

AI & Careers Education

Irish Higher Education Landscape Survey

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UCD Careers Network & AHECS AI-Augmented Careers Education CoP
March 7th, 2025



University College Dublin
Careers Network

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Save the Date!
November 25th 11am - 3pm

AHECS CoP Symposium on AI & Careers Education

hosted by
University College Dublin @ the
UCD University Club

Introduction

This report shares the findings of a survey conducted by the AHECS AI-Augmented Careers Education Community of Practice (CoP). Established in January 2025, and **co-chaired by Bernie Burke and Michelle Coen, University College Dublin**, 51 people joined in the first month, highlighting the centrality of the topic to AHECS members.

The core aim of the CoP is to support career educators to share knowledge to augment the employability development of all students using AI as a learning tool and to facilitate discussions about development in the area as they impact careers education.

Artificial intelligence (AI) is an expansive term. The aim of the survey was to generate a strategic discussion about what career educators in Ireland mean when they refer to AI and its potential, to inform a base line in terms of current AI literacy levels in member institutions and to establish a learning path forward in keeping with the requirements of the EU Act.

It is hoped that this report will inform the collective intelligence discussions

at the **All-AHECS meeting in Dublin on April 24th, 2025** which will explore *'Is AI Revolutionising Careers and Employability in Ireland?'*

AI and Careers Education: Here for Good?

Survey Window

Jan 14-29th 2025

Survey Sample
81

Context

Career education on the island of Ireland operates within global, European and national frameworks and policies (UNESCO, 2016, OECD, 2023, Governments of Ireland, 2024, 2025, UK, 2025, WEF, 2025). Higher education career services, therefore, have to consider not just their institutions but the state and all its third level students.

This survey comes at a time of incredible change in career education globally, driven by developments in AI. The pace of this change is relentless, as evidenced by developments in the month following the survey alone. These include the emergence of DeepSeek and its impact on the markets; the enactment of the EU AI Act; and most recently, the publication of Ireland's *AI Advisory Council Recommendations - Helping to Shape Ireland's AI Future* in February 2025, including a specific paper on AI and Education.

Academic studies are emerging to inform our understanding of how generative AI impacts cognition and critical thinking skills; how third level students are adopting it in their

learning; and the underlying psychological factors that influence human attitudes to AI tools.

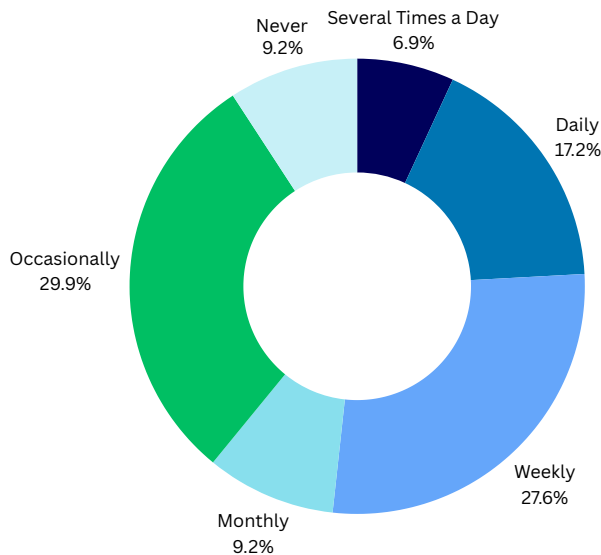
Career services in Ireland have an opportunity now to take a leadership role with regard to AI and chart the future course and nature of careers education. The first step in deciding where to go is to understand where we are now. The aim of this survey is inform the routemap for the journey.

"In the careers sector, we are only beginning to use the powerful AI tools already available, let alone the new capabilities likely to develop in the coming decade....the future of AI in career guidance holds a spectrum of possibilities, each with profound implications for career advisers, the individuals they support and their work with employers."

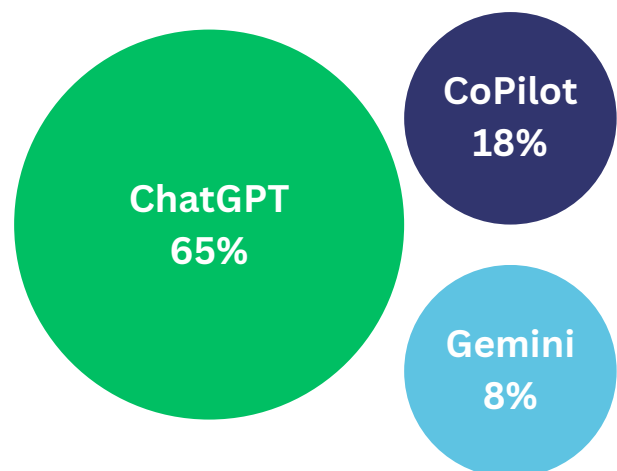
From the Morrisby/CareerChat report, *Careers 2035: What Does AI mean for the future of career guidance?*

Usage Patterns

To what extent do you use Gen AI in your role at work?



AI tools used most regularly to support work



What is the biggest challenge you face in integrating AI into your professional practice?

- 1 Knowledge
- 2 Time

Interest Areas

What aspects of AI in careers education interest you the most? Select all that apply.

**Employer
Requirements**
85%

**Interview
Preparation**
74%

**Career
Exploration**
74%

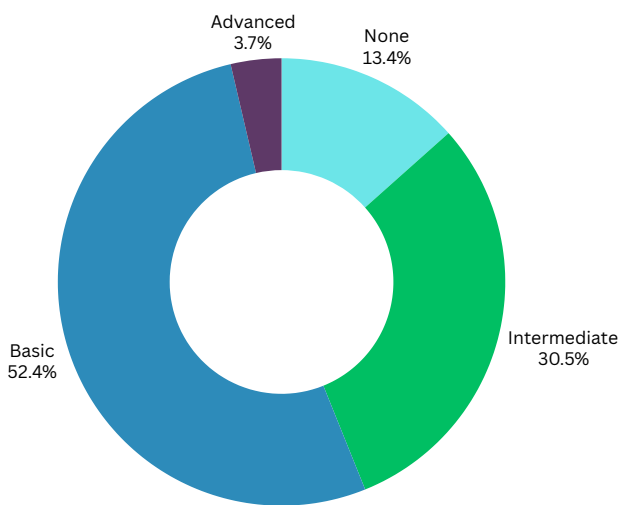
**CV
Optimisation**
68%

**Psychometric
Assessment**
58%

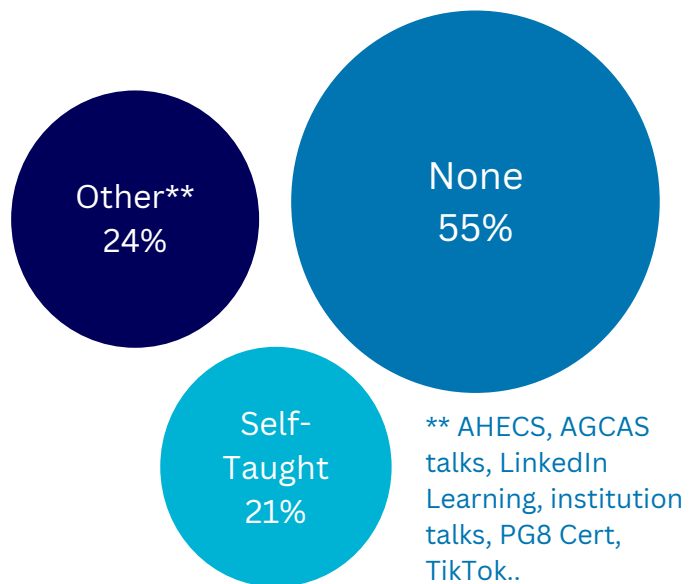
**Training
Design**
50%

Training & Skills

Please rate your prompt writing skill level



What AI Literacy Training Have you Completed to Date?



What skills or training areas would help you feel more confident in using AI for career education/work? Please rank in order of priority.



Ethics

What are your main concerns about the ethical use of AI in career education?
Select all that apply.

Misinformation
94.5%

Bias in AI Tools
87.6%

Data Privacy
76.7%

Digital Divide
50.6%

Accessibility Challenges
43.8%

Environmental Impact
30%

Opinions: In what ways do you think that AI can most effectively enhance students' career development? **

"Integration into overall careers work."

"Coaches need to understand AI in the first instance and present the benefits and dangers of using AI. Does the application sound like you? Employers may abandon the application phase in time..."

"Increase career exploration and broaden horizons."

"Compare employers."

"I'm not sure."

"Workplace readiness - it will be a key tool in the workplace of the future."

"AI can significantly enhance university students' career development by offering personalised, scalable and data-driven support. One of its most impactful applications is in personalised guidance."

"Empower them to take control of their career development."

"Getting CVs to a standard before a CV review appointment."

"Good for learning about organisations but not so good in finding roles."

"Students should see it as a starting point for support rather than a place they can copy and past from e.g. starting a cover letter but realising you do not speak the language ChatGPT produces."

"Acting as a co-pilot during the job search process (start to finish and everything in between)"

"Make CV feedback better and help with interview preparation."

"Researching career options, interview preparation, researching employers. Students with solid AI knowledge and understanding will be attractive to employers."

"Open to learning more on this."

"It can do it in many ways - I think it takes out the base thinking and allows students to get really creative about what they are doing. Enabling them to develop their own personal USPs. Add their voice to AI."

"AI is too big a term to answer this helpfully. I don't think GenAI can effectively enhance career development. I think compiling data might be a possible use."

"Help them with research and effective time management. They spend less time going down rabbit holes if they know how to prompt effectively and use AI strategically."

"Widens participation and builds their market competence."

"Helping them to answer application questions, to generate ideas."

"Help them plan a route to a specific career."

"Need to be convinced that it can."

"Provide structure to generate ideas, to shape learning, 24 x 7 support."

"Help them to create CVs, cover letters and to prepare for interviews.."

"Speeding up the time to apply."

"Good for high-level guidance."

** A representative selection of verbatim comments

2025 Calendar

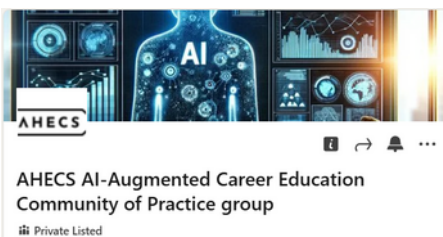
**AHECS Q2 Meeting: Member Institute Showcase,
April 8th (Zoom), 12pm - 1:30pm**

**All -AHECS Meeting
April 24th, 11-2pm @ National College of Ireland**

**AHECS CoP Q3 Meeting: Developing a Code of Practice
August 26th, 12pm - 1:30pm (zoom)**

**AHECS CoP National Symposium on AI-Augmented Careers
Education**
November 25th, 11pm - 3pm @ University College Dublin**

**** 66 expressions of interest to-date**



Please reach out to Michelle Coen,
University College Dublin if you
would like to join the CoP LinkedIn
Group

AHECS Member Institutions



References

AI Advisory Council. (2025). Ireland's AI Advisory Council Recommendations – Helping to Shape Ireland's AI Future (February 2025). Department of Enterprise, Trade and Employment.

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