

The National Careers Service

The National Careers Service launched on 5 April 2012. The service will provide access to advice on careers, skills and the labour market. The service will be free to everyone aged 13 and over and will be available online and through advisers on the telephone. The National Careers Service will replace the current Next Step service for adults and Connexions Direct for young people with enhanced online access, more interactive facilities and a greater focus on the quality of advice offered.

The service will:

- Handle over 1 million helpline calls from adults and young people, and
- Facilitate 20 million hits to the website
- Provide a helpline that will have longer opening hours
- Offer a range of ways to get in touch including web chats, online forums and text messages
- Provide advice from professional careers advisers
- Offer a range of online tools to help customers explore their interests, assess their skills, develop an action plan for finding the right job, and write a good CV

National Careers Service - Q&A

Who is the National Careers Service aimed at?

The National Careers Service is aimed at all adults and young people (13 and over) across England. It is a service that can be used by people who are looking for careers advice, to find out how they can access training and enhance their skills, as well as those seeking guidance on the work options available to them. The service can help as much or as little as users wish, so people can get the help they need quickly and efficiently by visiting the website or calling the telephone line for more information and guidance.

What services will the National Careers Service provide?

The website can help users look at how best to find jobs to fit their skills set (there are over 750 job profiles which provide essential information on what each job involves and the skills needed), how to enhance the skills they have and access training, as well as ways to map out their career development. There is practical advice on CV drafting, interview tips and advice on how to gain the job they want. The website is very user friendly, but if they need to discuss their options then they can speak directly to a careers adviser over the phone.

How is the National Careers Service provided?

The service can be accessed quickly and efficiently through three main channels including a new interactive and user-friendly website, a direct helpline number where people can access trained careers advisers that can provide high quality and impartial advice; and face-to-face support that can also be accessed by adults in the community. The National Careers Service will be provided by a range of public, private and voluntary sector organisations, under contract to the Skills Funding Agency; professional careers advisers will be at the heart of the National Careers Service and everything it does.

How will people know they are getting a quality service?

National Careers Service contractors will be accredited to the matrix Standard for information, advice and guidance, so customers can be confident they are getting advice they can trust. Holding the matrix standard will ensure that the National Careers Service provides advice which is expert and impartial, and supports its advisers to achieve recognised professional standards.

How will people know that they are getting expert advice?

The professional organisations that represent careers advisers have joined together as the Careers Profession Alliance to develop brand new standards for careers advice. They will also be introducing an online register of careers advisers showing their highest level of qualification, and guidelines on how careers advisers can develop their own skills and gain higher qualifications.

What is the ambition for the National Careers Service?

The Government's ambition for the service is to help people unlock their potential through employment, skills and training. We wish to provide access to accurate and informative careers advice to as many people across England as possible to ensure everyone can make the right choices about learning and skills to flourish in life and work.

How can you find out more about the National Careers Service?

You can access the National Careers Service via the website www.nationalcareersservice.direct.gov.uk or by calling 0800 100 900.