

Scheme to help adults retrain gets underway

Adults whose jobs could change due to advances in technology will get support to retrain and get on a path to a new career, Education Secretary Damian Hinds announced today, marking the start of the innovative National Retraining Scheme.

The National Retraining Scheme – which is being developed to support adults to adapt to changes in the workplace – has begun its initial rollout in the Liverpool City Region with the launch of a new digital service, Get Help to Retrain.

It comes as figures reveal that up to 35% of jobs could be at risk of changing as a result of automation in the next 10-20 years with computer programmes or even robots transforming the way things are done in the workplace.

Get Help to Retrain is designed to help adults to discover new opportunities and what they need to do to get the skills to land a new job. The online service will help adults identify their existing skills, explore local job opportunities and where to go to find training courses to gain the skills they need to progress. Dedicated support will also be on hand from trained careers advisors to guide people through the process and provide expert information and advice.

Education Secretary Damian Hinds said:

“Technologies like AI and automation are transforming the way we live and work and bringing huge benefits to our economy, but it also means that jobs are evolving and some roles will soon become a thing of the past.

“The National Retraining Scheme will be pivotal in helping adults across the country whose jobs are at risk of changing to gain new skills and get on the path to a new, more rewarding career.

“This is big and complex challenge, which is why we are starting small, learning as we go, and releasing each part of the scheme only when it’s ready to benefit its users. We’re beginning with the launch of the Get Help to Retrain digital service in the Liverpool City Region first, working alongside our partners the CBI and TUC, to make sure we get it right and the service works for the people who need it.”

The launch of the Get Help to Retrain digital service is the first of a series of products that will make up the full National Retraining Scheme. The National Retraining Scheme – backed by £100 million of Government investment – is a manifesto commitment and is a key part of the Government’s Industrial Strategy for building a country fit for the future.

The scheme is led and overseen by the National Retraining Partnership – a

unique partnership between Government, the CBI and the TUC – to ensure the collective voices of businesses and employees are heard.

Get Help to Retrain will initially start as a private service. Eligible adults across Liverpool – those aged 24 and over, with a qualification below degree level and working below a certain wage threshold – will be invited to trial the new service so the system can be developed and fully evaluated before being scaled up and rolled out to other regions in the coming months. Get Help to Retrain will be released to all eligible adults in England in early 2020. A series of additional products that will make up the full service are being developed and tested in parallel, before being released at different times.

The [National Careers Service](#) in the Liverpool City Region is supporting the testing of the scheme by providing qualified careers advisers to give expert information, advice and guidance to users of Get Help to Retrain.

Robert Jenrick, Exchequer Secretary to the Treasury, said:

“The pace of technological change has never been faster and U.K. is well positioned to take advantage of that, but we also need to watch the backs of working people whose careers will be changed as a result.

“The National Retraining Scheme is a £100m programme to help people gain new skills in the workplace, change occupation if necessary and increase their pay and prospects.”

Matthew Fell, CBI Chief UK Policy Director, said:

“Ensuring our country’s workforce is fit for the 21st century, particularly the challenges and opportunities presented by automation, is vital if we are to improve productivity growth, which is the only sustainable route to higher wages and living standards.

“As the world of work changes, employers – supported by Government – have a crucial role to play in providing opportunities that help people learn throughout their careers. And as it develops, the national retraining partnership should become part of wider cross-government efforts aimed at embracing the fourth industrial revolution.”

Kevin Rowan, Head of Organising, Skills and Services Department at the Trades Union Congress said:

“Every worker should have the opportunity to improve their skills and retrain.

“This is crucial as the labour market is transformed by technology and automation in the coming years. The launch of the first phase of the National Retraining Scheme marks the beginning of a new collaborative approach – opening retraining up to many more adults, and preparing them for the jobs of the future.

“Union learning reps will play a key role in supporting workers to access the

advice and retraining opportunities made available through the scheme.

“This is just the beginning. The challenge for the National Retraining Partnership is to develop a national programme that invests in the potential of all workers, delivering the skills we need to compete in the growth sectors of the future.”

Steve Rotheram, Metro Mayor of the Liverpool City Region, said:

“As new technologies disrupt our existing economic model, creating new types of jobs but making others obsolete, it makes perfect sense to give people the opportunity to retrain for the employment opportunities of the future so I’m pleased that the National Retraining Scheme is launching in the Liverpool City Region.

“It is also clear that, because regional economies like ours differ so much from those of London and the South East, the government needs to deliver real devolution of powers and funding for training so that we can ensure our residents have the skills that our economy needs.”