

## Next Step Media Kit

### What is Next Step?

Next Step, the national adult careers service offers free and impartial careers advice and is available online, over the telephone on 0800 100 900 and with a local adviser face-to-face. The service is available free to all adults in England, aged 19 and over (or 18 and over if referred by Jobcentre Plus),

Next Step provides information and advice to support adults in making appropriate decisions on a full range of careers, learning and work opportunities. All our advisers are professionally qualified to provide careers advice to every visitor to the service, whatever their qualification, skill level or employment status, fuelling the potential of millions of adults and helping them move on in work and life through our three channels:

- Online: [direct.gov.uk/nextstep](http://direct.gov.uk/nextstep)
- Telephone: 0800 100 900, 8am – 10pm, 7 days a week
- Face-to-face: Call 0800 100 900 to arrange an appointment in your area

### What is the media kit?

In this Media kit, you will find all you need to know about Next Step, including key facts and figures, case study examples, profiles of our advisers and details of how our media team can support you with case studies and media trained careers advisers who can provide expert quotes for your work.

## **Key data:**

### **Since launch on August 1 2010:**

- Over 620,000 adults have received face-to-face advice locally
- Over 240,000 adults have received advice over the telephone
- There have been over 2.8 million visits to the Next Step website
- There are over 1,700 followers of Next Step through our social media pages on Twitter and Facebook
- There have been over 155,000 'My Next Step' accounts created
- We have over 750 different job profiles on our website, from architect to zoologist providing essential information on what each job involves and how to get into it.
- Over half of all visitors to the service are between 25 and 49 (54%)
- Three quarters of all customers that speak to an adviser are unemployed (76%)
- 2 out of 3 visitors to the website are accessing it for the first time
- The service is also available over the telephone through bi-lingual advisers in: Punjabi, Sylheti, Somali, Urdu, Gujarati, Polish, French and Farsi

## **How do we support our customers?**

Next Step provides information and advice to support adults in making appropriate decisions on a full range of skills, learning and work opportunities.

Our service is delivered by qualified careers advisers through a telephone helpline and through a network of local face-to-face centres. Both channels are supported by a comprehensive website full of careers information, advice and tools such as a CV builder and the Skills Health Check.

The service is confidential and impartial and free to all adults in England. Customers can use just one or all three channels to depending upon the amount of support they require.

## **What happens in a careers advice interview?**

Customers contacting the service can discuss with their adviser, anything to do with learning, skills or work all designed to help them take the next step.

Each careers advice session is tailored to the individual's needs, the type of areas covered include:

- Discussing their current circumstances
- Reflecting upon their background
- Helping them to focus on what's important to them
- Helping them to identify their skills, strengths and interests
- Identifying their options
- Suggesting ways to tackle their personal obstacles
- Discussing job hunting strategies
- Deciding on the right learning style for them
- Helping them to make appropriate choices about their learning and training

- Helping them to work out their next steps (action planning)

Our website has four separate sections that are designed to support and complement the advice our customers receive from the telephone and face-to-face channels. Visitors to the website can access a wide range of careers and skills information, along with a suite of essential career tools such as a CV builder and a Skills Health Check tool.

Our customers are encouraged to think about the position they are in currently, where they want to get to and then think about the steps required to get them there. An essential part of this process is identifying their current skill set.

Our Skills Health Check tool allows customers to identify the skills and abilities they currently possess and how they can help them to get the job they want.

There are easy step by step instructions to follow and allow the customer to learn more about themselves and plan their career.

Career planning is part of what people should be doing when thinking about a new career, or progressing in the career they are already in. Our customers may be looking to make a complete career change, or just to improve where they are at the moment.

**...Ultimately we aim to create an action plan that will help our customers to achieve their goals**

The screenshot shows the 'Next Step' website interface for the Skills Health Check tool. At the top, there is a navigation bar with 'Sign in', 'Register with us', 'Contact us', and 'Call us on 0800 100 900'. A search bar is also present. The main navigation menu includes 'Home', 'Planning your career', 'Getting a job', 'Improving your career through learning', and 'Advice and funding'. The 'Skills Health Check' section is highlighted. Below the navigation, the breadcrumb trail reads 'You are here: Next Step home > Planning your career > Skills Health Check'. The main content area is titled 'Skills health check - introduction' and contains a paragraph explaining the tool's purpose, a 'Take the assessment' button, and a note about the tool's use. A 'How to use the tool' section follows, with 'Step 1 - Check your personal skills' highlighted. To the right, there are three side panels: 'In this section' with links to 'About the skills health check' and 'My Reports'; 'Where's my report?' with instructions on where reports are saved and a 'My reports' link; and 'Already started?' with instructions on how to proceed with assessments.

There are four main areas of the Next Step website that contain all the information and resources individuals need to plan their next career move:

- Planning your career
- Getting a job
- Improving your career through learning
- Advice and funding

The screenshot shows the homepage of the Next Step website. At the top left is the 'NEXT STEP' logo. To its right are buttons for 'Sign in', 'Register with us', 'Contact us', and 'Call us on 0800 100 900'. A search bar with a 'Go' button is also present. The 'Directgov' logo and tagline 'Public services all in one place' are in the top right. A purple navigation bar contains links for 'Home', 'Planning your career', 'Getting a job', 'Improving your career through learning', and 'Advice and funding'. Below this is a large banner with a central image of three people. Text on the banner includes 'Helping you get on in work and life', 'Changing direction?', and 'Get ready for a new challenge. Start now >'. A 'View as list' link is at the bottom right of the banner. Below the banner are three content boxes: 'Welcome to Next Step' with introductory text and a 'Directgov' link; 'Want to be a ... ?' featuring a photo of a young man and the text 'Fashion design assistant'; and 'Find a course' featuring a photo of a woman and the text 'Look for a course in your area. e.g. Manchester College or plumbing'. At the bottom left of the 'Welcome' box are social media icons and the text 'Take a look at'.

## [Planning your career](#) (link)

The screenshot shows the 'Next Step' website interface. At the top left is the 'NEXT STEP' logo. To its right are links for 'Sign in', 'Register with us', 'Contact us', and 'Call us on 0800 100 900'. A search bar with a 'Go' button is also present. The 'Directgov' logo and tagline 'Public services all in one place' are in the top right. A purple navigation bar contains links for 'Home', 'Planning your career' (highlighted), 'Getting a job', 'Improving your career through learning', and 'Advice and funding'. Below this is a sub-navigation bar with 'Where to start', 'Skills Health Check', 'Job profiles', and 'Action plan'. A breadcrumb trail reads 'You are here: Next Step home > Planning your career'. The main content area has a teal header 'Planning your career'. The text explains that career planning is part of thinking about a new career or progress. It lists three things to think about: what you can do already, what you'd like to do next, and what else you need to learn. An image shows a woman in a white uniform assisting an older man. A sidebar on the right promotes 'Visit the Next Step forums' with a photo of a smiling woman on a headset and a link 'Take me to the forums'. At the bottom are two buttons: 'Where to start' and 'Identify your skills'.

This section is all about getting our customers to take the time sit down and take some time to plan their next move.

Planning needs time, as there are several things to consider. When you are planning, you need to think about:

- what you can do already
- what you'd like to do next
- what else you need to learn

There are articles throughout this section that help people to plan their career.

- **Think about what you want out of a job**  
And help to make your next career move the right one for you,
- **Identify your skills,**

Take a closer look at the skills they use in work and at home, there are often more than they think

- **Take the Skills Health Check**

And identify your transferable skills

- **Read through the different Job Profiles**

Discover the key facts about careers and how to get into them.

- **Action Plans**

Find out how to create an action plan to help you get to where you want to be [Help with action plans](#) (link)

## [Getting a job](#) (link)

The screenshot shows the 'Getting a job' page on the Next Step website. The page has a purple header with the 'NEXT STEP' logo and navigation links for 'Sign in', 'Register with us', 'Contact us', and 'Call us on 0800 100 900'. A search bar is also present. Below the header, there are navigation tabs for 'Home', 'Planning your career', 'Getting a job', 'Improving your career through learning', and 'Advice and funding'. The 'Getting a job' tab is active. The main content area is titled 'Getting a job' and includes a sub-header 'Getting a job' and a paragraph: 'Looking for work takes time and effort, and it's good to get as much help as you can. Whether you've recently lost your job or been unemployed for a while, you can improve your chances of getting back to work by using our guides.' There is a photo of a man in a light blue shirt. Below this, there are three main sections: 'Finding a job' (with a link 'Help with finding jobs'), 'CVs and covering letters' (with a link 'CVs and covering letters'), and 'Related links' (with a list of links: 'Ask a question in our forums', 'Starting a new job', 'Job profiles', 'Advice and money', 'Improving your career through learning', 'Volunteering', and 'What happens in a careers advice interview?'). There is also a section for 'Visit the Next Step forums' with a partial image of a person's face.

In this section, we provide a range of advice and tools that can help people put themselves in the best position when looking for a job.

This area of the website provides advice on Looking for work in the “Finding a job” section. Here, we try to improve the job hunting methods of our

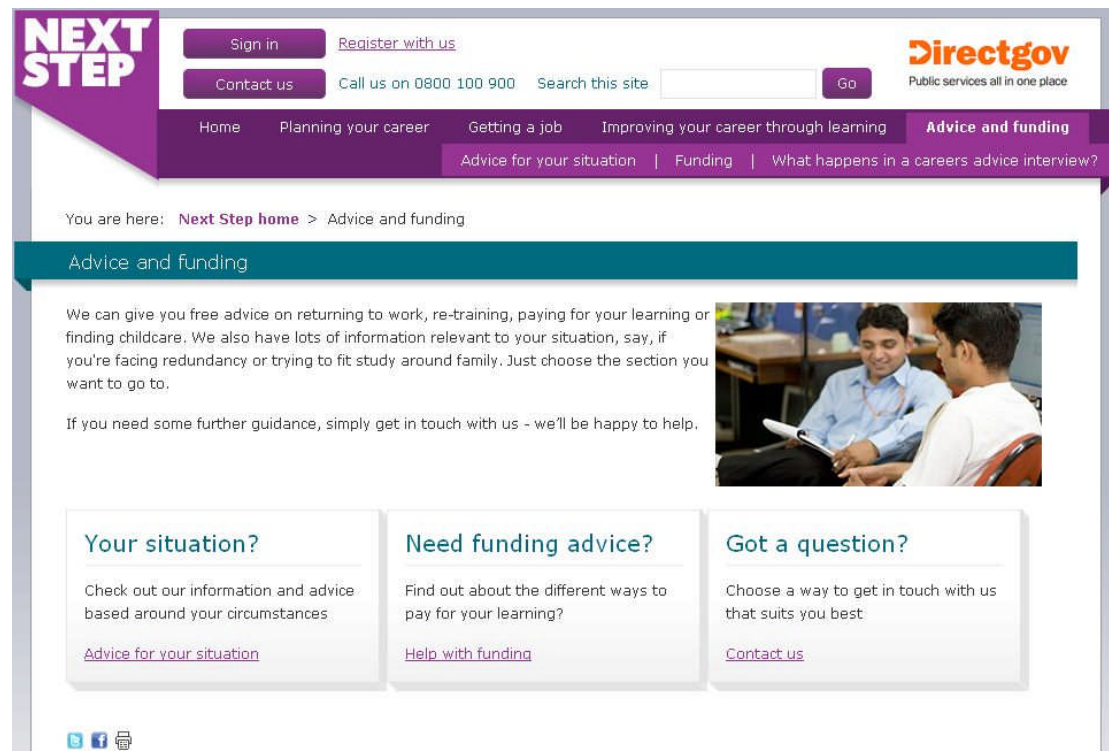
customers and show them how to discover the best places to look for work opportunities.

### [Improving your career through learning \(link\)](#)

The screenshot shows the 'Next Step' website interface. At the top left is the 'NEXT STEP' logo. To its right are buttons for 'Sign in' and 'Register with us', and another set for 'Contact us' and 'Call us on 0800 100 900'. A search bar with a 'Go' button is also present. The 'Directgov' logo and tagline 'Public services all in one place' are in the top right. A purple navigation bar contains links for 'Home', 'Planning your career', 'Getting a job', 'Improving your career through learning' (which is highlighted), and 'Advice and funding'. Below this, a sub-menu lists 'Why learn?', 'Types of learning', 'Improving your skills', 'Choosing a course', and 'Volunteering'. The main content area has a breadcrumb trail: 'You are here: Next Step home > Improving your career through learning'. A teal header bar reads 'Improving your career through learning'. The main text states: 'Learning doesn't end when you leave school or college: people go on learning throughout their lives, for work and leisure. Whether you are looking for a job or planning a career change, new skills and qualifications can help you get more out of life and work. You can:'. This is followed by a bulleted list: '• think about what you need to learn', '• find out more about qualifications at all levels', '• look for a course in your area', '• find out about learning at work, at home and elsewhere', and '• sign up to store all the information you find and keep track of your learning'. To the right of the text is a photo of two construction workers wearing hard hats and safety vests. Below the main text are three white boxes with teal headers: 'Why learn?' (with subtext 'Find out how learning a new skill can improve your life, your work and help you get ahead' and link 'Reasons to learn'), 'Types of learning' (with subtext 'Discover the the different ways you can learn, whatever your circumstances' and link 'Different ways to learn'), and 'Improving your skills' (with subtext 'Learn new skills to help build your confidence and improve your chances of getting a job' and link 'Get help to improve your skills').

This section is design to help visitors to the site discover how learning can help them move on in work and life through learning. We illustrate the different types of learning out there that can fit in with peoples lives along with advice on how to choose a course that is suitable for them.

## [Advice and Funding](#) (link)



The screenshot shows the 'Advice and funding' page on the Next Step website. At the top left is the 'NEXT STEP' logo. To its right are buttons for 'Sign in', 'Register with us', 'Contact us', and 'Call us on 0800 100 900'. A search bar with a 'Go' button is also present. The 'Directgov' logo and tagline 'Public services all in one place' are in the top right. A purple navigation bar contains links for 'Home', 'Planning your career', 'Getting a job', 'Improving your career through learning', and 'Advice and funding'. Below this, a breadcrumb trail reads 'You are here: Next Step home > Advice and funding'. The main heading is 'Advice and funding'. The text explains that free advice is available on returning to work, re-training, learning, childcare, redundancy, and study. A photo shows two men in an office setting. Below the text are three boxes: 'Your situation?' with a link to 'Advice for your situation', 'Need funding advice?' with a link to 'Help with funding', and 'Got a question?' with a link to 'Contact us'. Social media icons for Twitter, Facebook, and LinkedIn are at the bottom left.

Next Step advisers provide free advice on wide range of topics, including advice for people returning to work, looking to re-train or move on in their current job.

We can also advise customers on any funding they may be entitled to whilst learning or how to find suitable childcare.

### **Labour Market Information.**

Next Step also produce fact sheets detailing key job market information for each sector of the economy. The fact sheets provide an overview of the types of jobs within a chosen industry, the skills employers want and employment trends in a specific region.

The fact sheets are provided by the Sector Skills Councils (SSC) who are the national employer-led organisations responsible for the development of skills and qualifications in the workforce.

Visitors to the website can search for the information they need by typing a few key words into the search box. For example, to find out about the computer games industry in the West Midlands, a customer could just type 'computer games and West Midlands' to bring up the relevant LMI data.

Our advisers can also discuss the contents of an LMI fact sheet to help them completely understand the information published about the industry they are researching.

## Real life stories

Here are just a few examples of how we have helped people with different backgrounds and different needs to get back into work. With thousands of people contacting the service each day we can find a case study that can help support your feature. Just contact the press team [PressOffice@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](mailto:PressOffice@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

### Female returner:



Petra Crichton, 47, from Blyth, in Northumberland, is one Next Step customer who will be making a brand new start in 2011 with a new career to look forward to, thanks to the help and support she received from Next Step.

Petra, a mother of three, contacted Next Step back in September after finding herself out of work for the first time ever. After leaving school she worked as a nurse for 17 years but then decided to move into pharmaceutical sales. Her job involved a great deal of travelling and after becoming a grandmother for the first time recently, she wanted to spend more time at home with her grandson. She applied for 40 jobs while she was unemployed but didn't manage to get a single interview. But after receiving help with her CV from her Next Step adviser, she got the second job she applied for.

"I knew that with my new grandson around, I wanted to be at home as much as possible and was no longer able to cope with the travelling my job entailed," she said. "I decided to take the plunge and follow a new career path. I wanted to work in a customer facing role locally and use all the skills I have gained over the past 30 years, but in a different way and in a different career. My CV did not reflect the skills I had, however, and I was just not getting any interviews. I didn't know what to do next." Thanks to her new winning CV, she

was offered a full time, permanent job just before Christmas as a customer services adviser working in a call centre in Newcastle.

### **Post-redundancy support:**

When Suzanne Welburn, 39, was made redundant from the company where she had worked for more than 21 years, she was absolutely devastated and felt as though she was on the scrap heap. But thanks to the help and support she received from Next Step, she has picked herself up and is now on course to a new career as a teaching assistant.

Suzanne, who lives near Hull, had worked her way up the company and was an Engineering Resource co-ordinator in charge of a small team when her employer had to make redundancies. One of her former colleagues told Suzanne about Next Step and since she contacted the service she hasn't looked back. Suzanne was thinking about a change of career and Next Step helped her with her CV, job applications and course searches.

“My adviser was brilliant,” Suzanne added. “She has done so much to help me. It was really scary, finding myself out of work for the first time in more than 20 years. My confidence was low and I believed I didn't have anything to offer, but my adviser did all she could to help, did not once make me feel stupid or worthless, just genuinely wanted to help me get back into work. Any information I needed, she got for me“

Suzanne is doing a NVQ Level 2 S.T.L.S (Teaching Assistant) qualification and volunteering in a local primary school to get experience, as well as brushing up on her maths and English. She hopes to get a job as a teaching assistant when she finishes her course in the summer and maybe move into teaching eventually, a career she considered when she left school. “Next Step

helped me get my confidence back and see that I had lots of transferable skills to offer. They helped me get back on the right track and be confident and positive about my exciting future ahead.”

### **Employers:**

The Next Step careers service helped employers across Lancashire facing making redundancies with a range of information and advice to support their staff through these difficult times.

Next Step advisers, called into work places by employers to help employees facing redundancy, offer a wide range of support, from searching for suitable courses to CV writing and practising interview techniques.

Business Link Northwest is one such employer that have benefited from the Next Step service when around 180 redundancies had to be made following a restructure.

One manager from Business Link contacted Next Step after finding out that his own job could be at risk and was so impressed by the service that he asked his Next Step adviser Karen Lund to come into work and provide support for his team, who were also at risk.

Karen said: “This was clearly a very sensitive time for the staff, who were still waiting to find out the finer details about the potential numbers being made redundant and what types of roles they could apply for. Worry, concern and uncertainty were the general feelings felt by the team.”

Karen provided one-to-one appointments for the staff in a confidential setting, provided by Business Link. She continued: “As each person had their own reasons for accessing the service, the support provided covered a range of

topics, such as creating and updating CVs, researching course information, and support with application forms. The support also carried on after the face-to-face appointments, through phone calls and emails. We also offered to provide further face to face meetings for staff as and when required”

Jane Hewitt, Universal Services Adviser at Business Link Northwest, was one of the staff affected by the changes. She said: “The help that Karen gave me was invaluable. Karen was very proactive and had a wealth of information and I would recommend Next Step to anyone in the same situation.”

### **Young Adults:**

Matthew Chamberlain, age 24, struggled to get a job after leaving university so took up a voluntary placement with MerseyTravel, in Liverpool, to develop his skills in the world of work. While he was there, he contacted MerseyTravel’s Next Step adviser and hasn’t looked back since.

Thanks to the help and support he received from the adviser, he undertook some training and was offered a job as assistant freight co-ordinator with the organisation. MerseyTravel are the public body which operates the Mersey Tunnels, local ferry services and works in partnership with private bus companies and the local train operator.

“Throughout the whole experience, the most refreshing thing was actually having a reason to get up in the morning,” said Matthew. “I love my job and am learning something new every day. I would advise anyone who needs advice and support with their careers to contact Next Step now. You have nothing to lose and everything to gain.”

## PROFILE OF A CAREERS ADVISER

The working day of a Next Step adviser varies depending upon the customers they are working with and their specific needs. Three advisers give an insight into their background, why they became an adviser and what a typical day for them is really like.

**Ian Millar** is a Careers Adviser with Next Step, covering North Tyneside, Northumberland and central Newcastle.

Being a Careers Adviser wasn't Ian's first choice of career. After school and college Ian completed Project 2000 and he became a Psychiatric Nurse. He moved on from nursing and went to University, studying a Degree in Health Studies. Ian then worked in recruitment, before Ian became a Senior Team Leader for the Prince's Trust in Warwickshire and Birmingham. Ian was promoted to a co-ordinator, where he worked in personal development and coaching. Ian stayed in this role for eight years, before he moved to Newcastle.

Ian's first job in Newcastle was for the Transport Union. He eventually found an Advice and Guidance role in Sunderland, where he stayed for two and a half years, before he secured his role in Tyneside.

As a Careers Adviser Ian sees between 40 and 50 clients each week. Clients are referred to Next Step and see Ian in a wide range of locations. Ian delivers guidance sessions with clients including Jobcentre Plus, A4E and Remploy. The Remploy sessions are unique in that they are designed by Ian and advisers from Remploy. They consist of interview skills, group interviews and competence based questions, confidence building, CV workshops, communication, Customer service and sessions are concluded with a full feedback and signposting session. He hopes to complete an NVQ Level 6 in Advice and Guidance soon.



***Ian Millar***

**Francesca** is a careers adviser with the national careers advice service. She's based in Manchester, where she helps all kinds of people – whether they have just left university, been out of work for years, just come out of prison or are considering a change of career.

Francesca provides information, advice and guidance to adults aged 19 and over to help them make choices in relation to education, training and employment. This can be face-to-face or over the telephone, and by email for less in-depth enquiries. Examples of the kinds of things a career guidance session could involve are helping someone to work out what their skills and interests are; helping someone weigh up a number of options and think about how they are going to decide what path to take; helping someone create a CV, or helping someone prepare for an interview.

Francesca might only see a client once or could work with someone over a longer period of time, usually working on a one-to-one basis. Francesca can see or speak to eight or so clients a day for full career guidance sessions, which can last for approximately an hour, whilst also dealing with more clients for shorter enquiries.

Together, Francesca and her clients discuss what will be useful towards an action plan that they create. This sets out the steps that they need to take to move forward. Francesca also spends time doing administration, such as keeping computer systems up-to-date and doing research on new qualifications or changes in funding for courses.



**Francesca**

**Aniko Cullen** is a progression worker and adviser with Next Step Greater Merseyside, covering North Sefton, Southport, Bootle and Liverpool City centre.

Having originally worked in travel and tourism, and reaching her highest potential, Aniko decided she needed a change of career. Undertaking volunteer opportunities to give her more varied experience, namely as a counsellor with Child Line for 15 months before starting a Psychology degree with Open University. This led Aniko to be recruited to the role of adviser, demonstrating she had the skills, attitude and personality traits needed to be a successful adviser.

Aniko's role is wide and varied, delivering a tailored service to meet the specific needs of up to 40 clients each week. Aniko delivers one-to-one and group sessions, in relation to career changes, identifying transferable skills and training opportunities, assists clients with developing CVs, practising interview techniques and producing successful applications. Aniko sees around six clients each day, and as well as supporting clients, she promotes the Next Step service during events that may involve group sessions, providing careers information and assisting individuals with particular job applications and interview practice.



***Aniko Cullen***

## **Future developments**

### **The National Careers Service**

The National Careers Service will provide access to independent, professional guidance on careers, skills and the labour market. It will be accessible online, by telephone and face to face in the community, and will be operational by April 2012. The Skills Funding Agency will be responsible for designing, developing and implementing the Service.

The National Careers Service will comprise a single web address and telephone helpline number which will provide access to online resources and professional guidance on careers, skills and the labour market for young people and adults. It will also comprise a network of public, private and voluntary sector organisations funded by BIS to provide face to face careers guidance to adults, working in the community, and able to provide services on the open market. The Service will also work in partnership with Jobcentre Plus to provide those seeking employment with a source of careers and skills advice.

### **The Lifelong Learning Account**

In September 2011, people will be able to open a Lifelong Learning Account via the next Step website, enabling learners to make more informed choices about skills and careers.

A free Lifelong Learning Account is available for all adults aged 19 and over, in England.. It gives individuals access to a range of information and tools, to match their personal circumstances and needs - the results of which can be saved in a secure, private and easily accessible space. It offers greater

flexibility, control and choice for skills and learning development By opening an account you can:

- Access more personalised information through the website.
- Update and store personal information such as your CV, a skills health check, courses and job profiles.
- Access your qualification results from your Personal Learning Record and track what financial contributions have been made towards your learning.
- Manage information you have gathered to help you make the right choices and share this with employers, learning providers and advisers so you can take the next step.
- Receive regular careers information updates from the service based upon your needs and situation.

**We will keep you updated on future developments as they happen.**

## How can we help you?

Next Step have access to a range of case studies, from young adults to older workers and would be happy to contact our database of case studies to support your article or feature. If you have a specific case study in mind, just contact us and we will endeavour to find someone suitable for you.

We also have a team of media trained advisers, who as well as providing front line advice, are happy to take part in media activity such as radio interviews or even live webchats. Just contact us to arrange an interview.

Should you have any careers/skills features or requirements you would like to speak to us about, the contact details for the press team are below.

### **SKILLS FUNDING AGENCY PRESS TEAM**

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Email the press team at [PressOffice@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk](mailto:PressOffice@skillsfundingagency.bis.gov.uk)

All our previous press releases can be downloaded from the Next Step media room [here](#)



**European Union**  
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Investing in jobs and skills