



Future Employment Support

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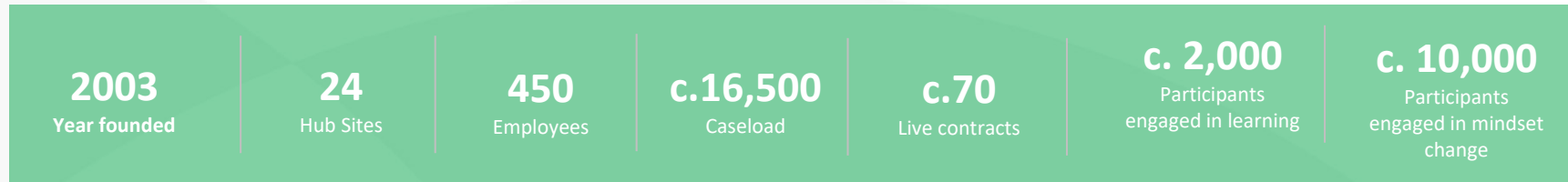
22nd April 2026

AGENDA

- Introducing AKG
- Share early insights and expectations on the impact of the evolving employment support landscape in the UK.
- Future employment support to replace Restart Scheme– what we know, what we don't know.
- Our next steps in engaging your interest in future programme delivery
- Comments, Q&A
- AOB – Invitation to attend a series of themed webinars

Who are AKG?

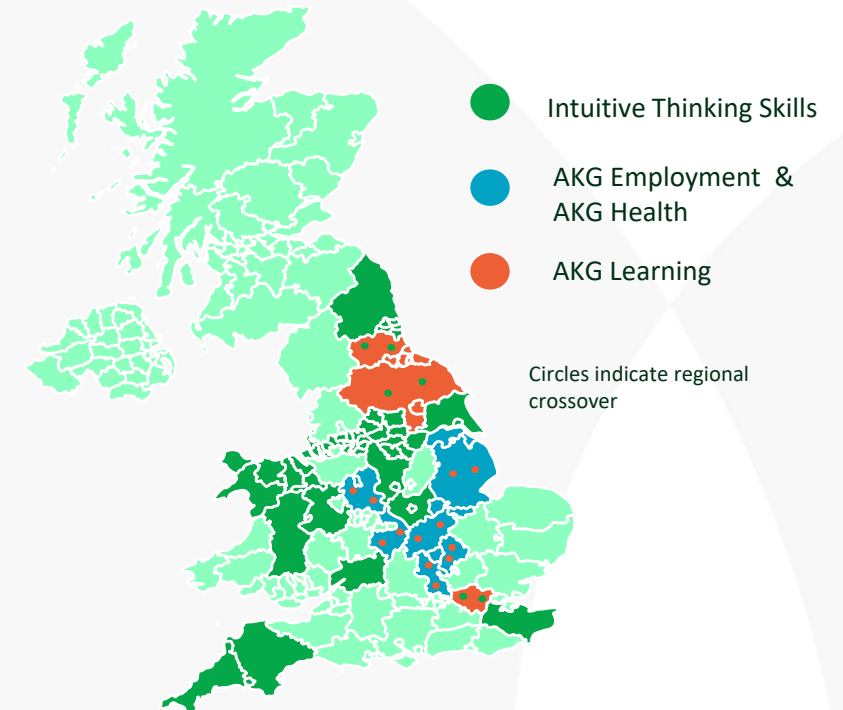
AKG UK – Company Snapshot



Business Overview

- Formed from 4 distinct business units; **AKG Employment, AKG Learning, AKG Health and Intuitive Thinking Skills.**
- Collectively deliver services against key strategic pillars of Employment, Skills, Health & Wellbeing and Mindset Change, all focusing on enhancing employment opportunities for those furthest from work.
- Services delivered primarily to Government customers, including Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), Ministry of Justice (MoJ), the Department for Education (DfE) and Local Authorities - as a mix of Prime and Subcontractor.

Geographical Footprint



The evolving employment support landscape – context for future employment support

Government objectives

Long-term ambition to achieve an 80% employment rate

Ensure all 18 to 21-year-olds in England have access to education, training or help to find a job or an apprenticeship

Back local areas to shape an effective work, health and skills offer for local people

Make health at work the shared responsibility between employers, employees and health services

Scale up and deepen the contribution of the NHS and wider health system to improve employment outcomes

Ensure the benefits system, particularly is fair and sustainable to support generations to come

Government reform priorities

Employment support services

Get Britain Working Plans

Mayfield Review & Milburn
'NEETS' Review

Welfare reform

Pathways to Work Green
Paper

Education and skills

Youth Guarantee and Skills
& Growth Levy

Employment Support - current context (1/2)

Get Britain Working

A system-wide integrated approach to tackling economic activity, reducing barriers to work and supporting more people into sustainable employment, with a long-term ambition to significantly increase the employment rate.

DWP Restart Scheme

An employment support programme for out-of-work Universal Credit claimants, providing personalised and tailored support to move individuals into sustained work. Enrolment to conclude in 2026.

Connect to Work

Locally delivered Supported Employment programmes providing tailored support for individuals facing complex barriers to employment, including disability and health conditions.



Employment Support – current context (2/2)

‘New Deal’ for NEETs

A Government-led package of employment, welfare and skills reforms targeting young people NEET. Brings together interventions such as job subsidies, guaranteed placements and apprenticeship reforms as part of the wider Youth Guarantee and skills agenda

Youth Guarantee

Broader commitment to ensure all young people aged 18-21 are learning or earning - a coordinated package of employment, education and training support. Underpinned by Youth Jobs Grant, employer incentives to hire, and the Jobs Guarantee (subsidised job placements for long-term unemployed).

Milburn Review

Independent review commissioned by Government to inform its approach to tackling youth inactivity. Forms the evidence base underpinning reforms to improve transitions into work, education and training, including the Youth Guarantee.



Welfare Reforms

Pathways to Work Green Paper

Creation of a Pathways to Work offer to rebalance spending towards work over welfare, with establishment of the 'support conversation'

Timms Review

An independent Government-commissioned review, led by Sir Stephen Timms, examining how the disability benefits system can better support disabled people to live independently and, where possible, access and progress in work. It will inform future reforms to improve fairness, effectiveness and employment outcomes.

WorkWell Expansion

Integrated "work and health" programme to prevent people with health conditions or disabilities from falling out of work, and to support those already out of work to return.



Education and Skills

Growth and Skills Levy

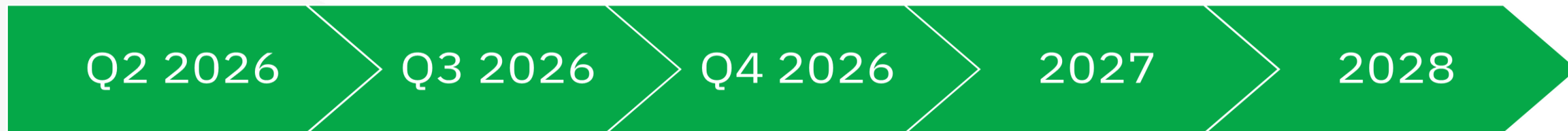
Designed to provide a more flexible offer for employers and learners than the previous Apprenticeship Levy. Will help people learn new, relevant high-quality skills at work and fuel greater innovation in businesses across the country.

SEND Reforms

Reforms to the SEND system are designed to improve outcomes for children with additional needs and create a fairer, more consistent system. Greater focus on strengthening support in mainstream education.



Ongoing Government Reviews & timeline for reform



📅 WorkWell: National rollout funding to all ICB areas begins

📅 Milburn Review: Full report

🕒 Autumn Budget

🕒 Welfare legislation expected

📅 Replacement of Restart scheme introduced

📅 Jobs Guarantee: Phase 1 delivery begins

🕒 Conference season

📅 Timms Review: Final report

🕒 SEND legislation expected

🕒 Apprenticeship Levy transition to the Growth & Skills Levy

📅 Jobs Guarantee: Final phase of initial job starts

📅 Youth Jobs Grant: Materials expected

🕒 Health legislation expected

🕒 King's Speech – 13 May

📅 WorkWell: Wider expansion expected

📅 Restart Scheme replacement providers chosen

📅 Timms Review: Call for evidence closes – 28 May

📅 Restart Scheme replacement procurement opens

📅 Jobs Guarantee: First job starts expected

📅 Milburn Review: Interim report

📅 Future of Restart in consideration

- 🕒 **Policy / Political events**
- 📅 **National programmes / delivery**
- 📅 **Reviews / publications**

What does this mean?

- Government focus on localism expected to drive commissioning of employment support, skills, and education programmes at Strategic Regional Authority (SRA) level.
- Focus on holistic approach to systemic issues within health and welfare to see greater integration between employment support, health services, and Jobcentre systems.
- Local services and their ecosystem expected to play a central role in programme design and delivery. Increased emphasis on co-design with local partners to reflect place-based needs (“local design for local needs”).
- Opportunities for strategic alignment of service delivery across employment, skills and health - from the top down and bottom up.

Future employment support to replace the Restart Scheme

AKG and the DWP Restart Scheme

In numbers...

Scale



c.81,000

Scheme Starts

(DWP published statistics, to Oct 2025)



43%

**Of all Starts managed by
delivery partner network**



c. 1.5 million

**completed participant
appointments**

c.350,000 per annum

Need



27%

**of participants have no
qualifications**

A further 11% only have Level 1



9%

**Need ESOL/Basic Skills
support**

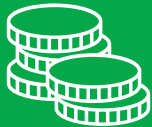


30%

**of participants have been out
of work for 2+ years**

at point of referral

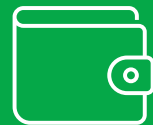
Impact



113% MPL

**Participants supported into
paid work**

19,000 job outcomes (DWP published
statistics, to Oct 2025)



c. £127 million

**in wages earned by participants
supported into work by AKG and
our delivery partner network**



c. £178 million

**in economic value for our
local communities**

assuming a conservative x1.4
economic modifier

AKG Delivery of DWP Restart Scheme

Working in partnership..

Delivered across
East Central CPA – 7
Counties
(Lincolnshire,
Leicestershire,
Northamptonshire,
Bedfordshire, North
Buckinghamshire,
Staffordshire,
Warwickshire) since
June 2021

43% of programme
delivery through 10
cross-sector, end-to-
end delivery
partners

100s of providers
engaged and
funded to deliver
specialist support
services, products
or interventions
enabling
participants to
enter and sustain
employment

Circa £60m of
funding to Delivery
Partners for end-to-
end

Circa £15m+ on
specialist
interventions and
participant spend.

DWP 'Future Employment Support'

What do we know?

- DWP is intending to procure new employment support provision for out of work Universal Credit claimants.
- It will provide personalised and tailored support that is responsive to the needs of individuals and the local area

Support will include:

- Skills, training and work experience;
- Matching participants with employers
- Support with self-employment;
- Intensive support with job applications, interviewing skills;
- Managing health conditions in the workplace;
- Travel, childcare; and specialist support (e.g. ESOL, addiction)

- Support available across England and Wales, integrated within local labour markets.
- DWP is co-designing the provision with Mayoral Strategic Authorities to ensure it is tailored to the needs of local labour markets.
- Focus on delivery by SMEs and voluntary, community and social enterprise
- Wales is expected to procure the service directly

- The service is expected to last up to 5 years, commencing on 1 Feb 2028 (this could change forwards or backwards)
- Procurement is expected to formally start on 26 Nov 2026

DWP 'Future Employment Support'

What don't we know?

The name of the service

The total value of the contracts

How the programme will be divided into Contract Package Areas geographically

What the programme will specifically ask for in delivery

Expected performance levels and other performance measures (i.e. outcomes)

Whether any of the service will be devolved to Combined Strategic Authorities (outside of Wales), or how much

Next Steps

Next Steps

- **First Stage 'light touch' EOI**
 - Details about your organisation, the geographies you cover, the cohorts you support; and the services you deliver.
- **Regular communication and engagement**
 - Further webinars in June, August and October to keep you up to date on DWP's procurement process and our plans.
 - Regional forums.
- **Delivery partner discussions**
 - Second-stage EOI once the tender is released.
 - Formal evaluation and scoring of EOIs based on delivery model requirements.
 - Shortlisting of delivery partners and due-diligence.
 - Opportunity to co-design and inform the service.

Comments and Q&A

AOB - Themed series of employer-
focussed webinars

Employer Webinar Series

| | |
|---|--|
| <p><i>April 30th 11am – 12noon</i></p> | <p>Social Recruitment in Practice: Why it’s good for communities and businesses. What social recruitment means, why it matters, the business case for social recruitment and common myths and concerns</p> |
| <p><i>May 21st 11am – 12 noon</i></p> | <p>Skills, Progression, and the Future Workforce The changing workforce, why progression matters, supporting progression, future pipelines</p> |
| <p><i>June 18th 11am – 12 noon</i></p> | <p>Health and Wellbeing at Work Why health and wellbeing is an employer issue, responsibilities, mental health in the workplace, prevention over crisis</p> |
| <p><i>July 16th 11am – 12 noon</i></p> | <p>Social Value for SMEs and VCSEs Why social value matters now, social value without the jargon, measuring and evidencing, practical tips</p> |

Click here to register your interest: [**Webinar Registration Form – Fill in form**](#)

Contact Details:

Email – bd@akguk.co.uk

To register on AKG UK's Partnership Portal -

<https://akguk.co.uk/about-us/partner-with-us/#join>