

Thousands more adults set to benefit from new technical skills

Thousands of working adults will soon benefit from free courses that will help them to rapidly upskill or retrain, as part of the government's drive to plug skills gaps and boost access to more high-quality training alternatives.

Sixty-five short and modular courses will start to roll out from later this month at 10 [Institutes of Technology](#) (IoTs) across England in sought-after STEM subjects. This will include courses such as Artificial Intelligence, Digitisation of Manufacturing, Digital Construction, Agricultural Robotics, and Cyber Security.

The courses will be a blend of classroom and remote online study, and will vary in length from 50 to 138 hours – giving more adults greater flexibility in how and when they learn, so they can fit it around their lives. Swindon and Wiltshire IoT, for instance, will offer five short 50 hour courses across eight weeks.

The programmes will be available to working adults aged 19 and over, with priority given to those employed locally to the IoT, in related industries such as digital or healthcare. The IoTs have worked in partnership with local employers to ensure courses address existing skills gaps, meaning employees from both large and SME businesses will be able to gain in demand new skills or retrain – so they can progress on to higher skilled, higher paid jobs in their area.

Separately, over 100 further and higher education providers have also been awarded a share of £18 million to invest in new equipment, such as virtual reality goggles, therapeutic play equipment for children, and air quality testing equipment that will support them to offer more higher technical training. The funding will also help them to boost links with local businesses in key sectors such as digital, construction and healthcare – so employers can tap into the talented workforce they need for the jobs of the future.

Minister for Further and Higher Education Michelle Donelan said:

Making sure more people can train and develop at any stage of their life to secure high skilled, high paid jobs is at the heart of our plans.

These fantastic new courses will open up more training alternatives for adults, address skills gaps in our economy and level up opportunities across the country.

We are also investing up to £18 million to support over 100 further and higher education providers to expand the higher technical training on offer to their local communities.

[The government's network of Institutes of Technology](#) – collaborations between leading employers, further education colleges and universities – specialise in delivering high-quality Higher Technical Education and training in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) subjects, such as digital, advanced manufacturing and engineering, providing employers with the skilled workforce they need.

A total of £6.4 million is being invested to support IoTs to offer the free courses, which will support up to 4,000 working adults to get on the path to a new, rewarding career and will plug local skills shortages.

The Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology will be running courses for the medical technology and engineering sectors, including one on Anaesthetic and Operating Theatre Equipment. This will enable someone already working in medical engineering to gain new skills in using, calibrating and maintaining anaesthetic and operating theatre equipment – opening up new options for progression in their workplaces.

Principal and CEO of Dudley College of Technology Neil Thomas said:

As lead partner of the Black Country and Marches Institute of Technology, Dudley College is really excited to be a part of this project. The aim of the IoT is to provide employers and local residents with new opportunities for higher level training, and initiatives like this give us the chance to develop training solutions that really meet the needs of local employers.

The industry relevant course content and the accessible, business-friendly delivery model are what employers have been asking for. Under the pilot the IoT is supporting the MedTech and Advanced Engineering Sectors, and we've already got staff signing up from employers like Shrewsbury and Telford NHS Trust.

Vice Principal of The Bedford College Group Georgina Ager said:

In order to prepare for delivery of Higher Technical Qualifications we are investing in staff training and upskilling. We have undertaken workforce planning exercises to model staffing skills gaps we may face in the future. Where gaps exist, we are investing in staff to upskill and retrain to ensure our staff have the most up to date industry and academic knowledge to deliver the Higher Technical Qualifications.

In addition, we are ensuring that our facilities are in line with industry standards in order to ensure our learners and our employer partners can access and train on equipment relevant to the current industry standards.

Boosting the uptake and quality of Higher Technical Qualifications – that sit

between A levels and degrees – and supporting adults to study more flexibly throughout their lives is a key part of the [government's landmark reforms to post-16 education and training](#).

A [major review of higher technical education](#) revealed these qualifications can unlock the [skills employers need](#) and lead to well paid jobs. However, it also shows that the quality of qualifications on offer at further and higher education providers can be variable and it can be hard for students and employers to find the ones that are right for them.

From September 2022, the government will start rolling out newly approved Higher Technical Qualifications, beginning with Digital, and followed by Construction and Health in 2023. A full suite of qualifications will be available by 2025.

Higher Technical Qualifications will provide a natural progression route for both young people taking T Levels or A levels, and adults looking to upskill or retrain – enabling them to take the next step up and gain higher technical skills in key subjects like STEM.

[Embed peacebuilding approaches now to avert humanitarian crises later](#)

Mr President, your Excellency President Kenyatta – thank you for convening this timely and important debate. The UK values our close cooperation with Kenya on the issues brought to the Council. Thank you to our distinguished briefers for sharing their experience and distilling into insightful comments for us today..

Today's topic is a pressing one. Economic pressures, a global pandemic, and climate change have put unprecedented strain on the social contract that holds states together.

The United Kingdom believes in open societies. We value human rights; inclusion; gender equality; and free expression. Open societies respect identities and differences as integral aspects of community and not as forces for division. Our experience is that societies are more strong and stable when we embrace diversity.

History has shown us what happens when identity is weaponised – from Bosnia to Rwanda.

Mr. President, I want to support this important debate by offering make three points: why the Council should be concerned when identity is used to stoke conflict; why inclusivity matters for peacebuilding; and how to more fully advance the use of UN peacebuilding tools.

Firstly, Mr. President, we know the danger of identity-based incitement. It marginalises already vulnerable populations; fuels extremism; manifests in human rights violations; and sparks war. The Council with its responsibility for peace and security has an obligation to call it out – and end the protection of states that choose to ignore warning signs. In Myanmar, exclusion of the Rohingya population has escalated into systematic violence and forced displacement. In Ethiopia, identity politics and hate speech are dividing communities, exacerbating a conflict that has already pushed 400,000 people into famine. This Council should not stand by as violence escalates. We should heed the warnings of humanitarians on the ground. Second, inclusion is central to peacebuilding and makes states more resilient to shocks. As we have heard so clearly from all of our speakers today, from the lessons of Rwanda to the situation of Afghanistan, peace processes that include the warring parties, civil society actors, and women’s groups strengthen national ownership. Third, as other speakers have mentioned, the UN has a range of tools to support countries that are struggling with identity-based violence and are committed to pursuing peace. In UN Peace Operations, human rights monitoring is a critical early warning function. UN political leaders, mediators and advisers facilitate inclusive peace processes to build sustainable peace.

The Peacebuilding Commission supports countries grappling with their peacebuilding challenges, while the Peacebuilding Fund – to which the UK remains a major donor – provides catalytic funding to encourage these efforts.

But as you said President Kenyatta, the system can do a better job of getting ahead of threats to peace. Peace and development are mutually reinforcing, and many of the tools to build sustainable peace live in the UN development system. We urge the development system to embed peacebuilding approaches now, to avert humanitarian crises later.

Mr President, to conclude, identity does not need to be a source of violence, but a source of pride. By supporting diversity, we can build stronger national and international bonds, and open, resilient, and prosperous societies. Thank you.

Civil Society Minister’s speech to NPC 2021 Conference

I am delighted to have the opportunity to speak to you today and I am honoured to have been asked to be the new DCMS Minister with responsibility for civil society and youth.

I’m really sorry that I am not able to be with you live today, but I would like to thank NPC and Dan for making it possible for me to share some

thoughts, albeit over the internet.

Charities, social enterprises and volunteers play a vital role in modern Britain. From large national organisations, to locally-run community projects, they tackle some of the greatest challenges that we face, and help people and communities most in need.

I have seen first hand how the extraordinary work of civil society can change lives and enrich communities. I've seen this as a constituency MP, well before covid hit us all, but also and especially during the lockdowns, and of course with other parts of my ministerial portfolio. Particularly in sport, I've worked closely with youth groups, charities and other civil society organisations on a wide range of projects and initiatives.

I know that my predecessor Baroness Barran worked exceptionally hard over the last two years, and I would like to take this opportunity to thank her for everything that she has done.

I am very pleased to be taking on this role. Civil society is a critical part of so much of what DCMS and the whole of government is working to achieve. I believe there is huge potential in embedding civil society as part of my broader portfolio, for example aligning our efforts to unlock philanthropy and grow the role of volunteers.

Of course it is important to acknowledge the extraordinary challenges of the last 18 months.

I know that the pandemic has placed great strains on many charities and social enterprises, as you respond to rising demand, and at times increased financial hardship. It has also required a huge mobilisation of volunteers.

But we have all been inspired by the role that our sectors and volunteers have played, going above and beyond to help those affected by the crisis.

This includes the huge generosity of the British public. Volunteers were essential to the community response with an estimated 12.4 million volunteers across the UK supporting local people to access essential services and stay connected. As well as formal volunteering the pandemic saw communities rapidly mobilising to help local people who were particularly at risk or hardest hit by the effects of isolation.

While the pandemic is not yet over, we must look to the future. It is the defining mission of this government to unite and level up the whole of the UK. This mission is about spreading opportunity, raising living standards, and restoring people's pride in the places they live.

Civil society has a huge and central role to play in this mission. Charities, social enterprises and volunteers are already working up and down the country, delivering a real impact in left behind communities.

We know that the involvement of volunteers, charities and social enterprises make a huge difference to the experience of living in a place, providing opportunities for everyone, young and old, to become active citizens.

Participation in civil society builds social cohesiveness and allows people to come together to tackle issues and challenges collectively.

We also know that where charities and social enterprises are active they can deliver positive outcomes for people in need through the services they provide.

However, together we can do even more to make sure these opportunities are available in all neighbourhoods. Levelling up provides us with an opportunity to look again at how government, civil society, the private sector and local communities can work together to go even further, and maximise our collective impact.

I look forward to hearing from you in the weeks ahead about how we can make this ambition possible, and what government can do to support civil society.

Of course central to this will be a strong relationship between government and civil society.

I am committed to building and maintaining an open and constructive partnership between us. I am looking forward to meeting with many of you at future roundtables, visits and events, and hearing about your important work and how we can strengthen our relationship.

I know that you will continue to engage with us in this spirit of openness and collaboration as we work to achieve our shared objectives.

DCMS is here to represent the interests of civil society across government, to unlock opportunities, and create the conditions for our sectors to thrive. Together we can deliver huge change and level up all parts of this country.

Thank you for listening, and I look forward to seeing many of you face to face in the very near future.

Tesco Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold Lemon Sachets are being recalled

Press release

Tesco Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold Lemon Sachets used for the relief of cold and flu symptoms is being recalled



People who have purchased Tesco Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold Lemon Sachets used for the relief of cold and flu symptoms are today being asked to check the batch number on the outer carton and individual sachets. Anyone with a product from one of these batches should stop using the medicine and return it to Tesco for a refund.

Approximately 78,000 packs from three batches, sold only by Tesco, are being recalled as the sachet labelling incorrectly states that children aged 12 years and over can use this product. This medicine should not be given to those aged under 16 years as the product is only for people aged 16 and over.

This product has been taken off shelves while the labelling is updated.

MHRA Chief Safety Officer, Dr Alison Cave, said

Patient safety is always our priority and we are committed to ensuring that the medicines you take are safe. It is vitally important that people check their packs of Tesco Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold Lemon Sachet and check if they have an affected pack. If they do, they should stop using them and return them to Tesco for a refund.

We would like to reassure patients and parents that if you or someone under the age of 16 have used recently these sachets and have suffered no ill effects there is no cause for concern. If anyone has any questions please speak to your healthcare professional and report any adverse reactions via the Yellow Card scheme.

This product is specifically branded as Tesco Max All-In-One Chesty Cough & Cold Lemon Sachets and the recall does not affect any other products that share the same product licence number but are distributed by other retail stores.

The batch details are below:

Tesco Flu-Max All In One Chesty Cough & Cold Powder for Oral Solution (GSL)
PL 12063/0104

Batch Number	Expiry Date	Pack Size	First Distributed
9MW0145	Nov 2022	10s	16 Mar 2020
0CW0054	Jan 2023	10s	07 Apr 2020
0FW0133	May 2023	10s	12 May 2021

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[Attorney General visits the Community Security Trust's HQ](#)

The Attorney General, the Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP, today visited the Community Security Trust (CST) to discuss their work combatting antisemitic hate crime.

The CST aims to promote good relations between British Jews and the rest of British society by working towards the elimination of racism and antisemitism. They represent British Jews on issues of racism, antisemitism, extremism, policing and security, and assist those who are victims of antisemitic hatred, harassment or bias. Visiting the CST's headquarters in Hendon, the Attorney General discussed the impact of hate crime on Britain's Jewish community and the work that it is doing to raise awareness of and tackle the rise in anti-Semitic hate crime.

Today's visit takes place during Hate Crime Awareness Week. Hate crime is when someone is targeted because of their actual or perceived race, religion, sexual orientation, transgender identity or disability. It is a criminal offence and the law provides additional penalties for such crimes.

Last year (2020/2021) the CPS prosecuted 363 cases of religiously aggravated hate crime, in which 74.3% of cases the defendants pled guilty.

Over the last three years ending in 2020/21, CPS also prosecuted 8,202 cases of racially aggravated hate crime, in which 82% of defendants pled guilty.

The Attorney General, the Rt Hon Suella Braverman QC MP, thanked CST for their welcome and stated:

Antisemitism has no place in our country, and I applaud the work of the Community Security Trust in building and strengthening relations between British Jews and the rest of society. Hate crime can have a deep impact on victims and offenders targeting someone based on their race or religion can expect to receive a higher sentence to reflect the enormity of their crimes.

The UK has a robust legal framework to tackle hate crime, and last year the CPS prosecuted over 10,000 cases. Victims of antisemitic hate crimes can feel encouraged that they will be taken seriously when they come forward.

CST Chief Executive Mark Gardner said:

CST's partnership with government, the police and the CPS is central to our work protecting the Jewish community and securing justice for people who are victims of anti-Jewish hate. We were grateful for the opportunity to show CST's work to the Attorney General in person and discuss the importance of prosecuting and convicting hate crime offenders at a time of rising antisemitism.

The Attorney General has also recently referred the case of Ben John to the Court of Appeal under the Unduly Lenient Sentence (ULS) scheme, as she believed it to be unduly lenient. Far-right extremist Ben John was convicted of possessing the 'Anarchist's Cookbook' which gives detailed instruction on how to plan and execute terror attacks using explosives and by other means of violence. He was sentenced to 2 years imprisonment', suspended for 2 years.