

FutureSmartCareers



MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

ISSUE No 20 February 2026

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News updates

Government launches national conversation on SEND



Department for Education

The government acts on their commitment to put parent's experiences at the heart of SEND reform through a new public engagement campaign. The government is committed to creating a SEND system that stands the test of time, ensuring that every child receives the support they need. You can read the full news report here: [Government launches national conversation on SEND - GOV.UK](#).

Councils are given £3bn to create thousands more spaces for SEND pupils



The government has announced that 50,000 school places will be created for SEND students from £3 billion of funding. Some of the funding will go towards creating school places across the country in mainstream schools so that SEND children are not expected to travel far for their education. The remaining amount of funding may be used to create breakout spaces for children who may need more support or for rooms to support children with autism and ADHD who find a classroom environment overstimulating. Read the full article: [£3bn investment to end postcode lottery for children with SEND - GOV.UK](#).

Free supported employment programme launches in Torbay



A new voluntary supported employment programme that will support over 800 people is now open to participants aged 16 and over. [Connect to Work - Torbay Council](#) is designed to help individuals with disabilities, long term health conditions and other significant barriers that make it difficult to find employment and progress towards meaningful work. Find out more: [Free supported employment programme launches in Torbay - Torbay Council](#).

DFN Project Search – Annual Youth Parliament 23rd March 2026



As part of our National Supported Internships Day celebrations, [DFN Project SEARCH](#) are delighted to announce they are hosting their second annual Youth Parliament on **23rd March 2026**. This Youth Parliament is the first initiative of its kind created specifically for young people with learning disabilities and autism. Anyone who has previously completed a supported internship, or is currently undertaking one, is welcome to attend. You do not need to be part of a DFN Project SEARCH programme to take part or join the celebration. Places are limited, so early applications are encouraged. Job coaches, tutors, and parents or carers are welcome to complete this form on behalf of an intern or graduate if they wish. For more information, please contact info@dfnprojectsearch.org with the subject "NSID" or visit: [National Supported Internship Day: Youth Parliament](#).

Disability Confident Scheme Overhauled – GOV.UK



The Government Disability Scheme has been overhauled to boost workplace standards for disabled people. Sick and disabled people will have more opportunities to move into work following the overhaul of a scheme that will boost living standards and workplace inclusion. You can read the full report here: [Disability Confident scheme overhauled to boost workplace standards for disabled people - GOV.UK](#).

DfE announces £200m investment in SEND training across all phases of education



The Department for Education announce investment of £200m for a training package to be offered to all teachers to strengthen SEND and inclusion training across nurseries, schools and colleges. This training will deepen teaching staff's knowledge to enable them to adapt their teaching to meet a wide range of needs in the classroom. Read the full report here: [£200 million landmark SEND teacher training programme - GOV.UK](#).

10 min Read by Nxford University: How will Artificial Intelligence Change the world?



Have a read of this insightful article about how AI could affect our futures (including jobs and economy): [How will Artificial Intelligence Affect Jobs 2026-2030 | Nxford University](#).

The Times News Article Richard Branson: Dyslexia doesn't stop you loving books – I'm proof



In this news article by The Times, Richard Branson talks about his struggle with dyslexia and how he hasn't let it get in the way of his love for reading. Read his top tips for getting children and adults to fall in love with literacy here: [Richard Branson: Dyslexia doesn't stop you loving books — I'm proof](#).

Upcoming Events

STEM Research Placements and Experiences – Applications now open for 2026



A fantastic opportunity has arisen for Year 12 students (or equivalent) to take part in real-life STEM workplace experiences. Students can apply the skills and knowledge acquired at school while providing a meaningful contribution to the work of researchers and industry professionals. 100% of students taking part are from low-income backgrounds, under-represented groups, or the first in their family to attend university. These placements are funded by the partners of [STEM Learning](#). You can find out more about the placements and how to apply here: [Research Placements](#).

Ignite your Creativity with Netflix - National Youth Theatre, 16th- 20th February 2026



IGNITE is coming to the South West of England (Somerset) and Glasgow. Supported by [Netflix United Kingdom](#), this scheme is open to young people aged 16-25 (up to 30 years if neurodivergent, deaf or disabled), who have a passion for TV, film and theatre. Learn from industry professionals in filmmaking, producing, sound, lighting, camera, editing and design and visit backstage theatre and TV studios! Find out more and apply here: [Ignite Your Creativity with Netflix - National Youth Theatre](#).

Cornwall Opportunities Skills and Career Fair, Tuesday 10th March 2026



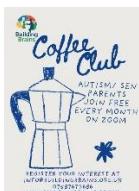
Attend the Cornwall Council Skills and Careers Fair – an unmissable event to showcase all the various different exciting opportunities that are happening across the whole of Cornwall and to find the right one for you! Held on Tuesday 10th March 2026, 4-6pm at New County Hall, Truro, Cornwall. For more info please visit [Cornwall Council Skills and Careers Fair](#) or email peopleandskills@cornwall.gov.uk.

Sky (TV) UP Academy Studios Programme



‘Sky Up’ programme sets ambitious goals to help up-skill those who are digitally isolated with technology, connectivity and training. The programme will see £10M invested to level up communities in the markets that Sky operates and ensures that no-one is left behind in the digital world. To find out more about the programme and to book a place, click [Sky Up Academy Studios | Sky Up](#).

Building Brains Coffee Club for parents with SEN/Autistic children – Every month on Zoom



Building Brains (a service offering guidance and support to parents of autistic/children with SEN) are launching a monthly coffee morning via Zoom. Register your interest at info@buildingbrains.org.uk or visit www.buildingbrains.org.uk, where you can also find further support and resources.

Skills Bootcamps in Creative Sector with MUTI Live (for Post 16 students)



MUTI Live is a specialist live Arts & Events training provider who design and deliver apprenticeships and skills development across the sector. These skills bootcamps, funded by [The West of England Combined Authority](#) are for anyone aged 19+ to apply for in creative areas such as: Event Production, Freelancing and Income Strategies for Creatives. Find out more: [Bootcamps — MUTI Live](#).



Cornwall Careers Hub Summit 2026

The Careers Hub Summit 2026 is your chance to connect, share insights, and help shape the future talent pipeline in Cornwall. The summit will take place at The Eden Project, Cornwall on **26th February 2026 from 9am – 2.30pm**. Find out more: [Careers Hub Summit - Careers Hub](#).

Save the Date – National Careers Week 2026, 2nd – 8th March 2026



National Careers Week is back from the 2nd-7th March 2026. This years theme is ‘Own Your Future’. Be prepared early by checking out the website: [Welcome - National Careers Week](#) for resources and tips for how you can get involved!

REMINDER: SEND Conference, 7th May 2026 at the Excel Centre, London



The next SEND Conference will be held on **7th May 2026** at the **Excel Centre, London**. Located at the heart of the Schools and Academies show, the conference provides an opportunity to shape the SEND provision within your school. Find out more and register your interest: [SEND Conference | 7th May 2026 | Excel, London](#).

Careers in Veterinary Science with School of Veterinary Science – University of Liverpool



Join **Futures For All** the UK's Top Social Mobility Charity | **Futures For All** at an exclusive experience hosted by fully qualified and experienced Vets and practitioners from the University Of Liverpool's School of Veterinary Science. Held **Monday 23rd – Wednesday 25th March 2026**, each day 9.30am-2.30pm. Apply here: [Future Finder - Futures For All](#).

UCAS Premium Discovery Events back for Spring 2026



UCAS are excited to reveal the dates for their 2026 Premium Discovery events – returning to Manchester, London, and Birmingham.

Here's where and when they will be:

- ◆ Manchester, 3–4 March 2026
- ◆ London, 23–24 March 2026
- ◆ Birmingham, 22–23 June 2026

Find out more: [UCAS Discovery Events | Meet universities, colleges and employers | UCAS](#)

Schools Cricket Day is coming on Thursday 23rd April - Sign your school up!



To celebrate 50 days until the commencement of the ICC Women's T20 World Cup in England and Wales, there is going to be a very exciting Schools Cricket Day on **23rd April 2026**, bringing barrier-free cricket activities to our school children. The aim is to embed cricket across the curriculum throughout the day, allowing children to participate in cricket activities, learn about the tournament and inspire a love of the game. These activities could mean anything cricket related, serving up a cricket tea, delivering an inspirational assembly or playing a game with classmates. There are a variety of ways schools can get involved and you will be provided with a host of digital resources to support with delivery on the day. Register your interest: [Schools Cricket Day Is Coming - Register Your Interest](#).

Princess Yachts Careers Fair – Saturday 28th February 2026, Plymouth



Princess Yachts are holding a Careers Fair on **Saturday 28th February 2026** from 9am-1pm. Find out more about their current vacancies and discover more on their award-winning apprenticeships. Register for the event here: [Princess Yachts Careers Fair Registration Form](#).

Recommended Websites & Resources

Norland Nanny College launch new free online course!



Norland College, Bath have launched a brand new free online course – An Introduction to Babysitting. The college have partnered with FutureLearn (The Open University's leading online platform) to design a course for teenagers and young adults who want to gain confidence and practical skills in babysitting. If you are interested in a career in childcare or earn money babysitting part-time, this could be a great starting point. Find out more: [Norland launches free babysitting course on FutureLearn - Norland](#).

Amazing Apprenticeships – ‘This is My Day’ resources



These resources have been updated to help students visualize different workplace apprenticeship settings. Starting with Aaron, a Chef, and Sarah, a Teaching Assistant, each resource follows a day in the life of an apprentice, using clear and engaging images and wording. You can access the resources here: [This Is My Day - Amazing Apprenticeships](#).

Discovery Education Centres – Alternative Education Provision



Discovery Education Centre provides alternative education across four primary and secondary centres, supporting children and young people with a wide range of needs. They also offer an outdoor education programme and post-16 BTEC pathways in Construction and Hospitality. Their provision is built around individual learners, with 1:1 support, personalised Individual Learning Plans, transport provided, food throughout the day, and all course materials included. They work closely with schools, local authorities, and families to offer a supportive, structured environment that helps students re-engage with education and develop skills for their next steps. Find out more: [Discover Alternative Education Provision | Education Centre](#).

Careers & Enterprise Company launch podcast: Let's Make it Work



Let's Make it Work: The Podcast is officially live! Tune in to Episode 1: Bringing modern work experience to life - listen to real conversations, real work experiences, and practical takeaways. Available on all mainstream podcast platforms. Find out more: [The Podcast | The Careers and Enterprise Company](#).

New Updated Resources from Amazing Apprenticeships!



Check out [Apprenticeship Arcade - Amazing Apprenticeships](#) to access the updated resources in the Apprenticeship Arcade – a suite of games providing interactive and fun ways for students to learn about apprenticeships, either in groups or individually. Students can also access the Apprenticeship Quiz 2026, where students can test their knowledge and find out more information: [The Apprenticeship Quiz 2026 - Amazing Apprenticeships](#).

Into Film and WBD Sports Europe Create New Free Resource – Story Builder: Sports Broadcasting



Into Film and WBD Sports have teamed up to create a brand-new free resource – Story Builder: Sports Broadcasting. This resource is for students in key stage 3 (age 11-14). Students will develop a chosen sporting event into a brilliant sports highlight broadcast plan. This adaptable resource can be used across the curriculum to help learners transfer and develop key employability skills including leadership, problem solving and idea generation. To register and download the resource visit: [Explore Story Builder: Sports Broadcasting – A Free Learning Resource - Into Film](#).

Xello Careers Platform



Xello ([CEIAG Software that Inspires Students | Xello](#)) is an online careers platform that can be used with students across different ages, abilities and circumstances. It also includes a financial literacy resource, The Real Game, which focuses on helping students understand money, work and real-world decision making. Find out more: [The Real Game by Xello](#).

New Resources from The National Autistic Society



[National Autistic Society](#) have produced a range of new school resource packs, including lesson plans, assemblies and classroom activities designed to build empathy, encourage understanding, and celebrate neurodiversity. Access the resources [here](#).

FutureSmart Careers January Blog: Careers in Animal Care – What are your options?



If you are wild about animals and considering a career in animal care, why not have a read of this month's blog? Discover information, careers and advice and useful links to find out more about the different roles available to you, you may be surprised at how many career options there are in this field of work! Read the blog here: [Careers in Animal Care what are your options?](#)

Apprenticeship & Internship Opportunities

Nestlé Apprenticeships – Applications Open!



Nestlé are offering apprenticeships in Confectionery, Packaging, Sales and Supply Chain, ranging from 3.5-4.5 years in duration, starting in September 2026. To find out more, visit the following links:

[Apprenticeships in Confectionery | Nestlé UK & Ireland](#)

[Packaging Apprenticeship | Nestlé UK & Ireland](#)

[Nestlé Academy: Sales Apprenticeship](#)

[Supply Chain Apprenticeship | 'Nestlé UK & Ireland](#)

Apprenticeships with AECOM



Explore the various apprenticeships in engineering, arboriculture and road surveys with AECOM. Visit the website to find out more information [Jobs | AECOM](#).

Heathrow Employment and Skills Academy Employability Workshop and Apprenticeship Vacancies



The Employability Workshop at Heathrow Employment Skills Academy combines the best of their CV and Interview Preparation Workshops to offer comprehensive support. You'll learn how to craft compelling stories about your experiences, handle tough interview questions, and make a positive first impression. Additionally, the team will guide you on what to include in your CV, provide personalised feedback, and help transform your CV to catch the employer's attention and position you as the ideal candidate. Join the Heathrow Employment & Skills Academy to transform your job search skills. Register now on the Heathrow Employment & Skills Academy website to secure your spot at their next Employability Workshop. [Employability Workshop in Heathrow Airport - Heathrow Employment & Skills Academy](#). You can also explore apprenticeship vacancies in Electrical

Installation, Project Management, Civil Engineering, Construction Quantity Surveying and Business Administration via the above link.

Tesco Stronger Starts Retail Apprenticeships – Applications for September 2026 now open!



Applications for September 2026 are now open! Apply to the region that best matches your location: North, South, East or West. With a Stronger Starts Retail Apprenticeship, you will gain a full-time job as well as a National Level 2 Standard in Retail qualification. All you need is drive and commitment to succeed and Tesco will support you with hands-on experience and structured learning. Find out more and apply: [Stronger Starts Retail Apprenticeship | Tesco Careers](#).

Apprenticeship Opportunities with Aldi



Aldi are recruiting for apprentices in their stores (Level 2 Retail and Level 3 Store Management, depending on your qualifications). There are also warehouse and driver apprentice opportunities available. To find out more, access a parents video guide and virtual work experience opportunities, visit: [Apprenticeships | Aldi Recruitment UK](#).

RAF Recruitment – Many roles and opportunities available



Check out the many opportunities currently available with the RAF. Their award-winning apprenticeships mean you'll gain a professional qualification as part of a challenging and unique career. The RAF was rated as a Top 75 employer for Social Mobility in 2023. View the opportunities here: [RAF Recruitment | Apprenticeships | Royal Air Force](#).

BT Group – Apprenticeship applications open on the 2nd February 2026



BT Group are offering apprenticeships in Software Engineering, Engineering and Transformation and Delivery. Applications open on the 2nd February. Apply here: [Apprenticeships - BT Group](#).

Apprenticeships with EDF Energy – applications open now



If you're passionate about tackling climate change, the apprenticeship programmes with EDF Energy offer an exciting opportunity to build a rewarding career while contributing to a more sustainable energy future. View the apprenticeships here: [Apprentice Jobs | EDF UK](#).

Unlock Your Future with Bayer UK Work Experience: Reading, Berkshire



Bayer UK are a leader in pharmaceuticals, consumer health and crop science. They are offering 'Insights into the Life of Science Sector' work experience weeks. This is a great opportunity to dive into the world of science and discover the endless career opportunities that await you. You will learn about Innovative Learning, Creative Challenges, Marketing Insights, Medicines Journey, Farm Visit, and Career guidance. The work experience week will run from **Monday 30th March – Thursday 2nd April 2026** in Reading, Berkshire. Find out more: [Work Experience | Bayer United Kingdom](#).

Behind the Scenes at Rolls Royce – In-person insight weeks in March 2026



Experience what it would be like to work at a global company with 4 days of "Insight" Work Experience with Rolls Royce. You'll get a real-world glimpse into the business, people and future, with the chance to build new skills, meet the team, and explore how you could develop your future with Rolls Royce. Held in Bristol and Derby throughout March 2026. Apply here: [Work Experience | Rolls-Royce](#).

Cancer Research UK Careers Lab Work Experience Programme – Applications Open



Cancer Research UK's Careers Lab Work Experience Programme offers Year 12 students a unique, week-long opportunity to gain hands-on experience across a variety of departments at the Cancer Research UK Cambridge institute. **Applications for 2026 are now open.** Apply here: [Careers Lab - Cancer Research UK Cambridge Institute](#).

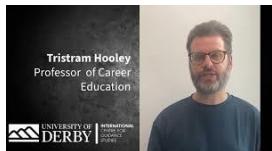
Penguin Random House Publishing Work Experience in partnership with Springpod



For students interested in working in books or publishing, this online virtual work experience offered in partnership with Springpod gives young people the opportunity to go behind the scenes of the UK's biggest publisher. Click [Penguin Books UK x Springpod](#) to find out more about the work experience programme.

For Careers Leaders/Heads of Careers Department

Practical Session and Q&A for Careers Leaders with Professor Tristram Hooley



Join Professor Tristram Hooley (author of the Career Leaders Handbook) for a practical session for new careers leaders and a Q&A. The session covers the Gatsby Benchmarks, Key Leadership tools and practical steps for building an effective careers programme. Tristram answers common questions from careers leaders and offers practical solutions to current delivery challenges. Once the handbook is purchased the recording of the course can be accessed at any time. Take a look at: [The Careers Leader Handbook: Q&A - Trotman Digital](#).

CDI: At the Cutting Edge: Supporting Neurodivergent clients – Insights for Career Professionals



A fantastic opportunity for CDI (Career Development Institute) and NICEC members on **Thursday 5th March 2026**. Explore some fundamental questions including:

- What are the strengths of Neurodivergent clients?
- What are some of the unique challenges that they face?
- What is the benefit of taking a neuroinclusive approach in learning environments, workplaces and society as a whole?
- What are the ethical boundaries that we might want to consider when working with Neurodivergent clients?
- What are some practical actions that we can take when working with neurodivergent individuals or those presenting with neurodivergent traits?

The training will be held via Zoom from 2pm-4pm.

Find out more: [At the Cutting Edge: Supporting Neurodivergent clients; insights for career professionals - Career Development Institute](#).

Industry Insights and T-Levels Virtual Training Events



A series of free virtual events arranged by [The Education Training Foundation: CPD in Further Education](#) relating to different industries and information on T Levels for teaching staff and careers professionals. Explore the courses available: [Course Catalog - The Education Training Foundation Learning Platform](#).

Get in touch

FutureSmart Essentials Package



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

- A suite of downloadable resources
- 9-16 careers advice helpline
- Monthly newsletters with news, events and opportunities

FutureSmart Careers Apprenticeship Support



Since the announcement that the DfE has removed the funding for the ASK programme, we are now offering an Apprenticeship Support Package to schools and colleges. We have produced a suite of workshops and talks to include the best bits from the ASK programme, but with the added extras we feel are needed. The Apprenticeship support we are offering is a paid for service, but we are working hard to make it cost effective and flexible to help you support your students. We are also able to work in all geographic areas we cover. If you would like to find out more about this service or book in a meeting to discuss further, Please click on the link to complete the form: [Apprenticeship Support - Expression of Interest Form](#).

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](tel:03303119509). You can view our menu of services below:



FutureSmartCareers
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.

www.futuresmartcareers.co.uk