

The UK paid £4.1 million for a bookmarks site

The UK Government recently unveiled its '[AI Skills Hub](#)', which wants to provide 10 million workers with AI skills by 2030. The main site was delivered by PwC for the low, low price of.. [£4.1 million \(~\\$5,657,000\)](#).

II.1.7) Total value of the procurement (excluding VAT)

Value excluding VAT: £4,148,645

It is *not* good. Like, at all - the UI is insanely bad and it's clear that this was just a vibecoded site (to be fair, this is the *AI* Skills Hub, but c'mon, where is the pride in your work? I would be ashamed to even release this as a prototype!)



PwC didn't even write any of the course content! The only thing the Skills Hub does is link out to external pages, like Salesforce's free Trailhead learning platform:

The screenshot shows the Trailhead website interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with links for Products, Industries, Customers, Events, Learning, Support, Company, a search bar, and a login button. Below the navigation bar, there is a secondary navigation menu with categories like Home, Learn, Community, Career Growth, Certifications, and Help. A prominent banner at the top states: "Scheduled Maintenance: Trailhead, myTrailhead, and Trailblazer Community will be offline January 17, 16:00–20:00 UTC. Thanks for bearing with us as we update your experience!"

The main content area features a course card for "Responsible Creation of Artificial Intelligence". The card includes a badge icon, a brief description: "Remove bias from your data and algorithms to create ethical AI systems at your company.", and three action buttons: "Start", "Favorite", and "Add to Trailmix". To the right of the course card is a detailed course outline with the following items:

- Understand the Ethical Use of Technology (~10 mins)
- Recognize Bias in Artificial Intelligence (~15 mins)
- Remove Bias from Your Data and Algorithms (~10 mins)
- Create Responsible Generative AI (~10 mins)

Below the course outline, there is a section titled "Skills you will gain" which includes a small icon of a balance scale.

Note that I'm fairly certain this course already existed before the contract was even awarded, so all the site does is.. link out to other sites?

PwC itself also admits that the site does not properly meet accessibility standards:

A dark-themed document section titled "Non-compliance with the accessibility regulations". It contains a bulleted list of issues:

- Some pages have an inconsistent semantic structure such as missing header levels or extra content inside the main area that may cause assistive technology to misunderstand the page. (WCAG 4.1.2 Name, Role, Value)
- Some pop-up elements are not positioned correctly in the tab order, making them hard to use with the keyboard or screen readers that rely on this to understand the order of content on the page (WCAG 2.4.3 Focus Order)
- The fixed header can sometimes obscure content when using keyboard navigation as the content is still considered inside the viewport, so the page does not scroll appropriately. (WCAG 2.4.11 Focus Not Obscured (Minimum), 1.4.8 Visual Presentation)
- Some of the input controls do not work in the expected manner when operated using a keyboard. (WCAG 2.1.1 Keyboard)
- The comment box can occasionally trap keyboard focus while being used, making it hard to comment using only a keyboard. (WCAG 2.1.2 Keyboard Trap)
- Some UI elements have poor colour contrast (WCAG 1.4.3 Contrast (Minimum))

Below the list, a note states: "Some documents are in non-HTML formats, for example PDF. They are not accessible in a number of ways including missing text alternatives and missing document structure."

Even for those without a disability, the lack of here in this regard means that the site can be very confusing and buggy as a result.

Incorrect laws

The site has a course on “AI and intellectual property”. One thing it mentions is [fair use](#):

FAIR USE AND TRANSFORMATIVE WORKS

Fair use is a legal doctrine that permits the limited use of copyrighted material without permission for purposes such as criticism, commentary, parody, or education. With generative AI, determining whether the use of copyrighted material is fair use or infringement becomes more complicated. AI models may generate content that falls within the realm of fair use, but the automated nature of AI creation raises questions about the intent and transformative nature of the generated works.

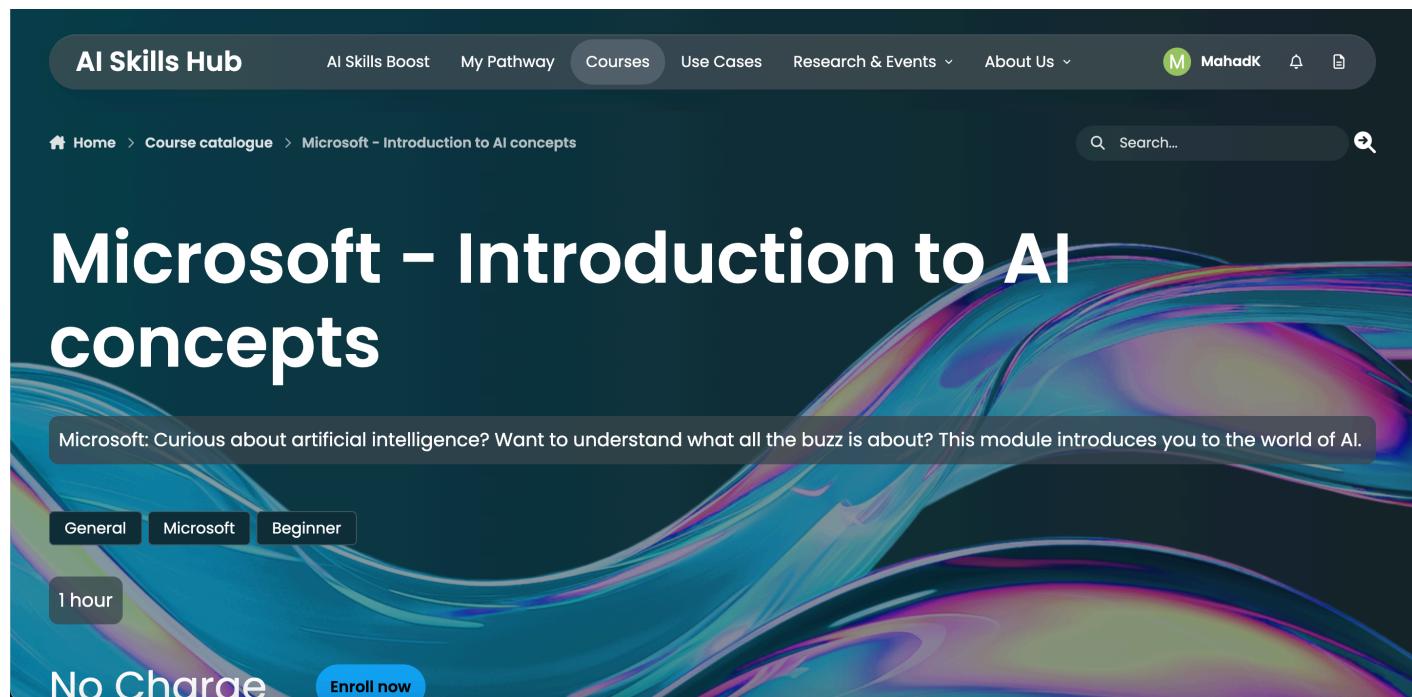
([credits for the photo](#))

Except that *fair use is not a thing in the UK* - that's a US concept! The UK uses what's known as “fair dealing”, which is more restrictive than fair use, so the details here are plain wrong.

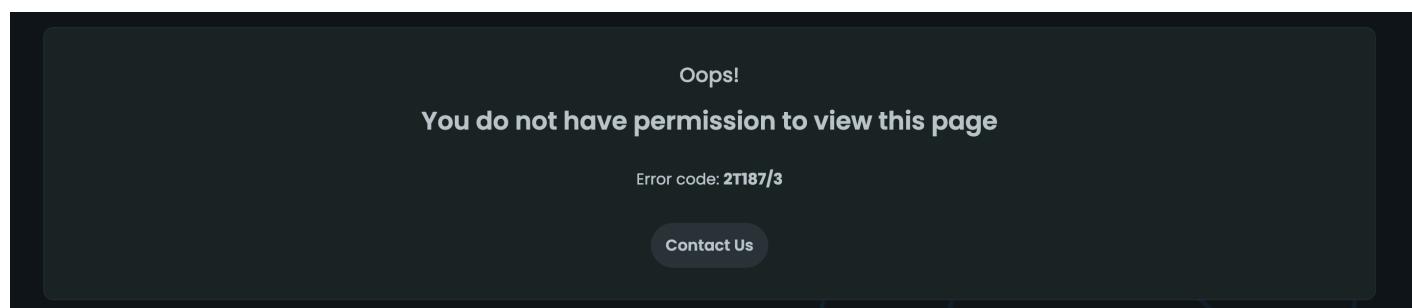
Lack of care, lack of craft

The interface for this website has also not been clearly thought out - one glaring example is the process of actually enrolling in a course.

On the course page, the “Enroll Now” button is *tiny*, and if you don’t see it and try scrolling down to the bottom, you will find yourself nothing but a comment section!



Then you have other bugs too, like the “Skills & Training Gap Analysis” - which is linked at the top of the site! - apparently being closed off to the public for no reason:



To be honest, seeing this made me angry.

I'm angry at the sheer *wastefulness* of the UK Government here. Our public services are collapsing - while £4 million is admittedly chump change for the UK government, there are real people behind these numbers - families waiting months for NHS appointments, children in crumbling schools, vulnerable people not getting the care they need. The waste feels particularly galling when you realise that almost no one will actually use this site!

I'm also angry that the small webdev businesses we have here in the UK were left out of this - for less than 5% of the cost, we'd have a *better* website and help out small businesses who actually care about their work, instead of handing the project to a multinational company that made nearly \$60 billion in revenue in a year and has zero qualms about ripping off the British taxpayer.

Do better.

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— Merge branch 'main' of https://github.com/skyfallwastaken/skyfall-site (ec8f360)

512KB Club Team Blue

