

Future threats and opportunities: competition for students



(image credit: Pixabay)

The Defence Science and Technology Laboratory (Dstl) has launched a quest to uncover visions of the future from the brightest student minds in the UK.

Entrants must answer the question: what do you believe to be the future threats or opportunities facing UK defence and security over the next 25 years?

The competition is open to undergraduate and postgraduate students currently based at UK academic institutions, and the deadline has been extended to the end of July 2021.

The 5 finalists will be invited to (virtually) present their essay to a panel of senior current and former government officials, before the final winner is revealed.

The winner will receive £250 prize and the top 5 will receive certificates of commendation.

The top 10 essays may be published in a journal style publication.

How to enter

Submit your essays to futuresessaycompetition@dstl.gov.uk

The competition closes on 31 July 2021 and the virtual presentation and announcement of winners will take place in June.

All entrants who place within the top 10 will be asked to submit a picture of their student ID for verification.

Essay guidance

Topic: what do you believe to be the future threats or opportunities facing

UK defence and security over the next 25 years?

Your essay can focus on a particular theme or act as an opinion piece.

Suggested themes include, but are not limited to:

- emerging technology and the legal, ethical, technical, moral or policy implications
- societal reactions to advancements in technology or changes in policy
- how does technology affect policy or industry
- emerging misuse of technology
- individual privacy
- strategic advantage and competition
- prosperity and economic strength
- alliances and international relations
- global norms across all domains (including cyber and space) digital freedoms
- pandemic and future policy
- data technology

There is a 2000 word limit (10% allowance).

All essays must follow standard academic rigour and use either Harvard or Chicago referencing styles.

You must include a title and abstract (not included in the word count). The abstract should include key themes and arguments.

Essays will be marked based on the following weighting:

Marks allocated to	Weighting
Academic rigour	15%
Originality of thought	25%
Credibility and relevance of topic	25%
Use of real world case studies	15%
Engaging writing	20%

Published 15 February 2021

Last updated 11 May 2021 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 11 May 2021

Closing date extended to 31 July 2021.

2. 15 February 2021

First published.