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# GUIDE FOR FORMER STUDENTS

# Guide for Former Students

Future First is a charity that helps schools and colleges stay in touch with their students after they leave. This group of former students is often known as an 'alumni network'. The idea is that the school, the former students and the young people who are still there could all benefit from staying connected.

Once you've joined your old school's alumni network, they might invite you back to support the school and its current students in a range of ways. And this might be good for your personal and professional development.

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*Why should you join your school/college's alumni network?* It may well be years since you left school/college, but the things you have learnt since you left and the career path you have taken are of great interest to the staff and students who are there now. Your school/college might know which university you planned to go to, or which industry you hoped to work in, but it's unlikely they know more about what you've been up to since you left. Whether you loved it or hated it, there is no denying that school/college was a large part of your life, and we're looking for former students to sign up to their alumni network to support their old school in a number of ways.



## How can you help your school?

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There are a range of ways for you to get involved and support your old school and many of these are flexible and can fit around your job/studies/other commitments.

Whatever route you have taken since leaving school, you will be an inspiration to many students. You could help to show younger students that traditional routes, or university, are not for everybody and that there are many different ways to get to where they want to be.

If you feel that your job is not aspirational, remember that every young person is different and there will be many and varying career paths that they aspire to achieve; being a lawyer or a banker isn't for everyone. If you can be a role model for students in the school who want to do something like you, but don't know how to get there, you can really make a difference.



Need to find out more? Check out our FAQs



**Become an inspiring role model for young people:** Future First supports schools and colleges to host assemblies and careers workshops for current students to learn about their options when they leave school/college. These events involve alumni who enjoy their jobs talking with current students about their careers paths after leaving the school. You could act as such a role model; this can be on a one-off basis for an assembly, or on a more regular basis, depending on how much time you have to give. This is a really valuable way to support current students.

**Act as either an online or in-person mentor:** Many young people would benefit from extra support at school/college. One of the best ways for these young people to be supported is with the help of a relatable role model. A former student like you, from the same school/college, could be the perfect person to become a role model for one of these pupils. There are two different mentoring opportunities, either online (e-mentoring) or face-to-face. You could talk to a current student about your time at school/college, or about what you have been doing since leaving school/college and offer support and guidance.

**Volunteer to help out with school activities:** You could go back in to your old school/college to volunteer with events, classes or clubs, such as sports day, plays or music classes. This can be on a one-off basis, or regularly, it's your choice how much time you commit.

**Become a school governor:** Every school/college has a board of governors who meet regularly to discuss the running of the school and help make decisions on how to improve it. It is important that the board of governors is effectively representative of the interests of all students, and therefore it is great to have former students involved. Your school may be looking for new governors now or in the future, and Future First will keep you informed if your school is looking.

**Offer work experience opportunities to current students:** You might be able to offer, through your current work place, work experience placements for young people, in order to help them to gain useful skills, knowledge and understanding of the world of work, and of the possible industries they might be able to enter after leaving school.



## So how do I sign up?

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Signing up is easy and will take no more than 2 minutes:

**Step 1:** Go to <http://networks.futurefirst.org.uk/former-student-search>. Alternatively, you can ask a member of staff at your old school to send you a paper form.

**Step 2:** All you need to do is fill in a few of your details including what you've been up to since leaving.

**Step 3:** Check and agree to the [data protection policy](#).

**Step 4:** If you want to, you can sign up to Future First with Facebook. It doesn't let us view your profile or your photos, it's just another way of keeping in touch.



### How to edit your details

If any of your personal details change, or we have them saved incorrectly, simply let us know on [networks@futurefirst.org.uk](mailto:networks@futurefirst.org.uk) and we'll ensure that the information is updated.



## What to expect after signing up

Once you've signed up, your contact details will be added to your school's database (see [Privacy policy](#) for more information).

You will then receive up to eight communications per year; these will be either text messages or emails and will include:

- Updates with news and successes from the school/college;
- Opportunities for you to get involved and offer your support;
- Requests for updates regarding what you are currently up to; from the point of leaving school/college, your circumstances will change a lot. It is helpful that your school/college is aware of your situation so that they know what activities you might be interested in hearing about.