

Evaluation & evidence

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Introduction

This section describes some research studies into career interventions designed to increase exposure to either the workplace or professionals within it, which offer learning opportunities or the chances for using evidence and ideas in approaches

In doing so, in the Practices and Outcomes section, we have noted the potential contribution that the study could make to practice, by identifying the type of challenge it addresses.

As well as publications showing implementations for this type of career intervention, we have included several resources from other media, including talks, interviews and case studies. These may not be “academically” rigorous, but can provoke reflection and understanding of further approaches. These are included in the “Further illustrations and perspectives” section.

Finally, from either discussions we have had with the CDI, or through research agendas suggested in careers or related fields, we include a section on some potential future “Research questions”.

Key learning

Measurement and evaluation in careers is over 50 years old, with one of the first meta reviews being conducted in 1970 ([Hamilton and Jones, 1970](#)).

Careers practitioner researchers developed relatively slowly to 2010, though around 2 in 3 career guidance professionals were carrying out research at that time. ([Neary et al, 2011](#)).

The onus to “prove it works” (to budget holders and policy makers) has increased over the last decade or more, exemplified by a conference paper by [Hiebert et al \(2014\)](#) that gave examples of career services in Canada and Europe that demonstrated evidence of impact.

There are a wide body of case studies to show evaluations of career interventions, establishing good practices, but wider literature review and discussion papers point to the various dimensions of robust evaluation that are not often considered such as *process, policy, consumption and people* (e.g. [Hooley et al, 2019](#))

Other subjects, notably education and therapeutic fields, offer potential learning opportunities for career guidance in the area of practitioner-researcher activities and opportunities, with deeper considerations for ethical concepts and client-researcher relationship dynamics (e.g. [Shaw and Lunt, 2018](#))

Practices and outcomes

Title	Insights	Brief description
Hamilton, J. A., & Jones, G. B. (1970). Integrating and Evaluating Career Information in a Developmental Guidance Program. (Link)	Early practices shown for context, highlighting a matching theory based approach	This paper provides an example of an early practice into career evaluation in the US. The project reflects matching theory as instrumental in the design of the evaluation.
Enderlein, T. (1977). A review of career education evaluation studies. (Link)	An early review to provide context to subsequent practices	This review from nearly half a century ago provides a contextual benchmark into the evolution of career evaluation with cases set in the US.
Fretz, B. R. (1981). Evaluating the effectiveness of career interventions. Journal of Counseling Psychology, 28(1), 77. (Link)	Critical analysis of evaluation practices	The paper provided a critical review of past evaluations of career guidance practices in the literature to this time, noting (for instance) that the majority of such evaluations focused on only one type of intervention, often not including a control group and only rarely attending to client attributes that might differentially affect the results of the intervention.
Campbell, R. E. (1983). Enhancing Career Development: Recommendations for Action. A Review of Empirical Studies of the Effects of Career Guidance. (Link)	Demonstration of linking insights to recommendations for service improvements	This study shows an example of a structured analysis of literature to extract research insights that are then used to recommend steps to improve career guidance services. The focus for this particular study was on the US school system.
Donohue, R., & Patton, W. (1998). The effectiveness of a career guidance program with long-term unemployed individuals. Journal of Employment Counseling, 35(4), 179-194. (Link)	Evaluation of a program for the long term unemployed	The paper provides a template for a standard evaluation, using pre and post program surveys to understand the effect. The evaluation also included a qualitative element which, in this case, revealed themes such as increased knowledge of self, improved direction in career goals, confirmation of own perceptions of abilities, and improved confidence. Comparisons indicated that participants were able to generate more career options. The study shows the kind of insights that can be found using pre- and post measurement instruments, as

Title	Insights	Brief description
		well as qualitative and quantitative research instruments.
Bimrose, J. (2004), What is effective guidance. Report by the University of Warwick for the Department of Education (Link)	Defining successful outcomes of guidance	This 204-page report, funded by the Department of Education, was commissioned over two decades ago, but contains a wealth of information from n=57 international case studies that provide perspectives on the question posed by the report's title. A combination of literature reviews and research into client expectations is used to provide a range of potential outcome metrics by which to judge the success of guidance, noting also that expectations differ between stakeholders.
Maguire, M. (2004). Measuring the outcomes of career guidance. International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, 4, 179-192. (Link)(Paid)	Considering measures in light of contextual factors that affect outcomes from guidance	This paper is oft-cited in evaluation research. The author draws attention to the various factors that can characterise a career guidance intervention and can influence an outcome. From such reflections, the author proposes how to consider the selection of suitable evaluation measurements. The implications are discussed for both practice research and policy-making.
Plant, P. (2004). Quality in career guidance: Issues and methods. International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, 4, 141-157. (Link)	Considering the dimensions of quality during evaluation	This paper discusses the dimensions of quality during evaluation of career services: "Quality issues in career guidance can be tackled from a range of different perspectives, related to economic, ethical and/or effectiveness criteria. With selected examples mainly from the USA, Canada, and Europe, this paper highlights how quality is described and measured in terms of statements, guidelines, standards or hidden customers."
Bernes, K. B., Bardick, A. D., & Orr, D. T. (2007). Career guidance and counselling efficacy studies: An international research agenda. International Journal for Educational and Vocational	Meta review on career efficacy studies to learn lessons and understand weaknesses	This paper provided a meta review on career guidance and counselling efficacy studies. The sum of the analysis led the authors to propose that more studies of every sort are needed: "More efficacy studies, experimental designs, and longitudinal research in career guidance and counselling in educational and organizational settings, and for diverse cultural and economic backgrounds are needed."

Title	Insights	Brief description
Guidance, 7, 81-96. (Link)(Paid)		
Crust, G. (2007). The impact of career related interventions in higher education. Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling, 17(1), 16-22. (Link)	Making the case for evaluation	The paper sets out the case for evaluating career services and their effectiveness, using the context of a higher education setting. (Similar arguments could be made in many settings to the ones proposed in this paper). Topics are covered that span commercial (cost effectiveness), effectiveness (the necessity to target capability gaps of potential users to effectively help them e.g. career management skills), and standards (the critical value of implementing an underlying process of change and to elicit feedback to drive further improvement.)
Fowkes, K. M., & McWhirter, E. H. (2007). Evaluation of computer-assisted career guidance in middle and secondary education settings: Status, obstacles, and suggestions. Journal of Career Assessment, 15(3), 388-400. (Link)(Paid)	Evaluation of digital tools in schools settings	This article critiques existing research on outcomes associated with the use of computer-assisted career guidance systems (CACGS) by middle and secondary student populations. In doing so, the paper provides useful frameworks for measuring digital career tools. In this particular paper, many shortfalls were noted in the state of the literature i.e. there is a focus on user satisfaction rather than career-related gains; failure to examine potential differential effects of CACGS associated with gender, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status; and reliance on small convenience samples.
Baudouin, R., Bezanson, L., Borgen, B., Goyer, L., Hiebert, B., Lalande, V., Magnusson, K., Michaud, G., Renald, C., & Turcotte, M. (2008). Demonstrating Value: A Draft Framework for Evaluating the Effectiveness of Career Development Interventions.	Creating an effective evaluation framework for practice	This article was written in Canada, set against a backdrop where evaluation of practice was viewed as an exception rather than a norm. The authors develop and propose an evaluation framework for evaluation that permits linking the services provided with the client outcomes that are being achieved. The paper starts with a review of some existing evaluation frameworks from the literature, but recognises that “no one evaluation model is “best” in all regards”. Criteria are suggested for what makes for a “good” evaluation framework. The paper thereby offers both a practical tool

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Canadian Journal of Counselling and Psychotherapy, 41(3). (Link)		and insights to consider the criteria of an effective evaluation framework.
Nassar-McMillan, S., & Conley, A. H. (2011). Programme evaluation toolbox: effective evaluation principles and considerations in career practice. International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, 11, 211-220. (Link)	Ingredients of an evaluation toolkit and acknowledgment of weaknesses.	The paper provides an overarching review of career guidance evaluation, with a focus on the US: "In this article, we will review the key components of effective programme evaluation, including purposes and types of evaluation. Our review will span empirical and practical literature across disciplines and within guidance and counselling, specifically. We will review current evaluation models within an international context but focus predominantly on US based ones, along with articulating their shortfalls.
Plant, P. (2012). Quality assurance and evidence in career guidance in Europe: counting what is measured or measuring what counts?. International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, 12, 91-104. (Link)(Paid)	Integrating policy drivers into assessments of services	The paper reviews the European landscape for quality measurements in career guidance and particularly addresses how policy factors are integral to assessing career guidance services. The paper describes the role that quality assurance played on policy and practice, at that time, and highlights issues.
Dany, F. (2014). Time to change: The added value of an integrative approach to career research. Career Development International, 19(6), 718-730. (Link)(Paid)	Conducting and Interpreting research to reach deeper insights	The paper calls for an integrative approach to research. A criticism is levelled at some research approaches in the careers field, which are reviewed, that they "stick to narrow views of {chat a} career {is}". The paper provides examples that invite career differences to be re-examined which seek alternative explanations than offered through some treatments. The authors propose that adopting their wider perspectives will create richer discussions amongst researchers.
Hiebert, Bryan, Karen Schober, and Lester Oakes. "Demonstrating the impact of career	Making the case for evaluation, and reviewing approaches to	This book chapter is contextualised by an agee in which there is an onus on career guidance practitioners to "prove it works". The importance of the topic is described. The article describes some

Title	Insights	Brief description
<p>guidance." Handbook of career development: International perspectives. New York, NY: Springer New York, 2014. 671-686. (Link)(Paid)</p>	<p>determine a choice of framework</p>	<p>alternative approaches for documenting the impact of career guidance services that account for the emphasis on evidence-based practice and outcome-focused intervention, observed by the researchers. Drawing from examples in Canada, the US and Europe, the authors draw attention to a number of different frameworks that have been employed to measure impact.</p>
<p>Holman, J. (2014). Good career guidance. The Gatsby Charitable Foundation, London. (Link)</p>	<p>Understanding the rationale of the Gatsby benchmarks</p>	<p>The paper describes the eight benchmarks used that shaped English career educations from the mid 2010s to the present. This study describes a validation of the measures in the North East of England.</p>
<p>Haug, E. H., & Plant, P. (2016). Research-based knowledge: researchers' contribution to evidence-based practice and policy making in career guidance. International Journal for Educational and Vocational Guidance, 16, 137-152. (Link)(Paid)</p>	<p>Considering the role and opportunity for valuable practitioner-research</p>	<p>The paper focuses on researchers' contribution to evidence-based practice and policymaking in career guidance. The article puts a specific focus on the need for a stronger involvement of the voice of users.</p>
<p>Neary, S., & Johnson, C. (2016). CPD for the career development professional. Crimson Publishing. (Link)</p>	<p>Recognising the role of research in practitioner CPD.</p>	<p>This publicly available book chapter does not introduce new research per se, but draws together thinking to explain the role of research in a practitioner's professional practice. A broad definition is taken of what constitutes "research", with varied suggestions on where to source it. References are provided to other texts which discuss the wider concepts and rationale for "evidence based practice".</p>
<p>Spokane, A. R., & Nguyen, D. (2016). Progress and prospects in the evaluation of career</p>	<p>Reviewing the historical literature and adopting community</p>	<p>The paper reviews research into the evaluation of career assistance from 1970 to 2014 and finds n=23 studies, which are then examined for common conclusions and recommendation. The</p>

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assistance. Journal of Career Assessment, 24(1), 3-25. (Link)	based evaluation criteria	author suggests that the current body of work could be usefully augmented with research that showed community-level impacts, as well individual.
Tejedor, E. M., Mangas, S. L., & Sierra, J. B. (2016). Measuring the relationship between career, guidance, and adults' training needs: Analysis and assessment of results from the perspective of the social responsibility. Universitas psychologica, 15(4). (Link)	Measuring needs of a population and the correlation between career counseling and career satisfaction.	This paper describes research to elicit needs of a population: It researched and analysed the training needs and career guidance needs, as well as the guidance received, in the adult population in the Spanish region of Castile and Leo using a survey (n=375), where many participants were unemployed. The paper was able to demonstrate relationships between counselling and satisfaction with career. The paper provides a useful battery of 24 questions to elicit training and counselling needs.
Ali, S. R., Flanagan, S., Pham, A., & Howard, K. (2017). Translating the career development knowledge base for practitioners and policy makers. In The Handbook of Career and Workforce Development (pp. 227-242). Routledge. (Link)(Paid)	Communicating practice research outcomes in a way to influence public policy	This book chapter discusses the potential for research in practice to be "translated" so that it can be used by a policy audience. It provides a framework by which research outcomes can be communicated and a three step process - "research; translation; and institutionalization" - to see the evidence implemented. The chapter reviews situations in, amongst others, the US Departments of Labour and Education to show the importance of putting evidence into a form that is understandable, about what types of programs work in different contexts for different populations. (The format also, implicitly, suggests considerations at the stage of designing the study such that it can generate outcomes in this format.)
Jacquin, P., & Juhel, J. (2017). An individual mixed-evaluation method for career intervention. The Career Development Quarterly, 65(1), 16-28. (Link)	Example of a mixed evaluation method that addresses imperatives to show economic value	This paper is motivated by the need for career guidance to show economic returns in developed countries. A measurement framework is proposed that has temporal and process dimensions and reports on progress at a series of checkpoints to demonstrate the impact of the career intervention.
Whiston, S. C., Rossier, J., & Barón,	Implementing evidence-led	This paper reviews, discusses and proposes the characteristics of evidence

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<p>P. M. H. (2017). Evidence-based practice in career and workforce development interventions. In <i>The Handbook of Career and Workforce Development</i> (pp. 39-56). Routledge. (Link)</p>	<p>career guidance interventions</p>	<p>led career guidance practice. The paper begins with a meta analysis on career intervention evaluations. The rest of the paper reviews evidence led interventions in different groups/themes.</p>
<p>Martaningsih, Sri Tuttur. "Evaluation of career guidance program in vocational high school." <i>SHS Web of Conferences</i>. Vol. 42. EDP Sciences, 2018. (Link)</p>	<p>Case study of a programme evaluation in a vocational schools</p>	<p>This paper provides a case study of an evaluation of a career programme at a vocational schools, talking through the various stages that were involved: This review is conducted qualitatively through surveys, interviews and literature studies to provide the necessary evidence. It also describes the scope of the evaluation, covering quality, weaknesses, obstacles to service implementation, and potential utilization.</p>
<p>Childs, R. (2019), <i>Developing a methodology for evaluating the impact of Career Guidance in the modern age</i>. Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment for the degree of Professional Doctorate in Occupational and Business Psychology (DOBPsych). Kingston University UK (Link)</p>	<p>The process of developing and testing a methodology and instrument for evaluating the impact of career guidance.</p>	<p>This thesis describes the process for developing a methodology for evaluating the impact of Career Guidance interventions. There is a literature review which summarises methodologies published in peer reviewed journals since 1987. The recommendations that arose from the study were to develop a framework that could be used to guide and combine results from different studies together with the development of a measure that could be used as a benchmark by a wide range of researchers and practitioners. This led to an empirical study which involved the development of a potential benchmark measure which was then piloted on two very different samples to establish usability, acceptability, reliability and sensitivity.</p>
<p>Cobelli, N., Bonfanti, A., Cubico, S., & Favretto, G. (2019). <i>Quality and perceived value in career guidance e-services</i>.</p>	<p>Evaluation of career e-services</p>	<p>This paper aims examined career guidance services in terms of e-service quality, information quality and perceived value, using students' perceptions. The sample was n=119 and taken from a school in Italy. The insights were two fold, showing the ability to achieve high</p>

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International Journal of Quality and Service Sciences, 11(1), 53-68. (Link)(Paid)		levels of user satisfaction, and also showing how to derive correlations that inform on the most important aspects of the service for client satisfaction. A specific finding was that students valued a report after using the system.
Elliott, J., Stankov, L., Lee, J., & Beckmann, J. F. (2019). What did PISA and TIMSS ever do for us?: The potential of large scale datasets for understanding and improving educational practice. Comparative Education, 55(1), 133-155. (Link)	Using large public datasets alongside qualitative studies to increase insight and impact	The authors of the paper suggest that a gulf exists between researchers who use large data sets and other researchers who develop deeper qualitative understanding of individuals and groups and how they make career choices. The authors suggest how analysis of large data sets can be employed alongside the latter type of research to provide richer and deeper insights into, for instance, cross-cultural and regional differences between the career experiences of different groups. Specific examples are noted in this paper of using the PISA and LEO data which means outcomes at two stages of early adulthood.
Hooley, T., & Rice, S. (2019). Ensuring quality in career guidance: A critical review. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 47(4), 472-486. (Link)	Measuring and assuring quality	The paper is motivated by the lack of a quality framework for career guidance, and so proposes a solution. The authors wrestle with the conceptualisations of quality in career guidance, as well as the specific challenges related to the disparate stakeholders. This culminates in a multi-dimensional perspective on quality: Domain, policy, process, people, organisation, product and consumption. Indicators are suggested to measure (and assure) there is quality achieved in each.
Whiston, S. C., Mitts, N. G., & Li, Y. (2019). Evaluation of career guidance programs. International handbook of career guidance, 815-834. (Link) (Paid)	Designing an evaluation activity having critically considered past evaluation studies	The authors first examine previous research related to the effects of career guidance programs or interventions with a discussion of the effectiveness of career guidance programs, which modalities are preferable in providing career guidance, which clients benefit from these interventions, and outcome measures that are typically used in the evaluation of career guidance programs. Second, the authors provide a summary of how to conduct an evaluation of a career guidance program. This overview utilises a six-step process for evaluating

Title	Insights	Brief description
		career counselling programs proposed in previous studies
David, L. T., Truța, C., Cazan, A. M., Albisser, S., & Keller-Schneider, M. (2020). Exploring the impact of a career guidance intervention program in schools: Effects on knowledge and skills as self-assessed by students. <i>Current Psychology</i> , 1-12. (Link)	Case study of a school program evaluation	This paper describes a case study into evaluating a school program. The study provides an example of designing control groups and extracting effects from large samples. The study also shows an instrument used to measure both knowledge and skills before and after a program. The intervention was found to be successful in this case study.
Dislere, V., & Vronska, N. (2020, June). Evaluation of career counsellors' competences in career guidance. In <i>The Proceedings of the International Scientific Conference Rural Environment. Education. Personality (REEP)</i> (Vol. 13, pp. 385-399). (Link)	Evaluation of career counsellor competences	This paper provides a case study in self-evaluation of n=334 career counsellors in Latvia. The paper usefully describes the derivation of a measurement instrument and analysis to show some of the key "factors" (themes) of competence, such as information sources, career service management and career education. The literature review also draws from both career and wider counselling to justify the inclusion of different questions.
Young, R. A., & Valach, L. (2019). Action theory: An integrative paradigm for research and evaluation in career. <i>International handbook of career guidance</i> , 797-814. (Link)(Paid)	Application of action theory to career research	Action theory reflects the common experience that people understand their own and others' behaviours as goal-directed, so in this context. is used to relate peoples' actions with their careers. The approach is proposed as a framework for researchers to evaluate the quality of services, by identifying action as the unit of analysis. The framework can provide a useful way of conceptualizing the impact of career systems on clients' ultimate outcomes through a series of behaviours/actions.
Hansen, J. S. (2021). <i>Critical Reflection and Ethical</i>	Applying critical reflection and ethics in practice	This is a chapter from a book that promotes critical reflection on practice, but only one area where the book references aspects of evidence led and

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<p>Responsibility in Career Counselling Practice. In H. Košťálová, & M. Cudlínová (Eds.), A Practitioner's Guide to Uncharted Waters of Career Counselling: a Critical Reflection Perspective (pp. 87-89). EKS. (Link)</p>		<p>ethical practice. Ethical dilemmas are noted, such as when career guidance places undue additional pressure on secondary school students, and proposes ways to think around the problem.</p>
<p>Robertson, P. J. (2021). Evidence-based practice for career development. In P. J. Robertson, T. Hooley, & P. McCash (Eds.), The Oxford handbook of career development (pp. 353–370). Oxford University Press. (Link)(Paid)</p>	<p>Thinking through an evidence-led strategy for career guidance and mitigating risks and obstacles</p>	<p>The author discusses the ambition of having an evidence led approach to career guidance, and highlight some obstacles and challenges to the goal. Firstly, there are innate differences between the medical profession, which is often seen as a “standard” for such practice. Secondly, there “policymaking and practice are political processes and research evidence is necessary but not sufficient to influence decision-making.” Therefore, is it suggested that “to best inform practice, research evidence should be combined with local knowledge, practitioner experience, and input from service users”</p>
<p>Rice, S., Hooley, T., & Crebbin, S. (2021). Approaches to quality assurance in school-based career development: policymaker perspectives from Australia. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 50(1), 110–127. (Link)</p>	<p>Managing quality (in secondary schools)</p>	<p>This paper reports on research on how Australian secondary schools manage quality in career guidance. The paper answers questions on how policy makers define quality, the measures and mechanisms they use, and how these approaches should be classified. Policy-makers are found to have a wide range of approaches to embedding quality in schools. These are arranged in terms of their frequency of use.</p>
<p>Cedefop et al. (2022). Towards European standards for monitoring and evaluation of lifelong guidance systems and</p>	<p>Establishing routines for evaluation and quality (in the context of adult guidance and</p>	<p>Evaluation approaches developed over 2009-15 made good progress in Europe, but “are still short of providing clear methodological indications on the implementation of the suggested indicators and the reality and context of current monitoring and evaluation</p>

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services (Vol. 1). Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Cedefop working paper; No 9.. (Link)	lifelong learning)	practices”. In this first report of three examines “individual support to careers and learning to shed light on the efficacy of current upskilling, reskilling and activation measures by examining career development and guidance systems and services for adults.”
Dodd, V., Hanson, J., & Hooley, T. (2022). Increasing students’ career readiness through career guidance: measuring the impact with a validated measure. <i>British Journal of Guidance & Counselling</i> , 50(2), 260-272. (Link)	Measuring career readiness	This paper describes a large-scale study with two samples (n=1500 and 2240) in English secondary schools to test career readiness of students pre- and post-career interventions. The paper describes the relevance of the “career readiness” measure as a useful indicator and finds that engagement of students correlates with career readiness. The analysis depicts how levels of engagement across career education can be correlated with an outcome measure to show tangible impact, rather than rely on self-reported improvements from participants.
Konuk, M. and Yimaz, A. (2023). Investigation of experimental studies in the field of career counselling. <i>International Journal of Education Technology & Scientific Researches</i> , 8(25). (Link)	Designing research to evaluate career guidance	This study reviewed the approaches and models used in the studies conducted in the field of career counselling and vocational guidance between 2013-2023. showing both themes and new areas. The content analysis also showed themes such as the most common dependent variable (which was topped with ‘career decision’).
Jemini Gashi, L., Bëruxulli, D., Konjufca, J., & Cakolli, L. (2023). Effectiveness of career guidance workshops on the career self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and career goals of adolescents: an intervention study. <i>International Journal of Adolescence and</i>	Example of the evaluation of a group workshop with multiple elements and multiple outcome metrics.	This study evaluated the effectiveness of the career guidance workshop intervention by examining changes in career self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and career goals with 47 high school students in grades 10–12 (aged 16–18 years). Based on a five-step model including self-awareness, career exploration, school and career paths, real encounters, and decision-making, the career guidance workshop combined lectures, discussions, individual activities, and pair and group work. Data were collected through career self-efficacy, outcome expectation, and

Title	Insights	Brief description
Youth, 28(1), 2281421. (Link)		career goal questionnaires and analysed using a pre- and post-test design with a single intervention group
Shu, L., Yanbin, Z., Ka, C., Zakariah, S. H., & Ali, N. M. (2023). The Establishment of Career Development and Employment Guidance Course Evaluation System based on CIPP Model. <i>Journal of Technology and Humanities</i> , 4(1), 41-48. (Link)	Application of a measurement framework to career education evaluation	This paper from China introduces and applies a measurement framework to assess a career course. The so-called CIPP model entails the proposed system includes context evaluation, input evaluation, process evaluation, and product evaluation. A set of measurement questions and scales are proposed to test the content of the courses. (While designed more for larger scale education, the framework and ideas could theoretically inform the evaluation of career education at any scale).
Percy, C. and Hooley, T., (2023) Lessons for career guidance from return-on-investment analyses in complex education-related fields, <i>British Journal of Guidance & Counselling</i> (Link)	Building ROI investment cases for careers guidance to influence policy or institutional decision making	The authors tackle the problem of finding a methodology to calculate the return on investment for career guidance, as a foundation of making cases for investment. A review was carried out of 32 studies in different countries that measured return on investment in education and related settings, but concluded there was a high degree of inconsistency. A practical method was ultimately proposed, while the discussion in the paper provides insights that can stimulate a critical appraisal of different approaches.
Winter, David. "A framework for analysing careers and employability learning outcomes." <i>Journal of the National Institute for Career Education and Counselling</i> 51.1 (2023): 15-25. (Link)	Taking a strategic and critical perspective on measuring outcomes, that draw awareness to inadvertent biases	Set against the context of seeing greater integration of careers education within the curriculum, the authors questions how to create suitable measurement frameworks that overcome ideological biases, and account for different forms of "capital" that a graduate might accrue on the path towards the labour market (e.g. sociological). A framework is suggested which profiles career interventions in terms of "depth" of learning (we can either 'discern', 'acquire', 'adapt' or 'enhance' while learning, across various "domains" where learning could occur (e.g. forms of capital like social networks and personal identity).
Bridgeman, J., & Giraldez-Hayes, A.	Using AI to provide	One of the applications mentioned for AI within coaching and counselling is the

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(2024). Using artificial intelligence-enhanced video feedback for reflective practice in coach development: benefits and potential drawbacks. Coaching: An International Journal of Theory, Research and Practice, 17(1), 32-49. (Link)	augmented feedback to coaches and counsellors from videos of client interactions	opportunity to provide feedback to the practitioner. One way to do this would be to use AI to 'watch' and 'analyse' videos of client interactions. In this paper, such a practice is explored. In this study, n=15 coaches were interviewed who had deployed it. Benefits were reported in terms of the insights it offered, leading to greater self-awareness. Drawbacks included the nervousness around using new technology and on seeing one's own performance. Future research is suggested.
Cedefop (2024). Learning outcomes going global: a multifaceted phenomenon. Luxembourg: Publications Office. (Link)	Building learning outcomes into guidance to enable global comparisons for better learning	This study from Cedefop examines the international trend for measuring learning outcomes across different education based systems, in careers and beyond. The move to learning outcomes is described as "one of the most significant trends to have influenced European VET over the past two decades." The learning outcome approach facilitates new benefits, such as the ability to compare international policies, and also to create foundations for designing lifelong learning systems. A stakeholder analysis of these measures is also included.
Hughes, D., McCormack, D., Neary, S., & King, P. (2024). Praxis in guidance and counselling: new frontiers. British Journal of Guidance & Counselling, 1-6. (Link)	Understanding the value of involving practitioners in research to clients, professionals and the evidence base	The authors draw attention to the fact that much research is conducted by academics without the input of practitioners - a feature of past studies that has been observed by other researchers. Reasons for this 'praxis gap' are cited. However, the authors make the case for involving practitioners more, drawing attention to the ways this can be done and the way that it can increase the value of the study: For instance, "a credible and sustainable model of professionalisation in careers practice depends on narrowing the gaps between both theory and practice."
Fonzo, C., & Serradel-Lopez, E. (2024). Quality assurance: framework of indicators and	Synthesis of quality frameworks and QA practices	Based on the already explored domains of guidance, the literature shows how to get informed about new research and developments in quality assurance and evidence-base in career and guidance-related interventions, This

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<p>evaluation models for career guidance. Quaderni di Comunità: persone, educazione e welfare nella società 5.0: 2, 2024, 127-157. (Link)(Paid)</p>		<p>references several of the papers in this notebook. European quality models were found to dominate the field.</p>

Further illustrations and perspectives

Selected publications that describe practices and outcomes for different challenges are listed below, with links in the title column. We have mostly included open access sources, but where the sources requires payment, it is noted next to the link by “(Paid)”.

Title	Insights	Brief description
Fraser, D. M. (1997). Ethical dilemmas and practical problems for the practitioner researcher. Educational action research, 5(1), 161-171. (Link)	Learning about practitioner research from other fields (re: ethics)	This paper explores the ethical dilemmas and problems encountered when an educator undertook an action research study at their school. For instance, the author noted the role of personal values (bias), and considered the politics of the researchers' role in the organisation. Relevant considerations may be found for careers researcher-practitioners.
Conneeley, A. L. (2002). Methodological issues in qualitative research for the researcher/practitioner. British Journal of Occupational Therapy, 65(4), 185-190. (Link)(Paid)	Learning about practitioner research from other fields (re: client-research relationship in occupational therapy)	This paper examines some of the methodological and ethical issues that arose during the course of a qualitative study in occupational therapy. In particular, the relationships between the researcher and the respondents, reflexivity and the dynamics of power during data collection and data analysis are discussed.
McWilliam, E. (2004). W (h)ither practitioner research?. The Australian Educational Researcher, 31(2), 113-126. (Link)(Paid)	Advocating for development of practitioner research to increase its influence	The paper is written from the perspective of the education sector, but contains relevant considerations for other sectors where practitioner research is conducted. Particularly usefully, the this part of the three part study describes the barriers to wider use and methods of overcoming them.
Costley, C., & Gibbs, P. (2006). Researching others: care as an ethic for practitioner researchers. Studies in higher education, 31(1), 89-98. (Link)(Paid)	Ethical considerations and duties of care in practice research	The paper discusses the duty of career for practice researchers: practitioner researchers are “insiders who have insider knowledge not only of systems but also of the individuals they designate. ... This creates for them a different ethical position than, say, for researchers able to research and then leave the context of their research space.” Implications are discussed.

<p>Hughes, D. and Gration, G. 2006. Performance Indicators and Benchmarks in Career Guidance in the United Kingdom. University of Derby (Link)</p>	<p>Selecting indicators by which to measure career guidance effectiveness</p>	<p>The report reviews the use of indicators for the effectiveness of career guidance in Europe, and benchmarks the UK against other nations. The paper reviews a range of potential indicators that could be used and explains that they cover inputs, processes and outputs. The use of indicators by different UK institutions involved in the career landscape are described.</p>
<p>Ragland, B. B. (2006). Positioning the practitioner-researcher: Five ways of looking at practice. Action Research, 4(2), 165-182. (Link)</p>	<p>Reflecting on postures to take as a researcher-practitioner</p>	<p>The paper describes the personal experiences and reflections of a worker at a juvenile correction centre, while undertaking research. The reflection leads the researcher to question their posture with others and the meaning of this for the research.</p>
<p>Athanasou, James. Evaluating career education and guidance. Acer Press, 2007. (Link)(Paid)</p>	<p>Handbook for evaluation</p>	<p>This book is dedicated to the measurement of career guidance, and starts with the basic question of “what is evaluation?” It takes a step by step approach in each chapter to evaluating different aspects of a service, such as costs and content.</p>
<p>Grégoire, J., & Nils, F. (2008). Cognitive measurement in career guidance. In International handbook of career guidance (pp. 565-585). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. (Link)</p>	<p>Contextual review of cognitive measurements as used in careers</p>	<p>The paper provides a context of measuring career guidance outcomes dating back to 1900, and through the rise of matching theories. The paper describes that “common sense” was the basis for much of the field to the 1950s, but evolved more scientifically thereafter.</p>
<p>ETI (2009), Evaluating the Quality of Careers Information, Advice and Guidance provided by Career Information, Advice and Guidance Providers (Link)</p>	<p>Assessing information quality used in guidance using a holistic framework of measures</p>	<p>While this study is now dated in terms of the findings, it provides a systematic method and approach to assessing the quality of information (as well as wider CIAG) provision from different service providers, looking at both the information itself as well as policy and infrastructure dimensions (amongst others).</p>

<p>Frigerio, G. (2010). "Narratives of Employability: Effective Guidance in A Higher Education Context. A Qualitative Evaluation of the Impact of Guidance." Higher Education Career Services Uni (Link)</p>	<p>Conducting a small scale case study project to better understand expectations of service users and the impact of the service.</p>	<p>This study is an example of a small-scale research study at Warwick University that took the form of six case study students who underwent a career consultation. Expectations were elicited before the event, and then outcomes reviewed two months later. While the authors stress the limited applicability of the specific study to the context where it was deployed, it shows a practical example of a small exploratory study to increase understanding of students' expectations, build them into practice, and review the effectiveness of practice.</p>
<p>Reese, R.J., & Miller, C. (2010). Using Outcome to Improve a Career Development Course: Closing the Scientist-Practitioner Gap. Journal of Career Assessment, 18, 207 - 219. (Link)</p>	<p>Anticipating unexpected or anomalous outcomes</p>	<p>In this study, the authors test a follow up to a previous study to understand if modification that had been made led to desired improvements. The authors found a large increase in the effect size of a career class in terms of the self-efficacy of students, which were sustained into a second year of the course. The "uneven" nature of results prompted the researchers to evaluate improvements, however, and include measurements for outcome data. The paper provides an example of interactive learning.</p>
<p>Menter, Ian J., Moira Hulme, and Dely Elliot. "A guide to practitioner research in education." (2011): 1-280. (Link)(Paid)</p>	<p>e-Book with methods and considerations</p>	<p>This ebook provides an overview of approaches, methodologies and considerations for practitioner research in the education field, with many cross-over considerations for career guidance professionals, particularly in education.</p>
<p>Neary, S., & Hutchinson, J. (2011). More questions than answers: the role of practitioner research in professional practice. 92x8z. (Link)</p>	<p>Understanding the status and evolution of researcher practitioner roles in career guidance</p>	<p>At the time of the paper, the career guidance practitioner had been encouraged after having developed slowly, but this role had subsequently come under recent challenge. his paper presents examples of progress within this endeavour and the views of practitioners who have engaged in research activities, either as part of their role or as dedicated continuing professional development (CPD). At the time of the</p>

		article, 67% of practitioners engaged in research.
Robertson, P. J. (2013). The well-being outcomes of career guidance. <i>British Journal of Guidance & Counselling</i> , 41(3), 254-266. (Link)	Widening the target metrics for consideration	Health, wellbeing and work have risen to the fore as important topics in the past decade. This paper discusses these linkages and suggests a role for career guidance to support wellbeing outcomes, as well as employability metrics. The paper offers an argument to expand evaluation beyond “hard and fast” career outcomes, and into considering wellbeing.
Hiebert, B., Schober, K., & Oakes, L. (2014). Demonstrating the impact of career guidance. In <i>Handbook of career development: International perspectives</i> (pp. 671-686). New York, NY: Springer New York. (Link)(Paid)	Reviewing the different ways that evidence for career guidance impact and value has been presented	This chapter discusses the challenge of demonstrating the value of career guidance services. The authors review international practices and present alternative approaches for documenting the impact of career guidance services that embrace the current emphasis on evidence-based practice and outcome-focused intervention. In particular, to address a “prove it works” challenge, the authors provide examples of two approaches to dealing with this situation. (More studies have followed since this one in 2014).
Jacquin, P., & Juhel, J. (2017). An individual mixed-evaluation method for career intervention. <i>The Career Development Quarterly</i> , 65(1), 16-28. (Link)	Demonstrating impact on clients over the course of a career programme	The paper addresses the challenge that career counsellors face to demonstrate the value of their services from policy makers. This method proposes a mix method approach to demonstrate impact: The method used 5 items related to a client’s career decision self-efficacy and studied the evolution of those items throughout the intervention of 1 career counsellor (43 days) to show improvements.
Frigerio, G. (2018). Making connections through practitioner research. In <i>Graduate Careers in Context</i> (pp. 179-192). Routledge.	Embarking on a practitioner research initiative to measure impact	This chapter focuses on the role of the career development practitioner integrating theory with their practice through engaging in practitioner research. It uses the systems theory framework developed to show the complexity of career development, where individuals are mutually influenced by a range of other people.

<p>Shaw, I., & Lunt, N. (2018). Forms of practitioner research. <i>British Journal of Social Work</i>, 48(1), 141-157. (Link)</p>	<p>Learning from other fields: Understanding different types of, and roles for, practitioner research</p>	<p>The aim of this paper is to draw on evidence to identify distinctions within those forms of research which are to significant degrees practitioner engaged. The research review on which this is based took place in the fields of health, social care and social work. The paper also defines the scope of practitioner-research itself. Distinctions are draw between academic partnerships and practitioner-led studies, to highlight the implications of how studies are conducted and how they are scoped and led.</p>
<p>Whelan, Nuala, et al. "EPIPIC-Enhancing Employability through Positive Interventions for improving Career potential: the impact of a high support career guidance intervention on the wellbeing, hopefulness, self-efficacy and employability of the long-term unemployed-a study protocol for a randomised controlled trial." <i>Trials</i> 19 (2018): 1-18. (Link)</p>	<p>Designing an evaluation activity with a control group</p>	<p>The paper provides a detailed outline for an example study that involves a single-centre randomised, controlled, partially blinded trial. A total of 140 long-term unemployed job-seekers from a disadvantaged urban area will be randomly assigned to two groups: (1) an intervention group; and (2) a 'service as usual' group. Each group will be followed up immediately post intervention and six months later.</p>
<p>Weber, Peter C., et al. "European research agenda for career guidance and counselling." <i>New perspectives on career counseling and guidance in Europe: Building careers in changing and diverse societies</i> (2018): 219-250. (Link)</p>	<p>Reviewing the research landscape and potential gaps</p>	<p>The paper provides a research agenda for the careers sector, developed by subject matter experts: "The proposed lines of research, which are pronounced in the ERA, are based on a literature review involving 45 researchers concerned with the CGC practice. At three events, approximately 150 researchers from across Europe were engaged in the discussion, what kind of research is needed to enhance the knowledge foundation of the CGC practice."</p>

<p>Winter, D. (2018). The rise of the practitioner-researcher: How big data and evidence-based practice requires practitioners with a research mindset. In Graduate Careers in Context (pp. 167-178). Routledge. (Link)</p>	<p>The implications of big data on career guidance</p>	<p>This chapter provides a brief introduction to the concept of big data and how it is starting to have an impact on higher education institutions. It explores how the availability of data on students' career thinking has the potential to transform the practice of careers and employability support in universities. These pressures are making it increasingly important for careers service staff to be willing and able to engage with robust evidence-based practice. Different flavours of education-careers professional are described with different onuses to use data.</p>
<p>Maree, J. G. (2019). Group career construction counseling: A mixed-methods intervention study with high school students. The Career Development Quarterly, 67(1), 47-61. (Link)(Paid)</p>	<p>Measuring a an intervention using multiple tests and synthesising the results</p>	<p>This study investigated the value of group career construction counselling in a high school with (n = 57) students. The paper describes the intervention, but also the range of tests and evaluations completed by students to measure different facets of pre- and post-intervention attitudes and capabilities: a) the Career Adapt-Abilities Scale–South Africa (CAAS-SA), b) the Career Interest Profile and c) the Maree Career Matrix. Results showed that the students' career adaptability scores had improved meaningfully and no gender-based differences had been introduced. However, differences were detected between both the boys' and the girls' pre- and posttest Control and Confidence subscale scores.</p>
<p>Austin, M. J. (2020). Identifying the conceptual foundations of practice research. In The Routledge handbook of social work practice research (pp. 15-31). Routledge. (Paid)</p>	<p>Learning from other fields (e.g. social care)</p>	<p>This book chapter reviews practitioner research in the field of social care, to provide potential learning for the career sector.</p>
<p>Kjærgård, R. (2020). Career guidance and the production of subjectivity. In Career and career guidance in the</p>	<p>Addressing subjectivity in career assessments</p>	<p>The book chapter (set on the Norwegian career system) provides a philosophical discussion on subjectivity in career guidance and its evaluation. This chapter explores the development of career guidance and how it is subsequently imbued with different ideologies, discourses and</p>

<p>Nordic countries (pp. 81-92). Brill. (Link)</p>		<p>forms of power to produce subjectivity. The chapter identifies the emergence of five discourses and related productions of subjectivity.</p>
<p>Hanson, J., Moore, N., Neary, S., & Clark, L. (2021). An evaluation of the North East of England pilot of the Gatsby Benchmarks of good career guidance. University of Derby (Link)</p>	<p>Designing a comprehensive evaluation into a major or complex intervention.</p>	<p>The evaluation used longitudinal research to examine the impacts of a career programme implemented in schools in the North East of England. It was particularly focussed on the impact of the programme on helping schools and students to reach Gatsby Benchmarks, which are indicators of progress in career knowledge, experience and capability. There were six different components to the measurement and evaluation exercise, which combined to give a robust and holistic understanding of how well the pilot performed. The evidence used for this work has helped to “make the case” for careers education in other schools, showing the wider value of such work.</p>
<p>The Careers & Enterprise Company (2021). Swindon and Wiltshire Careers Hub: Evaluation Guide for Careers Activities and Programmes: Edition 1 – February 2021. London: The Careers & Enterprise Company. (Link)</p>	<p>Creating a matrix of research subjects and research instruments to evaluate a programme</p>	<p>This document offers an example of a research approach employed by the Careers and Enterprise Company to measure the impact of a schools intervention programme. The document describes a matrix of stakeholders and research instruments that were used to give a rounded view of the programme, and come to robust conclusions that account for multiple stakeholder perspectives. Several methods are described for getting feedback, with some innovative ways offered for engaging target respondents.</p>
<p>HM Treasury (2024), The Green Book (2022). (Link)</p>	<p>Making cases that align with government practice</p>	<p>The Green Book is guidance issued by HM Treasury on how to appraise policies, programmes and projects. It also provides guidance on the design and use of monitoring and evaluation before, during and after implementation. The book is not prescriptive but provides a range of accepted methodologies and practices.</p>

Future research questions

From the CDI's discussions with stakeholders, we have heard an appetite for more practitioner based research, particularly recognising that there are very many variables to test. Related suggestions for future research activities in this area included:

- A pilot fund to facilitate practitioners or researcher-practitioners - for conducting a series of faster, small scale tests - that can shed light on the impact of changing different key variables in interventions (e.g. online vs offline, group size, dosage effects with different client groups etc).
- Deconstruction of the career guidance interview into components, noting the decisions taken by a practitioner at different junctures, and evaluating the best decisions that practitioners could make in different scenarios.
- Development of metrics that can be used as useful proxies for mid and longer term outcomes from career interventions, that can be asked of clients shortly after a career intervention, and which mitigate the need to do costly, longitudinal studies.
- Increasing the use of appropriate, proven career theories by practitioners, for both designing services and evaluating them, through training and support.

[Weber et al \(2018\)](#) wrote a research agenda for career guidance.

There are also various paper that have suggested research agenda in specific aspects of careers e.g.

- Careers exploration ([Jiang et al, 2019](#))
- Career growth ([Modem et al, 2017](#)).
- Career proactivity ([Jiang et al, 2023](#))
- Sustainable careers ecosystems ([Donald et al, 2024](#))

The area of evaluation is itself a cross-cutting discipline within the social sciences. Therefore, there are several journals dedicated to evaluation, such as [Evaluation](#) and [The International Journal of Evaluation Theory, Research and Practice](#). Research agendas proposed in the past - which address the activities of evaluation and measurement - have covered the illustrative topics below:

- Evaluating the impact of social and political research ([Link](#))
- Evaluation of public participation exercises ([Link](#))
- Responsible research practices ([Link](#))
- Measurement practices for policy learning ([Link](#))

Additionally, researcher-practitioner research in other fields such may lead to new ideas for careers (e.g. [social work](#))

Related publications

(Outside of the usual career journals and publications, the following sources may also be useful for exploring this topic from different perspectives:

Title	Overview
Applied Measurement in Education (Link)	Applied Measurement in Education's prime objective is to improve communication between academicians and practitioners. To help bridge the gap between theory and practice, articles in this journal describe original research studies, innovative strategies for solving educational measurement problems, and integrative reviews of current approaches to measurement challenges.
Counselling and Psychotherapy Research (Link)	Counselling and Psychotherapy Research (CPR) is an innovative international peer-reviewed journal dedicated to linking research with practice. CPR is a journal of the British Association of Counselling and Psychotherapy.
Journal of Educational Measurement (Link)	Published on behalf of the National Council on Measurement in Education (NCME), Journal of Educational Measurement (JEM) is a vehicle for sharing the latest methodological improvements and innovations in educational measurement.
Journal of Measurement and Evaluation in Education (Link)	JMEEP is a quarterly journal focusing on methodological studies that will contribute to the development of measurement theory and innovative studies to measurement problems in the education sector.
Journal of Practitioner Research (Link)	A double-blind, peer-reviewed, open-access journal, includes manuscripts that represent the traditions of action research, teacher research, practitioner inquiry, teacher inquiry, and other traditions that target the same type of knowledge production.