, which offers practitioners (amongst other) a framework with which to prepare students for a volatile and uncertain labour market. Insights are provided as to the application of the model in different national/cultural settings.
<b>Employability development</b>	Fish, Nicola, Santina Bertone, and Bernadine van Gramberg. "Improving student engagement in employability development: recognising and reducing affective and behavioural barriers." <i>Studies in Higher Education</i> (2025): 1-16. <a href="#">Link</a>	This research from Australia gains a good understanding of the way higher education bachelor students develop their employability capabilities via participation in co-curricular and extra-curricular employability and career development opportunities. The case is made to relate frameworks of career engagement, employability and career learning with teaching frameworks, to enhance the effectiveness of student support.
<b>International students</b>	The Conference Board of Canada (2025), <i>Joining the Workforce. How International College Students Use Career Supports</i> <a href="#">Link</a>	The report provides insight into the engagement levels and use-of career services amongst international college students, while relating the findings to the particular concerns of this student group. The gaps in the actual vs. desired state of play provides recommendations that could be of general interest for college and higher education establishments.
<b>Social media</b>	Tkachuk, V.V., et al. "Social media as a tool for career guidance in higher education." <i>CEUR Workshop Proceedings</i> . 2025. <a href="#">Link</a>	The paper provides a case study and discussion about the benefits and potential for using social media to deliver career support in higher education.

## Adults

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Modern careers</b>	*Kundi, Y.M., Alessandro L.P., and Khan, H.. "Designing your own job: how protean mindset and adaptability resources shape the modern workplace." Career Development International 30.1 (2025): 91-105. <a href="#">Link</a>	Research into Polish employees is used to explore how people are coping with economic turbulence and the resulting effects seen in workplaces. Researchers find there are relationships between protean career behaviours, job crafting techniques and ways of dealing with the conditions. The possession of career adaptability capabilities is important.
<b>Unemployment</b>	Learning and Work Institute (2025), The Benefit Trap <a href="#">Link</a>	The report provides context to the situation facing some unemployed clients and the welfare system. The paper provides recommendations to policy makers and includes a discussion of how additional employment and careers support can be part of the solution.
<b>Unemployment</b>	Carvalho, C. L. D., Marôco, J., Taveira, M. D. C., & Silva, A. D. (2025). Employability resources of unemployed adults: longitudinal effects of a group career intervention. Frontiers in Psychology, 16, 1470611. <a href="#">Link</a>	This study evaluates the efficacy of a group-based career intervention designed to promote employability resources among unemployed individuals conducted in both face-to-face and online settings. This is a particularly useful study by virtue of being longitudinal: data was collected pre-, post, and two months post-intervention. The successful outcomes of the pilot demonstrated the importance of ongoing forms of support for unemployed adults.
<b>Early career trajectories</b>	Steindórsdóttir, B.D., Arnulf, J.K., and Norbom, H.M.. "Does grade point average have a long-lasting impact on career success later in life? A resource caravans' perspective from adolescence to mid-career." Journal of Vocational Behavior 155 (2024): 104063. <a href="#">Link</a>	The Norwegian paper provides an analysis of the first 15 years of careers and relates the results to grade point average (GPA) scores attained previously in higher education. The results demonstrate the relationship between higher education performance and career success. It was found that GPA scores were not positively related to initial levels of career success (i.e., salary and leadership level). However, GPA scores were positively related to increases in career success over time and positively related to subjective career success. The authors describe the process of "gain spirals" in people's career trajectories, whereby success leads to the acquisition of resources to gain further success. There are therefore policy implications of students who score lower, noting scores act as an early warning system for the future..



## Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Migrant women</b>	Yazdankhoo, Sogol, et al. "Migrant women navigating the intersection of gender, migration, and career development: A systematic literature review." <i>Journal of Vocational Behavior</i> (2025): 104093. <a href="#">Link</a>	Given the growing importance of migrants, and their career needs, this article provides a systematic literature review about the state of knowledge regarding migrant women's career development. It addresses the research gap at the intersection of gender, migration, and career development.
<b>Women &amp; STEM</b>	Gao, Yannan, Jacquelynne S. Eccles, and Anna-Lena Dicke. "Not a pipeline but a highway: Men's and women's STEM career trajectories from age 13 to 25." <i>Journal of Vocational Behavior</i> 156 (2025): 104067. <a href="#">Link</a>	Women are underrepresented in STEM fields, which has been a topic of many papers and efforts to address the gap. This paper takes a more nuanced approach by analysing men's and women's career trajectories from ages 13-25 across different STEM disciplines to understand where women disproportionately "drop out", giving the opportunity for targeted interventions. Although the data is for the US, the approach can be generalised to other countries.
<b>Autism</b>	*Goldfarb, Yael, Ofer Golan, and Eynat Gal. "A narrative approach to career identity construction of autistic adults." <i>Journal of Vocational Behavior</i> 157 (2025): 104092. <a href="#">Link</a>	Due to the growing prevalence of autism diagnosis, counselors in various settings are more likely to encounter autistic adults who are seeking employment-related counseling and support. The current study examined career narratives of autistic adults, helping to provide a deeper understanding of the likely challenges and role of career professionals.
<b>Neurodiversity</b>	Rumrill Jr, Phillip D. "Employment and Career Development Considerations for Neurodiverse Individuals." <i>Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation</i> (2025): 10522263251314885. <a href="#">Link</a>	This relatively brief article offers a discussion on the considerations of defining and understanding neurodiversity in relation to work, and provides a scope to the set of issues facing institutions and professionals with a remit to improve inclusion.
<b>Older workers</b>	Total Jobs (2025), 57 is the age employers consider 'too old' as hiring ageism sees millions overlooked for job roles. <a href="#">Link</a>	Research from the recruitment agency Total Jobs found that 57 is the average age at which candidates are considered 'too old' for job roles. Nearly three in five (59%) HR decision-makers admit to making assumptions about candidates based on age, with 42% experiencing pressure from colleagues to prioritise and hire younger candidates. Although most implications of this research are directed at recruiters and HR, there are implications for adult career coaches helping clients to deal with these challenges.

## Economic & labour market influences

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Future work</b>	*Rabenu, E., and Yehuda B.. "The shape of careers in the future workplace: extreme scenarios and their prospect impact." Career Development International 30.1 (2025): 3-27. <a href="#">Link</a>	The authors describe different "extreme" scenarios for the future workplace and the nature of work, describing the implications for peoples' careers. The paper provides consideration for future opportunities and risks of career clients.
<b>Skills gaps</b>	Learning and Work Institute (2025), World's Apart: Skills and learning inequalities in the UK <a href="#">Link</a>	'Worlds apart' is the second report produced as part of the LWIs "Ambition Skills" programme of work. The UK has larger gaps in workforce skills between different parts of the country than most other European countries. Closing the gap between London and the rest of the UK would require 4.1m more people to gain higher education qualifications outside London. The report warns of advantages perpetuating through the migration of better skilled people to cities.
<b>Skills gap</b>	Cedefop (2025). Cedefop labour and skills shortage index. Publications Office of the European Union. DOI: 10.2801/6787773. <a href="#">Link</a>	Cedefop's Labour and Skills Shortage Index (LSSI) aims to provide a standardised measure of occupational shortages. For practitioners, it provides a useful LMI source for international career and job opportunities.

## AI, technology and careers

Theme	Reference	About
<b>European AI use</b>	Cedefop. (2025). Skills empower workers in the AI revolution first findings from Cedefop's AI skills survey. Publication Office of the European Union. Policy brief. DOI: 10.2801/6372704. <a href="#">Link</a>	The report provides a macro level view of the latest in AI use in European workplaces, as well as employer support for employees. The importance of AI in successful skills acquisition and career development is inherent in the report's findings.
<b>Quantum computing</b>	Dhamayanthi, D., et al. "Career Path Recommender Using Quantum Machine Learning." Real-World Applications of Quantum Computers and Machine Intelligence. IGI Global Scientific Publishing, 2025. 55-62. <a href="#">Link</a>	We have heard much about the role of AI in career guidance, but another critical emerging technology is quantum computing with the potential to create a seismic shift in computing speeds. This paper describes the state of the field and an early application in careers.
<b>AI &amp; career success</b>	*Ahmad, B., & Bilal, S. (2025). Knowledge of AI as a Future Work Skill for Career Sustainability. Journal of Career Development, 52(2), 134-152. <a href="#">Link</a>	Grounded in research, the authors discuss how AI will shape career outcomes, and therefore highlights the additional skills that people will need in future to be successful in their careers.
<b>Virtual reality</b>	*Hughes, Claretha, Yuanlu Niu, and Tomika W. Greer. "Opportunities in VR Career Development." Career Development and Virtual Remote Work: Challenges and Opportunities. Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland, 2025. 93-118. <a href="#">Link</a>	This paper reviews the potential role of virtual reality in career development, offering the ability to provide clients with additional foresight into their career decisions.

## Health and wellbeing

Theme	Reference	About
<b>UK &amp; European landscape</b>	Litsardopoulos, N., Gifford, M., Sharma, M. Allen, A. Bajorek, Z. and Wilson, T. (2025), Work and health: international comparisons with the UK. A report for the Commission for Healthier Working Lives. Institute for Employment Studies and The Health Foundation. <a href="#">Link</a>	The Learning and Work Institute, Institute for Employment Studies and Royal Society for Public Health have formed a new collaboration as research partners for the Commission for Healthier Working Lives, supported by the Health Foundation. This report provides international health and wellbeing benchmarks from 15 countries. Over 2018-22, the UK experienced a particularly high growth in worklessness amongst people with health limitations. For older workers with health limitations, employment chances are declining in the UK, but improving elsewhere.
<b>Effectiveness of career support</b>	Milot-Lapointe, F., and Nicole Arifouline. "A Meta Analysis of the Effectiveness of Individual Career Counseling on Career and Mental Health Outcomes." Journal of Employment Counseling (2025). <a href="#">Link</a>	This article reports on the results of the first meta-analysis on the effectiveness of individual career counselling on wellbeing, and showed strong positive effects from 35 independent data samples. The work further supports the value of careers guidance, as well as highlighting it as a tool to policy makers.
<b>Career wellbeing</b>	Chen, Charles P. "Emotional Intelligence and Career Wellbeing." Canadian Journal of Career Development 24.1 (2025): 73-82. <a href="#">Link</a>	The paper discusses emotional intelligence and career wellbeing, suggesting interventions for practitioners to these ends.

## Careers and the environment

Theme	Reference	About
<b>Engagement</b>	Amalina, I. K., Vidákovich, T., & Karimova, K. (2025). Factors influencing student interest in STEM careers: motivational, cognitive, and socioeconomic status. Humanities and Social Sciences Communications, 12(1), 1-15. <a href="#">Link</a>	The paper describes how interest levels can be both stimulated and assessed through exposing students to different career paths via online tools

## 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.

If you see a paper that you want including, then please contact [stephen.plimmer@thecdi.net](mailto:stephen.plimmer@thecdi.net).



Ground Floor,  
Copthall House,  
1 New Road,  
Stourbridge,  
West Midlands  
DY8 1PH

e: [hq@thecdi.net](mailto:hq@thecdi.net)  
t: 01384 445627

[thecdi.net](http://thecdi.net)