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Education, Careers, News & Insight Issue 4

Make the future yours!

Information on careers you may not have thought about!

Apprenticeships explained - earn while you learn!

Life skills, tips and more!

What's next?

Information, advice and case studies to help you make the right career choices!

Discover a new career in the great outdoors!

Are you creative, practical, have an eye for detail, interested in the environment and want to work outdoors?
Then landscaping could be the career for you.

There are lots of roles in landscaping...

Creatively solving problems in green spaces, designing plans that will improve or create new gardens? **This is landscape design.**

Looking for something hands-on and physical? Want to be involved in planning and building landscapes using a range of structural materials to turn design into reality? **This is hard landscaping.**

Can you see yourself choosing and planting a wide range of plants to transform green spaces, adding texture, colour, and scent? **This is soft landscaping.**

Making sure green spaces are looking their best, that they are safe, clean, and attractive to those using and visiting them? **This is landscape maintenance.**

To find out how to have a career in the great outdoors, visit www.golandscape.co.uk

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building real careers

Make the future yours!

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From the Editor

Welcome to Issue 4, it's been a whole year of Make the Future Yours!

In this issue, we look at your choices at the end of Year 11, why paying attention to your mental health matters and even what to expect in a polling station.

Claire

Whether you know what path you're thinking of taking or have no idea at all, as always, we aim to present you with examples of the diverse range of careers, education routes and training opportunities that are on offer.

We hope our magazine can help inspire you to start thinking about your future and we're here for any tips you may need along the way. Follow us on our social media and head to our website for more stories, resources and updates!

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Apprenticeships explained

Scan to see how your qualifications compare to different levels of Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships have been round for hundreds (if not thousands) of years but are today more structured and more widely recognised than they have ever been. Arguably, the UK leads the world in the range and levels of qualifications now on offer through an Apprenticeship route.

What levels do they come in?

You can now do Apprenticeships in a range of levels and at many stages in your career. For example, someone new to a role might do a Level 2 Apprenticeship but someone with more experience looking to develop their career might do a Higher or Degree level Apprenticeship. The illustration at the end of this article shows what levels are available in England.

Not every career area has an Apprenticeship at every level. In some cases, this is because Apprenticeships are being developed all the time as industry identifies a need. In other cases, it might be because the work-related skills change as a career develops: take Hairdressing or Barbering for example. You can do both of these as an Advanced (Level 3) Apprenticeship, by which time you will be a very skilled hairdresser. Your next step might then be to either become a Supervisor or start your own salon, in which case you might need Team Leading, Customer Service or Business qualifications at a higher level.

You can find out which Apprenticeships exist and at what levels by visiting the Institute for Apprenticeships website, www. instituteforapprenticeships.org, and browsing their 'Standards' page. It is regularly updated as new qualifications are written.

How do they qualify me?

As an apprentice, at least 20% of your working week will be spent in structured learning, working towards relevant qualifications.

As we have already mentioned, every Apprenticeship has nationally (and often internationally) recognised qualifications built into it. The new generation of Apprenticeships looks to existing industry qualifications to provide that recognition. For example, if you are doing an IT Apprenticeship, you might work towards a Google qualification, or if you are doing Accountancy, you might study for an AAT (Association of Accounting Technicians) qualification. Some of the Degree and Higher-level qualifications include industry relevant degrees or Chartered professional status.

Most Apprentices will come out with at least two Certificates; one for their industry qualification and an Apprenticeship completion Certificate. It's not uncommon for Apprentices to have collected three or four Certificates, as they complete the various component parts of their Apprenticeship.

How do I get one?

Every Apprenticeship requires three key players:

- The Apprentice – who is employed to work and study
- Their employer – who is responsible for employing the Apprentice and deciding the training route
- Their training provider – who is responsible for helping deliver the qualifications and to maintain quality (all Apprenticeship training providers are inspected by OFSTED).

If you want to be an Apprentice, you therefore have two potential routes to finding an Apprenticeship: you can either approach employers who offer jobs in the career you are interested in or you can talk to training providers who deliver the qualifications you want. In reality, of course, you should probably do both!

The big difference between applying for an Apprenticeship and applying for a place at college or uni is that Apprenticeship vacancies are posted at any time during the year, as an employer chooses to recruit, so don't just expect to find the right vacancy for you in the summer term.

Who offers them?

Hundreds of employers, large and small, up and down the country and in many different sectors employ Apprentices. From some really big household names to the small business round the corner; you might even find that your school or college employs an Apprentice or two.

Who can do them?

Almost anyone can do an Apprenticeship. As long as you are old enough to leave school (16 years plus), an Apprenticeship is an alternative option to staying in full time education until you are 18. There is no upper age limit, as long as you are employed and your employer is willing to invest in your training.

There are some limitations with regard to previous qualifications. For example, if you had already completed a Degree in Engineering as a student your employer would be unlikely to get funding to pay for you to complete a Degree Apprenticeship in Engineering. Instead, you may be able to do a Level 7 Apprenticeship in Engineering or a Degree Apprenticeship in a different skill area, such as Management.

Some of the employers that offer apprenticeships

GlaxoSmithKline
Capgemini
Boots
NetworkRail
EE
Specsavers
BAE SYSTEMS
Google
BRITISH AIRWAYS
ASOS
AIRBUS GROUP
British Gas
GREENE KING
FUJITSU
itv
IBM
JAGUAR
BBC
RBS
RSPCA
Virgin media
pwc
ROLLS ROYCE
pets at home
sky
PRET
ROYAL AIR FORCE APPRENTICESHIPS
LAND ROVER
BMW
Santander

OptimisedRetrofit

Hello

Did you know that housing is responsible for **29%** of the UK's carbon emissions?

We have a big challenge on our hands to make our homes greener, that is why the Optimised Retrofit project is underway - to create the tools we need to make our homes more energy-efficient.

The project involves **68** partners working together to retrofit **1,372** pilot homes across Wales. This will help pave the way for the other **29 million** homes in the UK to become greener as well as creating a wide range of exciting building and construction job opportunities in the future.

Find out more at: **www.sero.group/optimised-retrofit**

The original 'green' career?

Time is running out to address climate change, but the strategic use of plants and trees is at the forefront of tackling the issue. We're seeing a huge growth in landscape and horticulture-related jobs that haven't existed before to help combat the climate emergency. Referred to as 'green jobs' or jobs with green skills, here's why they are part of the solution.

Careers in the landscape industry have been around for a very long time and the work they carry out has a direct impact on the environment. We don't call it being 'green fingered' for nothing! But the use of plants and trees is also one of the vital ways we can tackle the climate crisis, which is why we are hearing more about the importance of green spaces and the planting of trees, for example. The skills of gardening, landscaping and horticultural science are being enlisted in new ways to secure the future of humanity.

So, how do plants help our planet? Plants and particularly large areas of planting like parks or forests contribute a number of benefits. First and foremost, plants improve our air quality: they are natural stores of carbon dioxide and producers of oxygen. Plants also help to regulate the temperature: trees and plants around buildings help insulate in the winter and cool in the summer. You will have noticed how a grassed area feels significantly cooler than tarmac or concrete.

Plants also help reduce noise: not only do they absorb and deflect sound energy, they also mask other sounds with their own noises, like leaves rustling or the wildlife living in them. Plants significantly contribute to water management: they will absorb and help control runoff water, reducing the risk of flooding and soil erosion. Planted areas also provide habitats for wildlife and insects, offering food, shelter from the weather, nesting places and protection from predators.

The other incredibly important aspect to plants is how they make us feel. Many studies have shown that plants and spending time outside with nature has a positive impact on our wellbeing and mental health. Time spent outdoors and around plants makes us happier, healthier, and more productive. Did you know you could do better in your exams if you can see greenery? A study in the USA reported that students with a higher exposure to 'greenness' showed better academic performance in English and Maths, especially in the spring when they sat their main exams.

Don't just think about plants being on the ground or outside. There are many ways to incorporate plants into a building, such as the green walls and roofs that are growing in popularity. Interior landscapers bring the green inside, meaning buildings can still gain the benefits where a traditional garden wouldn't fit.

Landscapers have the skills and knowledge to design these areas. Choosing the most appropriate plants and features, they will plan, install and plant them. The work doesn't stop there, of course, as they will also implement programmes to maintain the plants, keeping the areas safe and the plants healthy. They will create spaces that are not only beautiful to look at, but which provide active benefits for the world around us.

By considering a career in the landscape industry, you are choosing a career that will shape, change and improve our environment. You can undertake the relevant training as a Level 2 or Level 3 Landscape or Horticulture apprentice, or as a full-time course at college. These could even lead onto you undertaking a degree within a specialist area in landscaping.

Our green spaces are so powerful, who wouldn't want a career that delivers such positive outcomes?

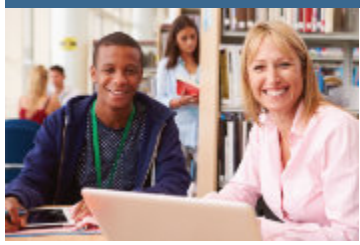
For more information visit golandscape.co.uk

Want to know more about the world of work?

East Sussex County Council

If so, we have just the resource for you!

The East Sussex Careers Hub's mission is to inspire and prepare young people for the world of work by using the skills and experiences of a network of employers who pass on their knowledge in a variety of ways.



iCan 2022

iCan is an in-person careers event for young people with additional needs in East Sussex. Hear inspiring stories from local employers and engage in interactive skills sessions. iCan 2022 will be taking place on 30th June at the Towner Gallery, Eastbourne. Talk to your Careers Lead in school about attending. Find out more at **careerseastsussex.co.uk**.

Apprenticeship Roadshow 2022

Apprenticeship Roadshows 2022 are in-person careers events where young people can learn about live apprenticeship opportunities from local employers and training providers. Meet current and former apprentices and find out about their role and day-to-day work. Apprenticeship Roadshow events will be taking place in Hastings at the White Rock Theatre on 20th June, from 4:30 to 6:30pm, and in Eastbourne at the Welcome Building, Devonshire Park Quarter, on 6th July, from 4:30 to 6:30pm. Find out more at **careerseastsussex.co.uk/advice/apprenticeships/**.

Opportunity Days

Opportunity Days offer an exciting careers event open to all Year 9 and 10 students. The day aims to offer some young people the chance to experience the workplace environment and have meaningful encounters with employers from a chosen industry sector. These events enable young people to explore and find out about different roles and the skills, qualifications and careers routes for each industry sector. Opportunity Days will be taking place in Hastings on Thursday 28th April and Lewes/Eastbourne on Wednesday 25th May for Hastings and Lewes district schools respectively. Find out more at **hastingsopportunityarea.co.uk**

Where can I learn more?

You can read more about the Careers Hub, upcoming events and careers opportunities at **careerseastsussex.co.uk** or by speaking to your Careers Lead.

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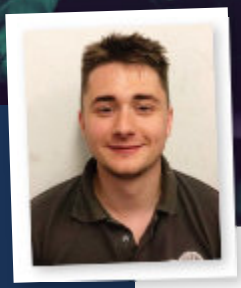
Driving the future of engineering

Graduate engineer Jonny Jamison tells us how what started as passion for cars shared with his Dad is promising to become a next-generation career in engineering.



"I grew up in a small town on the north coast of Northern Ireland. My Dad's love of cars perhaps explains why I grew up with a passion for cars too and understanding how they work. Choosing GCSE subjects at 14, I already knew what I was good at and I did well in Maths and Physics. I was already thinking about a career in engineering. I looked at Tech' College courses for after GCSEs but I was considering University, so A Levels seemed like the way to keep my options open for that.

I was able to choose four AS Level subjects – Maths, Physics, ICT and Technology – and carried all but Technology on to full A Levels. I had heard somewhere that there would be a shortage of engineers but my school didn't seem to be able to offer much specific advice on engineering careers, so I set out to research myself.

I had friends who were doing Apprenticeships instead of A Levels; they had been able to buy great cars already, so I was jealous of that!

But I felt like geography was an important factor: there aren't too many engineering firms near me, so I wasn't sure I would find an Apprenticeship locally enough doing something I wanted to do.

The challenge in Northern Ireland is where to go to university. We've got two great Universities here (Queens Belfast and Ulster) but we can also apply to Universities across the UK. It wasn't a clearcut decision for me. I had been over to London and also had a brilliant night out with friends on my 18th in Newcastle. I decided to make Queens Belfast my first choice, but Newcastle was my second choice. Of my group of eight close school friends, in the end only two of us stayed in Northern Ireland for university; the rest went 'over the water' to universities in the mainland UK. I was accepted to Queens. Belfast is such an up-and-coming city and I lived with some great housemates, so I had a great time. From a practical point of view, although I had moved out of home, my parents were still only 1½ hours away - and I wasn't having to pay for flights to get home!

Of course, my degree was great too. Queens Belfast ranks highly as a university, and I had been accepted on to their 5-year integrated Masters Engineering Degree. This meant that I 'skipped' a first, bachelor degree and got to do a year in industry. The first two years of the degree had required modules to cover the engineering 'basics', topics liked the fundamentals of engineering dynamics, thermodynamics, CAD, Maths etc. Most of us then went on our placement year in the third year, to gain practical experience and help decide on the projects and modules we wanted to choose when we came back in years four and five. I chose a placement based around internal combustion and engine development, a great opportunity to combine my passion for cars with my degree.

Back at Belfast, one of the things we did in year four was a group project. I chose to be part of the Formula Student* racing team. We designed a suspension system for the car – working out stresses, costing, performance etc. Then, in my final year, we had the option to do another linked project.

Again, thinking about cars, I chose high-fidelity simulation, taking my knowledge of dynamics a step further. I had also been lucky enough to work my final two summers from University with a great company in Wisconsin, USA, working on car construction.

I finished my Masters in July 2020, all set to return to Wisconsin to take up a contract with them for ten months, and to do a bit of travelling, before returning to find a graduate job in the UK in September 2021. Sadly, the pandemic restrictions meant I couldn't get a visa or a plane ticket, so I felt like my plans had stalled. However, I spotted a postgraduate study programme working on Artificial Intelligence, so I enrolled on that instead, knowing it would be a great opportunity to expand my knowledge of programming.

It gave me the chance to explore automotive simulation, which means you don't have to build a real prototype to test its performance and materials.The postgrad' course is also giving me that chance to explore other specialisms that interest me, such as telemetry and the power train, so I can experience lots of areas before I think about specialising in any of them. I've also spent a lot of 2021 working with Formula Student and supporting what they do.

After my postgraduate course finishes, I would love to work in the automotive industry as we

> **Engineering also teaches you lots of transferable skills**

are seeing so many changes and developments already. For example, autonomous driving is going to be massive for transporting goods and people. It will blur the lines even more between mechanical engineering and programming – and bring ethics into the programming.

The leading technologies at the moment are electrification and hybridisation. These are really important because the automotive industry – and the world – needs to meet the carbon emissions goals. It will be engineers who have to step up and deliver these goals. And it's not just the fuel that's the issue, we need to decarbonise the materials and manufacturing process. When I was in the USA, I got to meet a team who can test how much emissions the paint on your car gives off.

We do need to think of everything: for example, what new materials can we use that can be recycled after a car has reached the end of its useful life? It's going to be a massive task for industry in general and it will be engineers and scientists who are best placed to provide the answers.

My advice would be, if you don't know what you want to be in life, do an engineering degree as it prepares you for so much. If you do have strengths and qualifications in STEM subjects, it's fairly easy to step into aeronautics, programming and other related areas, so engineering is a great generalism. Engineering also teaches you lots of transferable skills, too, from teamwork to analytical thinking. The best engineers bring lots of skills.

Choosing a career is definitely a balancing act: prioritise what you're interested in and what you enjoy but also think about what the world needs and where your skills could fit."

Editor's note:

Since we conducted this interview, Jonny has found a job in Automotive Simulation at Rivian in the USA, helping to make the next generation of electric vehicles.

Do you have a LinkedIn profile yet?

Launched in 2003, LinkedIn, www.linkedin.com, was designed to be a tool to connect professionals across the world, helping them become more efficient and productive. Microsoft bought LinkedIn in 2016 for $26.2 billion since when it has worked on integrations with other Microsoft products, particularly Dynamics, its customer relationship management (CRM) system.

Far from being 'Facebook in a suit', LinkedIn is a platform that exists to share best practice and ideas, give testimonials to others, join professional or industry online networks and – sometimes – to find your next job. 30 million companies and organisations have a LinkedIn profile, and that 67% of LinkedIn users are between the ages of 25 and 34.

It is free to set up a LinkedIn profile and the set- up guide leads you through it. You can then follow companies, universities or other organisations you are interested in, connect with and message people you know and join interest groups for areas of interest. Like other social media, you can also follow or search hashtags to read up on the latest discussions on a topic.

Inviting someone to connect with you on LinkedIn feels less intimidating than speaking to someone in person; just remember to include a message with your invitation to say why you're asking to connect with them.

At the time of writing this article, you can only include a message on the desktop version and not on the mobile app.

If you're serious about entering the world of work at some point, it's never too early to start building your network on LinkedIn.

To call LinkedIn a social media platform is to misunderstand its purpose and its potential. You only have to look at some of the statistics to see why:

- Someone is hired through LinkedIn every 7 seconds
- 55 job applications are submitted every second
- People in 200 countries and regions are on LinkedIn
- 75,000 freelancers find new contracts
- 2 million small businesses regularly use LinkedIn to hire staff
- LinkedIn now has 690 million members worldwide

(data from LinkedIn, May 2020)

Canolfan Arloesi Adeiladwaith Cymru
Construction Wales Innovation Centre

CONVERT
Dysgu Trochi ym Maes Adeiladu | Immersive Learning in Construction

Construct Your Future with Us!

Funded by the Construction Industry Training Board this UK wide collaborative project aims to CONVERT young learners to consider a career in Construction.

Construction is evolving in new and exciting ways.

Construction Wales Innovation Centre. (CWIC) at Swansea's University of Wales Trinity Saint David has 4 ways to immerse yourself virtually into construction!

Through its CONVERT project (Construction Virtual Environment Resource training) it uses the latest Virtual and Mixed Media Reality equipment for students and pupils to experience the following constructional situations:

1. Learn about the stages of constructing a building with the Virtual Building Environment Element Explorer (VBEEE)
2. Experience sawmilling safely with the Virtual Wood Machine or learn how to paint like the professional with the paint spraying simulator.
3. Fly a virtual drone to survey safety on a construction site.
4. Use a Virtual Reality headset to feel what it's like to Work at Height on scaffolding.

To find out how you can book your virtual experiences contact Julie Evans on:

01792 481273

julie.evans@uwtsd.ac.uk

Prifysgol Cymru
Y Drindod Dewi Sant
University of Wales
Trinity Saint David

CWIC
CanolfanArloesiAdeiladwaithCymru
ConstructionWalesInnovationCentre

citb Cymru Wales

ESP

Coleg Cambria

Leeds College of Building

KIER

SIMAN

Waltham Forest

city college plymouth

ALTRAD SERVICES

CONSTRUCTION SCOTLAND INNOVATION CENTRE

To read the full article, scan here!

In the Navy

Following our article in the last issue, All at Sea, we look at the career opportunities in the Royal Navy. The Royal Navy can trace it's history back to Henry VIII (at least). But for all that history, the Navy also embraces the heights of new technology too - and they don't just employ sailors.

There are over one hundred different job roles and skill areas within the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Many can now be entered through an Apprenticeship or even performed part time as a 'reservist'. From starting salaries typically around £15,000, some of the most responsible jobs can earn £50,000 or more. Here's our selection to illustrate the wide range roles that keep the service running.

Work with aircraft
The Royal Navy operates aircraft as well as ships, known as the Fleet Air Arm. Here are a couple of the roles that will see you working with aircraft:
- Air Engineering Technician or Officer
- Aircrew Officer Pilot

Work in catering and hospitality
They say 'an army marches on its stomach' but certainly a navy does too! Here are a few of the roles that will see you feeding your colleagues:
- Qualified Chef
- Steward

Musicians
The band of the Royal Marines is famous throughout the world and regularly perform at some of our most high-profile national events. Why not consider becoming:
- Royal Marines Bugler
- Royal Marines Musician

Underwater roles
Many roles that are performed on ships also happen on submarines, too.
If you actually want to get wet, how about:
- Mine Clearance Diver

Logistics & Supply Chain
Moving supplies, equipment and people around the globe has become a specialist area and the Navy uses a range of skilled roles to help ensure it operates effectively:
- Leading Hand Supply Chain Operative Qualified (RFA)
- Logistics Officer

Science, Medical & Welfare roles
Many roles in the Navy are dedicated to the physical, mental and spiritual welfare of service members. Roles exist in the surface fleet, land-based and often on submarines too for:
- Biomedical Scientist
- Dental Officer
- Mental Health Nurse (Qualified or Student)

Engineering
Land-based, ship-based or submarine based, here are just a couple.
- Weapon Engineering
- Survival Equipment Technician (SET)

Communications & Intelligence
Coordinating activity amongst your forces, as well as monitoring the activities of enemy forces, is key to effective deployment. There are a number of specialist roles that respond to the latest technology in place including:
- Cryptologic Technician
- Warfare Intelligence Officer or Specialist

And many other support roles....
Like any large organisation, the Royal Navy also requires many supporting skills to keep it functioning efficiently, including:
- Mine Warfare Specialist
- Royal Navy Police
- Writer Logistician (Human Resources Administrator)

For more details on all of these roles – and more – please visit the Royal Navy website at https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/careers/role-finder

Might a maritime career float your boat?

There are plenty of exciting careers in the maritime sector to choose from, both on and offshore. It is a growing sector with a thriving future offering well-paid careers.

There are many ways to enter the maritime sector and once in, there are tremendous opportunities to move to different parts. Careers range from working on commercial ships to maritime law, hospitality to boat building, or cleaning the oceans of plastics to designing a superyacht, and many more!

To learn more, speak to your Careers Leader in your school or college

SOLENT CAREERS HUB | SOLENT LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP | THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

Space placements in Industry

Looking for a career that is out of this world? A Space Placement in Industry (SPIN) could be the place to start. The space and satellite industry in the UK is growing quickly and it's fast-developing technology impacts on many other sectors, from healthcare to construction. Jointly managed by the UK Space Agency, the SPIN programme is designed to give students of any subject a taste of working in the space industry.

The South Coast Centre of Excellence in Satellite Applications is a collection of organisations who are keen to promote development and use new technologies and information. Based at the University of Portsmouth, the collective includes academics, businesses, government bodies and others. Starting in 2021, the Centre hosted a SPIN placement intern to look at how Virtual Reality (VR) could be used to help in equipment prototyping. During her placement, intern Naomi was able to identify that Cubesat, a type of mini-satellite, would really benefit. In conversation with her Centre of Excellence host, Chloe Mcclellan, Naomi reflects on why she went for the placement opportunity and what she's learnt from it.

Who are you? What do you do?

My name is Naomi Wiren. I am a student at the University of Portsmouth, studying Computer Games Technology and I'm currently focusing on becoming an engine programmer in the games industry.

This means, I develop custom engines and create the digital framework that a game is made out of. It is not one size fits all, and my job is to tailor the engine to the game we are creating.

What was the aim of that SPIN placement? What did you want to achieve?

For me, there were two opportunities here, the first is the obvious one, using my skills in VR development on a programme with links to the UK Space Agency and Satellite Applications Catapult, I knew this would look great on my CV. And the second is that working in the space sector in this way, I really didn't think was an option for me, and it was something I simply couldn't pass up, I might learn something about myself, and I might find that the space industry is the place for me.

What did you manage to create during this programme?

As I was totally new to space, I took the first 4 weeks (of the 8-week internship) just as an opportunity for research. Before this programme, I had no prior technical insight into the space sector, more or less just knowing that satellites orbit Earth and that we haven't been to the moon since 1972. So I took the chance to connect with companies across the industry, I gathered sector-specific data and learnt all about their ambitious plans e.g space tourism and more!! I realised that VR could fill a gap in services in the space sector. CubeSats and Micro Satellites are the most cost-effective satellite you can make, but in real terms, this is still a very costly endeavour for lots of space companies. I realised that VR could connect an engineer and a client, that they could design and work on a virtual CubeSat together, reducing costs, and getting all the clients criteria – which the engineer could then use to create a CubeSat in real life.

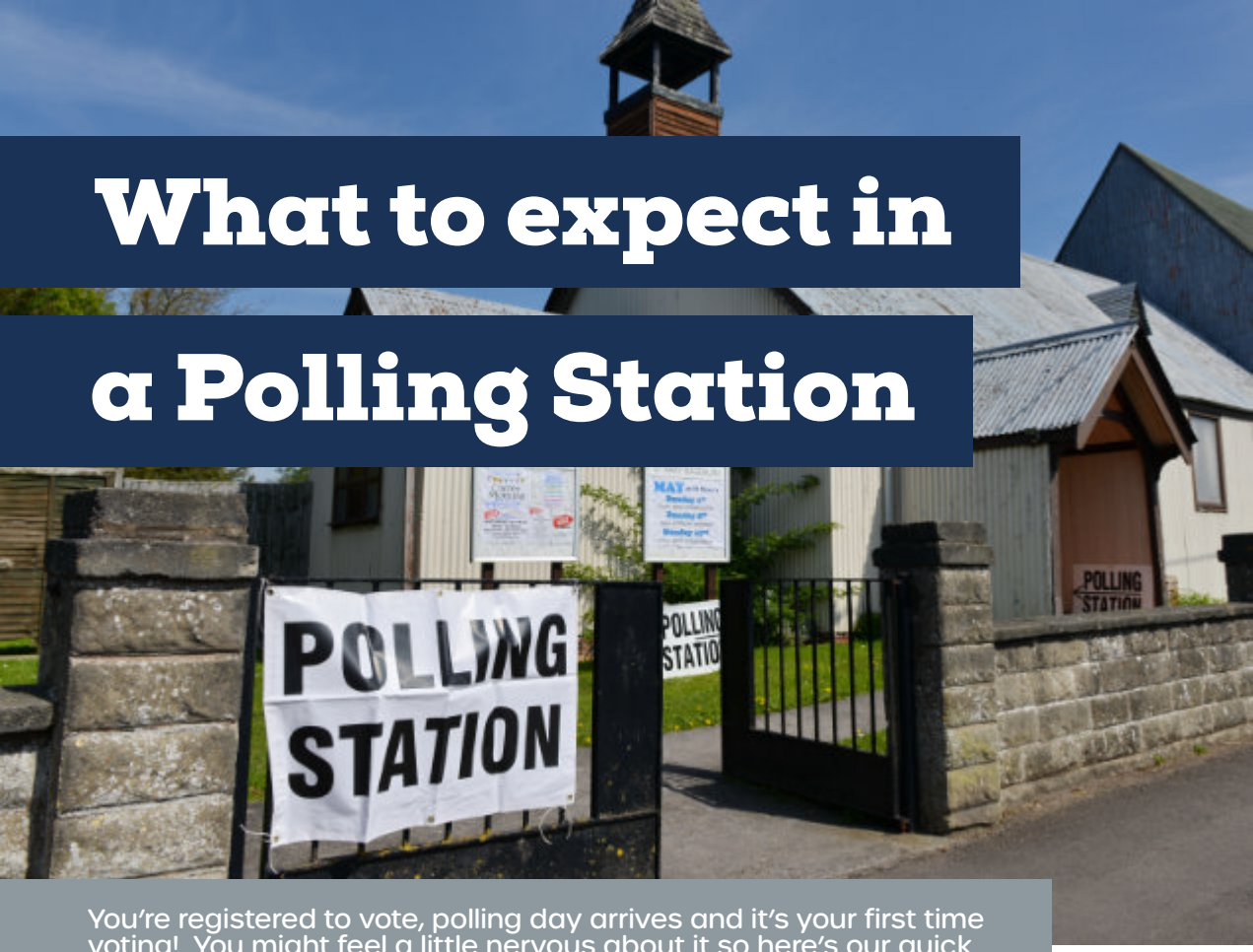
What are you looking forward to seeing happen in the space sector in the next 10 years?

One of the things that I really like about the space sector is its possibility and speed of it. In my research, it was clear that they are huge advancements on their way, in 2022 we're going back to the moon. Oh, and in 2024 there's going to be a habitable moon base, and then we are aiming to go further, all the way to Mars. At this point, it sounds impossible, but according to the experts, it's happening. And I have heard about Moon bases before, but only in video games, and the idea that the technology and advancements can make that happen in my life is so cool.

What's next for Naomi?

It's my final year of this course at university, so it is jam-packed. I'm currently in conversations with some companies regarding where I'm going to end up next year. But if I'm going to be completely honest, I don't really know just yet. I'm toying with the idea of joining a Masters programme straight out of the gate and then toying with the idea of going straight into the games industry. But there are so many different paths I want to take and none of them I've set in stone just yet. If you come back again in 5 months time, perhaps then I will have a better answer for you.

What to expect in a Polling Station



You're registered to vote, polling day arrives and it's your first time voting! You might feel a little nervous about it so here's our quick guide to what to expect and how straight-forward it is!

Before election day, you should have received your Poll Card through the post notifying you of the date of the election. Not receiving a Poll Card could mean that you aren't registered to vote or, if you're a student, your Poll Card could have gone to your home address.

Your Poll Card will include some important information and which Polling Station you need to go to. These can be schools, community centres or church halls that are being used just for the day, it is important that you do attend the right Polling Station and don't just turn up to another one expecting to vote.

Polling Stations are open between 7am and 10pm on the day of the election. Every Polling Station is different, but you can expect it to be a little busier at peak times of the day: some people like to vote early on their way to work, some will pop out at lunchtime whilst others may go when they collect children from school.

When you arrive at a Polling Station, there may be people with clipboards and party rosettes standing outside. These people are called Tellers. They might just say hello to you as you go in, but they will be more interested to speak to you on the way out. After you have voted, they will ask you what your Voter Number is if you have your Poll Card with you and which candidate you voted for. You do not have to tell them, voting in the UK is private. This information can be where political parties get their 'Exit Poll' results.

Inside the Polling Station, you will be greeted by the small team, usually 2 or 3 people, who are running the station.

They will be sitting at a desk and they will ask you either what your Voter Number is if you have your Poll Card with you or what street you live in, and your full name. When they find your name on the list, they will issue you with a ballot paper.

Traditionally, people mark their ballot paper with a cross X in the box

You will then be directed to a Polling Booth, usually a screened stand placed a distance away from their desk. Pencils are provided in the booth. There will be a notice in the booth to explain how to mark your ballot paper if you're not sure. For example, at some elections, you just mark one candidate, but at others you might be ask to make a first and second choice. They will also have resources to help Voters with disabilities, too, so do ask them if you would like some support.

Traditionally, people mark their ballot paper with a cross X in the box. If you really mess up, which is called 'spoiling a ballot paper', as long as you haven't put your ballot paper in the ballot box, you can hand it back in at the desk and ask for another ballot paper instead.

After you have marked your ballot paper(s), you will be directed to the ballot box and you 'post' your ballot in here.

The box will have been checked and sealed at 7am and those seals will not be broken until the papers inside are ready to be counted after the close of poll.

And that's it – you have just voted! You will probably only be in the Polling Station for 5 minutes at the most so it really is simple.

If you registered to vote by post, but didn't remember to post it in time, you can hand your completed envelope in to your local Polling Station. As long as it's in my 10pm, it will still be counted.

If you know you will not be able to get to your Polling Station on the day, you can nominate someone to vote for you; this is called nominating a Proxy. You will need to notify your council Election Office in good time before the election to do this. In an emergency, such as serious illness, you can request a Proxy on the day.

To read the full article, scan here!

More than meets the eye:

Optical Assistant Apprenticeship

An Optometrist is a medical professional who specialises in eye care. Toby Fisher has always had his eye on this as a career and tells us how focussing on his apprenticeship has set him in the right direction.

"I had always been interested in being an Optometrist. I had a Saturday job here for a while so that gave me a pretty good insight into what goes on day to day at an opticians. I had thought about going the traditional A Levels route, but found out that, with the Apprenticeship, I would be able to work my way to becoming an Optometrist instead. After talking it over with my family, colleagues and the directors here, I decided to make my store role full time and signed up to the Apprenticeship after my GCSEs, in September 2019.

The apprenticeship has been an excellent launchpad into the optical industry, and I can already see so many options opening up to me. During the apprenticeship, I covered every area of the store, from pre-testing customers, to dispensing glasses and contact lens. Each week, I was given time away from the shopfloor to complete coursework or assignments for my apprenticeship. I had regular meetings with my assessor to track how

my knowledge was growing and to help set targets. I had great support from my colleagues, too. Working with experienced staff in store meant that there was always someone willing to help if I needed it. The apprenticeship was only 13 months long but it flew by!

Since I completed the apprenticeship, my experience helped me become the in-store trainer here to help plan the development of my colleagues. I'm now the store's assistant manager! The apprenticeship was a brilliant place to start, but I am continuing my learning journey. I'm currently doing the Cert 4, part of the Specsavers training programme, and then I plan to study Ophthalmic Dispensing, so I can prescribe and fit glasses and contact lens. I'm also enjoying my management responsibilities here in store, which I know will open other opportunities to me here.

There is generally a shortage of opticians and ophthalmologists so it's a career I would recommend. You get to meet people every day and it's definitely a caring profession; you can make so much difference to someone's quality of life. It's also true that, as we get older, we tend to need more eye care so, as we're all living longer now, we're going to need even more of us in future!"

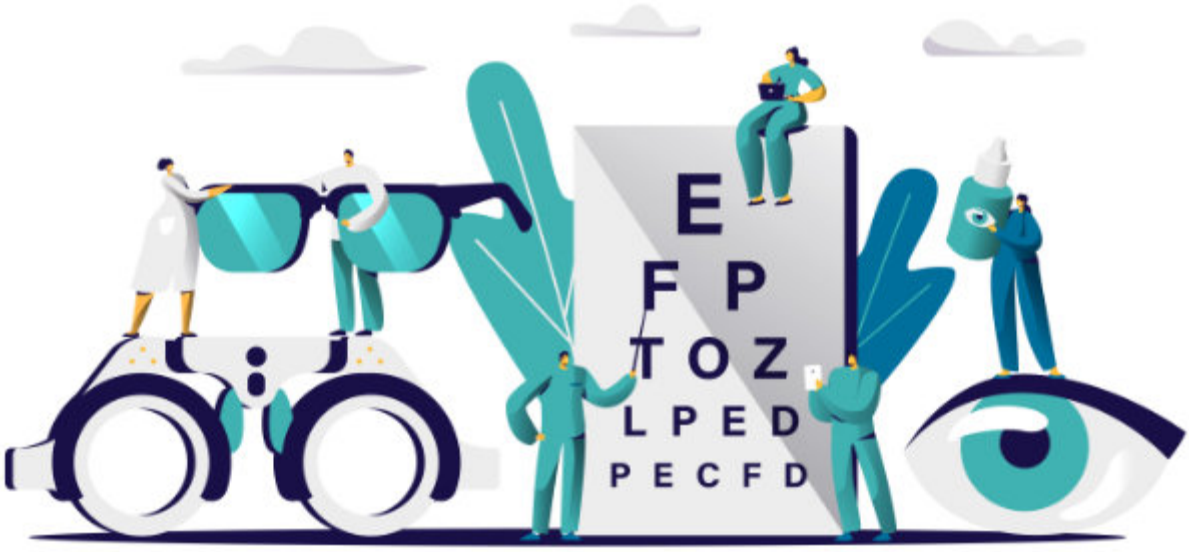
More roles:

An optician store like Specsavers needs more than just opticians to run smoothly. Here is a selection of the other in-store and head office colleagues you will typically find on the team:

- Optical, hearcare and domiciliary assistants (supporting customers in store)
- Lab technicians (sometimes in store, finishing spectacles ready for customers)
- Store Managers
- Retail Business Support (based at HQ to support the stores)
- Supply Chain (ensuring lens and other goods and services are delivered on time)
- Technology (because every business today needs IT support!)
- Marketing & Creative
- Human Resources
- Finance

Optical & Aural Apprenticeships

Hearing Aid Dispenser (Level 5)
Optical Assistant (Level 2)
Optometrist (Level 7) in development
Dispensing Optician (Level tbc) in development



Managing innovation!

Having left school with her GCSEs but no idea of what she wanted to do in life, Cerys Williams shares her journey to the busy job she enjoys today. If you don't know what an Innovation Manager does, read on!

"I was lucky enough to be given a chance by the owner of an estate agency who saw that what I lacked in formal training, I more than made up for in enthusiasm! I knuckled down and worked hard. I learnt how to support people selling their home, when they entrusted me with their most valuable asset. I learnt to guide first time buyers or downsizers to seeing potential in homes that they may not have previously considered. Eventually I also learnt how to hold my own against experienced solicitors and surveyors who had no patience for 'rookies' like me.

After five years, I understood conveyancing, the process of selling a house, inside out and had even the stoniest of solicitors warm to me! We were a busy city centre estate agency, and I had become Sales and Lettings Manager. Looking back, I realise I needed that bit of maturity to get these positive outcomes. I had been a bit of a wild child in my teens and early 20's but I was quick to learn life lessons once I got serious about working. I guess what I'm trying to say here is that you need determination and perseverance.

I would say that you also need luck, but I believe you make your own luck. I think that was how I met the founders of Sero, a group of businesses working towards a green, net zero carbon home for everyone.
The business was growing rapidly, and they needed a team member to help manage all the new ideas and technologies being planned. I jumped at the chance and that's how I became Innovation Manager here.

Although my previous estate agency experience clearly gave me an insight into homes, I realise how little I actually knew about energy efficiency. I think it's safe to say that this is not one of the main selling features of a house and that, actually, the industry as a whole is pretty

ignorant about how to decarbonise our homes. Working here has given me a real fire in my belly to change that. I believe that we need to educate estate agents, conveyancers, surveyors and mortgage-lenders so they can give the general public the most sustainable guidance possible when buying or selling a home.

My role as Innovation Manager is quite tricky to put into words. It's a very diverse and exciting role, which sees me involved in lots of different projects. I've worked on our FLATLINE* project, which demonstrates how important it is to balance energy supply from different sources to meet demand. My current 'baby' is the VALUER* project, which is about understanding how the energy running costs of a property should be influencing the market value of that property.

Mostly, my role focusses mainly on green finance, to enable people to choose more sustainable energy solutions. For example, if someone wants to replace their traditional gas boiler with a more sustainable air-source heat pump, what is the best way for them to pay for it? Do they want to take out a loan to cover the upfront costs? Add it to an existing mortgage? Or would they rather sacrifice some of their resulting energy savings to be able to repay the installation costs over time? Having different finance options will be key to enabling the public to choose which route is best for them.

Whatever you choose, embrace the challenges and learn from your fears.

Of course, as well as personal finance, mortgage-lenders and the government could also have a part to play in installing these new, sustainable technologies. Will lenders offer good deals for those looking to install positive new energy management systems? Or penalise those who don't? Will the government enforce new regulations and legislations - when and how? All of this financial and funding side is what I spend a lot of my time exploring.

For anyone thinking about a career in innovative tech' or green finance, I would say the key at the moment would be to get plenty of general experience. There are so many new technologies being developed, don't just pick one, but understand that there's space for a variety of different solutions. Given that I have more 'life experience' than academic, it would be hypocritical of me to steer learners towards one path or another – just do what's right for you when it feels right, whether that's as a school leaver or someone seeking to retrain later in life. Whatever you choose, embrace the challenges and learn from your fears. I'm still learning every day – it's another reason I love my job. When you can become familiar with things that once scared you, you become confident in tackling them and they aren't the barriers you thought they might be."

* FLATLINE – Fixed Level Affordable Tariffs Linked with Intelligently Networked Energy
VALUER – Valuations and Lending Underwriting Energy Efficiency

What is a training provider?

You would think that the obvious answer to that question is a person or organisation who provides training. Whilst that is certainly true, in the world of apprenticeships, the term training provider has a very specific meaning too.

A training provider is an organisation who is officially registered and approved to deliver Apprenticeship Training. All training providers need to be listed on the Register of Apprenticeship Training Providers (RoATP) and will have a contract with the Government for funding purposes. All training providers are also subject to OfSTED Inspections, which helps to ensure the quality and the experience for their learners.

Training providers are typically colleges of further education, private or specialist training providers and some universities. For example, Basingstoke College of Technology (BCoT), HTP Apprenticeship College and Solent University all feature on the RoATP and regularly deliver apprenticeships in a range of areas.

However, some employers or specialist organisations also choose to become registered so they can deliver apprenticeships. Browsing the list of over 2,000 training providers currently registered in England, the following organisations also feature: Her Majesty's Revenue & Customs (HMRC), Boots the Chemist and the National Pharmacy Association, to name just a few.

If you want to find out more about training providers, the Gov.uk website has useful information and if you want to find a Training Provider, the RoATP listing can be found on the Gov.uk website in the Apprenticeship section.

The Young Apprentice Ambassadors Network (YAAN)

The Young Apprentice Ambassador Network (YAAN)is a group of inspiring, driven apprentices, both current and former, who are happy to share their experiences with others. Ambassadors can be booked to come in to speak at schools, attend careers fairs or support mock interview days, for example. All Ambassadors receive free training and are then able to choose which events in their area they are able to support. In our experience, employers are usually delighted to support their Apprentices to sign up as an Ambassador as they are such a great reflection on the company!

To sign up as a Young Apprentice Ambassador or if you are teacher and you would like to request an Ambassador, please visit **www.amazingapprenticeships.com**

Fareham College

T-LEVELS

Wherever your future is heading, take it to the next level with a T Level at Fareham College. You will be provided with a clear route to skilled employment, an Apprenticeship or a degree.

From September 2022 we will be offering T Levels in:

- Business and Administration
- Legal, Finance and Accounting
- Digital Production, Design and Development
- Digital Business Services
- Digital Support Services
- Building Services Engineering for Construction
- Design, Surveying and Planning
- On-site Construction
- Engineering and Manufacturing
- Education and Childcare
- Health
- Science

Apply now at fareham.ac.uk/t-levels

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OUTSTANDING

Ofsted Outstanding Provider

Your choices at the end of Year 11

To read the full article, scan here!

Most people will leave school at about 16 and continue in some sort of formal training for a further two years. Essentially, this means two options: stay in full-time education, or mix working and learning through something like an apprenticeship. Since 2015, in England you must remain in education until you are 18. Here is our round-up of all the options after Year 11!

Full-time education

Around 80% of 16–17-year-olds will continue their education full-time by choosing to stay on at school or go to college. Sixth Form, Further Education and University Technical Colleges are all viable options.

A Levels
For many considering University as their next step, A Levels remain a popular choice. Entry will usually require good passes at GCSE in English, maths and subjects related to what you want to study at A Level. Typically, you get to pick three subjects (sometimes four) and will study them for two years. These three or four subjects will fill most of a college week, with some gaps for self-study, sports or other qualifications.

International Baccalaureate (IB)
Around 130 schools and colleges in the UK offer the International Baccalaureate. Their Diploma Programme allows students to study three subjects at advanced level and three to standard level over two years. Students will also study a 'theory of knowledge' component and produce a 4,000-word extended essay.

T Levels
A relatively new qualification, available only at the moment in England, T Levels are designed to combine the 'academic rigour' of an A Level with the applied knowledge of vocational qualifications. For example, if you chose a T Level in Engineering, you would also need to study subjects like Maths and Physics to a higher academic level. You choose one T Level subject, which will fill your college week, and assessment is a mixture of practical, assignment and exam.

Vocational or applied qualifications
There are many types of vocational qualification now available, with names like BTEC and City & Guilds perhaps being the most widely known. These are the names of different Awarding Bodies and others do exist. They are often assignment-based or practical, with less emphasis on end-of-year exams. If you didn't do quite so well in your GCSEs, you could go into a one-year Level 2 course. If you've completed a Level 2 or you did well in your GCSEs, you could go into a two-year Level 3 course (at the same academic level at A Levels).

Mix work and learning

For most 16-year-olds who decide not to stay in full-time education, an Apprenticeship will be their first choice; an opportunity to start earning some real money alongside study towards their chosen career path. For those who don't quite know what industry area to choose, a traineeship or supported internship would be a good way to try something and find out.

Apprenticeship
An apprenticeship is usually a full-time role where you not only learn by doing the job but are paid to study towards a relevant qualification the equivalent of one day a week (20% of your working time). There is no set time of year to apply for an Apprenticeship so it's worth starting a year ahead as some employers really do like to get in early. An Apprenticeship has to be a minimum of one year but some – at higher levels – can be up to 6 years. Most employers like to keep their apprentices after they have completed so you are likely to qualify with experience, qualifications and a job.

Traineeship
A Traineeship is a tailored programme, available in England only, that can last from just 6 weeks up to one year, depending on what you need. All traineeships have three, flexible elements: Maths and English support if you need it; CV, application and interview support, to help you in applying for your next step; and a work placement. For most Trainees, the placement is the really attractive element, and they will use it to gain experience of a real workplace. Your Traineeship provider can help you find a placement and you can have just one employer or try out several to get a feel for different areas.

Supported Internship
A supported internship is for any person aged between 16 and 24 who has learning difficulties or learning disabilities, who wants to get a job and needs some extra support to do this. To be eligible you need a Statement of Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND), a Learning Difficulty Assessment, or an Education Health and Care Plan. Your provider (typically your school or college) will put together a programme that gives you the training, support and work skills you will need to get a job. You will also get some work experience with a real employer, who will train you to do a job role and learn the skills needed for work. Typically, internships last up to 6 months, with the goal of moving into a job or Apprenticeship at the end of that time.

Part-time study
In some cases, and if none of the options above suit what you want to do, you can spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering as long as you also complete part-time education or training at the same time. Talk to your school or college about what study options they have available that would fit this model for you.

For further information, see the online article here.

Could hospitality serve your career ambitions?

The world of hospitality is always interesting and lively, and will develop you professionally and as a person.

You will develop new skills such as communicating or working in a team and ones that will lead to a career in management. There are creative jobs, from creating food to staging an event.
The skills are transferable, a career in hospitality can very easily be the key to discovering new countries, new cultures and new people.

To learn more, speak to your Careers Leader in your school or college

Why is resilience important?

Resilient people still experience stress, setbacks, and difficult emotion, however resilience empowers them to adapt to a situation and move forward. It's important for both your career and personal life - it's what gives people the emotional strength to cope with trauma, adversity, and hardship.

Stress management

Firstly, learn to recognise the signs of stress: irritability and anger, trouble sleeping, eating changes, neglecting responsibilities...

If these things start to happen you can tackle the stress in numerous ways: talking about stressful situations will put things in perspective, physical activity is an essential stress reliever whether it's a walk or going to the gym, and learning mindfulness...

The value of mistakes

Mistakes are proof of trying new things and reaching out the comfort zone - whether this be learning a brand new subject or teaching yourself to roller-skate.

What can you take away from this? Expect them as part of the process of development, and keep in mind they could lead to something extraordinary!

Mistakes allow you to learn more than what you would if you got everything right first time.

How to use mindfulness

Mindfulness is where you focus on being intensely aware of what you're feeling in the moment, without judgement. It helps relax the body and mind and help reduce stress. This could involve: walking meditation, focusing on your breathing, or writing. For advice, guidance and tips on mindfulness, scan below.

Want to find out more about any of these topics?

Head to our website

Relationships

Everyone has their own individual opinions on how relationships work. Some key things to remember in a relationship are to make sure you (no matter what) are feeling: supported, safe, happy, trusted and loved. If you are doubting any of these things, the best thing you can do is reach out and talk, as hard as that can sometimes be.

YOUR MIND MATTERS

FINANCE?
What about it?

How to avoid debt

Be a saver — it's never too early to start. Having a savings account is the most reassuring thing you can do for yourself financially, at a young age.

Sort out needs vs. wants. Bills before anything!

Never start the month without a plan. List all of the things that need to be paid and plan around it!

What is National Insurance?

What: National Insurance is a tax on earnings and self employed profits.

Who: National Insurance is paid by employers, as well as employees and self-employed workers

Why: You'll need to pay into National Insurance for a set number of years to be entitled to receive the state pension and it will entitle you to some state benefit.

How: If you are a UK national, you should receive an NI number (and NI card) automatically before you turn 16. If you're employed, National Insurance is automatically deducted from your monthly pay.

How do student loans work?

Student loans can include a Tuition Fee Loan and a Maintenance Loan to help with your living costs.

Tuition Fee Loans cover the full cost of your course, are paid directly to the course provider, and you won't have to pay it back until after your course, when you're earning above a certain level.

Maintenance Loans can be applied for at the same time. How much you get depends on your household income, where you study, where you live, and how long for.

Students can apply for grants if they're eligible for certain benefits, disabled, or need help with childcare costs.

How to avoid financial cons

1. Don't click on links from anyone you don't know or trust.

2. Don't give out personal information like your bank details unless you know you can trust the person receiving it.

3. Never pay to enter a contest, apply for a scholarship, or get a job.

Who makes the perfect HR person?

Human Resources (HR) is the business function that looks after an organisation's staff. From recruitment through to retirement, and from training to disciplinary matters, HR teams are there to provide both practical support and legal compliance. So who makes the perfect HR person – someone sympathetic or someone tough? Well, perhaps a bit of both. Here's our take.

Around 1.6% of the UK workforce now works in HR-related roles. Salary data shows that average pay varies between £18,372 and £115,953, depending on things like levels of responsibility and region. Most HR professionals work in private companies, compared to working for public sector organisations, like local councils or hospitals.*

HR is clearly a growing and fairly well-paid profession, but what does the job actually entail. Let's look at the typical activities an HR team will get involved in through the timeline of taking a job.

Pre-recruitment – it's likely that HR will have supported a department head to make the case for recruiting a new member of their team, as well as checking the job description and person profile.

Recruitment – HR may well take the lead in advertising a vacancy and then helping to shortlist applications. HR will provide interview training, if required, or may support managers in conducting interviews and the recruitment process. When a decision is made, it is usually HR who will send out formal offer letters and check things like an individual's right to work in the UK.

Payroll and expenses – some companies run their payroll and staff expenses through a finance department, but many choose to ensure that HR are involved, in order to check that the right people are being paid.

Training – working alongside department managers, it's likely that the HR team will oversee a company's training budget and help to arrange training required. They will also keep records of any mandatory training that a business needs such as First Aid, so that they can remind people when renewals are due.

Holiday and absence management – every company varies but it's likely that HR will support and record staff absence, whether for nice things like holidays or for unfortunate things like sickness. They will also support their colleagues in managing things like Maternity or Paternity leave, compassionate leave or taking time off for Jury Service. HR will keep an overall view of patterns of absence and support a manager and an individual staff member if there are indications of a problem.

Disciplinary – if a staff member is not doing their job as they should be, or has done something that they shouldn't, HR will be there to support the individual and their manager to try to resolve the process, if possible. This will usually be a phased process, to give people the opportunity to correct their behaviour. Very occasionally, an individual will do something so bad that they need to be instantly dismissed: it is likely that HR will manage that process.

Resignation – if a member of staff chooses to leave, HR will be informed so that they can make sure all the 'ends'a are tied up. In today's businesses, this may include liaising with IT staff to make sure an individual's logins are cancelled when they leave to making sure pension contributions are correctly assigned.

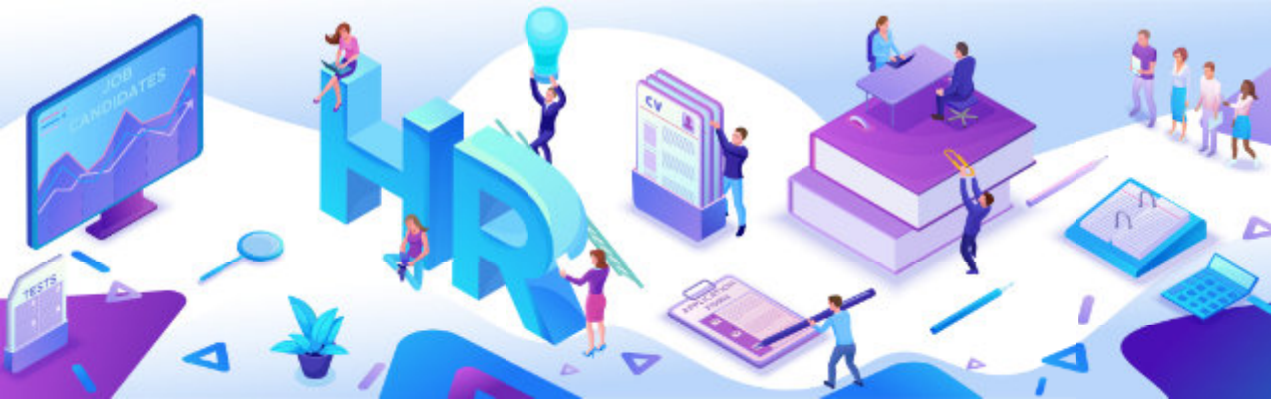
Redundancy – if a business decides to let some staff go because they don't need those particular roles, whether it's one person or a whole group of people, HR will usually play a key role in supporting that process. The people who are at risk of being made redundant need to be informed, and efforts are made to either find them other suitable roles within the business, to work out 'early retirement' terms for them or to support them into another role somewhere else. Redundancy can be a busy time for HR!

Retirement – when we get to the end of our working life, we like to think that we'll enjoy a long and happy retirement. But leaving work can be a big upheaval for some people so HR teams are often there to support people through the process, anything from making sure they know how to access their pension to signposting them to clubs and activities they might want to take up.

People working in HR need to have a good understanding of relevant laws and regulations, to ensure things are done correctly, and they probably need to be quite organised people who are good at following processes step by step. HR people to be good communicators, not only to listen to problems but to clearly explain solutions or next steps. Russell Whitlock works as an HR Consultant and he believes there is one characteristic that is perhaps even more important.

> **To be effective in HR, I would say you need to have a strong sense of fairness. A good HR person will try to find what is commercially right for the business and is fair for the individual**
>
> Russell Whitlock, HR Consultant

*Data from https://www.cipd.co.uk/knowledge/strategy/hr/uk-people-profession-numbers#gref 24/02/2022



Earn while you learn in Surrey

An apprenticeship lets you get on the job training whilst being able to work towards a qualification at the same time. During your time as an apprentice, you will be able to earn while learning a career.

Here at Surrey County Council we have a range of apprenticeships from Business Administration, Digital Marketing, Project Management, Fire Service apprenticeships and many more.

Why do an Apprenticeship at Surrey County Council?

- Earn whilst you learn – As an apprentice you will also receive the same benefits as other employees such as pension contributions and 26 days' annual leave.
- No University debt with the opportunity to gain a qualification at the end of your apprenticeship.
- Relevant work experience to your role and support from training providers to ensure you have everything you need to succeed.
- Strengthen your CV – you will be able to gain transferable skills that you will be able to take on into your future career.
- Grow your network – An apprenticeship will allow you to meet many people including customers, colleagues, and managers. Making a good name for yourself and building professional contacts will benefit you greatly in the future. You never know when you might need them for advice, mentoring, or opportunities!

"The reason why I chose this apprenticeship is because I like to help people, and if it wasn't just for the firefighters saving lives it would be us as well, keeping and maintaining Surrey Fire and Rescue's fleet full of equipment, cars and trucks. Helping save lives is part of what we do every day."

Heavy Vehicle Service & Maintenance Technician Apprentice – Jonathan Berry

How long will it take to train as an apprentice?

It can take anywhere from one to five years to complete an apprenticeship. How long it takes depends on the level you are training at, the occupation and what skills and qualifications you have already. All apprenticeships offer 20% off the job time as a minimum for development opportunities.

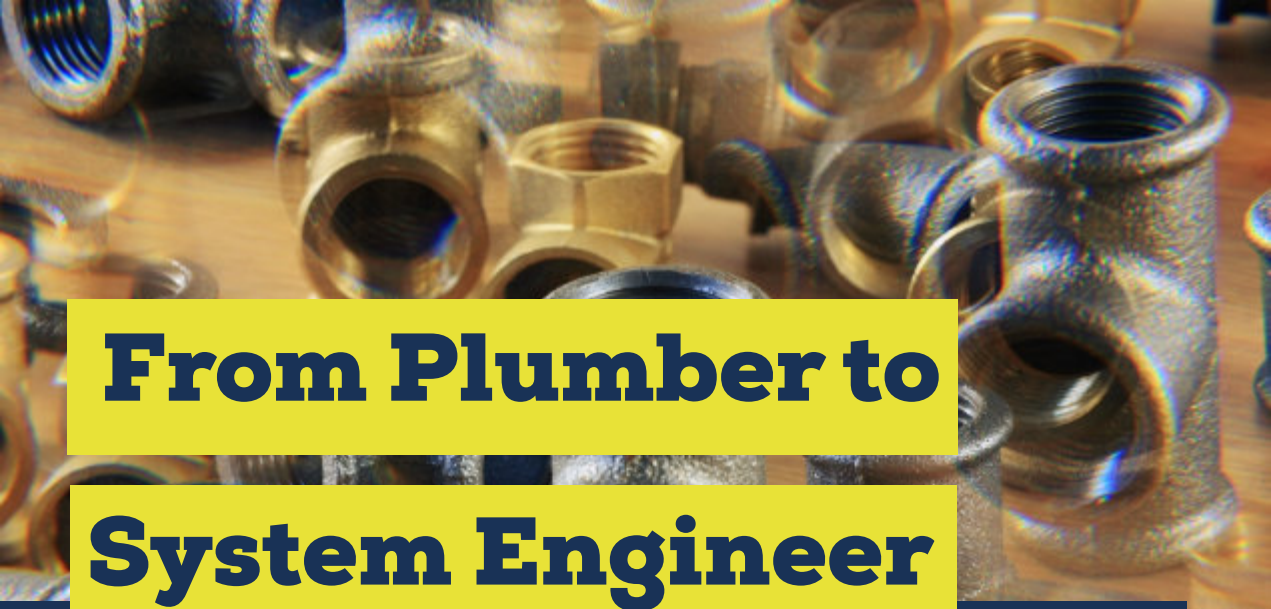
What qualifications will I get once completed?

This is depending on the level of the apprenticeship.

Level 2 – Equivalent to 5 GCSEs
Level 3 – Equivalent to 2 A Levels
Level 4 – Equivalent to a Higher Education Certificate/Diploma
Level 5 – Equivalent to a Foundation Degree
Level 6 & 7 – Equivalent to a Bachelor's/Master's degree.

If you are interested in an apprenticeship with Surrey County Council please look for current opportunities on our website (surreycc.gov.uk).

SURREY COUNTY COUNCIL



From Plumber to System Engineer

29% of the UK's carbon emissions come from our houses! How we build our homes and how we live in them has a massive impact on the environment. From starting out in a 'fossil-fuelled' job, System Engineer Dan Murray tells us how he has made the switch to focus on a more climate-friendly future.

"When I was at school, I thought I wanted to join the Police, so I chose A Level subjects that would be suitable to study Police Science at University. I did get to University but quickly realised that I was a more practical learner and that academic studies weren't for me. I applied to join the Police then, still aged just 18, knowing full well that I probably wouldn't have the life experience they would be looking for. It was around the time Police recruitment was tailing off too, so I didn't get in, for whatever reason.

So, I had to think about what I could do instead. It seemed to me that people will always need a good plumber so went back to college. I actually started my plumbing apprenticeship aged 21, alongside lads who were straight from school. That didn't matter to me; taking up plumbing was a positive choice and I saw it as the start of my career. My mindset was probably more focussed than some of the others.My apprenticeship saw me cover traditional plumbing skills, including gas installation.

After my four-year apprenticeship, I stayed with my employer, Tai Calon Community Housing, for a further five years. I worked on everything from boiler installation and repairs to heating and radiator installations, and all sorts of problems in between. I enjoyed the job and loved working with my colleagues, but a chance meeting let me to a new opportunity.

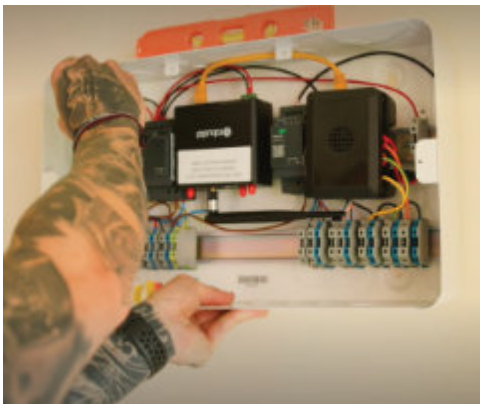
I met one of the co-founders of Sero, who are dedicated to reducing the carbon footprint of our homes and energy usage by using intelligent technology. They could clearly see that my traditional skills gave me an understanding of heating and plumbing systems that could be useful to the business. I was offered a role of System Engineer, working with the new technologies Sero are designing and installing in real homes. This was definitely a career change for me, but I saw it as a massive opportunity to develop my own skillset. One of the first things I did was to take an electrical installers qualification, so I would be qualified to install the full suite of Sero's technology.

Being a System Engineer is a very varied role. In a typical week, I'll probably spend one ortwo days in the office, catching up on paperwork, ordering equipment or planning what I'll be doing on site. Then, I might be out with a business partner, installing and commissioning a new system and handing it over to them. Sometimes I also visit the homes we look after if a customer has an issue. Because our systems are so new, I will often spend time explaining to customers how they work and how they are different to, say, a traditional boiler. As well as new build properties, we also work with partners to 'retrofit' our technologies in older domestic properties; that is, to replace older heating and energy systems with new ones.

Almost all our system installations are monitored to see how they are performing. This data not only feeds into what Sero are doing and also a big Welsh Government project on energy use and performance. It's through this performance data gathering that we can continue to make improvements going forward. I always need to check that the tracking is in place and working on any of my installs.

As well as all that, I get involved in training people on how our kit works and designing training resources, making videos or building training rigs.

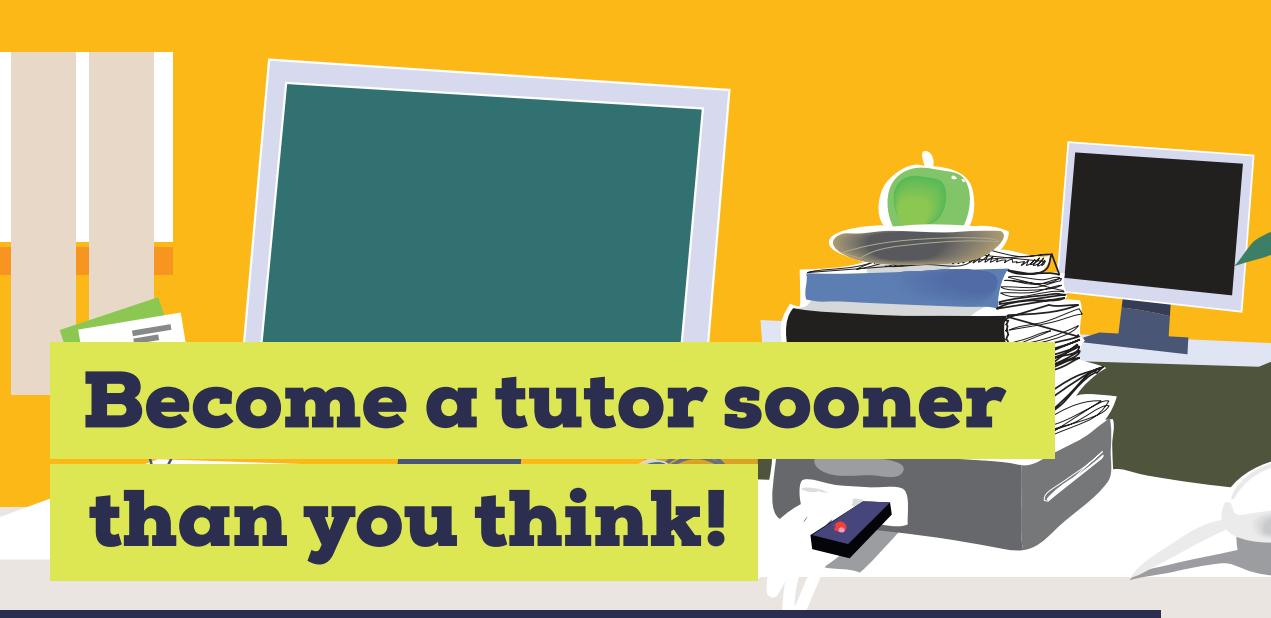
Starting my career with an Apprenticeship has turned out to be a really good choice.



We hope to open a full practice workshop in the near future. Because we're a growing and a very busy team, I'll often get asked to chip in on anything else that the team think I can help with! For example, I have been interested to learn more about programming and what our digital team do. My skills have grown to such a point that if I'm on site and one of them isn't, I can often help them solve issues that might arise.

Starting my career with an Apprenticeship has turned out to be a really good choice. It taught me a range of skills, from the practical ones to business skills, like customer service and teamwork. Looking back, I don't think the Police would have been the right career for me in the long run. I also realise that with the phasing out of fossil-fuels, I wouldn't have been able to be a plumber/gasfitter forever either. I think joining Sero has definitely put me ahead of the curve on that front.

Looking to the future there will definitely be a need for people with traditional skills, like mine were, in plumbing, gas and electrical, but there will also be much more cross-over between them. So many new technologies will require core knowledge from across many trades."



Become a tutor sooner than you think!

We don't associate young people as tutors, but it can be a great career that offers more than a financial reward. Studies have shown that students often relate better to people nearer their own age, which is why more young people are becoming tutors. Freelance tutor Rosanna tells us why tutoring works so well for her.

"I'm 27 now but I realise that my first tutoring experience was eleven years ago. We were 16 and doing GCSEs when a fellow student asked me for help with her English. I'm pleased to say that she achieved a C grade, having been predicted an F! She was happy, of course, but I was encouraged to see that I could have made such a difference.

After A Levels, I went on to Oxford University to study English. In the summer before my final year, I worked back at my old secondary school, helping sixth form students with their personal statements and with general guidance on applying to university. I enjoyed it, but it never occurred to me at that point to think about tutoring or working in education full-time.

When I graduated, I found a job working in sales and account management. It was busy and I quite enjoyed it but, after three years of 9 to 5.30 in an office, I realised I wanted a bit more freedom and flexibility.

I hadn't worked out how, but I thought doing some freelance tutoring would be a good 'stop gap' until I did. Two years later, and what I thought would simply be my 'stop gap' has actually become a full-time, highly fulfilling career! I am lucky enough to have built a bit of a 'portfolio' of roles, mixing tutoring and mentoring alongside creating learning content for EdTech companies.

I enjoy being a tutor because it allows each individual I work with to have a personalised learning experience. Classroom teachers, who are bound by our education systems, are having to deal with large classes, strict guidelines and increasing demands on their time. As a tutor, however, I will work either one-to-one or with small groups and have much greater flexibility to be creative in my approach. I think that means most tutors are able to offer more engaging, refreshing learning experiences than you will find in most classrooms.

I would encourage more younger people to think about tutoring because it can be so flexible and teach you so many new skills. For example, a student could consider some part-time tutoring around their own studies to earn a bit of cash. You will get to practise valuable skills like communication and empathy which are so beneficial across all walks of life and future careers.

I would encourage more younger people to think about tutoring because it can be so flexible and teach you so many new skills.

The huge uptake in digital learning technologies recently has also made tutoring even more flexible. Education professionals and parents alike are recognising that geographical boundaries shouldn't block access to high-quality tuition. We can and should be using modern technology to connect with the best tutors out there, whatever region or country they might be in.

I would also like to see tutoring taken more seriously as a legitimate career choice. I still think there's a perception that tutoring is just a temporary job on the side, and one that anyone can do as long as they have subject knowledge. If you want to thrive as a tutor, you need to know so much more than your subject: you need to be adaptive and diligent, good with people, and determined to make a difference."

Useful information

There are some great resources available out there if you know where to find them. Here is a selection:

Apprenticeships

Searchand apply for an Apprenticeship, go to
www.gov.uk and search for 'Apprenticeships'

Find out which Apprenticeships already exist and which are coming soon
www.instituteforapprenticeships.org

General resources and information
www.amazingapprenticeships.com

Jobs

Uni not your thing?Lots of options at:
www.notgoingtouni.co.uk

And ideas for a first step into the workplace at **www.getmyfirstjob.co.uk**

Qualifications

T Levels guide **www.tlevels.gov.uk**

Find T Level map
www.tlevels.gov.uk/students

University applications

UCASUndergraduate applications
www.ucas.com

You will also find the UCASpoints guide and calculator on their website.

University Taster Days guide, including online events **unitasterdays.com**

Funding

Advanced Learner Loans **www.gov.uk** and search for 'Advanced Learner Loans

To find the websites easily, go to the Useful stuff page on our website, makethefutureyours.com, where you will find the direct links.

Can you build your career in construction?

Building more homes, decarbonisation and new technologies mean construction skills are in high demand!

From working with sustainable materials to designing smart homes and cities, there are many different careers in construction. You could learn to fly drones, use laser technology or the latest design software to build the next sports stadium or a theme park. Your skills would always be in demand.

To learn more, speak to your Careers Leader in your school or college

Going to Uni?
Key dates and more

25th August
GCSE results day

18th August
A Levels results day (England and Wales)

14th July
University/ college decisions due on applications submitted by 30th June

5th July
UCAS Clearing opens/ International Baccalaureate results published

9th August
SQA (Scotland) results day

4th July
Last date to apply for a course in UCAS Extra

30th June
UCAS applications received after 30th June are entered into Clearing

19th May
University/college decisions due on applications submitted by 26th January

Find resources for University applications here!

Uni not your thing? Find out about Apprenticeships!

More than just glasses

You'll know us for one thing but we're so much more.
Find out just how many opportunities we have for
an amazing and rewarding career.

Specsavers