CAREER DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

Careers Insights

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



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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 (*) in 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.



Featured articles

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

#1. The business case for work experience

Work by the CEC provided another contribution to the argument for the value of careers, this time with employers. Their analysis showed the value of supporting work experience to businesses, meaning that work experience becomes a "win-win". Three key insights were:

Employers who engage strategically in careers education see clear business benefits including stronger talent pipelines, reduced recruitment costs and greater early careers diversity.

Focusing outreach on building essential skills is a cost effective way of developing future talent

Adopting a strategic approach leads to scale and impact

Career and Enterprise Company (2026), Employer Standards 2024/25 - The business case for engaging in careers education. (Link)

#2.Career decision making models

Career decision making models are fundamental to careers clients making good choices, but the researchers of this paper (who have long addressed "career choice") argue for it being under-researched.

In this paper, they use prior understanding to develop a career intervention that is specifically focussed on helping secondary school students make better career choices out of a short list of options.

The paper offers a useful contribution to consider the process architecture of choices, rather than seeing them as one off or linear events, and aligning appropriate personal or online support activities with the maturity of choices.

Gati, I., & Slama, M. (2026). From Options to Choices: Helping Clients Make Better Career Decisions. Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 100–117. (Link)

#3. Supporting SEND students

We reference several papers this month all addressing aspects of supporting students with SEND.

Particularly focussed on careers, a Canadian paper reported research into the specific requirements of students that presented with anxiety, to identify how support could be enhanced.

The UK Government also published the final report for a long review into supporting neurodiverse students in schools.

The IES published a toolkit to support women with autism in the workplace.

The body of research that offers understanding about diverse needs of people in the broad SEND category, is growing.

Dupuis, A., Lachance, A., Rancourt-Tremblay, Z., Dionne, P., & Abat-Roy, V. (2026). Adaptation of an Anxiety Prevention Program for Young People with Autism in School Settings When Faced With Career Choices. Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 18–36. (Link)



#4. Professionalism in Australian careers

CICA is Australia's Peak Body for the Career Industry, and has a role to promote quality career development.

In February, it published the latest "Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners".

The work was the result of a synthesis of "international frameworks, emerging research, consultation with practitioners and member associations, and analysis of contemporary practice environments."

Reflecting the fast paced nature of change, it was presented as a "living document". Many similarities exist with the UK standards.

Career Industry Council of Australia (2026), Launch of the 2026 Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. The article is found at: (Link) Standards are found at: (Link)

#5. AI use cases in Education

There were a couple of key publications about digital technology and AI in education. Of particular note: 1) The OECD published a comprehensive report on the use cases of generative AI. 2) Schoolnet produced a report on the applications of AI in 23 European education systems.

Although not directly focussed on careers, the reports offer a compendium of use cases, and indicators on the direction of thinking regarding AI policy and use in education.

OECD (2026), OECD Digital Education Outlook 2026: Exploring Effective Uses of Generative AI in Education, OECD Publishing,. (Link)

Roundup

General career practice

Theme	Reference	About
	Healy, M., Baruch, Y., Point, S., Harrison, J.A., van der Heijden, B.I.J.M., Briscoe J.P., and Donald W.E. (2026), "Celebrating 30 years of Career Development International: nine key topics among 1,186 abstracts (1996–2025)". *Career Development International*, Vol. 31 No. 1 pp. 5–21. (Link)	The journal *Career Development International* celebrated its 30th anniversary. This article examined the themes and trends covered over its lifespan, using an analysis of more than 1,100 abstracts. Nine prevalent thematic topics were discussed: 1) Sustainable, protean, boundaryless, and women's careers. 2) Job insecurity, engagement, and proactive behaviours. 3) Work-family dynamics and well-being. 4) Recruitment and talent management. 5) Leadership and career change. 6) Graduate employability, job search and career choice. 7) Mentoring, relationships, and career development. 8) Expatriate careers and international adjustment. 9) Work identity and temporary or precarious employment.
The Influence of External Factors	Toiviainen, S. (2026). Rethinking and reconnecting career guidance: Localism and relationality as ways forward. iCeGS annual lecture 2025. International Centre for Guidance Studies, University of Derby. (Link)	The annual iCeGS lecture considered the direction for career guidance, in a changing and challenging macro environment. The lecture saw a future for guidance that was oriented towards "localisms" as a response to these factors: "Localism invites us to attend to people's lived realities, to listen to stories and perspectives that are often marginalised within dominant career theories".
	Hooley et al (2025), Developing Critical Career Theory. COCAG 2024-28 (Link)	This paper lays out the challenges of today's career domain - scarcity and uncertainty: "This position paper argues for the development of a coherent body of critical career theory that responds to contemporary crises of inequality, precarity, and ecological breakdown."
	CICA (2026), Launch of the 2026 Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. (Link)	The Careers Industry Council of Australia (CICA) produced the launch of the newly updated edition of the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners. The report is the culmination of extensive consultation and analysis, but grounds the standards in erstwhile capabilities of career professionals.
Professionalism	*Kauppila, P., & Kettunen, J. (2026). Career practitioners' conceptions of developing career management skills in higher education. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–15. (Link)	This article presents findings from a study exploring career practitioners' conceptions of developing career management skills (CMS) in Finnish universities. For professionals, career management skills came about from: (1) an unplanned response, (2) a situational interaction, (3) a structured intervention and (4) a comprehensive practice. The paper looks at the synergetic relationship between a career-professional's career development and service development.
Biases	*Güç, Z., & Özdemir, A. (2026). Psychological counsellors awareness of cognitive biases: a qualitative study based on vignettes. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–15. (Link)	The paper provides an interesting and relevant insights from the sector of psychological counsellors, raising consideration of biases amongst professionals. Three common and relevant biases were explored with practitioners, and while the counsellors were able to detect them, the results highlight the need to integrate bias-awareness competencies into professional counsellor education

General career practice *continued*

Theme	Reference	About
Design thinking for career interventions	Lin-Stephens, S., Gregory, K., Zapsalis, F., Hughes, C., Souvan, G., & Mate, S. (2026). Integrating design processes and narrative approaches in career Guidance: a model of co-designing career narratives (CCN). CoDesign, 1-15. (Link)	"Design processes and narrative approaches are increasingly used in career guidance, yet their theoretical grounding and practical applications remain limited. This study critically examines the strengths and challenges of these approaches before presenting an integrated model - Co-Designing Career Narratives (CCN) - to bridge theory and practice."
	Rose, P. (2026). Design thinking: a pedagogical framework for work integrated learning. Journal of Vocational Education & Training, 1–17. (Link)	Design thinking approaches are used within the process of work integrated learning, to prepare vocational students for the world of work. Using qualitative case studies, data were gathered from 37 key stakeholders' students, faculty, and industry partners across 13 multidisciplinary Design Thinking projects were conducted on three continents to show the principles of applying the approach.. The paper shows, more generally, how the disciplines of design thinking can be used in careers domains.

Primary education

Theme	Reference	About
Play in career guidance	Fayzullayeva, N. (2026). Early Career Guidance Of Preschool Children Through Role-Playing Games. European Index Library of European International Journal of Pedagogics, 6(01), 87-89. (Link)	This discussion article explores early career guidance for preschool children through role-playing games as an effective pedagogical approach. Role-playing games are presented as a means of fostering cognitive, emotional, and social development while introducing basic occupational concepts. The article highlights the value of integrating play-based learning in early vocational education.
	Godden, L. et al (2026). Play as exploration for lifelong, life-wide, career education. CareerWise by CERIC (Link)	This article in the online e-magazine, CareerWise, by the Canadian career charity Ceric, discusses "play" as an emerging topic in career guidance for formative age groups. The useful properties of play are noted as being that actions are "freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated". This means that the young people engaged in play offer clues for career educators to design interventions that are aligned with learning preferences and motivations of the children.
Programme development	Sary, B., & colleagues. (2026). Early career orientation of primary school students: The impact of pedagogical intervention on future teachers and pupils. British Educational Research Journal, ahead-of-print. (Link)	The research involved the developing and evaluating a training programme for prospective teachers in early career orientation for primary pupils. The researchers found that well-structured pedagogical interventions meaningfully shaped both teachers' readiness and primary students' career-related awareness.

Secondary education

Theme	Reference	About
Quality & Impact of careers interventions	Career & Enterprise Company (2026 Careers Education in England (Link)	This annual report summarises insights from 331,075 young people, 4,863 schools and colleges, and 783 employers in England, during the 2024/25 academic year. The overall picture shows improvement in delivering Gatsby benchmarks, and student career readiness, while the next priorities are articulated e.g. gaps in certain benchmarks, provision gaps, and support for emerging sectors,
Work experience	Career and Enterprise Company (2026), Employer Standards 2024/25 - The business case for engaging in careers education. (Link)	Analysis on the benefits of work experience from the CEC in England shows that "employers who engage strategically in careers education see clear business benefits including stronger talent pipelines, reduced recruitment costs and greater early careers diversity."
Career decision-making	Salonen, A. (2026). Students' Perceptions of Skills Expectations in Science-Related Careers. International Journal of Studies in Education and Science, 7(2), 252-266.	This paper covers the perceptions of n=144 Finish secondary school students and gives an in-depth insight into their perceptions of STEM career paths. It helps show the relationship between perceptions of occupations and personal identity. The report also gives evidence for how there is both under- and over-estimation of the qualification entry requirements amongst students, suggesting that self-reported career understanding needs to be tested.
	Gati, I., & Slama, M. (2026). From Options to Choices: Helping Clients Make Better Career Decisions. Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 100–117. (Link)	Career decision making - namely "good" decision making is argued to receive too little support. "This paper focuses on individuals who have already compiled a shortlist of 3-4 viable alternatives and need guidance in choosing the best one. To address this need, the authors present an online tool ("Comparing and Choosing") which has been created from an evidence-based framework. It allows career counsellors and practitioners to guide clients in systematically comparing and evaluating their final alternatives."
Identity and belief formation	*Prado, J., & Sepúlveda, L. (2026). Constructing life projects in a comprehensive secondary school: experiences from secondary students in Chile. Journal of Vocational Education & Training, 1-17. (Link)	The paper, based in Chile, offers an examination into how students create their "life projects" and the relationship with their cultural environment. The role of schools in purposeful planning is deemed central, but it notes how all of these decisions take place within a wider economic and social reality, that has a strong influence. The papers offers interesting insights into career identity formation and choice, albeit in a different geographic setting to the UK.
Parents and situations	Işık, E., & Alıcı, B. Y. (2026). Family influence and well-being in adolescents: a test of the career construction model of adaptation. BMC psychology. (Link)	Although family influences have long been associated with career outcomes, it is not clear which aspects have the most effects. This study examined these issues by investigating the role of family influence within the Career Construction Model of Adaptation (CCMA) among n=712 adolescents in a Turkish setting: Informational and financial family support are found to be key resources for life satisfaction. School- and family-based career guidance efforts can enhance these resources when in place.

Secondary education *continued*

Careers interventions	Jo'rayev, S. M. (2026). The concept of vocational motivation in adolescent psychology. European Review of Contemporary Arts and Humanities, 2(2), 47-51. (Link)	This discussion paper addresses the idea of professional motivation from the perspective of personality-psychology and -development through adolescence. It offers a perspective into healthy career outcomes from secondary education, by considering "one's mental state when choosing a profession, and the prevention of negative situations." Psychological development processes are described towards the time students have a so-called "I-concept", which occurs concurrently with psychophysiological changes,
	Li, C., & Borines, M. (2026, January 24). Career Identity and Career Behavior of Preschool Education Students. Puissant, 7, 3032-3046. (Link)	This study from the Philippines examined the relationship between their career identity and career behaviour from n=300 students. The The study concludes that optimised curricula, strengthened practical teaching, and improved career guidance can foster high-quality education professionals with stronger career identifies.
Data	UK Government (2026). School and college voice: October 2025. (Link)	The UK Government published the latest data on "school and college voice" - a panel of school and college leaders and teachers in England. Results give a wider context into the situation in schools relating to diverse topics, such as whether attendance policies are in place and how schools communicate general information
	UK Government (2026), Parent, pupil and learner voice: October 2025 (Link)	The UK Government produced the latest data on learner/pupil voice, providing context into student experience to Year 11: This wave included a question on awareness of post 16 options. Almost all pupils in years 9 to 11 had heard of A levels (99%) and apprenticeships (97%). A lower proportion of pupils were aware of BTECs (76%), T levels (55%) and T Level Foundation Years (previously known as the Transition Programme) (14%).

Further education, vocational training and apprenticeships

Theme	Reference	About
Career service use	Bannerjee, U. et al (2026), Moving on: Who receives careers advice and guidance following compulsory education? Career Wales (Link)	The paper reviews interactions that Careers Wales has with a cohort of Key Stage 4 (KS4) pupils during the two years following their completion of compulsory education. Socio-economic background influences the likelihood that such interactions take place, along with prior engagement with Career Wales. The results indicate the importance of a career service making links with students earlier in education as a precursor to the student getting help later on if they need it.
Success	Conroy, L. (2026), IEP Journal #16 – Connected Futures: Building Networks That Help Apprentices Thrive. Inst. of Employability Professionals (Link)	The IEP journal included this discussion article by Lindsay Conroy, the Chief Executive Officer at Association of Apprentices, offering important observations about apprentice success. In particular, she highlighted the critical and overlooked role of networks in apprentice success: "Small to medium sized organisations employ c40% of all apprentices and in these smaller organisations, opportunities for peer cohorts, alumni networks, or structured mentoring are far less likely to exist .... networks can be the missing link between potential and progression." Students on these routes need to be prepared for networking to get on.
	Bocock, S. et al. (2026), Securing success from start to finish Investigating factors associated with apprenticeship withdrawal. National Foundation for Educational Research (Link)	"The apprenticeship achievement rate has fallen markedly over the last decade from 69 percent in 2013/14 to around 53 percent in 2021/22". This report examines the factors involved with (in)completion rates. The switch from apprenticeship frameworks to standards is a key factor in explaining the substantial decline in the apprenticeship achievement rate over the last decade. Learners' prior qualification levels are strongly related to their probability of withdrawing from an apprenticeship standard Results offer considerations for career practitioners promoting apprenticeship routes to their student clients, and pre-empting drop out mechanisms.
Futures	Shaun M. Dougherty, Samuel J. Kamin, 2026. "How Career and Technical Education's History Can Inform its Future for Advanced Learners", The Future of Advanced Education and Talent Development, Jonathan A. Plucker, Melanie S. Meyer (Link)	This essay reviews the history of career and technical education and suggests lessons for the future: "This essay explores how talent development can be optimized within Career and Technical Education (CTE) to better prepare students for both higher education and the evolving workforce. Acknowledging the complexity of educational goals, the authors argue for adaptive strategies that align with diverse student strengths and the changing demands of the 21st century. "
Data	UK Government (2026), Apprenticeships: January 2026 (Link)	The Government published the latest apprenticeship data for the first quarter of the 2025/26 academic year covering the period August 2025 to October 2025, based on data returned by providers in December 2025. Apprenticeship starts were up by 7.7% to 142,780 compared to 132,560 reported for the previous year.
	UK Government (2026), 16 to 18 school and college performance data in England: 2024 to 2025 (Link)	Results were published for the attainment of students at the end of their 16 to 18 study in England.

Higher education

Theme	Reference	About
Career interventions	Institute of Employability Professionals (2026), EP Journal Issue #16: Why Human Connection Still Matters. (Link)	A recent issue of the Institute of Employability's journal was dedicated to the topic of "why human connection matters" in employability support. Although the scope of employment advisers obviously differs to that of adult career professionals, the collection of articles - providing practices and insights - remain relevant for articulating the importance of human guidance for adults, as well as informing the separation of employment support and career support in light of recent policy changes.
	Bullock-Yowell, E., Klumpp, K., Mohn, R., Werner, B., & Leuty, M. (2026). The CASVE-CQ: scoring and validation of a decision-making progress measure. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–17. (Link)	CASVE-CQ is presented by the authors as an evaluation too for career decision making readiness, particularly relevant for adult career decisions and career change. The paper analysed the validity of the model, emphasising its potential value for different settings, particularly in post-compulsory education or work. The tool may be of interest to adult career coaches.
	Caballero, C. L., Hansen, L., Walker, A., Rosenberg, C., Orr, P., Claringbold, G., … Forsyth, L. (2026). Untangling graduate employability and work readiness to inform evidence-based practice in higher education. Higher Education Research & Development, 1–18. (Link)	The paper helps to clarify different objectives and functions of career development within higher education: This conceptual literature reviews draws on psychometric theory and organisational psychology to argue that graduate employability and work readiness are distinct constructs, and proposes a four-proposition capability framework to sharpen HE practice and measurement towards the ends of enhancing student outcomes.
Career readiness	Kirikkanat, B. (2026). Undergraduates' social-emotional learning and perceived future employability: mediation by career engagement. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–11. (Link)	This study involved conducting a survey of n=537 Turkish students to examine whether undergraduates' social and emotional learning skills shaped their perceived future employability via their career engagement. Career engagement significantly mediated the relationship between social-emotional learning skills and perceived future employability, highlighting the importance of engendering career engagement, and working to mitigate effects of students with lower social and emotional learning skills.
	Sozon M, Roengtam S, Yin Y (2026;), "Graduate employability in the AI and globalisation era: implications for higher education institutions". Journal of Applied Research in Higher Education. (Link)	This study includes a literature review of 107 previous studies, to investigate how artificial intelligence (AI) and globalisation shape graduate employability and to then derive the implications for higher education institutions (HEIs). AI is seen to add opportunities and risks to a graduate's outlook, with risks being from skills mismatches, outdated curricula, limited institutional support, and inadequate practical experience. Lifelong learning is proposed to offer an important role to mitigate these risks, given practical limitations of tackling them in the moment.

Adults

Theme	Reference	About
Career interventions	Institute of Employability Professionals (2026), EP Journal Issue #16: Why Human Connection Still Matters. (Link)	A recent issue of the Institute of Employability's journal was dedicated to the topic of "why human connection matters" in employability support. Although the scope differs to that of adult career professionals, the collection of articles - providing practices and insights - remain relevant for articulating the importance of career guidance for adults, and separating employment support from career support.
	Bullock-Yowell, E., Klumpp, K., Mohn, R., Werner, B., & Leuty, M. (2026). The CASVE-CQ: scoring and validation of a decision-making progress measure. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–17. (Link)	CASVE-CQ is an evaluation too for career decision making, particularly relevant for adult career decisions and career change. The paper analysed the validity of the model, emphasising its potential value for different settings, particularly in post-compulsory education or work.
Career competences	*De Rosa A, Akkermans J, Khapova SN, Lo Presti A (2026;), "Career competencies: a meta-analysis of their antecedents and outcomes". *Career Development International* (Link)	"Career competences" are important building blocks in the career domain. The academic literature has long studied what they are, mean, and how they are created. This paper provides a thirty year review into this line of enquiry. The paper cements their importance, showing relationships between career competences and work- and life-related outcomes.
	*Eryılmaz, A., & Kara, A. (2026). A longitudinal examination of the time-lagged pathways between career adaptability, career engagement, and life satisfaction. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–11. (Link)	This data analysis examined the relationships between career adaptability, career engagement, and satisfaction with life longitudinally. The cross-lagged effect of career adaptability at Time 1 on career engagement at Time 2 was positive and significant. Also, the cross-lagged effect of career engagement at Time 1 on satisfaction with life at Time 2 was positive and significant. Results thereby highlighted the importance of career adaptability, but also show effects can be delayed.
Career development	Shirmohammadi, M., Ayoobzadeh, M., Beigi, M., & Arthur, M. (2026). The intelligent careers framework: A review of the literature and a call for future research. Career Development International. (Link)	The intelligent careers framework, introduced three decades ago, made a key contribution to boundaryless career thinking by challenging the traditional assumption of long-term organizational careers. This paper provides an updated literature review and research agenda. (Findings are timely which much recent consideration given to how careers guidance responds to the skills gaps, AI and aging workforce).
	UK Government (2026), The role and experience of support staff in schools. (Link)	Relevant to careers professionals in schools, the Government provided the results of a survey into work experience, including career development opportunities. Few see opportunities to develop their career in the environment.
Regret	Schulze Schleithoff C, Lysova EI, Khapova SN, Korotov K (2026), "How does a career decision become a career regret? A qualitative exploration". *Career Development International*, Vol. 31 No. 8 pp. 57–81 (Link)	This qualitative study aims to expand the limited theoretical understanding of career regret by exploring its development and the key factors that contribute to it. It was based on 7 semi-structured interviews followed by 16 retrospective narratives with professionals. "Precisely, career regret develops when an individual responds to a realized loss with career inaction, which is shaped by two identified mechanisms: a feeling of low career agency and a feeling of being trapped" offering insights to coaches/counsellors.

Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers - ethnic/cultural identities

Theme	Reference	About
Migrants	Skålholt, A., & Kindt, M. T. (2026). A Double drive to failure: differences in labour market outcomes for children of immigrants undergoing vocational education. Journal of Education and Work, 1–24. (Link)	This paper explores career outcomes at the intersection of migrant status and gender, using Norwegian data. Male children of immigrants do not have the same wage benefits as their native (aka Norwegian) majority peers, but for female children of immigrants, the researchers find no difference from those with Norwegian-born parents. Access to apprenticeship is related to what the authors call a "double drive to failure": First, children of immigrants are more inclined to apply for a supplementary year, which is not economically rewarding. Second, apprenticeship applications are more likely to fail. Results suggest considering gender and migrant status together.
	*Kersten, A., Laukineitytė, E., Kerti, K. A., Nijs, S., & Scholz, F. (2026). Career crafting in transition: Strategies of migrant women in vocational settings. Journal of Vocational Behavior, 104218. (Link)	Despite the work challenges for disadvantaged groups, empirical research on the career crafting behaviors of vulnerable populations remains scarce. This paper examines the career crafting strategies that migrant women engage in to achieve their future work selves, as well as the influence of resource availability on the adoption of these strategies. Four strategic types were identified: (1) career planning, (2) career balancing, (3) career architecting and (4) career navigating. These strategies therefore offer potential routes to steer migrant clients.
Intersection	Maree, J. G. (2026). Integrative career construction counselling with seriously disadvantaged, unemployed black youths: semi-longitudinal, exploratory research. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–18. (Link)	This article explores an career construction counselling intervention for seriously disadvantaged, unemployed black youth with a n=51 participants. A three-phase intervention process facilitated the elicitation and validation of participants' career-life stories and self-perceptions, fostering forward movement and action. Career interest and confidence scores were assessed using a test, while a qualitative questionnaire captured participants' career-life narratives. Outcomes were promising, with successes noted along with areas for further development in the approach.
Professions	Amato, E. K., & Chen, C. (2026). Career wellbeing among racialized lawyers in Canadian law firms. Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 39–52. (Link)	The paper provides a qualitative study of racialized lawyers in Canadian firms. It finds systemic barriers to progression, such as underrepresentation in leadership, microaggressions, limited sponsorship. Such factors directly undermine career wellbeing, with implications for firm culture and career counselling.
Rural communities	Taylor, C., Borgen, R., Carlson, D., Warkentin, M., & White, E. (2026). Rural Realities: Bridging the Diversity Disconnect & Supporting Inclusion in Challenging Contexts. Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 65–83. (Link)	This article reports the findings of mixed-methods research conducted in Canada, identifying 20 factors impacting the employment of underrepresented community members, with a particular focus on Indigenous Peoples and individuals living with disabling conditions. Insights and experiences from job seekers, employees, employers, and community service providers, offer recommendations for career professionals, employers, and policy makers to facilitate access to work. The paper, while created in a Canadian setting, highlights the spectrum of barriers and intervention requirements for groups facing economic marginalisation in this way.

Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers - gender & orientation

Theme	Reference	About
Career shocks	*Nadiv, R. (2026). Holding on and letting go: Ambivalent responses to career shocks among professional women during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Career Development Quarterly. (Link)	The interplay between career disruptions and family dynamics remains underexplored in careers literature. This paper examined how n=35 Israeli professional women experienced and made sense of being furloughed during the COVID-19 pandemic. Furlough events were experienced as a source of ambivalence - simultaneously perceived as a threat to career progression and an opportunity for reflection or reorientation. Meanwhile the events changed family dynamics. The work found four coping strategies to deal with the resulting tensions: "work–family avoidance", "family dominance", "work dominance", and "work–family holism". Results have wider applicability for coaching women after career shocks.
Inequalities	Giguère, É., Sirois Gagné, M., Avoine, J., & Bangaly, M. (2026). How do gender issues mark the career paths of Canadian service sector employees in a digital transformation context? Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 6–17. (Link)	This paper aims to advance a better understanding of how gender issues mark employee career paths in a digital transformation context, and draws from n=44 employee interviews in Canada. Gendered related issues are noted, given that digital transformation projects can be both levers and barriers to career development.

Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers - socio-economic disadvantage

Theme	Reference	About
NEET prevention	Career Connect (2026), Addressing needs of young people with SEMH conditions is vital in driving down NEET figures (Link)	Career Connect have produced a report into the social, economic and health needs of young people, to achieve education continuity and better employment outcomes, with a particular focus on driving down NEET rates. Data is tracked to show groups particularly at risk, as well as evolving trends over time. The report concludes with a call to action, including to a) establish national benchmarks for NEET support services, and to b) increase funding for SEMH support.
Higher Education settings	*Lyden T (2026;), "Undergraduate career mentoring: social mobility panacea or ethical dilemma?". International Journal of Mentoring and Coaching in Education (Link)	The paper addresses the question of whether mentoring helps in HE to support students from lower socio-economic backgrounds. The results are nuanced: "Low-SES mentees secured more psychosocial and, at least, comparable career development gains but experienced more negative affect when feeling inferior....". This creates implications for career practitioners recommending this sort of support for their clients.
Social justice	*Bilon-Piórko, A. D., Lucas-Casanova, M., Toiviainen, S., Thomsen, R., & Olsen, A. (2026). Career guidance practitioners' understandings of social justice in four European Countries. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–17 (LInk)	The paper gathered perceptions on "social justice in careers" from four European countries, to examine similarities and differences in the concept. Findings show diverse understandings of social justice among practitioners, ranging from concerns about social stratification to individualistic, meritocratic views. There are context dependent interpretations. The results suggest not to assume common understanding when using the term.

Equity, diversity and inclusion in careers - SEND/neurodiversity/learning disabilities

Theme	Reference	About
Support	Dupuis, A., Lachance, A., Rancourt-Tremblay, Z., Dionne, P., & Abat-Roy, V. (2026). Adaptation of an Anxiety Prevention Program for Young People with Autism in School Settings When Faced With Career Choices. Canadian Journal of Career Development, 25(1), 18–36. (Link)	The HORS-PISTE Orientation program research team looked into the adjustments needed to meet the needs of the population of children with autism who presented with anxiety. Existing modes of delivery were tested with four groups totaling 24 participants, which allowed adaptation needs to be identified i.e. a) involvement of teachers in facilitation, b) the formation of relatively homogeneous groups, and c) the facilitation of activities that are as concrete as possible. Results have applicability to both the main curriculum and careers education activities.
	Future Skills Centre (2026), Career Development Strategies to Support Neurodivergent Students. (Link)	This short paper from Canada presents a challenge and opportunity: "Career development professionals are uniquely positioned to support {diverse} neruo-divergent students". Recommendations are provided to career practitioners that include continuing to learn, navigating disclosure, respond to anxiety, highlight alternate pathways, and promoting neuro-inclusive work integrated learning.
	Barnes, S. et al (2026) Future of Work: Behind the masks – good work for autistic women . Institute of Employment Studies (Link)	The report provides both research and a toolkit for supporting autistic women in workplaces. Examples of the insights are that sensory environments (lighting, noise, temperature) strongly affect wellbeing and work performance.
	UK Government (2026), Neurodivergence Task and Finish Group: report. (Link)	In November 2024, the government commissioned an independent Neurodivergence Task and Finish Group (NDTFG) to produce a report on the best ways to support and meet the needs of neurodivergent children and young people in mainstream settings. The results have been published. Although not directly mentioning careers, there are implications for all student-facing staff in schools for supporting neurodivergent students. Schools have an onus to understand and respond to students' unique needs and preferences.

Economics and labour market influences

Theme	Reference	About
Skills	Cedefop. (2026). *Shaping the future of lifelong learning: policy scenarios for 2040: Transparency and transferability of learning outcomes.* Cedefop research paper. Publications Office of the European Union. DOI:10.2801/7473761 (Link)	These scenarios were developed based on earlier research phases that analysed the evolution of lifelong learning regarding the transparency and transferability of learning outcomes over the past 20 years. Scenarios help with preparation for different possible future political, economic, social and technological developments.
	International Labour Organization. (2026). Employment and social trends 2026: Global job quality stagnates despite resilient growth. ILO Publications. (Link)	The ILO produced their flagship annual report (published 14 Jan 2026). Global unemployment steady at 4.9% but quality of work measures were deteriorating. The jobs gap reached 408 million. Youth unemployment was at 12.4%; AI threatens entry-level roles; gender and regional inequalities are entrenched.
Employer trends	Future of Work Institute (2026), The Future of Work report (Link)	Based on a survey of n=680 global business leaders, the report shows how organisations are adapting a fast-paced business landscape and uncertain future.
	Bossert, B.S. (2026). Workplace trends for 2026: The new labor market reality. IMD Business School (Link)	The article from the president of the World Employment Confederation reviews workplace trends and the needs of employers and employees, covering: AI's bifurcated labour market impact, skills mismatches, talent mobility deterioration and the resurgence of inclusion as economic imperative. Offers useful context.

AI and technology in careers

Theme	Reference	About
Online/digital counselling	*Pulat, M., & Barutçu Yıldırım, F. (2026). An examination of the views of counsellors and clients towards online counselling. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1–22 (Link)	This paper was not explicitly about career counselling, but represented a study of the views of traditional counsellors and their clients towards online interactions. There are hypotheses that the career professional might extract and test in the careers field.
AI in Schools	OECD (2026), OECD Digital Education Outlook 2026: Exploring Effective Uses of Generative AI in Education, OECD Publishing,. (Link)	This extensive review examines the potential for digital technology, and especially AI, in educati0on. Three areas for applications are described: 1) Improving student learning, 2) Augmenting teacher performance, and 3) Improving system and institutional management. There are implications for careers in considering a similar set of use cases.
AI in FE/VET	Wahrini, R., Hasbi, H., Nuruzzaman, M., Nur, N. A., Budiastuti, P., Gaspersz, M., & Tanggu Mara, A. (2026). AI-Driven Career Guidance to Reduce Vocational Students' Career Path Anxiety through Skills Mapping, Adaptive Mentoring, and Labor Market Intelligence. F1000Research, 15, 298. (Link)	"Vocational students often experience career path anxiety due to uncertainty about labor market demands, limited mentoring, and misalignment between curricula and industry needs". In this paper based in Indonesia, an AI assisted intervention was designed and used by n=180 students. Students using the AI system showed a significant 26.7% reduction in career path anxiety compared with minimal change in the control group
AI in HE	*Suntharalingam, P. (2026), Intelligent Learning Tools: Enhancing Student Skills and Career Preparedness.. (Link)	This new compilation of academic papers review different aspects of AI in HE settings, while being used for skills development and career development. Several papers are directly applicable to career professionals, particularly *The Role of Artificial Intelligence in Bridging the Gap Between Academia and Labor Markets,* This paper collection highlights how AI is shaping traditional discussions about skills development.
AI in the workforce	Specht, D. and Saunders, G. (2026), Being indispensable: Capabilities for a human-AI world, the 'FUTURES' framework. Higher Education Policy Institute (Link)	The authors note 75% of young people aged 13-18 have already used GenAI, with similar patterns visible across HE. There are opportunities and risks. The report argues universities need a dual approach to GenAI-enabled learning. 1) Curricula that embed human-AI collaboration while ensuring that ethical reasoning, critical thinking and wellbeing remain central to academic development. 2) New practical governance, staff and student training and equitable access to tools are deemed as being needed. The report contributes to planning the wider ecosystem development of skills and education, around GenAI evolution, with some transferable learning from HE settings.
	*Yuan Y, Liu B, Wang Y, Liu P, Yang L (2026;), "Artificial intelligence usage at work: understanding dual self-regulation mechanisms and goal orientation in career growth". *Career Development International* (Link)	Based on a three-wave survey of 495 AI-active employees across industries, this study examines the impact of AI usage on career development in a Chinese setting. AI usage positively contributes to career growth by boosting thriving at work and inducing identity threat, which drives increased employee effort. Results are shaped by individual's pre-existing learning and growth orientations. Although in a different setting, the paper discusses the generic tension between productivity gains and identity threat, and the role of pre-existing employee characteristics.

AI and technology in careers *continued*

Theme	Reference	About
Trends	World Economic Forum (2026), Four Futures for Jobs in the New Economy: AI and Talent in 2030. (Link)	Four Futures for Jobs in the New Economy: AI and Talent in 2030 explores how AI advancement and talent trends, and their potential trajectories until 2030, could transform the future of jobs and the global economy. The paper consolidates views and insights from chief strategy officers and other experts

Health and wellbeing

Theme	Reference	About
Burnout	Mental Health UK. (2026). Burnout Report 2026: High stress pushing workers into sick leave as just one in four feel mental health is genuinely prioritised and supported in the workplace. (Link)	A YouGov survey of n=4,502 UK adults found that: 91% experienced high/extreme stress; 1 in 5 took mental health-related sick leave; 35% unwilling to discuss stress with managers. The report highlights a persistent gap between employers' stated commitments and real-world support for staff.
Dara	UK Government (2026), Survey of Employees and Self-Employed Workers, 2024 to 2025 (Link)	The Government have published their latest data on employee wellbeing and the prevalence of health conditions across the workforce. Around one third (32%) of workers reported a long-term health condition. Among those with a long-term health condition, 77% had a physical condition, 43% a mental health condition and 11% a cognitive condition; 30% reported having a combination of physical, mental or cognitive conditions

Careers and the environment

Theme	Reference	About
Skills	*Haba, M., & Azeroual, A. (2026). Green Guidance: Reconciling Individual Career Pathways and Sustainability Challenges. Exploratory Study with Guidance Counselors. In Environmental Education and Sustainable Development: Challenges and Prospects for the Future (pp. 95-115). Cham: Springer Nature Switzerland. (Link)	This study - a book chapter within a wider publication on sustainability challenges - serves as an exploratory effort to examine the potential for establishing "Green Guidance" within the SCG system in Morocco. "It investigates how career counselors consider the effects of the ecological transition in supporting students' projects, emphasizing the importance of broadening reflection spaces to enable young people to develop responsible and community-oriented agency." 207 career counsellors from the US were involved.
Education	*de Oca, L. M., Navarro, M., & Byers, T. (2026). Understanding What Makes Sustainability Education Effective: Insights from a University Certificate Program. Cleaner Production Letters, 100133. (Link)	Sustainability education is increasingly recognised as essential for preparing graduates to address global environmental, economic, and societal challenges. Yet limited research examines which program features most effectively foster lasting learning and professional readiness. The paper points to the importance of interdisciplinary approaches and that experiential learning must be embedded across the curriculum, not isolated.

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, and any corrections from previous editions in the erratum rows.

Theme	Reference	About
AI in secondary education	Schoolnet (2025), Artificial Intelligence in School Education: An overview of policy priorities and initiatives across 23 education systems (Link)	This paper from December 2025 shows examples of AI policy in education settings across EU schools and school systems. While not directly related to careers, the paper offers a compendium of use cases.
Education transitions	IES (2025), Education to employment transitions (Link)	The Institute for Employment Studies produces resources that showed journeys through education and into employment - these being "often non-linear and complex". Often "people require additional support during periods of transition. " Infographics were depicted, which effectively depict a range of career case studies that depict the complexity of real transitions.
Adult careers	Talent Solutions (2025), The Career Imperative:. (Link)	This report provides an overview of the "state of careers" in North America, finding enduring global challenges that we also see in the UK, such as the lack of career planning amongst adults in work.
Gender differences	Megalokonomou, R., Silva Goncalves, J., & van Veldhuizen, R. (2025). Gender Differences in Self-Promotion and Career Advice. Working Papers, 2025(11), 1-97. (Link)	The authors conduct a novel online experiment to examine the role of self-promoting behaviour on enduring gender differences in career outcomes. The authors find women "report lower self assessments and receive less ambitious career advice as a result."

If you see a paper that you want including, or mistakes to be corrected then please contact: stephen.plimmer@thecdi.net.

The next issue will be early May, covering March and April 2026

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