

Government Announces 10,000 Technology Work Placements for Young People

22 October 2026



- Young people looking for their first job will benefit from 10,000 new work experience placements to open doors into the UK's digital and tech sector
- All secondary schools are now able to access government programme TechFirst, with an ambition to reach 1 million students by 2028 - a year earlier than planned - including 400,000 from the most disadvantaged schools
- The rollout builds on the PM's call to arms to employers to provide an additional 200,000 work experience placements to ensure all young people have vital exposure to the workplace between 14 and 16

10,000 young people will get the chance to get experience under their belt, build up their CVs, and get their foot in the door of Britain's digital and tech sector.

With nearly 1 million young people not in employment, education or training, Britain faces a generational challenge, requiring a generational shake up in how young people get the right skills and experience. That means creating more choices, more chances and more pathways for young people to chart their course from learning to earning.

Some of Britain's key tech employers, including Microsoft, Cisco, IBM, Cognizant, AtkinsRéalis, Arm, Kainos and QinetiQ, are backing the drive, opening up 10,000

opportunities over the next three years.

We are also calling on more employers to join them in offering new roles, with an aim of 20,000 entry-level jobs each year, as part of our mission to give young people in Britain, particularly those not in education, employment or training, a clear line of sight into a job.

This comes on top of support for at least 1 million secondary students – including 400,000 from disadvantaged schools – to get the skills and opportunities needed to build a future in tech, as government announces the rollout of the TechFirst skills programme across the UK.

Secondary students will receive workshops, skills sessions, career talks, industry workplace experiences, tech clubs, inter-school competitions, and access to the digital learning platform [Ada Computer Science](#) – giving every UK student the chance to build tech skills that lead to better jobs, higher earnings and brighter futures.

Only last week, the Prime Minister said that the challenges facing young people cannot be solved through traditional welfare reform alone.

Instead, change requires a whole-system approach, working in partnership with mayors, local leaders and employers to create more work opportunities and intervening earlier to tackle the wider systemic reasons young people fall out of education, training and employment in the first place.

The Prime Minister also made a call to arms to employers to provide an additional 200,000 work experience placements to ensure all young people have vital exposure to the workplace between 14 and 16. This could include spending time in key sectors including accountancy firms, digital media companies and construction companies. Employers can contact their [local Careers Hubs](#) to pledge new work experience placements.

Prime Minister Andy Burnham said:

It's one of the biggest frustrations when you're starting out. Everyone tells you that you need experience to get a job, but nobody gives you the chance to get that experience in the first place.

Thousands of young people will get the chance to get their foot in the door in

one of the UK's biggest growth sectors, build their confidence and skills, and get something meaningful on their CV.

Our job is to back this generation, open those doors and give every young person a fair chance to build a good future for themselves, wherever they come from.

Last week, the Prime Minister also said that the state is not set up to meet the needs of young people today, as they face new challenges in an age of social media and AI, rising costs and a more volatile and uncertain global context. He warned that the longer young people are left adrift from education, employment or training, the more likely they are to become disconnected from society, damaging not only their own prospects but the strength and cohesion of our communities.

Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport Lisa Nandy, said:

Our country is grappling a generational challenge – we cannot and will not let our young people be locked out of the British workforce.

Getting a good job in our thriving digital and tech industry shouldn't be determined by where you live or what school you go to. Talent is everywhere. Opportunity is not.

That's why we're making it easier for young people to build the skills and experience that lead to a fulfilling career through our TechFirst youth programme and Digital and Tech Skills Deal. Young people will be able to develop tech skills and gain work experience in the sector while at school, and we're ensuring the industry then leaves its doors open for them when they finish education, with proper job opportunities and career pathways.

We're wrapping our arms around the next generation, making sure they get the skills and opportunities that match their talent and ambition, helping a whole generation thrive.

This comes as DCMS publishes the [Digital and Technologies Jobs Plan](#), setting a target of 20,000 entry level jobs a year, aligning Government, industry and education providers to work collaboratively to build the skills and opportunities

people will need for the future roles of the UK's digital and tech sector.

The plan includes a new commitment to provide workplace experiences to help open the door to the sector – launching with an initial 10,000 experiences on offer from TechFirst industry partners.

Government is now putting the call out to employers across the tech sector to sign up as a [Skills Deal partner](#) and offer digital and tech work experiences.

The publication of the Digital and Technologies Jobs Plan follows the publication of the Professional and Business Services and Construction Jobs Plans on Monday, which marked the start of a week of Jobs Plans, with the Defence Jobs Plan due later this week.

Together, these Industrial Strategy Jobs Plans are opening up routes into good jobs while building the skilled workforce Britain needs to grow and reindustrialise. Bringing government and industry together, they will create more apprenticeship, training and vocational opportunities, helping more people access rewarding careers in the sectors that will power future economic growth.

The plans are being published ahead of the forthcoming Milburn Review into opportunities for young people and form part of the Modern Industrial Strategy, which is backing the industries where Britain can lead globally while ensuring people across the country benefit from economic growth and industrial renewal.

Minister for Skills Baroness Jacqui Smith said:

Every young person deserves the chance to build a career they're proud of, whatever their background and wherever they live.

TechFirst helps make that possible, giving students the skills, confidence and experience they need to see a future for themselves in the sector.

Alongside our Youth Guarantee, which aims to offer every young person the chance to earn or learn, programmes like this mean that ambition is matched by real opportunity with the right support at the right time.

The TechFirst programme has been designed for all young people, but will also work to boost skills for underrepresented groups in tech, including women and

girls, and young people from disadvantaged areas.

This follows the Prime Minister's announcement last week to give young people a direct route into skilled, well-paid rail careers. Great British Railways will open up 600 foundation apprenticeships over the next 4 years for 16 to 21 year olds, offering a chance to earn while they learn in an industry where currently less than 7% of the workforce is under 25.

The package also builds on Government work strengthening digital and media literacy across the curriculum to help young people navigate the online world confidently, evaluate information critically and tackle misinformation and disinformation. Alongside this, reforms to computing education, including a new Computing GCSE, will ensure all pupils develop the digital and AI skills needed for future jobs and careers.

These are underpinned by wider government action to put technical education on a par with academic learning and ensure more young people have access to high-quality technical education. As well as the UK's world-leading universities, Technical Excellence Colleges, new V Levels, expanded T Levels, and new Vocational GCSEs, all helping arm young people with the skills and confidence for the world of work.

Source: [Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport](#), [Department for Business, Innovation, Science and Trade](#), [The Rt Hon Andy Burnham MP](#) and [The Rt Hon Lisa Nandy MP](#)