# Former UK civil service head joins US AI firm amid growing influence of ex-government figures



Former UK civil service head Simon Case has joined American AI company Invisible Technologies as a paid, part-time adviser, marking another instance of senior Westminster figures moving into roles with prominent technology firms. Case, who stepped down as the UK’s most senior civil servant in December last year and now sits as a crossbench peer in the House of Lords, sought guidance from the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (Acoba) before taking on the role. The committee advised him not to leverage any privileged information gained during his civil service tenure nor use his government contacts to influence policy or secure advantages for Invisible Technologies. The role reportedly does not involve any direct interaction with government entities, and Case clarified he had no prior connections with the company during his Whitehall service.

Invisible Technologies, a US-based firm specialising in developing and training artificial intelligence for third-party use, joins a list of tech companies recently engaging with former UK government officials. Notably, former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has assumed paid advisory positions with both Microsoft and Anthropic, a San Francisco-based AI startup behind the Claude AI models. Sunak’s appointments similarly required vetting by Acoba, which underscored restrictions preventing him from using insider knowledge or lobbying government officials on behalf of these companies for two years following his departure from office.

Sunak’s advisory role at Anthropic involves providing strategic insights on global macroeconomic and geopolitical trends without engaging in UK policy matters or government contacts. At Microsoft, his role includes offering high-level strategic perspectives and speaking at events like the Microsoft Summit. These firms are significant players in the AI field—Microsoft recently announced its integration of Anthropic’s AI models into its Copilot assistant, a move aimed at diversifying its AI technology beyond its longstanding partnership with OpenAI. Microsoft's involvement in the UK tech and economic landscape is notable, leading Acoba to scrutinise potential risks of undue influence from Sunak’s positions.

The former prime minister has pledged to donate all earnings from these advisory roles to The Richmond Project, a numeracy skills charity he co-founded with his wife, Akshata Murty. While former government figures taking lucrative roles in tech firms has raised public and regulatory attention, the advisory roles are reportedly structured to comply fully with transparency and ethics guidelines. Acoba, which is set to be dissolved with its functions transferred to the Civil Service Commission, has recently reviewed several such appointments, including other public figures such as former Scottish first minister Humza Yousaf.

Beyond AI, other former officials are engaging with sectors pertinent to national development; for example, former Conservative rail minister Huw Merriman has become non-executive chairman of the High Speed Rail Group, highlighting the ongoing involvement of ex-ministers in influencing infrastructure and economic growth policy from outside Parliament.

These developments underline a growing trend: the UK’s foremost technology firms are increasingly linked to senior ex-government figures, raising questions about influence, the use of privileged information, and how best to regulate the revolving door between government and industry in rapidly evolving sectors like AI.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss), [[6]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/clyqe22pz81o)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss), [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/former-british-pm-sunak-joins-microsoft-anthropic-advisory-roles-2025-10-09/), [[4]](https://www.reuters.com/business/microsoft-brings-anthropic-ai-models-365-copilot-diversifies-beyond-openai-2025-09-24/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[2]](https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/former-british-pm-sunak-joins-microsoft-anthropic-advisory-roles-2025-10-09/), [[3]](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sunak-rishi-prime-minister-acoba-advice), [[5]](https://www.businesstoday.in/world/story/rishi-sunak-joins-microsoft-and-anthropic-as-paid-adviser-497610-2025-10-10/), [[6]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/clyqe22pz81o)
* Paragraph 5 – [[1]](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss), [[5]](https://www.businesstoday.in/world/story/rishi-sunak-joins-microsoft-and-anthropic-as-paid-adviser-497610-2025-10-10/), [[6]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/clyqe22pz81o)
* Paragraph 6 – [[1]](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss)
* Paragraph 7 – [[1]](https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss), [[6]](https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/clyqe22pz81o)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://uk.finance.yahoo.com/news/ai-firm-recruits-ex-civil-230126081.html?.tsrc=rss> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://www.reuters.com/business/retail-consumer/former-british-pm-sunak-joins-microsoft-anthropic-advisory-roles-2025-10-09/> - Former UK Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has taken on senior advisory roles at Microsoft and AI startup Anthropic. These part-time positions comply with UK watchdog ACOBA's regulations governing post-ministerial employment. Sunak will advise Anthropic on global strategy, macroeconomic, and geopolitical trends, explicitly avoiding UK policy or governmental interactions. Similarly, at Microsoft, he will provide strategic insights and speak at company events, such as the Microsoft Summit. Sunak, who remains a British MP after stepping down as Conservative Party leader following a July general election loss, announced he will donate all earnings from these roles to The Richmond Project, a charity he co-founded with his wife Akshata Murty. This follows his earlier advisory role with Goldman Sachs, where he worked as an analyst in the early 2000s. According to ACOBA, Sunak is barred from lobbying or using insider government knowledge for two years post-office.
3. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/sunak-rishi-prime-minister-acoba-advice> - The Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (ACOBA) has provided advice to former Prime Minister Rishi Sunak regarding his business appointments after leaving Crown service. The advice includes conditions imposed on his appointments with Microsoft Corporation and Anthropic PBC, ensuring compliance with regulations governing post-ministerial employment. The documents detail the considerations and conditions for these appointments, including restrictions on lobbying and the use of privileged information from his time in government.
4. <https://www.reuters.com/business/microsoft-brings-anthropic-ai-models-365-copilot-diversifies-beyond-openai-2025-09-24/> - Microsoft announced it will integrate artificial intelligence models from Anthropic into its Copilot assistant, signaling a strategic effort to diversify beyond its reliance on OpenAI's technology. Users will now have the option to choose between OpenAI and Anthropic models within Copilot’s 'Researcher' tool and Microsoft Copilot Studio for developing custom AI agents. This move marks a shift for Microsoft Copilot, which has been primarily using OpenAI for the new AI features across its suite of applications like Word and Outlook. Microsoft, a key financial backer for OpenAI, has ... other companies.
5. <https://www.businesstoday.in/world/story/rishi-sunak-joins-microsoft-and-anthropic-as-paid-adviser-497610-2025-10-10/> - Former British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has taken up roles of paid adviser at tech giant Microsoft and artificial intelligence start-up Anthropic. An independent watchdog that oversees activities of former government figures, Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (Acoba), has asked the former PM to not lobby ministers on behalf of the company. The MP for Richmond and Northallerton said he was delighted to be working with two of the world’s leading tech firms and planned to donate his earnings to a charity he founded. In its letter released on Thursday, Acoba described Sunak’s role at Microsoft as providing 'high-level strategic perspectives' on geopolitical trends. For Anthropic, an artificial intelligence company, Sunak informed the watchdog that his advisory work would be 'akin to operating as an internal think tank'. Acoba noted that Anthropic 'has a significant interest in UK government policy', which raised concerns that Sunak’s appointment could be viewed as providing 'unfair access and influence' in government. The committee also highlighted that Microsoft, identified as a 'major investor' in the UK, presented similar issues regarding potential access and influence. However, Acoba acknowledged that Sunak’s period away from government would have lessened the value of any confidential information he possessed, while reiterating the rules that ex-ministers must observe when seeking employment after leaving office. Acoba instructed Sunak not to advise either Microsoft or Anthropic on bidding for UK government contracts or to lobby UK ministers or officials for two years from his last day in office.
6. <https://feeds.bbci.co.uk/news/articles/clyqe22pz81o> - Rishi Sunak has taken up paid advisor roles at tech giant Microsoft and artificial intelligence start-up Anthropic. The former prime minister has been told he must not lobby ministers on behalf of the companies by the Advisory Committee on Business Appointments (Acoba), an independent watchdog which oversees the activities of former government figures. Sunak - who remains the MP for Richmond and Northallerton - said he was 'delighted' to be working 'with two of the world's leading tech firms' and planned to donate his earnings to a charity he founded. During his premiership, Sunak made tech regulation a significant priority, setting up an AI safety summit in 2023. In letters of advice sent to Sunak by Acoba and published on Thursday, his part-time role at Microsoft was described as providing 'high-level strategic perspectives' on geopolitical trends. The watchdog said it had been informed by Sunak that his part-time advisory role at Anthropic - an AI firm seeking to compete with companies like OpenAI, Google and Meta - would be 'akin to operating as an internal think tank'. Acoba said Anthropic 'has a significant interest in UK government policy', meaning that Sunak's appointment could potentially be seen to offer 'unfair access and influence' within government. The appointment with Microsoft, a 'major investor' in the UK, also presented similar issues, it wrote. However, it also said that his time spent out of government would have reduced the value of any information Sunak may still possess, while reiterating the standing rules ex-ministers have to abide when seeking employment after leaving government. Sunak was told not to advise on bidding for UK contracts, or to lobby the government for two years from his last day in ministerial office. In addition to the two tech roles, it was previously confirmed Sunak will act as a paid advisor to the bank Goldman Sachs, where he previously worked between 2001 and 2004.
7. <https://indianexpress.com/article/technology/tech-news-technology/former-british-pm-sunak-joins-microsoft-anthropic-in-advisory-roles-10298501/> - Former British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak has joined U.S. tech giant Microsoft and AI startup Anthropic as a senior adviser. Sunak, who stepped down as the leader of the opposition Conservative Party following a defeat in the general election ... . In a LinkedIn post, Sun ... . Amazon and Google-backed Anthropic said that the internally ... . Sunak will advise Anthropic on ... . At Microsoft, Sunak will provide ... ’s interim chair, Isabel Doverty ... .