CAREER CONNECTIONS

Careers Newsletter

ISSUE 3

It's February already and the Careers Department has been very busy! This issue is jam-packed with opportunities and experiences our students have had.

UCAS, St. Mary's and CAO applications have been completed, Year 12 students have been on work experience and now we are turning our attention to Apprenticeships!

We hope this issue will give you some more information about careers and please use this QR code to communicate with us if you have any questions.



The Careers Team

What are APPRENTICESHIPS?

There are two apprenticeship programmes funded by the Department for the Economy (DfE):

- ApprenticeshipsNI - Level 2 and 3 - available to individuals 16 years old and over
- Higher Level Apprenticeships (HLAs) - Level 4 to Level 7

There are around 100 ApprenticeshipsNI frameworks and almost 100 HLA programmes to choose from.

Know your Apprenticeship Levels:

- Level 2 (5 GCSEs)
- Level 3 (2 A Levels)
- Levels 4 and 5 (Foundation degree or equivalent)
- Levels 6 and above (Bachelor or Master's degree)

Where can you find apprenticeships?

nidirect government services | tédíreach seirbhísí rialtais | work+

Click here to learn more about Higher Apprenticeships.

Opportunities

National Apprenticeship Week
Mon 9th - Fri 13th February 2026

Some of our Year 14 students are going to Belfast Met on Friday 6th February to visit their Apprenticeship Fair and others are going to the UU Apprenticeship Fair on Saturday 6th February.

Are you interested in Apprenticeships?

Pathways Group has organised a FREE online careers fair (12pm - 2pm daily) with top companies and learning providers which will cover everything from discovering opportunities with organisations first-hand and guidance on how to apply for and make the most of an apprenticeship!

CLICK HERE >



Have you tried Springpod yet?



- Explore courses and careers!
- Gain experience with top employers and universities.
- Showcase your skills - 100% free.
- Earn certificates.



Get Career confident!

Get Career Confident has brought together into one place a range of virtual work experience opportunities available to young people.

Virtual work experience means work experience that is completed online. This can mean activities provided by an employer where you don't have any interaction and you can complete anytime, to a more interactive experience during specific dates.

Click here to see what opportunities are available.

BARCLAYS pwc kainos KPMG

TRAVEL & TOURISM HOSPITALITY TAKEOVER DAY





Recently, Year 14 Travel and Tourism students participated in a hospitality takeover at the Slieve Donard Hotel in Newcastle. Students were given the opportunity to make mocktails, set a table for a wedding breakfast and blind-taste food produced in the hotel's kitchen. Representatives from The Merchant, Millbrook Lodge and Slieve Donard hotels took part in a question-and-answer session, discussing the job prospects within the hospitality industry. Students also had the opportunity to personally experience AI technology that is being used by Tourism NI, especially their AI glasses which allow visitors hands-free navigation around major tourist landmarks. A big surprise was the 10-minute keep-fit session after lunch led by the hotel's resident fitness instructor, which highlighted the vast array of jobs available within the tourism sector. As an extra treat, we received a guided tour of the hotel's main function rooms, spa, and fitness facilities.







TOURISM NORTHERN IRELAND

https://www.tourismni.com/

Travel and Tourism Hospitality Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's tourism and hospitality sector is a vital part of the region's economy, supporting over 70,000 jobs and generating significant revenue. The Northern Ireland Tourism Alliance (NITA) and Tourism Northern Ireland are key players in promoting the tourism industry, offering resources and support for businesses. Events like Tourism and Hospitality Week highlight the sector's importance and provide opportunities for collaboration and innovation. The Tourism Action Plan aims to enhance the tourism experience and market Northern Ireland as a premier destination.

ART & DESIGN CONNECTING CAREERS



Exploring Careers in the Creative and Cultural Industries:
Our AS and A2 Level Art & Design students had the exciting opportunity to attend the 144th Annual Royal Ulster Academy (RUA) Exhibition at the Ulster Museum, Belfast. This visit was designed to deepen their understanding of the creative and cultural industries and inspire their future career aspirations.
As part of the experience, students attended an engaging lecture by renowned artist and Royal Ulster Academician Neal Greig. Neal shared insights into his life as a professional artist, discussing his sources of inspiration, the realities of working *en plein air*, and the impact of travel on his creative practice. His talk offered a valuable glimpse into the career journey of a successful artist, highlighting both the challenges and rewards of working in this dynamic sector.
The learning continued with a guided tour of the RUA exhibition, where students explored a diverse range of artworks and disciplines. They gained an understanding of the meanings behind various pieces and discovered how different artists approach their craft. This experience not only enriched their artistic knowledge but also provided practical research, notes, and sketches to support their individual projects.
Opportunities like this are vital for students considering careers in the creative and cultural industries. They offer real-world context, professional insights, and inspiration that cannot be replicated in the classroom. We are confident this visit will spark creativity and broaden horizons as our students progress in their studies.



Our AS Level and Yr11 Art & Design students recently took part in an inspiring printmaking workshop led by professional printmaker Fionnuala O'Neill. This hands-on experience introduced students to drypoint techniques while offering a unique insight into the world of printmaking as a career.
Workshops like this highlight the diverse opportunities within the creative and cultural industries, from fine art and design to roles in galleries, studios, and education. Students not only developed technical skills but also gained an understanding of the professional practices and pathways that shape this vibrant sector.
A huge thank you to Fionnuala for sharing her expertise and showing our young artists how creativity can lead to exciting and rewarding careers.





Arts Council of Northern Ireland

LECALE ICT VISIT TO QUB

Last term, some of our Year 13 and Year 14 pupils had the opportunity to visit the Computer Science building at Queen's University Belfast. It was a pleasure accompanying such an enthusiastic group of students as they explored one of the most innovative computing departments in the country.

Throughout the day, students were given a guided tour of the state-of-the-art facilities, including specialised teaching spaces, project labs, and collaborative work areas that reflect the dynamic nature of modern computing education. A particular highlight was our time in the Virtual Reality laboratory, where pupils were able to experience immersive technologies first-hand and see how VR is being used to shape new research and industry applications.

"**The VR experience was amazing – I didn't realise how many different applications it could have." – Max.**

"Getting to see around the building and all the technology was definitely a highlight." – **Eoin**

The visit also provided valuable guidance on university entry routes, course structures, and the wide range of pathways available within Computer Science at Queen's. Staff from the department offered insightful discussions about the future of Artificial Intelligence—not only in programming and software development but also in everyday life, careers, and the broader digital landscape our students will soon be part of.

"I didn't realise how much tech they actually have at Queen's." – Lucy

Our pupils thoroughly enjoyed the experience. Many expressed how beneficial it was in helping them better understand the options open to them should they choose to pursue Computing or IT at university. It was encouraging to see their curiosity sparked and their confidence strengthened as they began envisioning what future study in this rapidly evolving field might look like.

"This trip was a great experience and really showed me how AI can do so many jobs nowadays." – Adam.

"This trip made me think about how important ICT is for careers now." – Meghan

An inspiring and highly worthwhile trip, and I am immensely proud of how well our students represented the school. I look forward to seeing where their interest in computing will take them next.

— Mrs Conlon
Head of ICT/Computing









cafre
College of Agriculture, Food & Rural Enterprise



We recently had the pleasure of hosting Liz Simpson from the College of Agriculture, Food and Rural Enterprise (CAFRE). Liz delivered an engaging presentation about the diverse range of courses offered at CAFRE, highlighting opportunities in agriculture, food technology, and rural development.

Students were captivated as Liz shared insights into the practical, hands-on learning experiences that CAFRE provides. She emphasised the importance of these courses in preparing students for successful careers in the ever-evolving agricultural sector.

With a focus on sustainability and innovation, Liz encouraged students to consider how they can contribute to the future of food and farming. This visit was an invaluable opportunity for our students to explore their future career options and learn about the exciting possibilities that await them in the agricultural and food industries.



HEALTH RELATED CONNECTIONS

Mrs Veronica Bailie QUB shared with our pupils her career journey and experience to date within the field of nursing. She gave pupils excellent insight in relation to different types of nursing and what to expect as a first year nursing student at Queens University. She went through the importance of the '6C's' of nursing and required skills and qualities necessary for the nursing/midwifery profession. Veronica also discussed with students the professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates. The presentation was excellent and students had lots of questions about the application process and life after qualifying as a nurse.



Student Reflection:
This invaluable opportunity to gain insight at the Ulster Hospital has reinforced our determination to study medicine at university. We were situated in the South Eastern Health Trust Headquarters where we first collaborated with a small group of other students to research the different foundations that oversee the smooth running of our medical system. Then we were introduced to a group of medical students who all shared the different pathways and experiences they had in getting into medicine. We took part in ethical conversations led by Dr John Smyth and got to take part in some practical activities such as resuscitating a baby if it is born not breathing, using the MRI machine to look for a person's kidneys, and we were shown how to insert a cannula into an arm for an IV drip.
On day two, we toured hospital departments including Emergency, Cardiology, Paediatrics, and Renal, learning about triage, heart conditions, and dialysis. After lunch, doctors shared insights into their daily routines and ethical challenges, followed by a talk from Dr Inez Cooke on medical school requirements and advice on the application process.

Eamonn & Tiernan, Yr 13

CAREER CONNECTIONS

Careers Fair



THURSDAY 26TH FEBRUARY 2026

Lasallian Lower Building
5.00pm- 8.00pm

LECALE TRINITY GRAMMAR
2024
OMNI PUERO FIDES

OPEN TO YEAR 10-14 STUDENTS AND PARENTS/ CARERS

cafre
College of Agriculture Food & Rural Enterprise

SERC

HENDERSON GROUP

Over 60 Exhibitors

QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY BELFAST

EY

THE ACADEMY
HAIR & BEAUTY TRAINING SCHOOL

fibrus
FIBREFAST BROADBAND

LIDL

ALMAC

ASDA

Amey

Ulster University

Rutledge





- Help Your Child Explore Their Future
- Connect With Employers, Colleges & Universities
- Discover Pathways for Year 10–14 Students
- Talk Directly to Industry Professionals
- Support Your Child in Making Informed Choices Learn About Apprenticeships, Courses & Careers

CONNECTING YOUR CHILD TO THE RIGHT FUTURE PATHWAY