

# Strand 4: Specialist skills

News story

Explore the skills, knowledge and networks within specialist skills, strand 4 of the Government Campus curriculum.



[Government professions](#) develop the capability of a group of people with particular skills, knowledge or expertise. They work across government on behalf of departments, agencies and functions. An individual can belong to more than one government profession.

A function is a grouping aligned across government, embedded into departments and arm's length bodies. A function supports improved outcomes across government, defining what needs to be done, and why, for the effective undertaking of work within its scope.

Professions develop specialist skills and knowledge in people, and functions conduct the specialist work.

The Government Campus works with professions to offer high-quality training to improve specialist skills across the Civil Service. Strand 4 includes training by the professions for the professions, bringing coherence and alignment across government.

Professions also provide training for non-professionals to develop a broad base of knowledge and skills in the wider Civil Service. Much of this broader awareness level training can be accessed through [Strand 2 of the Government Campus](#).

## **Explore the specialist skills strand**

Professions provide training for their members through accredited routes as well as wider contentious development, deepening expertise to meet relevant professional standards.

The vast majority of professions have defined career frameworks and work with relevant professional bodies to offer clear development routes from working level through to practitioner and expert levels. This training can be

accessed through the professions' curriculums.

In addition, there are professions that defer directly to their professional bodies and their training offer:

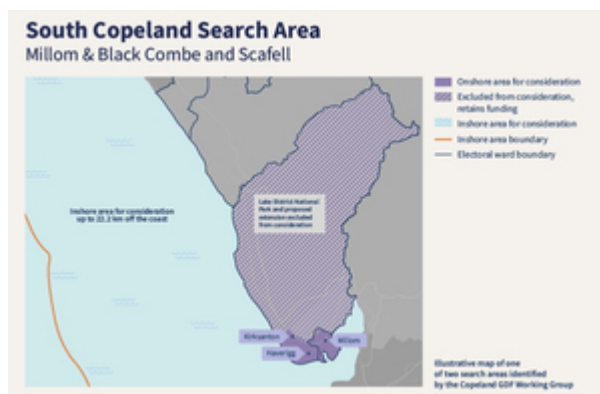
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## [Second GDF Community Partnership forms in Cumbria](#)

News story

Move unlocks £1 million local investment funding



The formation of a second Community Partnership in Copeland marks another step forward in the nationwide search to find a willing community and suitable site for a Geological Disposal Facility (GDF) for the safe and secure disposal of higher-activity radioactive waste.

This follows formation of the [Mid Copeland GDF Community Partnership](#) last month and completes the early engagement work undertaken by Copeland GDF Working Group over the last 12 months.

South Copeland GDF Community Partnership will now focus further engagement activities in a search area covering the electoral wards of Millom and Black Combe & Scafell.

Initially, RWM will explore the potential of deep geology beyond the coast for the underground elements of a GDF, as recommended by Copeland GDF Working Group. This would mean a land-based surface facility could provide access to a disposal area in rock deep below the seabed.

The Lake District National Park and proposed extension will not be considered.

RWM Chief Executive Karen Wheeler said:

We're delighted to see the formation of another Community Partnership in Copeland. It provides a platform to increase community engagement and trigger investment funding for projects that should really benefit the communities involved.

We look forward to continuing discussions and beginning investigations in these areas for a site that could be suitable for a GDF.

Formation of the Community Partnership will unlock £1 million per year of community investment funding available for initiatives supporting economic development opportunities, improving community well-being, or enhancing the local environment, including cultural and natural heritage. This figure could rise to £2.5 million later in the process.

As well as Copeland Borough Council and RWM, membership, which should be reflective of the Search Area, also includes local councillors. One of the first tasks is to recruit more members from the community.

Further information is available from the website:  
<https://southcopeland.workinginpartnership.org.uk/>

Learn more about geological disposal [here](#).

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## [Apple and Google duopoly limits competition and choice](#)

Firms exercising a “vice-like grip” over mobile devices.

Earlier this year, the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) launched a probe over concerns that Apple and Google have too much control over operating systems (iOS and Android), app stores (App Store and Play Store), and web browsers (Safari and Chrome) that together form their ‘ecosystems’.

When someone buys a mobile device, they essentially enter either Apple’s iOS or Google’s Android ecosystem. As a result, Apple and Google are able to control how online content, such as mobile apps and websites, is provided to users. They can also tilt the playing field towards their own services – for example, Apple does not allow any other app store than its own on iPhones and

iPads, and its browser Safari comes pre-installed on those. Google's browser, Chrome, and app store also come pre-installed on most Android devices.

The CMA is concerned that this is leading to less competition and meaningful choice for customers. People also appear to be missing out on the full benefit of innovative new products and services – such as so-called 'web apps' and new ways to play games through cloud services on iOS devices. The CMA is also concerned that people could be facing higher prices than they would in a more competitive market, including for Apple phones, app subscriptions and purchases made within apps.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA said:

Apple and Google have developed a vice-like grip over how we use mobile phones and we're concerned that it's causing millions of people across the UK to lose out.

Most people know that Apple and Google are the main players when it comes to choosing a phone. But it can be easy to forget that they set all the rules too – from determining which apps are available on their app stores, to making it difficult for us to switch to alternative browsers on our phones. This control can limit innovation and choice, and lead to higher prices – none of which is good news for users.

Any intervention must tackle the firms' substantial market power across the key areas of operating systems, app stores and browsers. We think that the best way to do this is through the Digital Markets Unit when it receives powers from government.

## **Mobile ecosystems**

The CMA has provisionally found that Apple and Google have been able to leverage their market power to create largely self-contained ecosystems. As a result, it is extremely difficult for any other firm to enter and compete meaningfully with a new system.

Apple does not allow alternative app stores to its own and has rules in place which limit the functionality of other browsers. A similar situation appears to arise with Google through its contracts with Android device manufacturers, despite offering its Android platform on an open source basis. These agreements encourage the pre-installation of Play Store and Chrome, which means they are used by the overwhelming majority of Android customers.

App developers also have to comply with Apple and Google's rules for access to their app stores, which some say are overly restrictive. Developers are required to accept these terms in order to reach users, which can include paying 30% commissions to Apple and Google.

Both firms argue that many of these controls are needed to maintain the

security and quality of the overall service to their users, and in some cases to safeguard users' personal information. The CMA agrees that these considerations are very important but is concerned that Apple and Google are making decisions on these grounds that favour their own services and limit meaningful choice, when other approaches are available.

The report sets out a range of actions that could be taken to address these issues, including:

- Making it easier for users to switch between iOS and Android phones when they want to replace their device without losing functionality or data.
- Making it easier to install apps through methods other than the App Store or Play Store, including so-called "web apps".
- Enabling all apps to give users a choice of how they pay in-app for things like game credits or subscriptions, rather than being tied to Apple's and Google's payment systems.
- Making it easier for users to choose alternatives to Apple and Google for services like browsers, in particular by making sure they can easily set which browser they have as default.

## Strategic Market Status

The CMA's work so far suggests, that Apple and Google would meet the criteria for 'Strategic Market Status' (SMS) designation for several of their ecosystem activities, [as set out in the government's recent proposals to create a new pro-competition regime for digital markets](#). These proposals may change as a result of the consultation process and any subsequent legislative process, and so will be subject to ongoing review.

If those proposals become law, the Digital Markets Unit (DMU) – which will sit within the CMA – will ultimately be responsible for deciding which 'big tech' firms get SMS status. This status will lead to these firms facing legally enforceable codes of conduct to govern their behaviour and to prevent them from exploiting their powerful positions.

With this in mind, the CMA's current view is that the firms' market power in this area will be best dealt with through the DMU, which the government has recently proposed powers for. The CMA is also [awaiting stronger competition and consumer law powers](#) from the Government, which were recently consulted on.

In the meantime, the CMA has been investigating [Apple's App Store](#) and [Google's Privacy Sandbox proposals](#) over competition concerns. While both examine issues falling within the scope of this study, this work into mobile ecosystems is much broader. The CMA will adopt a joined-up approach

across all these related cases, to ensure the best outcomes for customers and other businesses.

The CMA is consulting on its initial findings and welcomes responses by 7 February 2022. It will be continuing with the second half of the study and expects to issue a final report in June 2022.

For more information, [visit the Mobile Ecosystems market study page](#).

## Key Facts and figures

1. More than half of all smartphones in use in 2020 were Apple iPhones, while the rest were all using a version of the Android operating system.
  2. Over 95% of native app downloads through mobile app stores in the UK in 2020 were made via the App Store or the Play Store.
  3. Apple's and Google's browsers account for 90% of browser usage on mobile devices in the UK – Safari has a share of close to 50% and Chrome has a share around 40%.
  4. UK adult internet users spent on average over 3 and a half hours a day online in 2020, of which 81% (almost 3 hours) of this time on smartphones or tablets.
  5. On a global basis, Apple made around £50 billion in profit in 2020, and recent disclosures indicate that this grew to around £82 billion in 2021. Google made approximately £36 billion in profit in 2020.
  6. In 2020, around 80% of Apple's revenues come from device sales, whereas Google generates more than 80% of its revenue from advertising.
  7. There are a number of private litigation cases ongoing in relation to mobile ecosystems. Epic Games [is taking Google to court over its mandatory in-app payment method](#), Dr. Rachael Kent [is pursuing action in relation to Apple charging up to 30% commission on some apps](#), and Elizabeth Coll [is taking similar action against Google](#). According to the claims, Apple and Google's terms are costing users more money.
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# Prime Minister and Head of the NHS call for volunteers to support National Booster Effort

- Government and NHS announce ambition to recruit tens of thousands of volunteers to help get jabs into arms
- All eligible adults will be offered the chance to get their jab before the New Year
- PM: “We need you to come forward again, to work alongside our brilliant GPs, doctors, nurses and pharmacists, to deliver jabs and save lives.”

Prime Minister Boris Johnson and NHS Chief Executive Amanda Pritchard have joined forces to issue a rallying cry for thousands of volunteers to come forward and support the NHS booster campaign.

The public will be urged to play a crucial role in the UK’s fight against Omicron by helping the NHS to get as many jabs into arms as quickly as possible. No task will be too small to contribute towards this national effort.

Yesterday the Prime Minister announced a new ambition for every eligible adult to have the chance to get their jab by the end of the year.

This follows new evidence that suggest the Omicron variant is extremely transmissible and two jabs are not enough to protect against infection.

The new target means the NHS will be massively ramping up its vaccine operations in the next few days, and it needs as many people as possible to play their part by volunteering their time to help.

Urging volunteers to sign up to the booster drive, Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

As part of our Get Boosted Now vaccination drive we need to increase our jabbing capacity to unprecedented levels.

But to achieve something on this scale, we need your help. So today I’m issuing a call for volunteers to join our national mission to get jabs in arms.

We need tens of thousands of people to help out – everyone from trained vaccinators to stewards.

Many thousands have already given their time – but we need you to come forward again, to work alongside our brilliant GPs, doctors, nurses and pharmacists, to deliver jabs and save lives.

So please come forward if you can.

There are now almost 3,000 vaccine sites across the country, staffed by over 90,000 volunteers who have given up 1.1 million hours of time so far.

In the next week hundreds more sites, mobile units and pop ups will be springing up across the country. These will be in a range of locations that will make it as easy as possible for people to get boosted – such as at football stadia, shopping centres and racecourses.

This means volunteers are needed to perform tasks such as registering patients, managing queues and giving jabs.

Last week the NHS announced a recruitment drive for 10,000 paid vaccinators and support staff and that it will also work with the Royal Voluntary Service and St. John Ambulance to recruit a further 40,000 volunteers for roles such as admin and stewarding queues.

In the last week, 13,000 people have come forward as steward volunteers, and a further 4,500 people have registered their interest to take up one of the 10,000 paid vaccinator roles. The government and NHS now want to go even further.

NHS Chief Executive Amanda Pritchard said:

In the face of the grave threat posed by the new Omicron strain of Covid, the NHS is seeking to offer vaccine booster protection to all eligible adults by the end of the month, a new national mission in which everyone can play their part.

There is no doubt that our incredible NHS staff will rise to the challenge but we cannot do this alone – we need the support of the public and volunteers to once again support the Covid vaccination programme.

Since we first issued a call to arms we have had an outstanding response but Omicron has shifted the goalposts and we are now renewing our plea to the nation – I would urge anyone who has volunteered in the past, or considered it but not taken up the opportunity, to come forward now – search ‘NHS vaccine team’ today and find out more about how you can help us save lives.

Health and Social Care Secretary Sajid Javid said:

To help us turbocharge our COVID-19 booster programme we need



people across the country to join our national mission to get boosted now.

We are so grateful to the volunteer vaccinators from organisations such as St John Ambulance and Royal Voluntary Service who have made an enormous contribution by administering millions of vaccinations since the start of this year.

People interested in either a voluntary or paid role are urged to visit the [Join Vaccine Team page](#) or search 'NHS vaccine team'. People who volunteered or were trained for paid roles previously are also being contacted to help out again.

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## [The tireless work of IRMCT shows that impunity will not be allowed to prevail](#)

Thank you, Mr President.

I would like to thank President Agius and Prosecutor Brammertz for their reports, which highlight how the International Residual Mechanism for Criminal Tribunals continues to play a crucial role in ending impunity and implementing international justice.

I would like to highlight that the Mechanism has made significant progress this year, in particular, by rendering three notable judgments.

First, it affirmed Ratko Mladić's convictions for violations of the customs of war, crimes against humanity and the genocide at Srebrenica.

Then, in the contempt proceedings connected with Ngirabatware case, it reached convictions in relation to witness interference and violating court orders.

And finally, the Trial Chamber found Jovica Stanišić and Franko Simatović responsible for violations of the laws or customs of war and crimes against humanity. They were sentenced to 12 years of imprisonment each.

Through its tireless work, the Mechanism continues to show that impunity is not and will not be allowed to prevail. The United Kingdom is also pleased to see that, following the timely delivery of these judgments, the Mechanism has a clear plan for winding down its activities.

Mr President,

We remain grateful for the Mechanism's ongoing efforts to progress the case of Félicien Kabuga and note that the Mechanism is still considering his fitness to stand trial. We will continue to follow closely developments in the case and would be grateful for timely updates as they arise.

We also continue to follow the case of Protais Mpiranya, a former commander of the Presidential Guard, who is believed to be in, or to have been in, Zimbabwe. We continue to call on the Government of Zimbabwe to work with the Mechanism to support investigations.

Mr President,

We call on all Member States to assist the Mechanism, and we commend the Government of Niger for its acceptance of the 9 acquitted or released persons.

However, regional judicial cooperation in parts of the Western Balkans continues to remain inadequate, which has direct implications for achieving justice for victims.

We would like to mention the Mechanism's referral of Serbia to the Security Council, for the failure to arrest and transfer Petar Jojić and Vjerica Radeta. This continued non-compliance is serious, and follows years of requests, considerations and discussion. We urge Serbia to comply with the Mechanism's order.

Mr President,

Last week we observed the United Nations International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of this Crime. However, glorification of war criminals and the denial of genocide continue. This is unacceptable and increases the suffering of the victims. We see this in many areas, including with the continuing presence in Belgrade of a mural of Ratko Mladic, a man of convicted war crimes, crimes against humanity and genocide.

Reconciliation is difficult. We must accept and acknowledge the truth of the past to move forwards. Glorifying the perpetrators and instigators of these heinous acts takes us further away from reconciliation and hinders the achievement of a positive future.

The United Kingdom will continue to condemn such denial and glorification in all its forms and calls on all Member States to do so.

Mr President,

As you have seen through our actions, the United Kingdom remains committed to the Mechanism and we reaffirm our willingness to assist it wherever possible in fulfilling its mandate and implementing its vision of being a small, temporary and effective organisation.

Thank you, Mr President.