

Skills Supply Essential Reading – developments in education, qualification & skills

Scottish Government: [Programme for Government 2026-2031](#) includes ambitions to produce a single national skills plan by Spring 2027 and a Careers Ambitions Framework. [Programme PDF](#) (p17)

RESOURCES

- **SDS:** [Economy, People & Skills](#) Scottish labour market overview, August edition available
- [Publications](#) new set of Foundation Apprenticeship Employer Guides. Example: [Healthcare](#)
- [Education Team Professional Learning Offer 2026-27](#) with downloadable [overview PDF](#)
- **To watch:** [Career Stories](#): episode 22: Leah McBain, Highland Youth Convener; episode 23: [Foday Mannah](#) Teacher and Author; episode 24: [Fraser Bruce](#) Scottish Apprentice of the Year
- **To use:** [Developing the Young Work Force \(DYW\) Scotland](#) redesigned national webpage, making it easier to find local DYW contacts, events, and resources
- [#EqualityMatters](#) CDN 1-page infographic with links, September: 'Wellbeing in the Workplace'
- **To read:** [Why human connections are a hiring advantage in the age of AI](#), WEF article
- **Research:** Colleges Scotland's [YouGov survey](#) shows public support for apprenticeships
- [Young people, economic inactivity and mental health](#), research from Public Health Scotland on the impact of health on positive destination retention among those aged 16-24

TEACHERS

[Support for teachers taking up posts in rural and island communities](#) - pilot £1m fund to help with relocation and housing costs. There is also work to deliver a minimum 3-year job guarantee for newly qualified teachers and an overall commitment to reduce class contact time.

SCHOOLS

[PISA 2025 SCOTLAND REPORT](#) (published September 2026)

Scottish 15-year-olds' outperformed the OECD average in science, reading, computational problem-solving and environmental science. Results that are relevant to careers and career planning include:

- 70.4% of pupils agreed school taught them things that could be useful in a job (OECD 66.6%)
- Only 36% of pupils connected environmental protection with future jobs (OECD average 61.6%)
- 30% of pupils use AI weekly to help with learning (OECD average 45.5%) while 32% reported never or almost never using AI for schoolwork purposes (OECD average 14%)

For more: [OECD PISA 2025](#), including [Interpretations](#), videos & test [can you outsmart a teenager?](#)

Other **Schools** news:

- [Additional Support for Learning National Staged Intervention Model](#) being developed
- [E-Sgoil Evidence of Impact Report 2026](#) (PDF) shows programmes delivered across Scotland
- [DYW Live Programme for 2026/27](#) now available to view and for schools to book

The Update

Covering 20 August to 23 September 2026

QUALIFICATIONS

[Qualifications Scotland \(QS\) published 2027 exam timetable](#) following consultation.

Exams will begin on **Monday 26 April** and finish on **Thursday 3 June 2027**

- Other QS news: latest [QS update on qualification review & reform](#)

[SCQF celebrate their 25th birthday](#) during **SCQF Week, 21-25 September**

They have shared several themed blogs “where were they 25 years ago” as well as articles on:

- [Scottish qualifications equivalent value in England](#) and the rest of the UK
- [Graduate Apprenticeships in Engineering](#), flexible routes and the math ‘sticking point’

UCAS

2026 Key Dates: **24 September** 6pm final date for applications to 2026 courses

19 October will be the last day to enter Clearing

2027 Key Dates: **1 October** final date for Conservatoire music application

15 October ECD* to apply to Medicine, Dentistry, Veterinary, Oxford & Cambridge

***Equal Consideration Date:** after this date universities can close the course to further applications

COLLEGES / UNIVERSITIES

New opportunity to progress from [college to degree-level study in Dumfries & Galloway College](#) through a partnership with Open University. For other Articulation options: [HE Entry Guide 2026-27](#)

Other news:

- [SFC College Student Satisfaction Survey](#) showed 94.5% of FE students and 92.3% of HE students agreed “My time at college has helped develop knowledge and skills for the workplace”
- [Universities Scotland’s Future Jobs Scotland](#) ‘roadmap’ to guide universities, government and employers in their work to better link jobs, skills and labour market opportunities. [Full Report](#)

INVESTMENT IN SKILLS

- [Workforce North Co-Investment Fund](#) to boost workforce growth across Highlands & islands. Also see: [Workforce North promotional video](#) (1min47)
- [£3.85 million to Offshore Wind Skills Programme](#) through Ayrshire College, [NMIS](#) and STEM Returners. Plus new Ayrshire College Scottish Wind Technician Education Centre (SWiTEC)
- [Just Transition North East & Moray new energy projects](#) set to create more than 500 jobs across 22 new Just Transition projects, while 350 learners develop industry aligned skills

EVENTS

- **Scottish Climate Week** 28 September to 4 October, including events like, joint [Public Sector Webinar](#), 10 October, 3pm where SDS will speak on [Hydrogen Skills](#). See #ScotClimateWeek
- [Scottish Careers Week](#) Monday 9 to Friday 13 November 2026
- [Open University Online Events for Scottish Students](#) 25 & 29 September, 8 October. For other HE events see: [HE Entry Guide](#); [HELOA Events Excel](#); [UniTasterDays search](#)