

Adults to gain new skills on 400 free courses

Tens of thousands of adults will be able to benefit from almost 400 free courses next year, in the first major development in the Lifetime Skills Guarantee [announced by the Prime Minister](#) in September.

The fully-funded courses, ranging from engineering to healthcare to conservation, will be available to adults without a full qualification at Level 3 (A-level equivalent) from April 2021 to help them gain in-demand skills and open up further job opportunities.

Designed to help our country build back better after the pandemic, the qualifications in this offer have been carefully chosen to help adults improve their career prospects and meet the needs of the economy. They will be reviewed regularly so the courses offered can be updated as the economy changes.

The announcement marks an important step in the development of the government's landmark Lifetime Skills Guarantee, which will transform the skills system to ensure more people, no matter their age or background, can get the skills they need to progress in employment.

The offer is backed by £95 million from the £2.5 billion National Skills Fund, which is financing programmes that both support the immediate economic recovery and help meet future skills needs.

This funding will not only enable thousands of adults to gain new qualifications and access better job opportunities; a proportion will also be used to support education and training providers to scale up their provision to deliver the courses and meet the needs of learners.

Prime Minister Boris Johnson said:

Despite all our efforts, coronavirus is damaging the economy and putting people out of work. But I am determined to help everyone who has lost their job to retrain, develop new skills and find new opportunities.

The Lifetime Skills Guarantee will give thousands of adults across the country the chance to do exactly that – as we build back better after the pandemic.

Education Secretary Gavin Williamson said:

As we recover from the pandemic, we are focussed on making sure that individuals and businesses can build back better than before.

Throughout our lives we may all need to boost our skills, or gain new ones. These free qualifications will help open doors to better employment opportunities for thousands of adults and support businesses to access the workforce they need to grow.

Our new Lifetime Skills Guarantee promises to help you get the skills you need at every stage of your life. I'd urge all those eligible to see what course they can take from spring next year and start thinking about their next steps.

Stephen Phipson CBE, Chief Executive, Make UK, the manufacturers organisation:

Industry will be pleased to see manufacturing and engineering related level 3 qualifications as part of this new offer. Protecting existing vital skills and providing people with an opportunity to learn much needed new skills is crucial.

It is also an important first step in supporting individuals on the pathway towards higher-level qualifications as we transition to a digital economy. These new opportunities will be critical in the months ahead for the manufacturing sector as we build a workforce fit for the future.

Chief Executive of Association of Colleges, David Hughes said:

I'm pleased to see progress in the roll-out of the new Level 3 entitlement as part of the Lifetime Skills Guarantee. The qualifications will help people to get the skills they need in the labour market emerging from the pandemic so it is great to see that essential services like child and social care have been included alongside engineering, agriculture, construction and many others. Colleges are eager to start work and begin planning ahead of delivery in the spring of 2021.

This breadth of courses is vital in supporting rural and urban economies to build back better. The impact Covid-19 is having on people's livelihoods requires urgent action so we look forward to working closely with the Department to support the delivery of this new offer.

The government's plan to support people to upskill and retrain was also bolstered earlier this month by the announcement of £43 million from the National Skills Fund to expand the pioneering 'Skills Bootcamps' to other areas of England in 2021.

The Bootcamps – which were launched in the West Midlands, Greater Manchester, Lancashire and the Liverpool City Region this autumn, offer free, flexible

courses of 12-16 weeks to give people the opportunity to build up sector-specific skills and fast-track to an interview with a local employer.

Registrations have now opened for courses in the Leeds City Region, Heart of the South West, and Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire which will cover digital skills like software development, digital marketing, and data analytics but also technical skills training in such areas as welding, engineering, and construction.

Alongside the new Level 3 offer, the Lifetime Skill Guarantee will also include a Lifelong Loan Entitlement which will allow adults and young people to space out their study across their lifetimes and take high-quality courses in both further education colleges and universities.

[England Coast Path proposals published for Suffolk](#)

[Natural England](#) has today (Wednesday 9 December 2020), published its proposals to improve public access to a 25-mile (41-km) stretch of coast between Felixstowe Ferry and Bawdsey, which extends around the Deben Estuary in Suffolk.

There is now a period of eight weeks for legal interests and members of the public to make objections or representations that the Secretary of State must take into account when considering whether to approve the proposals.

Internationally important location

The Deben Estuary is renowned for its tranquillity and wildlife. It is one of the five estuaries in southern Suffolk which together define the character of the coast there. It sits largely within the [Suffolk Coasts and Heaths Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty](#) and is an internationally important wetland site valued for its overwintering water birds and waders, as well as its diverse saltmarshes.

This stretch of the [England Coast Path](#) starts at the small fishing hamlet of Felixstowe Ferry with its golf course, boatyard and sailing club. Then, at the head of the estuary, is the historic maritime town of Woodbridge, which still has a thriving boat-building industry. Here visitors can enjoy [Woodbridge Tide Mill](#) and the nearby [Sutton Hoo Anglo-Saxon burial site](#). At the end of the stretch lies the village of Bawdsey, the birthplace of radar and home to two Martello towers.

The estuary has a number of boatyards and marinas with a wide variety of sailing activity, from yachts to traditional vessels, which gives the Deben a strong maritime feel. While largely fringed by saltmarsh and mudflats,

visitors can enjoy beaches at Bawdsey and Felixstowe Ferry. It is a great place for an exhilarating walk or quiet reflection while watching the passing sailing boats.

Part of England's newest national trail

If approved, this route will become part of the [England Coast Path](#) – a 2,700-mile long-distance walking route and England's newest National Trail, currently being developed by Natural England.

This is the [fourth stretch](#) of the England Coast Path to be developed in Suffolk. Other stretches cover Harwich to Shotley Gate, Shotley Gate to Felixstowe Ferry, and Aldeburgh to Hopton on Sea.

Hannah Thacker, Natural England's area manager for Suffolk, said:

We have had discussions with landowners and key organisations along the proposed route. Their input has been essential and helped shape the proposals; we thank everyone for their time and input so far.

Over the next eight weeks, we are inviting all organisations, farmers, local residents, visitors and businesses to have their say. It's important that all responses are taken into account and we look forward to hearing people's views.

Councillor Andrew Reid, [Suffolk County Council's](#) cabinet member for Highways, Transport and Rural Affairs, said:

I am very pleased that Natural England is publishing the fourth of the reports which reveal the route that the England Coastal Path will take in Suffolk.

This is a very exciting time for all those who love the Suffolk coastline and enjoy the peace and solitude it provides. We very much look forward to continuing to work with Natural England on the other stretches and launching Suffolk's first fully fledged National Trail.

Anyone may make representations to Natural England about the reports during the eight-week period. Owners and occupiers of affected land may make objections about the reports on specified grounds, which will be considered by a planning inspector before the Secretary of State makes a final decision.

All representations and objections must be received by Natural England no later than midnight on 3 February 2021. The full reports, and all the forms and guidance on how to make a representation or objection within the next eight weeks, are available on the [GOV.UK website](#).

Background

- The Marine and Coastal Access Act 2009 places a duty on the Secretary of State and Natural England to secure a long-distance walking trail around the open coast of England, together with public access rights to a wider area of land along the way for people to enjoy.
 - Natural England is working on the entire coastal route, with new sections also opened in Cumbria, Norfolk, Dorset, Kent, Somerset, Yorkshire, Northumberland, North Tyneside, South Tyneside, the Tees Valley and Lincolnshire.
 - A map showing a timetable for the work is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).
 - The England Coast Path will be the longest, newest and most challenging National Trail, passing through some of the nation's finest countryside and coastal locations. It will secure legal rights of public access for the first time to typical coastal land including foreshore, beaches, dunes and cliffs.
 - As well as recommending new sections of route, the proposals outline improvements to existing access to the coastline, including identifying a clear and continuous way-marked walking route along this part of the coast, bringing some sections of the existing coastal footpath closer to the sea and linking some places together for the first time; and allowing the route to 'roll back' if the coastline erodes or slips, solving the long-standing difficulties of maintaining a continuous route along the coast.
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UK announces new approach on US tariffs

The UK is today announcing an independent approach to the longstanding trade conflicts between the EU and US around steel and aluminium and aerospace tariffs.

To defend the UK steel industry, International Trade Secretary Liz Truss is rolling over tariffs in response to the unjustified 'Section 232' tariffs imposed by the US on aluminium and steel imports. These tariffs will continue from January 1st when the UK becomes an independent trading nation once again.

The Department for International Trade will launch a consultation to ensure these tariffs are shaped to UK interests and tailored to the UK economy, based on evidence and input from key stakeholders. Details of the scope and timing of the consultation will be confirmed in due course.

In parallel, the UK government is suspending retaliatory tariffs resulting from the Boeing dispute in an effort to bring the US towards a reasonable settlement and show that the UK is serious about reaching a negotiated

outcome. The government reserves the right to impose tariffs at any point if satisfactory progress towards an agreeable settlement is not made.

The twin announcements are part of the government's strategy to de-escalate trade tensions so the US and UK can move forward to the next phase of their trading relationship, and ultimately draw a line under a dispute that harms industry on both sides of the Atlantic.

International Trade Secretary Liz Truss said:

As an independent trading nation once again, we finally have the ability to shape these tariffs to our interests and our economy, and to stand up for UK business.

Ultimately, we want to de-escalate the conflict and come to a negotiated settlement so we can deepen our trading relationship with the US and draw a line under all this. We are protecting our steel industry against illegal and unfair tariffs – and will continue to do so – but are also showing the US we are serious about ending a dispute that benefits neither country.

Background

S232 steel and aluminium measures

In 2018 the United States Government announced that under Section 232 of the US Trade Expansion Act of 1962 it would place tariffs on EU imports of steel and aluminium.

The ongoing tariffs are unjustified under WTO rules and unfairly target UK steel and aluminium manufacturers and should be removed. Any claim that UK steel and aluminium imports harm US national security is false and without foundation.

In response, the EU imposed counter-balancing measures on US products. A full list of products targeted is available online.

Airbus and Boeing disputes

In 2019 the WTO Appellate Body, the final court of appeal at the WTO definitively ruled that the US has continued to unlawfully subsidise aircraft manufacturer Boeing, causing significant harm to Airbus.

The WTO's ruling in this 16 year-long dispute confirms that the United States has not complied with obligations to withdraw subsidies previously declared illegal by the WTO Appellate Body in 2012, adversely affecting the UK and EU aerospace industry.

Following the findings, last month the EU was authorised in a WTO arbitration

and has gone on to place retaliatory tariffs on \$4 billion worth of US products in the Boeing dispute.

Ensuring a responsible and sustainable transition to UNITAMS

Thank you, Mr President, and to USGs DiCarlo, Lacroix and Khare for their briefing.

I would like to start by commending the civilian-led government of Sudan's commitment to continuing to make welcome progress towards their goal of becoming a fully democratic state.

Prime Minister Hamdok and his government have implemented a number of critical reforms. Of particular note is the removal of fuel subsidies and progress towards the ratification of key international human rights norms. We urge the Government of Sudan to continue on this path by implementing all necessary economic reforms and ensuring full respect for fundamental human rights.

The United Kingdom also applauds the signing of the Juba Peace Agreement on the 3rd of October. This agreement is a clear demonstration of the priorities of the new Sudan. We urge all stakeholders to support this promise of peace through the swift and full implementation of the agreement. We take note of the requests in the agreement for United Nations' support and call for further engagement between the government and the United Nations in this regard.

Mr President, whilst significant steps have been taken to overcome a multitude of challenges, as we've heard, much more remains to be done. Exacerbated by COVID-19, the economic situation has continued to deteriorate. Humanitarian needs are increasing, and violence has spiked in conflict areas.

Regarding the socio-economic situation, the United Kingdom welcomes the World Bank and IMF support for government efforts to alleviate the dire economic situation. The World Bank's support of the Sudan Family Support Programme will help mitigate the negative impact of some of the economic reforms. As the largest bilateral donor to the programme, we are playing our part with a pledge of \$105 million.

Mr President, turning to the security situation, the United Kingdom welcomes the government's commitment to fulfilling the protection of civilian responsibilities and to ensuring unfettered humanitarian access. However, we cannot ignore the significant security challenges that remain. Persistent intercommunal violence, as well as intermittent clashes between the Sudan Liberation Army, Abdul Wahid and government forces are continuing. We echo

the Secretary-General's call for the Government of Sudan to expedite its preparations to protect civilians in line with their National Protection of Civilians Strategy.

As the United Nations African Union Mission in Darfur (UNAMID) prepares to withdraw, we urge the government to develop more responsive and representative rule of law institutions in order to build trust with local populations and ensure stability in conflict areas.

Mr President, United Nations Integrated Transition Assistance Mission in Sudan (UNITAMS) was established to support Sudan's transition. The delays in appointing a Special Representative of the Secretary-General to lead UNITAMS are preventing the provision of such support. We urge the Secretariat to conclude the appointment process and continue to work with the Government of Sudan to expedite the full establishment of UNITAMS throughout Sudan.

I commend the continued support that UNAMID is providing to the Government of Sudan, particularly in the areas of peacebuilding and capacity-building.

We call on the United Nations, working with the Government of Sudan and the country team, to ensure that the transition from UNAMID to UNITAMS is responsible, sequenced and sustainable. In this regard, let me reiterate the Council's expectation that UNITAMS and its Integrated Country Team be the primary beneficiaries of UNAMID assets.

Mr President, I would like to briefly comment on the impact of the conflict in Tigray, Ethiopia on Sudan. We commend Sudan's commitment to enabling humanitarian access to refugees fleeing the violence in Tigray. Funding from the United Kingdom is already helping new refugees from Ethiopia to receive emergency assistance. However, more is needed. We encourage member states to support the United Nations in assisting Sudan to respond to these increased needs.

Finally, as this is the last session on Sudan before their Council tenure ends, let me express our thanks to Germany for the excellent co-penholdership over the past two years. Your commitment to peace and stability is unwavering, and we look forward to continuing our close partnership in support of Sudan.

Thank you.

**British Embassy Call for bids –
Climate Change seminar – Deadline**

extended



The British Embassy in San Jose invites applications for proposals from interested organisations to help design and deliver a virtual seminar (in Spanish and English) on best practice in climate change adaptation, delivered over two half days.

The seminar would demonstrate how investing in adaptation and biodiversity can prevent climate change impacts, allow faster recovery from natural shocks, and be of economic benefit. This could include, for example, discussion panels on the following topics:

- evidence-based analysis of the cost/benefits of preserving biodiversity
- the socio-economic benefits of adaptation programmes, particularly in terms of job and livelihood generation
- the role of nature and nature-based solutions in planning for a Green Recovery
- best practice in integrating environmental protection into policy making

Further details of the UK's climate change ambition and priorities can be found at www.ukcop26.org

The selected implementer will assist in the selection of speakers, identifying and inviting relevant stakeholders and audiences and lead on all logistical aspects of the seminar's organisation and execution. Seminar must take place by 31 March 2021. A more detailed concept note will be provided by

this Embassy to the successful candidate. The Embassy will support the organisation of the event with inputs and contacts.

Bid guidance

- Proposal budgets should be in USD.
- Maximum budget limit is USD \$20,000.
- Activity must be completed by 31 March 2021.
- Project proposals must have a clear purpose supported by achievable and measurable outputs (e.g. activities and reports) and outcomes (i.e. what the project aims to help address through its activity).
- Projects are funded under a reimbursement scheme, against delivery of milestones, with no expectations of continued funding beyond this period.
- Project proposals should demonstrate that the staffing level is appropriate to the aim of the project and that the staff have relevant expertise and experience in the field.
- Deadline for receipt of proposal is 6 January 2021.

Assessment

Bids will be assessed by the British Embassy Projects Board against the following criteria:

- alignment with the above-mentioned objectives and outcomes.
- outcomes are achievable within the funding period.
- project design includes clear monitoring and evaluation procedures, as well as risk and financial accountability procedures.
- the organisation's safeguarding policies ensure protection of beneficiaries.
- administration costs for delivering a project should not exceed 10% of the total project budget.
- overall value for money.

Bidding Process

1. Project proposals must be received in English by midnight (Costa Rica time) on 6 January 2021. Late proposals will not be considered.
2. Proposals must be submitted in English using only the forms provided, in their original formats (no pdfs please).
3. Proposals must contain the name of the call for bids, followed by the name of the organisation submitting the proposal, e.g. "Calls for bids: Climate Change seminar – [Name of organisation]"
4. Proposals must be submitted in English to Denise.Lewis@fcdo.gov.uk and Ivonne.Lopez@fcdo.gov.uk
5. Only the project proposal selected for further consideration will be notified.

All implementers will be expected to sign a standard FCO contract or grant agreement with the Embassy. The terms of the contract or agreement are not negotiable.

Bid documents

1. [Project Bid form](#) (ODT, 52.9KB)
2. [Activity Based Budget \(ABB\) template](#) (ODS, 10.3KB)

Other important information

1. [Value for money and ABB guidance](#) (ODT, 13.7KB)
2. [Administrative costs guidance](#) (ODT, 8.52KB)
3. [Grant Agreement](#) (ODT, 84.8KB)

Published 8 December 2020

Last updated 18 December 2020 [+ show all updates](#)

1. 18 December 2020

Deadline for proposals extended to 6 January 2021.

2. 8 December 2020

First published.