



Participant Information Leaflet

for Careers Guidance Professionals in Higher Education

Study Title: How can AI be optimally integrated with human careers guidance for maximum effectiveness in higher education careers services?

Investigator(s): Kate Robertson (MA Student, University of Warwick) with Fajar Imran (PgT Student, University of Aberdeen, Intern)
Supervisor: Wendy Pearson, University of Warwick

Introduction

You are invited to take part in a research study. Before you decide, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully. Talk to others about the study if you wish.

Please ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you would like more information. Take time to decide whether or not you wish to take part.

Who is organising and funding the study?

This study is being conducted as part of a Master's degree in Careers Education, Information and Guidance in Higher Education at the University of Warwick. It is independently designed and carried out by the researcher, Kate Robertson. The project is supported by a small research grant from **Jisc**, a UK not-for-profit organisation that provides digital solutions for education. Jisc has no role in designing or conducting the study.

What is the study about?

This research explores how careers advisers in higher education understand and use Artificial Intelligence (AI) within their professional practice. As AI tools, such as CV checkers, chatbots, or job matching tools, become more widely used, this study seeks to understand how these tools are experienced by practitioners, what benefits and limitations they present, and how they can be ethically and effectively integrated alongside human careers guidance.

What would taking part involve?

If you decide to take part, you will be invited to participate in a one-to-one, semi-structured interview lasting approximately 45–60 minutes. The interview will take place online via Microsoft Teams or in person, depending on your preference and location.

The interview will be audio recorded (with your consent) to support accurate transcription. During the interview, you will be asked about your experiences with AI tools in careers guidance, your views on their strengths and limitations, and your thoughts on how they could be used alongside human interaction. There are no right or wrong answers, and you are welcome to skip any question you do not wish to answer.

Do I have to take part?

No. Participation in this study is completely voluntary and choosing not to take part will not affect you in any way. You can also choose to withdraw your participation without giving a reason by contacting one of the research team. Further details about withdrawing from the study are provided later on in this document.

What are the possible benefits of taking part in this study?

Your participation will contribute to a better understanding of how AI can be ethically and effectively used in higher education careers services. Your insights will help inform future professional practices and contribute to a practical framework for AI integration.

What are the possible disadvantages, side effects or risks, of taking part in this study?

There are no significant risks associated with taking part. The topic of AI in careers guidance is not expected to cause distress. However, if you do feel uncomfortable at any point, you are welcome to pause or stop the interview.

Expenses and payments

As a thank you for your time, you will be offered a £25 digital gift voucher after the interview, regardless of whether you complete the full interview or choose to withdraw.

Will my taking part be kept confidential?

Yes. All information you provide will be treated confidentially. Interviews will be recorded and transcribed. Identifying details such as your name, institution, or job title will be pseudonymised and replaced with a participant code (e.g., P1). Only the researcher will have access to the full dataset, which will be securely stored on the University's password-protected OneDrive.

Quotes may be used in reports or publications, but these will not include any information that could identify you. If a disclosure indicates a risk of harm to yourself or others, the researcher has a duty of care to report this to appropriate authorities.

What will happen to the data collected about me?

As a publicly funded organisation, the University of Warwick must ensure that it is in the public interest when we use personally identifiable information from people who have agreed to take part in research. This means that when you agree to take part in a research study, such as this, we will use your data in the ways needed to conduct and analyse the research study.

We will be using information from you in order to undertake this study and will act as the data controller for this study. We are committed to protecting the rights of individuals in line with data protection legislation. Your data will be securely stored for **two years** following the completion of the research project, in line with university policy. Your personal data (e.g., name, email address) will be deleted once it is no longer needed for scheduling or communication.

Research data will be **pseudonymised** as quickly as possible after data collection. This means all direct and indirect identifiers will be removed from the research data and will be replaced with a participant number. The key to identification will be stored separately and securely to the research data to safeguard your identity. After data is pseudonymised (within 48 hours of your interview), it will not be possible to withdraw it.

Data Sharing

No personal or research data will be shared with external organisations. Jisc, the funder, will not have access to any data. All data will remain within the University of Warwick's secure systems.

Your rights to access, change or move your information are limited, as we need to manage your information in specific ways in order for the research to be reliable and accurate. The University of Warwick has in place policies and procedures to keep your data safe.

This data may also be used for future research, including impact activities following review and approval by an independent Research Ethics Committee and subject to your consent at the outset of this research project.

For further information, please refer to the University of Warwick Research Privacy Notice which is

available here: <https://warwick.ac.uk/services/idc/dataprotection/privacynotices/researchprivacynotice> or by contacting the Legal and Compliance Team at infocompliance@warwick.ac.uk.

What will happen if I don't want to carry on being part of the study?

Participation in this study is completely voluntary and choosing not to take part will not affect you in any way. You can also choose to withdraw your participation without giving a reason by contacting the researcher. If you withdraw within **48 hours of your interview**, your data will be deleted. After this time, it will not be possible to withdraw your data as it will have already been pseudonymised and used in the analysis.

To safeguard your rights, we will use the minimum personally identifiable information possible and keep the data secure in line with the University's Information and Data Compliance policies.

What will happen to the results of the study?

The results will form part of a dissertation submitted to the University of Warwick. A summary of findings will also be shared via professional networks and may be published in practitioner-facing journals (e.g., Career Matters, Phoenix) or presented at relevant conferences. No individuals will be identifiable in any publications or presentations.

Who has reviewed the study?

This study has been reviewed and ethically approved by the Centre for Lifelong Learning according to their Research Ethics Approval Policy, which has received devolved authority from the Humanities and Social Science Research Ethics Committee of the University of Warwick.

Who should I contact if I want further information?

Lead Researcher:

Kate Robertson

Email: Kate.Robertson@warwick.ac.uk

Supervisor:

Wendy Pearson

Email: wendy.pearson@warwick.ac.uk

Who should I contact if I wish to make a complaint?

Any complaint about the way you have been dealt with during the study or any possible harm you might have suffered will be addressed. Please address your complaint to the person below, who is a senior University of Warwick official entirely independent of this study:

Head of Research Governance

Research & Impact Services

University House, University of Warwick

Coventry CV4 8UW

Email: researchgovernance@warwick.ac.uk

Tel: 02476 575733

If you wish to raise a complaint on how we have handled your personal data, you can contact our Data Protection Officer who will investigate the matter: DPO@warwick.ac.uk.

If you are not satisfied with our response or believe we are processing your personal data in a way that is not lawful you can complain to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO).

Thank you for taking the time to read this Participant Information Leaflet