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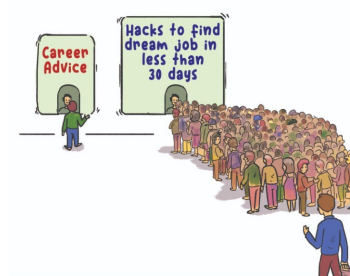
## Summer 2025

Welcome to the termly Soham Village College Careers Newsletter. This goes out to all SVC staff, parents, the governing body, selected local businesses and other stakeholders.

Careers education is a fundamental part of preparing students for their future. The SVC careers programme is fully inclusive of all students, and is constantly monitored and evaluated to ensure it meets the needs of everyone.

We hope that you continue to find this newsletter useful and interesting.

If you have any feedback on what you have read or have items you wish us to include in future editions, please let us know.



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## The Gatsby Benchmarks



The Gatsby Benchmarks provide a national framework around which schools can develop and improve their careers programme. We are working hard towards adopting all of the benchmarks, and have achieved 7 of the 8 Benchmarks.

This is far from being simply a tick-box exercise to meet government expectations — research has shown that the Benchmarks have been proven to raise students' aspirations and make them as work-ready as they can possibly be.

1. A stable careers programme	100% (100%)
2. Learning from career and labour market information	100% (100%)
3. Addressing the needs of each student	100% (100%)
4. Linking curriculum learning to careers	100% (100%)
5. Encounters with employers and employees	100% (100%)
6. Experiences of workplaces	75% (75%)
7. Encounters with further and higher education	100% (100%)
8. Personal guidance	100% (100%)

(figures in brackets = previous attainment level. Audit carried out every Nov, Mar and July)



# A parents' toolkit for career conversations

It has long been acknowledged that the most influential people in a young person's life are their parents or carers, and that many of the ideas related to their careers and future are formulated in their early school years and through conversations with family members.

*Talking Futures* is a recently released suite of resources, designed to help schools support parents to have informed and constructive careers and education conversations with their children.

The website is full of useful information and guidance on the various pathways available. There are loads of helpful conversation starting points to help parents approach the subject with their children, which can be the trickiest part. The earlier these conversations take place, the more informed and prepared students are when they reach Year 11.

Visit the site at <https://www.talkingfutures.org.uk/> and make it your go-to website for up-to-date information!

## Careers Website

<https://www.sohamvc.org/post16careers>

The section is always kept as up-to-date as possible, and is a great source of information across many aspects of Careers Education. There are some links to key websites that you are encouraged to visit.

We would also encourage students to regularly access and use the website so please take time to talk to your child about it.

## Careers Policy, Strategy and Programme

All schools have a statutory requirement to publish their policy, strategy and programme.

All three publications can be found on the Careers section of the school website:

**Policy** - this is our guiding principle and determines what should be done at the top level. It is approved by the Advisory Board and reviewed every 3 years

**Strategy** - this is our comprehensive plan which helps to shape what we do and provide more detail and structure. It is a flexible plan and is reviewed every year

**Programme** - this is the detail behind the strategy that highlights the key activities through the year. It is not an exhaustive list and is updated annually but it gives a good flavour of what the Careers Team deliver

Please take the opportunity to glance at these documents as they all provide a good insight into what we do and why we do it.

# The Tech Gender Gap



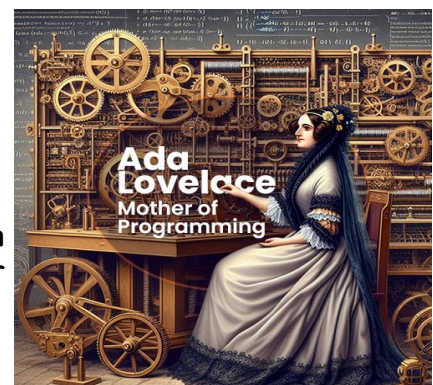
A recent survey of over 1000 UK students aged 11-17 has revealed that whilst three-quarters of young girls (78%) are interested in technology, only two in five (39%) are interested in a tech career. Girls' interest in a tech career is 50% lower than boys, showing a gender gap that the industry needs to close between girls' curiosity in technology and viewing a career as a viable option.

One of the key drivers behind these figures is the lack of inspiration for technology roles, with 41% of girls interested in technology citing a lack of female role models as a barrier to entering the industry. The Chartered Institute for IT reports that only 21% of IT specialists in the UK are women. The gender disparity challenge is obvious and complex.

The survey formed part of an online event with industry specialists held in October 2024. Areas of future focus included increased education around how technology is applied in different industries, investigating how tech roles are communicated with girls' passions in mind, and how can the gender pay gap be addressed.

It was agreed that identifying and celebrating female tech pioneers should be at the forefront of any future initiatives, to highlight inspirational role models to girls. Industry leaders also want business leaders to work with schools, offer mentorship, and promote inclusivity in tech.

Ada Lovelace, daughter of the famous poet Lord Byron, was one of the earliest pioneers of computer science. Born in 1815, her vision was way before her time, and her work lay the foundations for modern computing. She worked with famous mathematician Charles Babbage and eventually her work led her to producing what is now considered the first algorithm intended to be processed by a machine.



More recent female tech pioneers include Susan Wojcicki (former YouTube CEO), Karen Sparck-Jones (self-taught programmer who was an internet search engines pioneer), and Radia Perlman (whose work on data movement shaped the way ultrafast internet networks operate today)

(taken from [FE News | The tech gender gap: girls 50% less likely to pursue a career in tech](#) )

# INDUSTRY SPOTLIGHT

## GETTING INTO:

### Finance & Accountancy



The Financial industry offers a vast range of jobs and careers for those with analytical minds and strong attention to detail. The roles usually offer strong salaries, job stability, opportunities for advancement, and across the world consistent demand projections. Many roles also offer flexibility for employees, enabling them to work remotely or in hybrid work/home environments.

#### Finance Industry Facts:

- \* The UK is home to some of the oldest and most developed financial markets in the world,
- \* The UK's financial services exports reached £92 million in 2024, underlining the country's strong position in the global market
- \* As of 2023, 2.5million people worked in the financial sector (= 7.6% of total UK employment)
- \* UK fund managers helped protect and grow approx. £11.6 trillion in financial assets in 2021

#### Key Skills required:

- Communication
- Negotiation
- Influencing
- Flexibility
- Critical thinking
- Resilience
- Collaboration
- Empathy

To work in the financial sector, try to avoid thinking about the often stereotyped route of becoming a qualified accountant and working in an accountancy firm. Major employers include banks and building societies, insurance companies, investment banks, management consultancies, and financial and investment advisers. Don't forget the huge number of private businesses that require financial experts at all levels to help run the business. The self-employed sector should also be considered, with bookkeepers, accountants and advisors all providing valuable services.

Routes into these roles vary hugely and students' study options at GCSE's don't always have a huge negative impact on the ability to go on and study finance at a higher level. But do be aware of what Further Education subjects you might need to study at university, as some universities like the traditional academic subjects such as Maths, English, History, Economics, Modern Languages and Science.

And don't dismiss the apprenticeship route! Practical on-the-job training whilst earning is preferable to some, and there are plenty of great training providers and employers working together to offer these opportunities

Good starting points for research into this industry - <https://uk.indeed.com/career-advice/finding-a-job/why-finance-is-a-good-career-path> and <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/explore-careers/search-results?searchTerm=finance>

Followed by <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/careers-advice/what-can-i-do-with-my-degree/accounting-and-finance>

## Student Career Readiness

Each February, Yr7 and Yr9 students are asked to complete a Future Skills Questionnaire. The findings help the SVC Careers Team get a snapshot of the level of understanding of each year group, in key areas of careers education and career readiness. This enables the careers programme to be tweaked accordingly.

During the 2023/24 academic year, nearly 250,000 students across the UK also completed the questionnaire, and so a fantastic picture has been built up each year which careers professionals and policy makers use to help future work.

Whilst the report looking at trends from the results across the country can be read here <https://www.careersandenterprise.co.uk/evidence-and-reports/student-career-readiness-in-2023-24/>, it is possibly more relevant and useful to dip into the findings from the questionnaire Yr7 and Yr9 SVC students completed this year.

### Careers Knowledge & Skills

Reassuringly, there is a marked increase in knowledge and awareness of careers-related topics as students move from Yr7 to Yr9. A few examples -

	YEAR 7	YEAR 9
	Jun-24	Jun-24
Careers Knowledge & Skills	% positive	% positive
Do you know how to find out how much you could earn in different types of jobs?	49	58
At school, do you know who to go to for information and guidance about careers?	48	64
Do you have ideas about what you might do for a job or career in the future?	74	76
Do you have ideas about what subjects you want to study for GCSE?	72	98
Have you thought about which of these options might be right for you?	27	55
Do you know how to make a good impression if you want to be chosen for a position of responsibility?	71	78
Do you feel optimistic when you think about your future career?	52	76

During Yr7, many students have a strong idea of where their future might lie in terms of work. This figure remains very similar by Yr9, although for many the industry or job may have changed significantly.

A positive attitude is essential when it comes to making decisions about your further education and career, and so the last question about level of optimism is very encouraging to see.

### Essential Skills for Life and Work

This is trickier to measure, especially as the questions students are asked in Yr7 differ to those asked in Yr9. There is also an element of students having a better understanding of what skills they actually have in Yr9 compared to Yr7, and so quite often students in Yr9 are less positive they can demonstrate they possess the skill needed

YEAR 9		
Essential skills for life and work	% positive	% negative
Developing ideas by writing things down or asking yourself questions	49	51
Planning a complex task by considering the range of options	54	46
Recognising strengths and areas for development in yourself and others	74	26
Taking part in group decision making	83	17
Showing you're listening through your body language or how you respond	68	32
Speaking engagingly through tone, expression and gesture	72	28
Looking for opportunities in difficult situations	57	43
Planning tasks in order of importance to achieve goals	67	33

# Looking back at Spring 2024.....

## Yr9 World of Work day – February PSHE day

Yr9 World of Work day is an opportunity for students to take part in interactive lessons in subjects they might be considering for their GCSE. Some of the sessions were supported by an architect, a fitness coach, and a design & technology professional



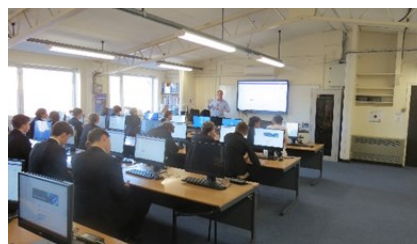
## Yr11 Mock Interviews – February PSHE day

Students got a taste of what a job interview might be like when they took part in our mock interview day. 30 ex-students, parent helpers and local business contacts gave up their day to play the role of interviewers. For many students, this was their first experience of a formal interview and whilst some were naturally nervous, the feedback from interviewers was extremely positive and many students were praised for their stories of success so far and for their future plans.



## National Careers Week – March

We invited 5 guests in (including 1 ex-student) during the week to speak in our year group assemblies. They then dropped into as many lessons as they could across the morning, in subjects that were linked to their industry. One of our guests is a motorbike enthusiast and brought in her hyperbike to let a small focus group of students see it and talk about all-things motorbikes and motorsport. The other guests were from the world of digital marketing, IT and AI, science and logistics. Each passed on their valuable advice to students as they discussed their own jobs and pathways.



# .....and looking towards Summer 2025

Yr7 SEND DS Smith visit

Yr7 and Yr9 Future Skills questionnaire

Yr9 SEND trip to West Suffolk College

Yr10 College Taster Days and Open Events

July PSHE Day - a range of careers and skills-related events across the day for all year groups

# Qualifications

The Parents' Guide to  
www.theparentsguideto.co.uk

Level	Qualification / educational route				
8	Doctorate (PhD)		NVQ 8		
7	Masters degree (MA)		Degree apprenticeship / NVQ 5, 6, 7		
6	Bachelors degree BA or BSc				
5	Foundation degree FdA or FdSc	Higher National Diploma (HND)			
4			Higher apprenticeship / NVQ 4		
3	A levels Grades A-E	International Baccalaureate	T Levels	BTEC diploma BTEC certificate	Advanced apprenticeship / NVQ 3
2	GCSE Grades 4- 9 (C, B, A or A*)			BTEC first diploma	Intermediate apprenticeship / NVQ 2
1	GCSE Grades 1- 3 (D,E,F or G)			Foundation diploma / entry level qualifications	Traineeship / NVQ 1
		Academic route	Vocational route	Applied / work route	

The range of courses available to students can appear to be a bit mind-boggling sometimes, and this is one area that students need to be clear about when they start looking at their options.

Colleges will have their own specific entry requirements but the table above can be used as a general guide.

Some colleges will require specific grades in certain subjects in order for students to study that course. Colleges that offer courses linked to apprenticeships may advise that a student should apply for a 1 year vocational course first to gain the basic industry knowledge rather than move straight to an apprenticeship. This will increase the chances of finding a suitable employer.

**Research** is the key for all of this, so the sooner students can start looking at options and ask questions the better.

## Feedback

If you have any feedback about specific careers events we organise then we are very happy to receive them.

Likewise, if you have any suggestions about events you feel we should be putting on, or employers/businesses you would like us to invite into school, then feel free to let us know. We are always open to new ideas or proposals!!

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