

Executive summary: Pre employment management platform discovery

Health Education England

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Version: 1

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# Executive summary

The Discovery was conducted by Lagom Strategy and between October 2022 and December 2022.

The Discovery focussed on building on previous research to determine if having a pre employment management platform would meet the needs of young learners, providers and coordinators.

The research activities were conducted in line with the definition and guidance of a digital service Discovery phase mandated by the Government Digital Service (GDS) Service Manual.

All publicly funded digital services are subject to such a Discovery phase before proceeding to the next phase of technical development and design, and passing subsequent service assessments.

The Discovery has concluded with a prioritised user needs backlog and a set of recommendations for Health Education to consider.

## Summary of findings

### Defining the problem and scope

* Stakeholders articulate a range of problems that they hope a platform will solve
* There are some concerns surrounding the scale and scope of these problems
* Stakeholders reflected differently on the perceived scope of a pre-employment platform
* Stakeholders have reflected on the inclusion of social care in this scope of this service

### Context

* Stakeholders are fairly clear about what pre-employment encompasses
* The term pre-employment is poorly understood by young learners and teachers
* The current scale of pre-employment activity is significant and difficult to quantify
* Stakeholders desire both national consistency and local innovation
* There is a wide landscape of existing initiatives that overlap with this work
* Stakeholders have reflected on the potential ownership of this type of service
* The merger with NHS England is bringing about uncertainty
* Data around work experience is lacking, although there are plans to address this

User experience

* There is a range of systems in use to coordinate pre-employment activities
* There are issues around capacity and resourcing when coordinating pre-employment opportunities
* There is a perceived reluctance to provide and deliver pre-employment opportunities
* Some young learners describe work experience as a tick-box exercise for university and/or employment
* Some young learners felt that there is a lack of local opportunities
* There is a fatigue of online pre-employment opportunities
* Opportunities do not seem to be promoted well enough

Fairness and equity of access

* There is evidence that some processes are not fair or equitable to young learners
* Incidences of nepotism are particularly common for some providers
* Some providers are working proactively to reduce these imbalances
* Some providers want to prioritise their opportunities for local young learners

## Summary of recommendations

### The context for the recommendations

* There are assumptions surrounding pre-employment activities
* Some pre-employment processes are unfair
* There is an administrative burden involved in facilitating pre-employment activity
* There are a multitude of local systems operating in this space
* Stakeholders see overlap with other ongoing initiatives
* A pre-employment service alone won’t solve systemic issues

### Overarching recommendations

* Be clear about the specific problem(s) that you are trying to solve
* Understand the pre-employment space in more detail
* Break the service down into manageable parts
* Proceed with the pursuit of an application tracking system
* Agreed to scope of a minimum viable product (MVP)
* Develop a roadmap for the service

Steps towards a pre-employment service

* Aim for a service capable of facilitating a strategic journey through pre-employment opportunities
* Differentiate between finite and infinite opportunities
* Adopt a set of overarching principles that underpin the service
* Work closely with Health Careers to create the optimal journey for young learners
* Place data at the heart of the service design

### Technical recommendations

* Technology options analysis
* Meet minimum viable product functionality with an application tracking system
* Explore simpler tools to achieve functionality not supported by an application tracking system

### Service management and governance

* Decide where service ownership should sit within the organisation
* Select a product manager and ensure they have the capacity to deliver the next phase of work
* Prepare for the communications challenge
* Create and enforce standards for the new service
* Create national policy around the fair distribution of pre-employment opportunities
* Develop KPIs to measure the performance of the service

### Suggested roadmap

* Prepare for an Alpha
* (Cautiously) proceed to Alpha