



Good morning Post 16.

It's a leap year this year, which means this week has an extra day. The leap year always makes me start to think about the whole weird concept of time and years and calendars – I mean, who decided? I looked it up. Here's what I found out. *(Adapted by Christine Dell'Amore from a February 21, 2020, National Geographic online culture article by Brian Handwerk)*

Over the centuries, many cultures have tried to make calendars, but they didn't always get them right. The Sumerians, who lived about 5,000 years ago in what is now Iraq and Kuwait, divided the year into 12 months of 30 days each—which made their 360-day year a week shorter than Earth's yearly journey around the sun. (When the Egyptians adopted this calendar, they solved the problem by adding five days of parties at the end of the year. Nice one!)

Earlier Egyptians—before about 3100 B.C.—and other cultures from places like ancient China and Rome used lunar calendars. They tracked the months by how long it took for the moon to orbit Earth. But lunar months are about 29.5 days; lunar years only about 354 days. That caused an 11-day gap between the calendar and the seasons.

Today the Islamic calendar—used in countries like Saudi Arabia and Syria—still uses a lunar system—though a single leap day is sometimes added to keep the seasons the same every year. And though modern China uses the Gregorian calendar for official purposes like the school year, the country also uses a lunar-solar calendar, which tracks both the moon's orbit around Earth and Earth's orbit around the sun, for more traditional customs. That's why Chinese New Year celebrations can start in late January or early February, even though the official calendar starts January 1.

Roman emperor Julius Caesar created **the Year of Confusion** when he decided that the year 46 B.C. was going to be 445 days long instead of 365 days long, in order to fix the problem. He then made a 365.25-day year—a tiny bit longer than the 365.2422 solar year—that added a leap day every fourth year. But even this Roman system wasn't right. The small difference between 365.25 and 365.2422 made each calendar year about 11 minutes shorter than the seasonal calendar, so the calendar was an entire day short every 128 years. By the 16th century, major dates and holidays had drifted by 10 days. In Rome, Pope Gregory XIII unveiled his own Gregorian calendar in 1582. That year, he dropped 10 days from the month of October to sync things back up. He also developed a new leap year system that used the solar year of 365.2422 days, added one leap day every four years, but dropped three leap days every 400 years to keep the calendars from drifting.

It sounds confusing, but the system has kept the calendar and the seasons in sync for more than 400 years. The Gregorian calendar isn't perfect—there's still a 30-second drift every year. But even with that, the calendar won't be off for more than a day for another 3,300 years!



On another note, this week may be confusing in other ways: I've been so utterly proud and impressed by the way you've all been coping and the incredible sensitivity and support you've shown each other. We will need to continue to be gentle with each other, and sensitive to each other's needs and feelings over the coming weeks and months. It can be confusing dealing with emotions, our own and those of others. The best tool you can use to support each other is empathy. What's the difference between sympathy and empathy? Watch this:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KZBTYViDPIQ>



Have a good week – don't forget to check the opportunities section carefully for anything that might be relevant to you.

Mrs O

Opportunities/Advice

Interesting and Interested?

Here you can find links and information about opportunities for you to expand your academic horizons through webinars, online and live lectures and online courses, as well as college open days, apprenticeship opportunities and summer residentials.

Take a look – there may be something perfect for you!

Peninsula Dental Residential:

Residential Dental Summer School funded by NHS England. This is a 3-night, 4-day summer school facilitated on the main University of Plymouth campus from Monday 8th July to Thursday 11th July 2023.

This is a fantastic opportunity for students from the Southwest region (Devon/ Cornwall/ Bristol/ Dorset/ Gloucestershire/ Somerset/ Wiltshire) to gain an insight into dentistry/dental therapy & hygiene, looking at the whole life cycle of a dental student and it will focus on supporting the student's journey into dental education. The programme is aimed at students in Years 11, 12, and 13 from disadvantaged backgrounds who meet the NHS/DSC eligibility criteria as shown on our website (link below).

Funding will cover the students travel costs, accommodation (in our university halls of residence), all meals, and refreshments. Please see the link below for further information about the summer school and the eligibility criteria.

<https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/outreach/summer-schools-2024>

The closing date for applications is **Friday 26th April 2024**.

Volunteering Opportunity – and good ongoing WExp for Medical, care based or education pathways and careers!

We are looking to recruit more volunteers this year to assist us with running our busy vaccination clinics at Homepark and our Outreach clinics in the Plymouth area. This role covers both inside and outside stewarding where you would be expected to direct patients, marshalling carparking, managing queues etc.

Apply: <https://govolunteering.co.uk/opportunities/vaccination-steward-volunteer-home-park-plymouth-0e2bceed-d3f4-4990-9245-a035cd8fe833>

Oxbridge Subject Conversations

Not sure which subject is best for you to apply for? Our Oxbridge [subject guides](#) (interviews with current students) give you an insider view into what studying various STEM and Econ subjects is like at Oxford and Cambridge! **Get Oxbridge Subject Conversations here!**

Access to UWE Bristol Fair

We would like to invite you and your students to our Access to UWE Bristol Fair, held at Frenchay Campus on **Wednesday 27 March 2024, 12:00-15:30**.

This is an opportunity for prospective Year 12 or Level 3, Year 1 students to find out about the wide range of services we offer to meet their needs and support a smooth transition into Higher Education. This small-scale event is designed to be accessible, reassuring and confidence building.

If you would like to attend the event, [please complete this short registration form](#).

Feel free to [contact us](#) if you have any questions about the event.

Are you turning 18 or already 18 and feel university is not for you? AWE have been training apprentices to make the world a safer place for 70 years, setting them up for success in the defence industry.

Wide range of [Level 2 and 3 roles](#).

Level 2 and 3 roles at AWE are a great starting point to nurture and develop skills and be supported into onward career paths and degree level study.

Take a look at some of the remaining open apprenticeships [Final deadline March 3rd](#):

Level 2:

- [Supervised Practitioner](#)
- [Engineering Operative Apprentice](#)
- [Operations Apprentice](#)

Level 3:

- [Maintenance Control Apprentice](#)
- [Machine Operator Apprentice](#)
- [Computer Aided Design Technician](#)
- [Mechanical Maintenance Apprentice](#)

Chris, aged 20 in Level 3 Mechatronics Apprenticeship.

"I studied Maths, Physics and Computer Science at 6th form which gave me the theoretical knowledge, but it was this apprenticeship that raised my practical knowledge up to the same level. Without it I wouldn't have the confidence and quality in my work to meet the standards of AWE and start my career in the professional engineering world.

After completing my apprenticeship in Mechatronics, I am specialising in electronics where the company is paying for me to go and complete my degree achieving the same standard as a level 6 apprenticeship."

Medicine Pathway Programme at Edge Hill University Medical School.

Applications are now open for **70 Year 12 students** to take part in our 2024 programme which consists of an on-campus visit to Edge Hill University where students will learn about student finance, life as a doctor and take part in clinical skills sessions. There will also be an online day where students will take part in workshops with staff from each of our partnering universities: University of Liverpool, University of Manchester and Lancaster University. The programme will culminate in a 4 day, 3 night residential where students will stay at Edge Hill University and spend their days at each of our partner universities, experiencing life as a medical student.

This programme is aimed at young people from under-represented backgrounds and is free to students who take part. This is an initiative run by the Medical Schools Council and is funded by Health Education England. Here - [MSC Pathway Programme Application Form 2024 \(onlinesurveys.ac.uk\)](#). More details can be found on our website - [Widening participation - Edge Hill University](#).

Applications for the 2024 Pathway Programme close on Friday 1 March. Please note, we may choose to close applications early depending on the number of eligible applications we receive.

Wellbeing

You are not alone...

You're not alone, there's always someone to talk to. Discover some of the national and local services that are available to support you or alternatively speak to your mental health leads at school, teachers, parents and friends.

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

shout 85258
Free text, confidential and anonymous text service open 24/7
Text: 'SHOUT' to 85258
here for you 24/7

FirstResponse
Crisis line open 24/7 365 days a year, providing advice, support and signposting for people experiencing mental health difficulties.
T: 0800 923 9323

PAPYRUS
Young person service for confidential suicide prevention advice, open 9am to midnight every day.
Text: 07860 039967 Call: 0800 0684141

kooth
Free, safe and anonymous online support for young people. Kooth provides web based information and advice along with online chat based conversation and forums.
www.kooth.com

CLASSROOTS STAY ALIVE
Download the app: search for, Stay Alive
www.stayalive.app

PETE'S DRAGONS
Suicide bereavement support and counselling, for people bereaved or impacted by suicide. Self-referral form available on 'Contact Us' tab.
www.petesdragons.org.uk

Childline
Free, confidential service with trained counsellors, either online or on the phone, anytime.
T: 0800 1111 www.childline.org.uk

SAMARITANS
Helpline open 24/7 365 days a year
T: 116 123
www.samaritans.org
jo@samaritans.org
(response time 24 hours)

...help is at hand

*Talk to a friend or family member

*Talk to a helpline

*Talk to a professional you trust – this could be for example your GP, teacher or another adult.

kooth **childline**
ONLINE, ON THE PHONE, ANYTIME

YOUNG MINDS

PAPYRUS
PREVENTION OF YOUNG SUICIDE

'It's okay not to be okay'

Crisis support – these organisations offer online or telephone support:

- ChildLine – Call free on 0800 1111
- Samaritans – Call 116 123 free
- Young Minds Crisis Messenger – Text YM to 85258
- The Mix - [08088084994](https://www.themix.org.uk) Crisis Messenger – Text THEMIX to [85258](https://www.themix.org.uk).

If a child or young person (under 18) is experiencing a mental health crisis, you can now access CAMHS 24/7. Please contact 03300 245 321 during normal hours (8am-5pm, Mon to Fri) or 0300 555 5000 outside these hours.

Websites that are useful sources of information include:

- Kooth – <https://www.kooth.com/>
- ChildLine – <https://www.childline.org.uk/>
- Young Minds – <https://youngminds.org.uk/>
- Mind – <https://www.mind.org.uk/>
- <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/feelings-symptoms-behaviours/behaviours/help-for-suicidal-thoughts/>

- <https://www.plymouth.gov.uk/suicide-awareness>
- www.myblackdog.co
- <https://www.nhs.uk/nhs-services/mental-health-services/>

Bereavement Support:

- Pete's Dragons
https://www.petesdragons.org.uk/Support_in_Devon_345.aspx
- Jeremiah's Journey
<https://jeremiahsjourney.org.uk/>