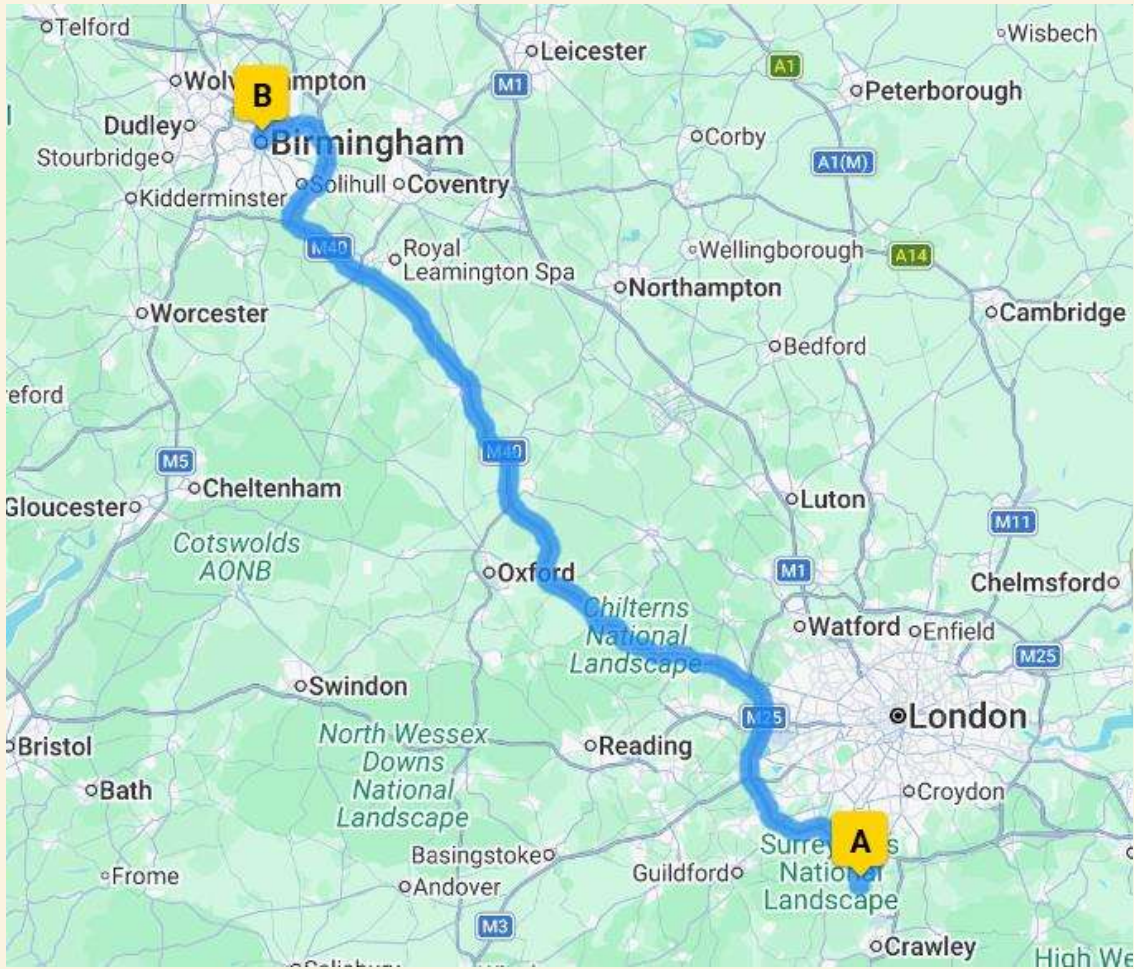


# Preparing Learners for Work Experience and Beyond:

Using AI-Supported Workplace Decision Scenarios to Develop Career Thinking

**David Curran**  
Moon Hall School Reigate





AT + AI + human in the building = amazing opportunities for all learners

# Q1. What are the biggest barriers to meaningful work experience in your setting?

## Access is uneven

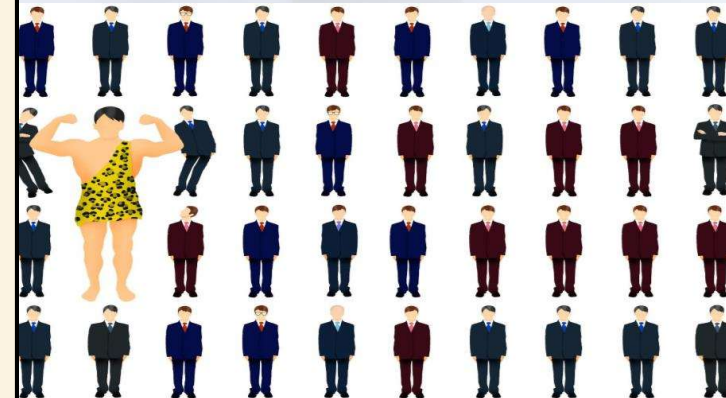
- Employer availability varies
- Transport, cost and confidence can limit access
- Some learners need more preparation before placement

## Preparation matters

- Workplace expectations are not always obvious
- Decision-making needs modelling
- Confidence affects what learners gain

## Reflection turns experience into learning

- Students need time to make sense of what happened
- Skills need naming and discussing
- Careers professionals help connect experience to next steps



## ***Q2. What do we actually want young people to gain from work experience?***

### **Workplace understanding**

- How workplaces operate
- Expectations and responsibilities
- Different roles and pathways

### **Transferable skills**

- Communication and teamwork
- Problem-solving and decision-making
- Confidence and independence

### **Self-awareness**

- What interests and motivates them
- What they enjoy or find challenging
- Questions to explore next



### **Q3. If a placement lasts 1 day / 3 days / one week, where does most of the learning actually happen?**

#### **Before?**

Preparation, confidence, expectations

#### **During?**

Experience, observation, participation

#### **After?**

Reflection, discussion, future planning



## ***Q4. Could AI help us strengthen preparation and reflection without replacing work experience or careers guidance?***

### **Preparation**

- Explore workplace situations before a placement
- Build confidence and understanding
- Practise thinking through decisions

### **Reflection**

- Make sense of experiences afterwards
- Recognise skills and strengths developed
- Generate questions for future exploration

### **Human conversations**

- Discuss ideas with careers professionals and trusted adults
- Challenge assumptions and broaden thinking
- Connect experiences to future pathways





# Where it started . . . 3 design decisions

## 1. Safe by design

- no personal information
- supervision visible
- trusted adult if worried

## 2. Thinking over testing

- not a role-play
- not a test
- no single correct answer

## 3. Guidance, not replacement

- reflective mentor stance
- no recommendations
- sits alongside careers provision

### Step 1: Career exploration

Watch a short careers video or read a job profile:

- [Careers in... - Careers - BBC Bitesize](#)
- [Explore - icould](#)
- [Careerpilot - Video stories](#) – make an account using your school email

Then answer.

Source used	BBC Bitesize / iCould / CareerPilot / Other Weblink -
Three tasks the job involves	
Two skills mentioned or implied	
One thing that surprised you	

# The prompt

**Everything you're about to see started with a copy-and-paste prompt and a worksheet**

- No coding
- No budget
- No special software
- Just a careers question and some careful prompt design

## **Step 2: Copy and paste the prompt into ChatGPT**

1. Open ChatGPT
2. Copy the prompt below into ChatGPT as one message
3. Then follow the instructions inside the prompt.

Prompt to paste into ChatGPT

# The follow-up

## Step 3: Record the scenario you received

After ChatGPT creates the task, copy the key parts below.

Sector	
Job role	
Type of workplace	
Describe your workplace scenario <i>in 3 or 4 sentences</i>	
Where was supervision or support shown	

## Step 4: Your workplace scenario / decisions

Write the three options you were given and choose one.

Describe your Health & Safety scenario <i>in 3 or 4 sentences</i>	
What decision(s) did you make	
Why	
Would you make any different decisions next time?	

## Step 5: Your workplace scenario / decisions

Write the three options you were given and choose one.

Option 1	
Option 2	
Option 3	
My choice	I choose option

Why I chose it

One skill I need to develop for this type of situation

## Step 6: Reflection (like after work experience)

Answer honestly. There is no right or wrong.

What went well in my thinking and decision-making	
Even better if How I could improve my reasoning next time	
What felt realistic about this workplace situation	

# What did students do?

## Explore unfamiliar careers

- *Online fashion retail / Flight attendant / Animal care / Forensic science / Airline pilot / Animation and digital art*

## Identify skills and pathways

Students were extracting:

- *Communication / teamwork / creativity / analytical thinking / attention to detail / problem-solving skills*

from career research before entering the scenario activity

## Engage with realistic workplace decisions

Students encountered situations involving:

- *safety concerns / prioritization / reporting concerns / working under supervision / uncertainty and incomplete information*

rather than simply answering career quiz questions

# What did we observe?

Not "results"

**Engagement** - Students were curious to see scenarios linked to careers they had chosen

**Discussion** - Learners naturally began explaining and defending decisions

**Transfer** - Students linked career research to workplace situations

**Safety** - Learners recognised the role of supervision rather than acting independently

**Reflection** - Students began questioning whether they would actually enjoy aspects of the role

Supported by examples such as students choosing to seek supervisor guidance, report concerns and explain their reasoning rather than simply selecting an answer

# What did students tell us?

## Worked well

- Career-specific scenarios felt relevant
- No single right answer reduced pressure
- Real-world situations felt real
- AI feedback prompted further thinking

## Needed improving

- Too much copying and pasting
- Navigation could be simpler
- Some students wanted more career choices
- Accessibility options should be built in from the start
- Reflection should be easier to capture and revisit



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# From Worksheet to WorkThink

 **Structured worksheet**




 **AI prompt**




 **Student trial**



 **Student feedback**



 **WorkThink v4.8**

 **WorkThink**  
Explore work. Build thinking. Start conversations.  
[Home](#) [Accessibility](#)













**Activity flow**  
Choose a role → make a decision → explain your thinking → improve it → continue the conversation.

**Choose a role**  
Spelling does not need to be perfect. You can type or use the Speak role button.

**Type a job role**  
 [Speak role](#)  
Examples: Vet Nurse • Electrician • Teacher • Game Designer

----- OR -----

**Explore by sector**  
Choose a sector to explore possible roles

 Health & Care	 Animals & Nature
 Education & Helping Others	 Digital & Technology
 Engineering & Construction	 Business & Money
 Creative & Media	 Hospitality & Events
 Public Services	 Sport & Wellbeing
 Retail & Customer Service	 Future & Emerging Work

[Read this page](#) [Stop reading](#)

[Start activity](#)

**Safety note**  
This is a learning activity. It does not replace work experience or careers guidance. Talk through ideas with a trusted adult, teacher or careers professional.

# Design decisions we made

## Accessibility

- Built-in accessibility settings, including Read and Speech options
- Consistent layout
- Reduced cognitive load

## Career thinking

- No career matching
- No suitability scores
- No "you should be"

## Human in the building

- Reflection prompts
- Discussion points
- Careers conversations
- Trusted adult reminders

**WorkThink**  
Explore work. Build thinking. Start conversations.

Home Accessibility

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Engineering & Construction	Business & Money
Creative & Media	Hospitality & Events
Public Services	Sport & Wellbeing
Retail & Customer Service	Future & Emerging Work

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# Practical uses of AI in Careers Practice

## ***Custom chatbots and bounded support***

“This is the best thing  
you’ve created, Sir!”

### Impact on learners

- Higher confidence, more independent research, less fear of getting things “wrong”
- Tone locked to short, neutral, calm British English
- Strict guardrails: no personal advice, no unsafe content, redirects to teacher/DSL
- Domain-limited knowledge so it can’t drift or hallucinate outward
- Supports PDA and anxiety profiles by avoiding pressurising language
- Students more willing to ask questions privately before meeting staff
- Teachers report improved engagement and calmer working atmosphere

*“... recent improvements and the creation of resources such as a careers chatbot demonstrate leaders’ commitment to equipping pupils for life beyond school.” (ISI)*



[@Deirdre-Hughes](#)

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## Final Reflection

- What works well?
- What concerns you?
- Where could this fit within careers practice?

*“This is not clever science.  
This is thoughtful careers practice.”*

Thank you 🙏



[@Deirdre-Hughes](#)



CiCi: The AI Careers Chatbot -  
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