[Press release: Students urged to apply for pioneering Cyber Schools Programme](#)

- £20m programme to train almost 6,000 teenagers due to launch in the autumn
- SANS, BT, FutureLearn and Cyber Security Challenge UK named as delivery partners
- Comes as £500k for GCHQ-accredited cyber security master's bursaries announced

Teenagers are being encouraged to register their interest in taking part in a cyber security schools programme being rolled out as part of plans to help the nation address the risk of a future skills shortage.

Today a [new website](#) has been launched where students, teachers and industry can register their interest.

[Pioneering Cyber Schools Programme](#)

The Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS)'s Cyber Schools Programme will see thousands of the best and brightest young minds given the opportunity to learn cutting-edge cyber security skills alongside their secondary school studies through a nationwide network of extracurricular clubs, activities and a new online game.

It aims to support and encourage schoolchildren to develop some of the key skills they would need to work in the growing cyber security sector and help defend the nation's businesses against online threats.

SANS, BT, FutureLearn and Cyber Security Challenge UK have today been confirmed as partners to deliver the programme and prospective students, teachers, industry members and volunteers can now register their interest in advance of the scheme.

Minister of State for Digital Matt Hancock said:

> Our Cyber Schools Programme aims to inspire the talent of tomorrow and give thousands of the brightest young minds the chance to learn cutting-edge cyber security skills alongside their secondary school studies.

> I encourage all those with the aptitude, enthusiasm and passion for a cyber security career to register for what will be a challenging and rewarding scheme.

Up to £20m has been made available to deliver the programme which will see students take a comprehensive cyber curriculum mixing expert, instructor-led classroom and online teaching with real-world challenges, online games and hands-on work experience.

Students will be selected for the programme via a pre-entry assessment, and the scheme will provide them with clear pathways into the cyber security industry via direct contact with industry experts. Cyber security firms and industry volunteers are also encouraged to register their interest to be involved.

Applications are open to students aged 14 to 18, with hundreds of hours of extra curricular content designed to fill a four-year programme. It will be delivered in modules and students up 18 years old can join at any time providing they meet the right criteria. Older students, for example, may work through the content and challenges at a faster pace.

The target is for at least 5,700 teenagers to be trained by 2021. The pilot programme year will be launched in the autumn.

- The news comes as DCMS also confirms £500k funding to continue a pilot to help adults who want to retrain for a job in cyber security by taking a GCHQ-accredited master's degree.

- Up to £500k will be distributed between participating universities to help those who want to use their skills and work experience to move into a cyber security career.

- Those interested in applying must first be accepted onto participating courses and apply for the bursary through the university.

These initiatives are all part of the Government's National Cyber Security Programme to find, finesse and fast-track tomorrow's online security experts. This also includes:

- The Government's Cyber Security Apprenticeships for Critical Sectors Scheme which is supporting leading employers in critical sectors including telecoms, broadcasting, energy and transport to develop the next generation of cyber security professionals through higher apprenticeships. It is currently open for applications for its second phase here.

- The CyberFirst bursary funding scheme offers grants of up to £4,000 for up to 1,000 students by 2020 to study a relevant degree, do a placement or attend a summer school, and, depending on meeting requirements, the chance to work in national security on graduation.

- There are also 1,250 free places on CyberFirst in 2017 and an additional CyberFirst Girls Competition, where teams of 12-to-14-year-old young women can pit their wits against one another to crack a series of online puzzles.

Notes to editors

Media enquiries — please contact the DCMS News and Communications team on 020 7211 2210 or out of hours on 07699 751153.

- This initiative is part of the Government's £1.9 billion investment to significantly transform the UK's cyber security. The 2016-2021 National Cyber Security Strategy sets out how the UK Government will deliver a UK that is secure and resilient to cyber threats; prosperous and confident in the digital world. The National Cyber Security Programme managed by the Cabinet Office coordinates the work undertaken to implement the UK's National Cyber Security Strategy.

About the Cyber Schools Programme delivery partners

SANS

SANS Institute was established in 1989 as a cooperative research and education organisation and is now the largest provider of cyber security training and certification to practitioners at governments and commercial institutions worldwide. The SANS curriculum spans more than 60 courses across multiple cyber security disciplines. SANS has successfully run programmes for school age students and is passionate about encouraging young people to pursue a career in cyber security.

BT Security

Employing more than 2,500 security professionals and with security operations centres all around the world, BT Security addresses the entire range of consumer, business and governmental security needs — from antivirus and parental controls that protect families in their home, through to complex managed security solutions used by multinational companies, banks and national governments. Ensuring we have the right people, with the right skills is critically important to addressing those needs.

Cyber Security Challenge

Cyber Security Challenge UK is a Cabinet Office-backed not-for-profit organisation with the sole purpose of finding, nurturing and placing more individuals into jobs within cyber security. The Challenge brings together key government, public and private organisations to host a programme of activities, spreading the word about cyber security as a varied and lucrative career..

FutureLearn

FutureLearn is a social learning company, enabling online learning through conversation. FutureLearn's online community provides collaboration tools to support cluster leaders and equip them with the confidence to support the students enrolled in the programme.