

Lancaster University:
*Stories of excellence,
inclusion, and innovation
in cyber security
education*

Welcome to our newsletter –
spotlighting the people, projects,
and progress shaping cyber security
at Lancaster University.

This publication is part of our
broader commitment to cultivating
a vibrant, inclusive, and impactful
cyber security culture. Across
research, teaching, knowledge
exchange, and community
engagement, our staff and students
are working together to address the
digital challenges of today – and
tomorrow.

January – April 2026



Leadership Reflections

Hear directly from ACE-CSE leaders as they share updates on progress, challenges faced, and hopes for the future. This section includes reflections on lessons learned and highlights key achievements, providing a candid look at the journey so far.



In today's fast-changing educational landscape, ongoing work at Lancaster shows how collaboration and reflection are as critical as innovation. Every project and initiative teaches us something new about resilience, adaptability, and the power of collective effort. Seeing progress unfold, even through challenges, reminds me that meaningful impact is built over time, guided by both curiosity and careful listening to those we aim to serve.



Inclusive and equitable education lies at the heart of our work, shaping how students learn, grow, and engage with the world. We are committed to developing future leaders in computing and STEM—individuals with the knowledge, creativity, and collaborative mindset needed to drive meaningful change in education and beyond.

Past & Future Activities

Here's a look at some of the exciting things we've been up to over the past quarter, along with a glimpse of what's coming next. From hands-on outreach activities to expert-led lectures, we're proud to be creating opportunities that inspire, inform, and connect our community around all things cyber and computing. Keep an eye out for more to come!

Lancashire Cyber Festival Education Week - 4th February 2026

On 4 February 2026, we were proud to host an exciting Cyber Day as part of Lancashire Cyber Festival Education Week, led by the Lancashire Cyber Partnership alongside many other colleges across the county. The day welcomed 126 students from LRGS, LGGS, Blackpool Sixth Form, Blackburn College, Ripley St Thomas, and Lancaster & Morecambe College to our campus for an inspiring and action-packed experience.

Students enjoyed an engaging welcome and introduction from a VIP guest streamed online to all host sites, before taking part in the Hexventure cyber entrepreneurship game, expertly led by Chris Lowerson, and a fast-paced cyber scavenger hunt run by Sophie James. The day wrapped up on a sweet note with cupcakes featuring QR codes for instant feedback.

It was an amazing day full of energy, collaboration, and curiosity—sparking interest in cyber careers and showcasing the power of partnership across Lancashire.

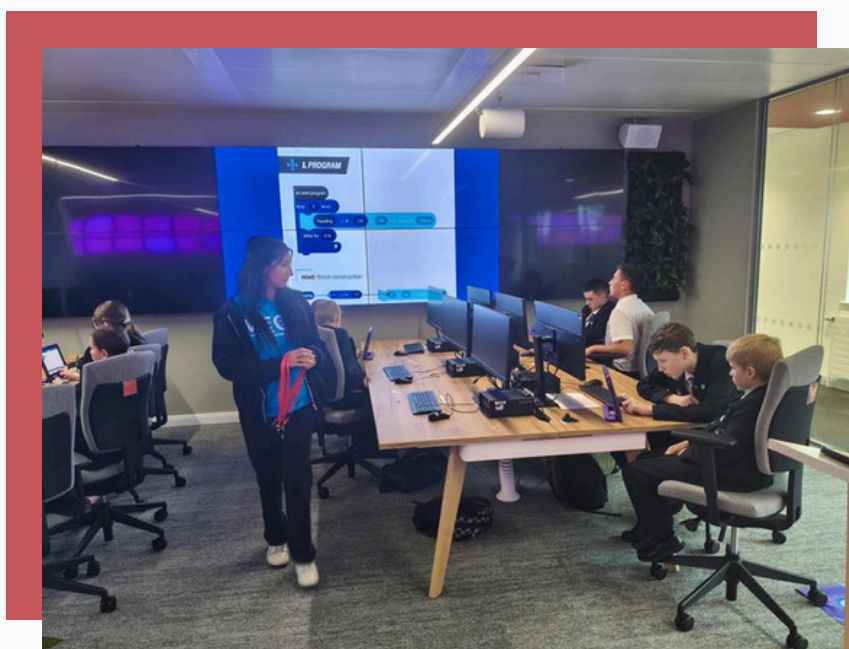


Cyber First Day with In4 - 12th February 2026

On 12th February 2026, we were delighted to host another successful CyberFirst Day at Lancaster University in collaboration with IN4 Group. The event welcomed 30 students from Greenbank High School and Birkdale High School for an engaging, hands-on introduction to the world of cybersecurity and emerging technologies.

Expertly led by colleagues from IN4, the day featured interactive sessions on AI image generation and replication, AI image detection, and micro:bit-controlled robotics. Students also benefited from a fast-paced masterclass on encryption and Caesar ciphers delivered by Dan Fretwell and Jessica Jay. Throughout the day, students had the opportunity to experience what it's like to work in a real lab environment within our InfoLab facility, as well as enjoy lunch in our Sky Lounge.

It was a fantastic day, and we look forward to hosting many more events like this in the future.



LMC's Cyber Day at Lancaster - 11th March 2026

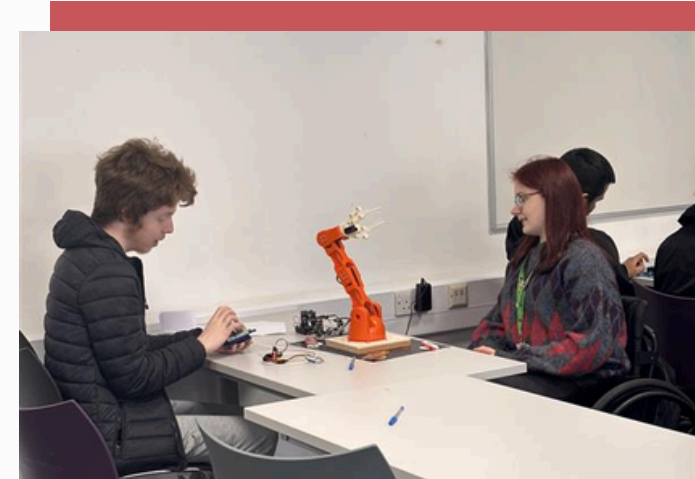
On 11th March 2026, we were pleased to host a Cyber Day at Lancaster University for 55 students from Lancaster & Morecambe College, a valued local partner we always enjoy working with.

The day began with an introductory talk from Frederick Binley, giving students an overview of opportunities in cybersecurity and technology. Students were then split into two groups to take part in a pair of interactive activities. One session focused on encryption, where Jessica Jay and Dan Fretwell delivered a popular hands-on workshop exploring codes and ciphers, returning by strong demand from previous events.

The second activity introduced students to micro:bit programming, where they learned how to control and program a robotic arm with guidance from Dan Fitton and Lynne Blair.

With the spring sunshine making an appearance, many students took the opportunity to enjoy lunch outdoors before rounding off the day with a quiz to test their new knowledge.

It was a lively and engaging day, full of enthusiasm and curiosity, and we look forward to welcoming LMC students back again soon.



MOD Bursary Event - 26th March 2026

On 26th March 2026, we were delighted to host the MOD Bursary Event at Lancaster University, welcoming 115 Year 13 students along with staff and partners for a day of engaging activities.

The programme, held in the George Fox Building, featured talks, interactive workshops, and breakout sessions covering cybersecurity, digital careers, and opportunities within the defence sector. We were also able to collaborate with BSides Lancaster, which took place on the same day and provided a keynote speaker as part of the MOD event.

The day concluded in the Great Hall with a buffet dinner, awards ceremony, and networking opportunities. It was a fantastic event, and we loved hosting such an enthusiastic and engaged group on campus.



BSides 2026 - 26th March 2026

On 26th March 2026, we were proud to host BSides Lancashire at the Management School at Lancaster University. This dynamic, community-driven cybersecurity conference brought together attendees ranging from seasoned professionals to those exploring the field for the first time.

The event featured multiple technical tracks, hands-on workshops, and breakout sessions focused on valuable research, career development, inclusion, and diversity in cyber security. Delegates gained insights across a wide range of disciplines and roles, with opportunities to share ideas, network, and connect with the North West's vibrant security community.

The day concluded with an after-party, giving attendees a chance to continue discussions and celebrate the day's achievements. Special thanks to Jen McCulloch from Lancaster University and the wider BSides team for expertly leading this engaging and inspiring event!



Cyber First Day with In4 - 14th April 2025

On 14th April 2025, we were delighted to welcome 30 students from The Sharples School to Lancaster University for another hands-on CyberFirst Day in partnership with IN4 Group.

The day followed a similar structure to our previous CyberFirst events and was a great success. Students took part in a mix of practical activities led by In4 colleagues, including AI tasks and micro:bit controlled robotics. They also enjoyed a workshop on encryption and Caesar ciphers delivered by Dan Fretwell and Jessica Jay.

It was, yet again, an engaging and fun-filled day. A big thanks goes out to In4 and their wonderful representative, Hana!



Keith Martin, Guest Lecture - 30th April 2026

On 30th April 2026, we were delighted to welcome Keith Martin from Royal Holloway, University of London to Lancaster University for a guest lecture.

In his talk, "Q-Day: Quantum security apocalypse or crypto meltdown that won't ever happen?", Professor Martin explored the widely discussed idea of "Q-Day" – the point at which quantum computers could potentially break the cryptographic systems that underpin modern cybersecurity. He considered whether this scenario is realistically approaching, what impact it could have on today's cryptography, and what steps we might need to take in response, including the role of post-quantum cryptography and quantum key distribution.

It was an engaging and thought-provoking lecture on an important topic, followed by excellent discussion and a range of insightful questions from the audience.

Thank you to Professor Martin for visiting us – we hope to welcome you back again soon!



Here's What's Coming Up Next!

- TeenTech Festival - June 2026
- QinetiQ Cyber First Advanced Summer School - July 2026

Do you want to get involved in any of these events? If so, please contact Kate at k.jenkinson@lancaster.ac.uk.

Links to Blogs

Here's a selection of links to relevant blog posts that expand on the topics mentioned in this newsletter. Dive in if you'd like to learn more and explore practical tips and insights.

Enjoying what you've read so far?

We've covered some exciting events recently – take a look at our latest blog posts to find out more about the following events!

- Lancashire Cyber Festival Education Day

Follow this link to read more on our website -

<https://www.lancaster.ac.uk/cyber-security-education/media/blogs/>

Cyber Security Training

Keeping our campus safe starts with us. This section offers up-to-date cyber security training info for staff, covering phishing, data protection, and best practices, provided by John Couzins [Lancaster's Head of IT Security]. Check here for upcoming sessions, resources, and tips to stay ahead of cyber threats.

A custom AI training course with a special guest appearance is now available for LU staff.

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This video introduces artificial intelligence from a security perspective. It focuses on two key areas. The first explains how cloud-based AI systems are used and why it is important that sensitive data is not shared with these services unless the correct contractual safeguards are in place. The second explores how AI is being used in social engineering attacks, including the growing risk posed by deepfakes.

Closing Remarks

As we kick off the first few months of the year, we want to extend our heartfelt thanks for your continued support and enthusiasm. Your engagement makes everything we do possible! Let's carry this momentum forward—together, we're building a stronger community, creating meaningful impact, and shaping an exciting year ahead.