Skills Development Scotland

The Update

Covering 24 September to 4 November 2026

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

RESOURCES

- **SDS:** New location for the career service in **Aberdeen** and career support in **Clydebank**
- **Economy, People & Skills** October LMI overview, plus some big 2026-27 annual updates…
- ★ **Regional Skills Assessments (RSAs)** updated annual reports are now available, as well as brief **RSA Summary infographics** for every Region and Local Authority
- ★ **Sectoral Skills Assessments (SSAs)** the RSA's help you see which sectors are important to your area, the SSA reports offer extra data and insight on fifteen of those sectors
- ★ Refreshed - **Scotland's Labour Market Drivers 2026** report and **Data Matrix** data dashboard which includes additional regional and local authority data in an interactive Power BI
- ★ **Annual Participation Measures (APM) 2026** showed slight increase in 16 to 19-year-olds in Scotland in education, employment or training activities – 93.6% in 2026 up from 93.3% in 2025
- ★ New **Spotlight on AI: How AI is changing work in Scotland** report and **webinar** 12 November
- **Scottish Government:** **Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2026 – Key Findings** Median weekly full-time earnings increased from £773.30 in 2025 to £824.80 in 2026 (+6.7%)
- **To watch:** **Career Stories:** episode 25: estate agent; 26: Physiotherapy & Sports Massage
  To watch CDI: recorded CDI webinar on **supporting adults with career guidance**
- **To use:** **#EqualityMatters** November, on supporting transitions & navigating pathways (1-page)
- **Research:** **Exploring School-College Partnership Provision in Scotland,** first national study shows vast range of provisions, but difficulties offering equality of opportunity for S4-S6 pupils
- ★ **What do graduates do? 2026/27** brilliant overview of UK graduate destinations data with subject specific profiles, to answer questions like "what jobs do Philosophy graduates actually go into?"

  Related: ISE Student Recruitment report says **Graduate jobs stabilise despite AI disruption**

APPRENTICESHIPS

Increase funding for Modern Apprenticeships, with apprenticeship providers seeing a funding rise of 10% for new and in-training MAs in 2027-28. Also see: **SFC plans new Apprenticeship Committee**

SCHOOLS

Up to 2 extra school in-service days can be requested by local councils to support teachers and allow discussion of changes and the first draft **Curriculum Framework** shared by Education Scotland

Also see: **Strengthening Scotland's Education System Through Empowered Schools** final report

Statistical publications: **Satisfaction with Schools**; **School meal uptake**; **School Estates**

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QUALIFICATIONS

Rapid Growth of National Progression Awards (NPAs) in Scotland with research showing attainment of NPAs has more than doubled since 2022 - from 19,640 to 44,030 in 2026
Example in practice: SCQF How Forrester High School is rethinking qualifications

New Employer Insight Group brought together by Qualifications Scotland and Education Scotland to ensure curriculum and qualification developments keep up with changing workforce demands.

UCAS

UCAS undergraduate application 2027 dashboard has data on the 15 October deadline with a video briefing for UK data. Scotland had 2,320 applicants by this deadline (+1% on last year)
Also see: 5 ways to turn UCAS data into strategic insight

UCAS Adviser Live webinars Upcoming: December Update (1 Dec); Helping Late Applications (8 Dec)
On demand: October Update (24min) and November Update (27min)

COLLEGES / UNIVERSITIES

Defence Technical Excellence Colleges (DTECs) - £10 million investment to create 2 DTECs in the east and west to develop skills for defence engineering, advanced manufacturing and maritime tech

Advancing Social Mobility - A Best Practice Guide for Universities has been produced by Sutton Trust, the guide includes multiple references to the importance of career services & guidance

Also see: Nearly half of 2026 Scottish graduates were the first in their family to attend uni (OU)

INVESTMENT IN SKILLS

- Paid NHS work-placements for parents will be available across Scotland, see NHS webpage, while Raising Income through Skills & Education (RISE) will help them get training via colleges
- New manufacturing facility at Port of Montrose to create 80 jobs in offshore wind supply chain

  Aerospace expansion in Prestwick should create 150 skilled jobs in Ayrshire

  Coastal and Island seafood & aquaculture projects to create an estimated 122 jobs

EVENTS

- Scottish Careers Week, 9-13 November – you can find Events for young people, parents/carers and professionals. DYW Live school events are also listed or go to DYW webpage
- Discover Creative Careers Month November for young people across the UK, see Partner Pack
- Green Careers Week 2-7 November (UK) includes a Virtual Careers Fair
- Youth Work Week 2026, 2-8 November – look for #YWW26 and #YouthWorkChangesLives
  Webinar: Role of Youth work in Transitions to Positive Post-School Destinations 3pm 11 Nov
- SAAS Staff Funding Awareness online information sessions, 1-2pm on 12, 19 & 26 November
  Share SAAS videos: for School Applicants (5min) & Care Experienced Student Funding (10min)