

# A guide to T Levels



T Levels were launched in September 2020 in a small number of colleges. Further T Levels have been launched each year and there are more planned for 2023/2024 giving a choice of over 20 T Levels courses. T Levels follow on from your GCSEs and will be equivalent to 3 A levels. These 2 year courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and gives you the skills and knowledge to succeed in the workplace. The 'T' in **T Levels** stands for **Technical**; these qualifications introduce a new system of technical education to provide a high quality technical option for learners aged 16-19. T Levels bring together classroom learning for 80% of your time alongside an extended work placement taking 20% or 45 days of your time with a local employer to get you work ready.

## How do they work?

T Levels consist of a number of sections:

1. **The Technical Qualification (TQ)** – this is the main, classroom-based part of the qualification. This is where students will be able to learn about their chosen sectors through a curriculum designed by employers. This technical qualification will have two parts:
  - 1.1. **Core theory** – this is the core knowledge and skills relevant to all occupations covered by the T Level.
  - 1.2. **Occupational specialism** – this is the knowledge and hands-on or practical/specialist skills needed to do a particular occupation or career.
2. **The Industry Placement** – this placement will be for at least 45 days and will give students practical insights into their chosen sector and an opportunity to embed the knowledge and skills that they have gained in the classroom.
3. **English, maths and digital** provision is built into the classroom-based element of the T Level. The programme will also include **employability, enrichment and pastoral** activities, and other industry requirements for work in that occupation, for example Health and Safety qualifications.
4. **Transferable workplace skills** – those skills that are required to work in any workplace environment.

## How T Levels will work with other post-16 choices

T Levels will become one of the main choices for students after GCSEs alongside:

- Apprenticeships: for students who wish to learn a specific occupation 'on the job.'
- A-levels: for students who wish to continue academic education.

## Who should study for a T Level?

T Levels are ideal if you are moving on from GCSE studies, enjoy classroom learning and want to experience an industry through the in-depth 45 day industry placement. The T Level is equivalent to 3 A levels and focuses on vocational skills and can help students into skilled employment, higher study or an apprenticeship.

## What are the entry requirements?

They are **Level 3** qualifications so the entry requirements will be similar to A levels or current Level 3 technical and vocational qualifications such as BTEC/OCR Level 3 Extended Diploma, NVQ Level 3 or VRQ/NVQ. Generally, students will need to have achieved the standard entry requirement of at least five GCSEs at grades 9-4 or 9-5 or equivalent, including maths and English. **It is important to check with each establishment when considering this option.**

**PLEASE NOTE:** For students who don't meet the entry requirements above, all local providers offering T Levels will also be offering a one-year T Level transition programme which will be targeted at young people who are not ready to start a T Level at age 16, but who can realistically be expected to complete a T Level by age 19.

## What occupational areas and T Level pathways are available from September 2023?



### Construction Occupational Area

Design, Surveying & Planning for Construction Pathway  
Building Services Engineering and Construction Pathway  
Onsite Construction Pathway



### Digital Sector Occupational Area

Digital Production, Design & Development Pathway  
Digital Business Services Pathway  
Digital Support Services Pathway



### Education and Childcare Occupational Area

Education and Childcare Pathway



### Health and Science Occupational Area

Health Pathway  
Healthcare Science Pathway  
Science Pathway



### Business and Administration Occupational Area

Management and Administration Pathway



### Engineering and Manufacturing Occupational Area

Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing Pathway  
Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control Pathway  
Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing Pathway



### Legal, Finance and Accounting Occupational Area

Finance Pathway  
Accounting Pathway  
Legal Services Pathway



### **Hair and Beauty Occupational Area**

Hairdressing, Barbering and Beauty Therapy Pathway



### **Catering and Hospitality Occupational Area**

Catering Pathway



### **Creative and Design Occupational Area**

Media Broadcast and Production Pathway

Craft and Design Pathway



### **Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care Occupational Area**

Animal Care and Management Pathway

Agriculture, Land Management and Production Pathway

You will choose an occupational area and specific pathway to take at college, during the course you will also have to choose an occupational specialism. For example you would choose:

- Occupational Area: Hair and Beauty
- Pathway: Hairdressing, Barbering and Beauty
- Occupational Specialism: Barbering

All Apprenticeships and T Levels are based on occupations recognised by employers. The Occupational Areas/Maps bring these together to show where technical education can lead. You can explore this further using:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/occupational-maps/>

## **How will T Levels be graded?**

The assessment for the qualification will be a mixture of exams, employer set projects, coursework, workplace observations, and a synoptic project/end-point assessment. Students who pass all the elements of their T Level will gain a nationally recognised certificate showing an overall grade of pass, merit, distinction or distinction\*. It will also detail what students have achieved on the course.

The T Level certificate will include:

- An overall grade for the T Level will be given as pass, merit, distinction or distinction\*.
  - A separate grade for the core component and employer set project, using A\* to E.
  - A separate grade for the occupational specialism and synoptic assessment, shown as pass, merit, distinction.
  - Grades or confirmation that the minimum maths and english qualifications are met.
  - Details of the industry placement and its completion.
  - Any additional mandatory requirements of that specific T Level.

In order to pass the qualification, students must have fully completed the industry placement element of the course and gained the necessary level of work experience which will be validated by the employer.

## Why study for an unpaid T Level over a paid Apprenticeship?

T Levels and Apprenticeships are different. T Levels will give you the opportunity to continue your studies and get a broad idea of what it would be like to work in a certain occupational area through gaining the core knowledge and skills, with the opportunity to choose your specialism later. Apprenticeships are paid, work-based training for those students who have a good idea of what occupation they wish to pursue and are willing to move straight to more practical ways of working by learning on the job.

## Can you go on to Higher Education after studying for a T Level?

Yes, you can. T Levels will prepare you to progress into a skilled job, but you can also choose to take further technical training, such as a higher or degree apprenticeship, if you don't want to move straight into a job. Students who want to progress into higher education will be able to as UCAS points will be awarded for T Levels. Points will be allocated to overall T Level grades, not to separate elements of the T Level to recognise the value of the qualification as a whole. The table below shows the UCAS tariff allocation for T Levels and how it compares to the allocation for A levels.

UCAS tariff points	T Level overall grade	A level
168	Distinction*	AAA*
144	Distinction	AAA
120	Merit	BBB
96	Pass (C or above on the core)	CCC
72	Pass (D or E on the core)	DDD

**Note:** Universities have started to publish their entry requirements and whether each institution will accept T levels for their specific courses. It is important to do your research and ensure that the universities you are considering will accept T levels and please check the grades they will require.

## Where will you be able to study T Levels locally?

The table below shows where you can study towards T levels locally.

T Level Providers	Transition Prog	Digital	Construction	Education and Childcare	Health and Science	Legal, Finance and Accounting	Business and Admin	Engineering and Manufacture	Hair and Beauty	Catering and Hospitality	Creative and Design	Agriculture, Environment and Animal Care
Activate Learning	X	X	X	X	X		X	X	X	X	X	X
Basingstoke College of Technology	X		X	X	X	X		X			X	
Bay House School		X			X		X	X			X	
Brockenhurst College				X					X			
Chichester College Group	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
City of Portsmouth College	X	X	X	X	X			X				
Eastleigh College				X	X							
Fareham College	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Farnborough College of Technology	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	
Greater Brighton Metropolitan College		X	X	X	X							
Havant and South Downs College	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X
Newbury College	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X	X		
Peter Symonds College	X			X					X			
Richard Taunton Sixth Form College		X			X							
Southampton City College		X	X	X	X							
Sparsholt College	X	X	X	X	X	X		X	X		X	X
St Philip Howard Catholic School							X					
St Vincent College		X	X		X	X	X					
UTC Portsmouth		X						X				
UTC Reading		X			X			X				

Note: Many colleges have several campuses, the individual T level courses may not be offered at every campus. Check with the college website or prospectus to confirm which campus offers the opportunity that is of interest.

## Where can you find out more?

For details of the content of each T Level, talk to the providers who will be delivering the qualification. Ask questions at open evenings about assessment, progression and work experience to enable you to make an informed choice as to whether the qualification will suit you. Compare the assessment to other qualifications on offer or apprenticeships.

The following websites will also be useful to help with your research:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/introduction-of-t-levels/introduction-of-t-levels>
- <https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/>
- <https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/t-levels/>
- There is also a useful video with the T Level branding: <https://youtu.be/doW5-SUpUN0>

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