



In the newsletter this month



UCL Biochemical Engineering VIRTUAL Taster Lectures - March 2026



Careers in Racing – 2026 Explore Racing Days



University of Oxford's Wadham College Summer Schools - 17 to 21 August 2026



Environment Agency: Environmental Practitioner Degree Apprenticeships (EPDA)

News updates

DfE published 2026 Education White Paper



On Monday 23rd February, the DfE published its greatly anticipated 2026 Education White Paper [Every Child Achieving and Thriving](#) (Executive Summary begins on page 6 of this printable ready copy). Widely discussed and leaked prior to its publication, due to the expected SEND reforms contained within, we are grateful to be able to share the final version with the full information on the reforms included and looking forward to seeing how the reforms will work in practice to ensure effective support for children and young people with SEND across England.

NCW: Professional Careers Support matters more than ever as World of Work changes



In this article, [Professional Careers Support matters more than ever as World of Work changes](#), the Career Development Institute (CDI) highlights the growing challenges and the increasingly important role career development professionals play in helping people navigate uncertainty. With rapid technological advances, changes to the employment landscape, and demographic and societal shifts, young people and adults need to invest in their careers to remain relevant. Read the full article [here](#).

Welsh Labour Market Overview for February 2026 – Welsh.GOV



The Welsh Government's latest [Labour Market Overview](#) shows a slight rise in unemployment and continued high economic inactivity, driven largely by long-term sickness. The data also highlights growing disparities between groups such as: young people, those with lower qualifications and individuals with health conditions. These patterns underline the importance of early intervention, targeted support and clear

progression pathways, particularly in sectors where opportunities remain available but competition is increasing. Read more [here](#).

CEC publishes insights on careers education in England for 2024-25



The CEC has published its annual [Careers Education in England report 2024-25](#) drawing on data from 330,000 young people, 4,863 schools and colleges and 783 employers. Insights cover: how careers education is improving, preparing young people for the world of work and whether employers are engaging and the benefits. The better a school's careers provision, the more likely students feel ready for work and the less likely they are to be NEET. However, gaps continue to exist. Read the report [here](#).

FE News: Why the UK's Skills Agenda now Rests on Employer-Provider Collaboration



This interesting article: [FE News | Why the UK's Skills Agenda now Rests on Employer-Provider Collaboration](#) discusses the 2025 publication of the [The UK's Modern Industrial Strategy](#) and the [Skills England report on growth and skills](#) and calls for 2026 to be the year of implementation. Touching on the policy landscape, employer responsibilities and collaboration between businesses and training providers, read the article [here](#).

ADR Wales: Who Receives Careers Advice After Compulsory Education?



A new [ADR Wales Data Insight](#) examines careers guidance in Wales, revealing significant differences linked to attainment, deprivation and prior engagement, with clear inequalities in access after compulsory education and learners facing disadvantage or lower attainment less likely to access support, despite being at greater risk of becoming NEET. The report reinforces the importance of strong data-sharing and provides valuable evidence to inform decisions on how to deliver CEIAG more consistently and equitably. Read the report [here](#).

Upcoming Events

Oxford University – ONLINE Student Conference, 16th-19th March 2026



REMINDER: the University of Oxford's [2026 Online Student Conference](#) is taking place between 16-19th March 2026. A free online conference offering prospective students, teachers and supporters an opportunity to explore academic interests, engage with the Oxford community, and gain insights into studying at one of the world's leading universities. Booking and event timetabling information will be released soon. The [full timetable](#) has now been released, register for individual sessions [here](#).

'Beyond the stereotype: Trailblazing Women apprentices' Webinar – 16th March, 3:30-4:00pm



From construction sites to coding labs, women are redefining what it means to succeed in apprenticeships. Join this [Beyond the stereotype: trailblazing women apprentices](#) webinar to hear from apprentices and employers who are breaking barriers and building futures in non-traditional roles. You'll hear from Gemma Hall and Jessica Smith, current apprentices at IBM, and from IBM's Early Professionals Manager, Charlotte Fisher Morecroft, who will give us an insight into their apprenticeships. Register to attend via Zoom [here](#).

UCL Biochemical Engineering VIRTUAL Taster Lectures - March 2026



Biochemical engineers turn scientific breakthroughs - such as vaccines, biofuels, and lab-grown foods - into large-scale realities. Their work tackles some of the world's biggest health, environmental, and ethical challenges. Join UCL's Faculty of Biochemical Engineering for their [FREE online taster lectures](#) to explore cutting-edge research, from lab-grown meat and next-generation vaccine manufacture to AI-driven drug design and advances in gene therapy. The lectures start on 23rd March and you can register and access the 2025 taster lecture series [here](#).

University of Cambridge – Online Events for Students March 2026



The [University of Cambridge's upcoming ONLINE events for students](#) this month includes a good range of subject options to help students in their decision-making around UCAS choices and application to one of the university's colleges. Events include: [Christ's Natural Sciences](#) and [Magdalene's Maths](#) tasters on the 18th, [Faculty of Law Open Day](#) on 20th, [Music taster](#) on 21st, [Oxbridge Classics Open Day](#) on 23rd and [Fitzwilliam College's Sciences taster](#) on the 30th March. View all events and register [here](#).

Careers in Racing – 2026 Explore Racing Days



[Careers in Racing](#) are holding their 2026 *Explore Racing Days*. A great way to get outside and explore your options in horseracing, they start off at Thirsk Racecourse in April where they will be joined by the [National Horseracing College](#) team. Each day is designed for you to ask questions and find out about opportunities and the careers paths available. For dates and booking, see: [Explore Racing Days](#).

British Army Careers: Seven Career Streams webinar – Tuesday 3rd March 6:30-7:30pm



In celebration of **National Careers Week 2nd to 7th March** and **International Women's Day**, this insightful webinar: [British Army Careers: Seven Career Streams](#) explores the range of opportunities in the **British Army**, with career streams including STEM, logistics, healthcare, engineering, intelligence, combat, and business-focused roles, this session showcases how young people can build rewarding, long-term careers, gain recognised qualifications and develop skills for life, whatever their interests, strengths or gender. Register [here](#).

UCAS Discovery Events: Southeast and Southwest England – March to June 2026



At a [UCAS Discovery event](#), discover all your options under one roof and find out about degrees, apprenticeships, careers, and more. Chat to unis and colleges about courses and uni life, speak to employers, apprenticeship providers and careers advisers about the options available and listen to talks. With events in London and Exeter in March, Bournemouth, Brighton and Farnborough in April and East London, Hartpury, Glos. and Winchester in June, you can register to attend [here](#).

University of Oxford Mathematics Departmental Open Days - 25 April and 23 May



The University of Oxford's [Mathematics departmental Open Events](#) is an **in-person** opportunity to attend academic talks from faculty staff, including some from the joint Maths courses, sessions about applying to Oxford and a student panel Q&A on 25th April; attendees can also talk to current students and tutors during a complimentary buffet lunch, booking required. Hosted **online** on 23 May, there will be course information, a Q&A, and pre-recorded Mathematics talks, no booking required. Register at: [Open Days | Mathematical Institute](#).

Smallpeice Trust's summer 2026 Engineering Experience events



The **Smallpeice Trust's costed** Engineering Experience events dates are now live, with events across the UK this summer, including: [Engineering Experience - Wales 28-30th July](#), [Girls into Engineering – Loughborough 11-13th August](#) and the [Engineering Experience \(VIRTUAL\) – 25-28th August](#). Aimed at Year 8 & 9 students, many of the events are residential and focus on creativity, innovation and skills-building through STEM challenges and social activities with support from STEM engagement specialists. Sign up for your place [here](#).

University of Oxford's Wadham College Summer Schools - 17 to 21 August 2026



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Recommended Websites & Resources

Springpod and UCAS virtual Work Experience (WEX) programmes



Springpod partners with **UCAS** to deliver WEX programmes for young people towards decision-making and demonstrating subject interest through their UCAS Personal Statement: [Virtual Work Experiences | Springpod-UCAS](#). With a wide range of tasters from Accounting & Finance, Agricultural & Environmental, Creative Arts & Design, Digital, IT & Computing, Energy and Utilities, Healthcare and Medicine, Hospitality, Catering & Events, Law & Legal Services, Marketing & Comms, Science and Research, Social Care and Supply Chain, Transport & Logistics, there's something for every student.

FutureSmart Careers March Blog: Foundation Year courses (Year 0 or IFP)



Keep an eye out for this month's [FutureSmart Careers blog](#) covering 'Foundation Year (Year 0 or IFP) for UK or International students'. Covering Where/How to Search for universities offering Foundation Year (Year 0) courses for UK students, Universities and Specialist IFP providers for International Students, the range of subject areas on offer, entry requirements, Fee implications and Student Loans and Resources, Weblinks and Further Sources of Information this should prove a useful guide for students and staff alike. Access our blogs at [FSC Blogs](#).

UCAS Parent's Podcast – Episode 3: Exploring Options



The UCAS [Parents' Podcasts](#) cover everything parents need to know about education and careers, from university applications and apprenticeships to the skills shaping the jobs of tomorrow, helping guide your child's future. In [Episode 3: Exploring Options](#), host Jon Smith is joined by careers adviser James Wilmot and apprenticeship manager Emily Pearson to explore the range of post-16 and post-18 options, breaking down key differences and share tips to support your child to find the right path.

Technical Education Programme: Watch the new video on Post-16 Pathways



As part of the [Technical Education Programme](#), the CDI have released new video [Post-16 pathways](#), aimed at careers professionals. Created with Amazing Apprenticeships, the video highlights changes announced in the [Post-16 level 3 and below consultation](#), covering proposals for V Levels and new Level 2 pathways and is part of a series of new resources, with videos on Apprenticeships and HTQs to be launched soon. Access the [Technical Education Resource Hub](#), a 'one stop shop' for advisers or view the Post-16 pathways video [here](#).

Amazing Apprenticeships - Meet the Employer



[Meet the Employer](#) from Amazing Apprenticeships is a series of employer profiles, highlighting brands such as Tesco, KPMG, Coca Cola, EDF, AstraZeneca, Specsavers, IBM and more. Each month, you can explore new employer profiles, programme insights, tips on what employers are looking for and more. This month's [MTE NavigATE update](#), spotlights women in apprenticeships, celebrates British Science Week and highlights some exciting employer industries to explore.

NEW Higher & Degree vacancy listing coming in April – Amazing Apprenticeships



The [Higher & Degree Apprenticeships vacancy listing](#) will be back earlier than usual, with a brand-new edition launching in April! This Spring listing is a new addition to the usual twice-yearly schedule in January and October and will be launched on 21st April 2026. Featuring a fantastic range of apprenticeships with employers from across the country, Amazing Apprenticeships hope that this extra edition will prove helpful for those searching for an apprenticeship over the Spring-Summer term. View previous editions and register to receive the April 2026 edition [here](#).

Expert Insight - practical takeaways for careers professionals



This interesting article from Emma O'Dell, B2B Marketing Director at BPP (part of Lyceum Education Group): [Growing Adaptive Talent: Why Apprenticeships Matter More Than Ever](#), shares thoughts on how the landscape is shifting and what Gen Z are looking for in a career. Noting that employers face widening skills gaps, Government driving apprenticeship participation targets (with more than 66% of young people choosing alternatives to the traditional university route), the need to support Gen Z and Employers and practical takeaways for Careers Professionals, the [article](#) makes fascinating reading.

Apprenticeship Opportunities

National Trust Apprenticeships – Now Live!, closing dates 15th to 23rd March 2026



With [National Trust Apprenticeships](#) available across country in Project Management, Marketing, IT, HR, Administration, Community Engagement and more, this is your opportunity to explore a career protecting nature and heritage in a diverse, inclusive team. Download the [National Trust Apprenticeship Applicant Guide](#), catch-up on the [National Trust Apprenticeship webinars](#) and visit [National Trust Apprenticeships](#) for information on annual recruitment to gardener, ranger, stonemasonry or carpentry and joinery roles. Apply for [current Apprenticeships](#) by 15th to 23rd March.

Volkswagen Apprenticeships: current vacancies



The [Volkswagen Apprenticeship Programme](#) will give you all the life and technical skills you need to build your career in the vehicle industry. Now is an exciting time to join Volkswagen as an apprentice Service Technician, Parts Advisor or Service Advisor working in one of our UK Retailers, training in world class facilities and learning from experts. [Current Vacancies](#) include Service Technician roles in **Exeter, Watford and West London**, and Parts Advisor in **Aberystwyth**. Students in other areas can register their interest [here](#).

Environment Agency: Environmental Practitioner Degree Apprenticeships (EPDA)



The EPDA is designed to develop skills and capabilities while giving you the experience and opportunities to make a real difference: [Apprenticeships - Environment Agency](#). As an apprentice, you'll rotate between teams, gain experience, study through online learning, block weeks, and field trips. Recruitment for the EPDA takes place annually, with apprentices joining us each **September**. Opportunities in Exeter, Bodmin, Sheffield, York, Leeds, Beverley, Bedford, and Ely are live - [Apply now](#).

Mondeléz International – Degree Apprenticeships



[Mondeléz International](#) are currently recruiting to their **Degree Apprenticeships**. Based in Reading, Uxbridge or Birmingham, there are roles available in: [Laboratory Science \(Chemistry\)](#), [Sales](#), [Engineering](#) and [Food Science and Technology](#) with this leading snack and chocolate company. Closing Dates are from 13th to 31st March, with the Engineering and Food Science and Technology roles closing on the 13th. [Apply here](#).

Thames Valley Police: apprenticeships for PCSOs and Police Constables (PCDA)



Opportunities are available with Thames Valley Police at Level 3, 4 and 6 (Degree Apprenticeship) [Thames Valley Police: A career to be proud of](#). Including roles for Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) and Police Officer – Police Constable (PCDA) based in Milton Keynes, Reading, Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Buckinghamshire, with salaries between £33,899 - £34,164 plus benefits (role dependent). The closing dates are between 22nd and 31st March, so [find out more and apply here](#).

Apprenticeships at Sir Robert McAlpine



A [Sir Robert McAlpine apprenticeship](#) is your chance to learn on the job and work towards industry qualifications – while earning a salary and great benefits. A family-owned construction and infrastructure company established since 1869, designing, developing, building and preserving some of Britain's most iconic buildings, you will be building up your skills in an amazing learning environment and your classroom learning will be delivered in partnership with a respected local educational provider. Search current apprenticeship vacancies [here](#).

EY (Ernst and Young) - Apprenticeships and Work Experience



Ernst and Young work in Assurance, Consulting, Strategy and Transactions, and Tax, helping clients assess and manage risk: [About us | EY](#). They have opportunities for [Work Experience](#) where you contribute to real client projects and learn from apprentices. Instead, you could kick-start your career with an [EY apprenticeship](#). Earn a salary, work towards a professional qualification, and use your skills to solve complex business challenges. Apply for 2026 entry [here](#).

For Careers Leaders/Heads of Careers Department

FREE virtual Teachers-Only UCAS Personal Statement Workshop - Tues 17th or Thurs 19th March



Medic Mentor are running a free VIRTUAL Teachers-Only Workshop covering the UCAS Personal Statement on **Tuesday 17th March at 12pm or Thursday 19th March at 3:30pm**. Providing an overview of the format, guidance on how to effectively approach each question, tips for crafting clear, concise, and impactful responses, example answers, insights into common pitfalls, tools and resources to support you and your students and a Q&A session for addressing any questions or concerns. With other workshops planned later dates, you can find out more and register [here](#).

New Oxplore: Teach platform – enrichment challenges for Years 7, 8 and 9



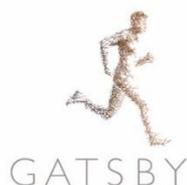
Keen to encourage deeper thinking in your classroom? [Oxplore Teach](#), developed by the University of Oxford, offers ready to use enrichment [challenges](#) for Years 7, 8 and 9 based on Oxplore Big Questions. These engaging 'out of the box' lesson materials support academic development are designed to promote curiosity and a love of learning, with accredited CPDL to support teachers' professional development and grounded in research-informed pedagogy, to strengthen classroom practice. [Explore Oxplore Teach](#).

UCAS admissions consultation - dates, deadlines, and choices



The [UCAS admissions consultation](#) – covering dates, deadlines, and choices – is now open. **UCAS invite you to take part and submit your response by 18:00 (UK time) on 22 April 2026**. UCAS was established over 30 years ago to bring fairness in how people progress to higher education and the consultation will consider: number of initial choices a student makes, firm and insurance choice and application deadlines, including the early (October) deadline and January Equal Consideration Date. Submit your response [here](#).

Gatsby Foundation: 'how career guidance can be used to reduce likelihood of NEET' video



The [Gatsby Benchmarks](#) are a powerful tool senior leaders are using to help ensure young people don't become NEET (not in education, employment or training). Our new short film shows how college and secondary school leaders are transforming lives using the Gatsby Benchmarks. Watch the video at [how careers guidance can be used to reduce the likelihood of NEET](#).

Get in touch

FutureSmart Essentials for schools



FutureSmart Careers offers a range of well-loved packages for schools but can also tailor a plan to fit schools' needs exactly. Our FutureSmart Essentials package includes:

- Suite of downloadable resources
- 9-5 careers advice helpline
- Monthly newsletters with news, events and opportunities

Contact us



For all other enquiries, please contact our team at enquiries@futuresmartcareers.co.uk or give us a call on Tel: 0330 311 9509



Bespoke careers advice services

- 1:1 Careers advice & guidance
- Workshops, talks & assemblies
- Group sessions
- Parents evenings & options events
- Careers Fairs
- Mock Interviews
- Morrisby assessments
- Specialist SEND provision
- Access to Helpline Service
- Monthly newsletters
- FutureSmart Essentials



We pride ourselves on offering a variety of unique careers services and we will work with you to create a tailored service to meet the needs of your students.

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We'd love to hear from you!