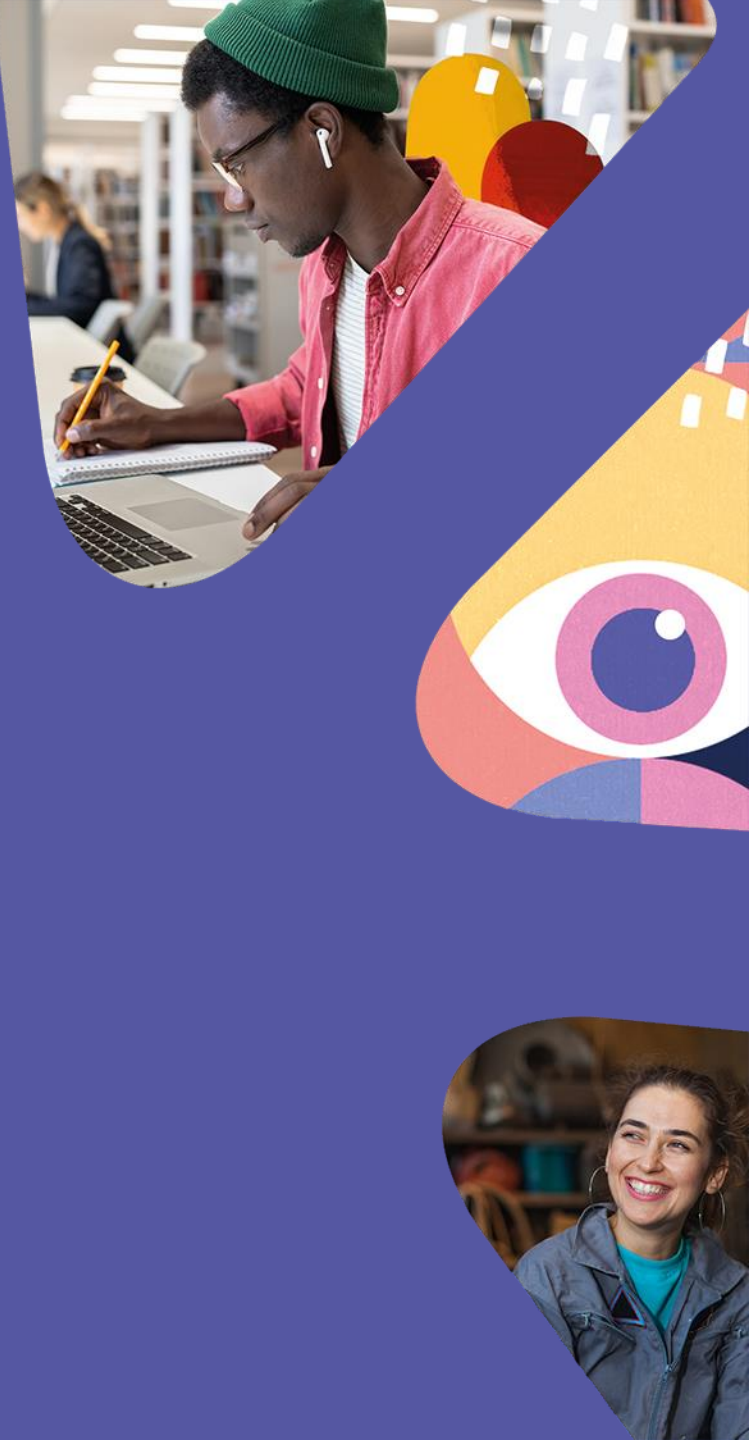




How career guidance and interactive tools can help get people into work

Equipping young people and adults for the world of work

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Discussion points

What is the research telling us?

What is policy telling us?

AI and IAG

Adult Careers landscape –
what does the future hold?

What problem are we facing?

9.115 million people
aged 16–64
economically inactive
in the UK
(June–August 2025)

UK unemployment
rate was 4.8% (June–
August 2025)

This equates to
around 1.74 million
people aged 16+
unemployed across
the UK.

UK skills shortages


Persistent challenge

- Despite some easing since pandemic peaks, shortages remain entrenched.
- Around 27% of vacancies are hard to fill due to skills gaps, down from 36% in 2022 but still above pre-2017 levels.
- Smaller firms face the highest shortage density (42%) compared to larger employers.



Economic impact

- **Skills mismatches** constraining productivity and growth, particularly in high-value sectors such as construction, health and social care, and manufacturing.
- **Labour market:** Nearly one-third of UK businesses report labour shortages, 76% struggling to fill roles due to lack of skilled talent.
- **Economic inactivity** (9+ million people aged 16–64) and early retirements exacerbate the issue

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CDI commissioned Valuing Careers Report (published Nov 2024)

Set against the context of a skills challenge, high economic inactivity rates and rapid change within the world of work in the UK, this study aims to provide insight into the value and opportunity for career development to help address individual, economic and social challenges.

62% of UK working-age adults recall receiving careers support from a careers or education professional while in education, but only 15% recall support from a career professional since leaving education, via a public career service, private careers coach/counsellor or at work.

Those that do receive support as an adult reported very strong positive results: 86% reported a substantive benefit from professional adult career guidance, and 82% would recommend it to others.

Economic benefits

Careers England research shows career guidance contributes to:

- Higher employment rates
- Reduced unemployment costs
- Improved tax revenues
- Estimated fiscal ROI for school-based guidance interventions can be as high as 4.4x.

Return on investment for careers guidance

Systematic Review of ROI Studies

A 2024 paper in the *British Journal of Guidance & Counselling* reviewed 32 ROI studies across nine countries.

Findings:

- ROI methods vary widely, making comparisons difficult.
- Strong evidence that career guidance improves labour market participation, education outcomes, and social equity.
- Calls for more consistent measurement frameworks.

Source: Lessons for career guidance from return-on-investment analyses in complex education-related fields

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What is policy telling us?

Get Britain Working White Paper Autumn 2024

- Labour has a long-term ambition to achieve 80% employment rate
- Creating a new Jobs and Careers Service
- This was followed by an announcement Autumn 25 National Careers Service (NCS) will be in-housed into DWP see below taken from DWP FAQs to NCS staff

'The current National Careers Service contracts with DfE are due to expire on 30 September 2026. Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has decided that from 1 October 2026 adult careers advice, for England, will be delivered by DWP through Civil Servants and no longer through contractors. This provides maximum flexibility in designing and developing an integrated, adaptable service that quickly identifies improved operational practices and consistently meets customer needs. It facilitates the bringing together of employment support and careers advice, building the Jobs and Careers Service culture immediately from October 2026.

We believe that having professional adult careers advice in the heart of the new service will help us to successfully deliver our vision to increase employment rates, increase earnings and support our citizen engagement '

Get Britain Working:

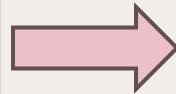
Creating a new jobs and careers service

The *Get Britain Working Paper* reports that every £1 spent on careers guidance for unemployed adults delivers a return of £3.20. This is attributed to improved employment outcomes and productivity gains, reducing benefit dependency and increasing tax contributions

AI skills for the UK workforce

Problem to solve

A recent report from Skills England has analysed AI upskilling needs, barriers and opportunities across 10 growth sectors, and introduces tools to support employers and training providers.



Solving the problem

Practitioners

- Having that up to date knowledge around skills gaps
- Applying careers guidance skills and careers tools to help you to equip people with insight regarding digital/AI needs
- Provide a future plan, mapping out personalised training pathways to ensure clients have the skills required in the labour market



Careers guidance and interactive tools

National Careers Service

The National Careers Service is committed to helping people realise their potential and to develop skills they need to get on in life and work.

It provides a FREE, impartial, confidential and high-quality professional careers advice and guidance service to those who need it. The National Careers Service is available to every adult and young person (aged 13 years old and over) living in England.

**National
Careers
Service**

**Helping you take
the next step**



GOV.UK

National Careers Service

- explore career options and aspirations
- understand the local job market
- develop their CV
- search and apply for jobs
- search for courses and training
- explore Apprenticeships
- find out about funding to support their learning
- progress in their current job
- identify their key strengths, skills and interests
- develop an action plan to help them achieve their goals
- make use of the online career tools available on the National Careers Service website

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GOV.UK

AI in career guidance

AI in career guidance

Using AI in practice

- How can a career practitioner use interactive tools to **enhance/support** in their delivery?
- How can a career practitioner support their customers to use AI in their career journey?



Career Verse Demo

Important key themes for future service provision:

Service Accessibility & Customer Focus: The service must remain accessible outside jobcentres, be customer-focused, impartial and consider local demographics.

Distinct Roles & Professional Standards: The unique roles of Work Coaches and Careers Advisers must be maintained with high professional standards, appropriate qualifications, pathways and continued CPD.

Early & Ongoing Support: Careers guidance should begin early in the customer journey and offer sustained, wraparound support, this can only be enabled by having supporting LMI, MI, CPD and CI.

Integrated & Flexible Delivery: Services should blend face-to-face and digital delivery, include a booking system (especially for out of JCP) and offer multiple interventions tailored to individual needs.

Important key themes for future service provision:

- **Collaboration with Stakeholders:** There should be strong links with youth services, local authorities, strategic bodies, and enhanced engagement with employers and education providers, this will need to be resourced.
- **Workforce & Operational Considerations:** Senior and middle management 'careers' expertise is essential; primes also have a workforce beyond level 4 advisers who can be deployed in different ways to support the service aims. Additionally:
 - We are still working to current contract restrictions until the 30th September 2026
 - Impacts on subcontractors and the wider careers sector must be considered and addressed.

Questions



Thank you

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