



Department
for Education

Review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below in England: glossary of terms

**Accompanying document for the
government consultation on the review
of qualifications at level 3 and below in
England**

19 March 2019

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Summary

This document is issued alongside the government consultation on the review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below in England, and is intended to be read alongside the consultation document. It provides a glossary of terms used within the consultation document and the accompanying document looking at the current system and the case for change.

Who is this publication for?

This accompanying document to the government consultation on the review of qualifications at level 3 and below is for anyone with an interest in post-16 education and training for young people and adults in England. This includes:

- Students (young people 16 to 19 and adults 19 and over)
- Parents and carers
- Employers
- Awarding organisations
- Schools, further education colleges, sixth form colleges, University Technical Colleges, Studio Schools
- Universities and other higher education providers
- Adult and Community Learning providers
- Independent training providers
- Apprenticeship providers
- Headteachers and college principals
- Teachers and trainers
- Careers advisers
- Regulatory bodies
- Equality organisations, including those representing the interests of students with special educational needs
- Local, regional, city and combined authorities and the devolved administrations in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland
- Representative bodies, including employers' representative bodies and trade unions
- Governors of Education and Skills providers
- Local Enterprise Partnerships

Glossary

Term	Definition
Adult Education Budget (AEB)	<p>The AEB aims to engage adults and provide the skills and learning they need to equip them for work, an apprenticeship or other learning.</p> <p>The national AEB supports three statutory entitlements to full funding for eligible adults (aged 19 and above). These are set out in the Apprenticeships, Skills and Children’s Learning Act 2009, and enable eligible adults to be fully funded for the following qualifications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English and mathematics, up to and including level 2, for individuals aged 19 and over, who have not previously attained a GCSE grade A* to C or grade 9 to 4, and/or • first full qualification at level 2 for individuals aged 19 to 23, and/or • first full qualification at level 3 for individuals aged 19 to 23 <p>Further information on AEB funding and performance can be found on GOV.UK</p> <p>From August 2019, AEB is devolved. Further information can be found on GOV.UK.</p>
Advanced Learner Loan	<p>An Advanced Learner Loan helps eligible adults (aged 19 and above) with the costs of a course at a college or training provider in England. Further information can be found on GOV.UK.</p> <p>Qualifications for which an individual can take a loan out are known as qualifications that are designated for loans. These can be found in the Advanced Learner Loans qualifications catalogue.</p>
Applied General qualifications (AGQs)	<p>Applied General qualifications are level 3 qualifications for post-16 students. They allow entry to a range of higher education courses, either by meeting the entry requirements in their own right or being accepted alongside and adding value to other level 3 qualifications such as A Levels. Applied General qualifications are included in DfE’s 16 to 18 school and college performance tables.</p>
Apprenticeship	<p>An apprenticeship is a job that combines practical training with study.</p> <p>See “A guide to apprenticeships” on GOV.UK for further information.</p>
Apprenticeship frameworks	<p>Apprenticeship frameworks are developed by sector bodies and are primarily qualification-focussed, containing a combination of competency based qualifications and broader technical and</p>

Term	Definition
	vocational qualifications. Apprenticeship frameworks must follow the minimum requirements set out in the Specification for Apprenticeship Standards in England (SASE). These are being superseded by apprenticeship standards.
Apprenticeship standards	Apprenticeship standards are more occupationally focussed than frameworks and are not qualification-led (although they may contain mandatory on-programme qualifications). The apprenticeship standard is developed by an employer (trailblazer) group and will set out the knowledge, skills and behaviours required in that occupation. There will also be an independent end-point assessment of the standard. The Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education is responsible for approving apprenticeship standards.
Classroom-based provision	Provision delivered in a school, college or other training provider as part of a study programme (for students aged 16 to 19) or as a standalone qualification (for adults aged 19 and above). Training may be delivered through a mixture of classroom-based activity and simulated workplace environments, for example workshops.
Community learning	<p>Community learning is funded through the AEB. It develops the skills, confidence, motivation and resilience of adults of different ages and backgrounds in order to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • progress towards formal learning or employment and/or • improve their health and well-being, including mental health and/or • develop stronger communities <p>Please see AEB funding rules 2019 to 2020 for more information.</p>
Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA)	The ESFA is an executive agency sponsored by the Department for Education. It is accountable for funding education and skills for children, young people and adults. See the ESFA website for more information.
ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding 14 to 19	<p>The ESFA list gives information about which qualifications are approved for funding for students. Qualifications are approved in accordance with their suitability for students in the following age categories: pre-16, 16 to 18, and 18+.</p> <p>For some DfE-funded institutions, such as maintained schools and academies, qualifications have to be approved for funding for ages 14 to 19 for them to be delivered to young people. Further information can be found on the ESFA list of qualifications approved for funding webpages.</p>

Term	Definition
English Baccalaureate (EBacc)	<p>The English Baccalaureate is not a qualification in its own right. It is a combination of GCSE subjects (including a language) that offer an important range of knowledge and skills to young people. The core subjects that make up the English Baccalaureate are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • English language and literature • mathematics • the sciences (combined science, or three single sciences chosen from biology, chemistry, physics and computer science) • geography or history • a language (ancient or modern) <p>Further information on the English Baccalaureate can be found on GOV.UK.</p>
Full level 2	Five GCSEs, each at grade C or above/grade 4 or above, or a Technical Certificate at level 2 that meets the requirements for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 16 to 18 school and college performance tables.
Full level 3	Two A Levels, or four AS Levels, or QAA Access to Higher Education (HE) Diploma at level 3, or either a Tech Level or an Applied General qualification at level 3 that meets the requirements for the 2018, 2019 and 2020 16 to 18 school and college performance tables.
Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education	<p>A Crown non-departmental public body, established in April 2017 as the Institute for Apprenticeships, responsible for, amongst other things, ensuring the quality of and approving standards and apprenticeships assessment plans, and ensuring that apprenticeships quality assurance for assessments is carried out. On 31 January 2019 it assumed responsibility for delivery of technical education functions in England – at which point it became the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.</p>
Key stage 4	The national curriculum is organised into blocks of years called ‘key stages’. At the end of each key stage, a pupil’s performance is assessed. Key stage 4 refers to education in years 10 and 11 of schools in England (ages 14 to 16), at the end of which most pupils sit GCSEs or equivalent level 1/2 qualifications. See the guidance on the national curriculum for further information.
Level 3 and below	This phrase refers to post-16 qualifications at levels 3, 2, 1 and entry level.

Term	Definition
	Most qualifications have a difficulty level. The higher the level, the more difficult the qualification is. You can find out what qualification levels mean on GOV.UK .
Non-qualification activity	Activity of value that does not necessarily lead to qualifications but enables students to progress. Examples are: tutorials, work to develop study, leadership, team-work or self-management skills, and activities such as volunteering or participation in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme.
Ofqual	<p>The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (Ofqual) regulates qualifications, examinations and assessments in England. It was set up in April 2010 under the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 and is also covered by the Education Act 2011.</p> <p>Ofqual is a non-ministerial government department with jurisdiction in England. See the Ofqual website for further information.</p>
Performance Tables	DfE's school and college performance tables are published annually, reporting key stage 2 results for primary schools in December; GCSE and equivalent results for secondary schools (provisional results in October and revised results in late January); and A Levels and other 16 to 18 results for schools and colleges in late January and March. School and college performance tables provide a reliable, accessible source of comparative information on pupil attainment and progress.
Regulated Qualifications Framework (RQF)	The RQF provides a single, simple system for cataloguing all qualifications regulated by Ofqual. Qualifications are indexed by their level and size. Ofqual maintains a register that provides more detail on each qualification. See the Register of Regulated Qualifications for further information.
Sainsbury Review	<p>The Independent Panel on Technical Education, chaired by Lord Sainsbury, reported its findings in April 2016. The recommendations were accepted in the Post-16 Skills Plan and form the basis for technical education reforms.</p> <p>See the Report of the Independent Panel on Technical Education for more information.</p>
Study Programme	<p>All 16 to 19 year old students are funded for an individual study programme. Study programmes have a core aim, are tailored to each student, have clear study and/or employment goals reflecting the student's prior attainment, and include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substantial qualifications

Term	Definition
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • mathematics and English for students who have not achieved grade A* to C or 9 to 4 GCSE in these subjects • high quality work experience or work preparation • added value non-qualification activity that supports the students' goals and is integrated into the study programme
Technical Awards	<p>Technical Awards are level 1 and level 2 qualifications in non-English Baccalaureate (EBacc) subjects that equip students with applied knowledge not usually acquired through general education. They focus on applied study of a sector or occupational group, including the acquisition of associated practical or technical skills where appropriate. These qualifications are included in DfE's secondary (key stage 4) performance tables.</p>
Tech Levels	<p>Tech Levels are level 3 technical qualifications that are recognised by employers. They are for post-16 students wishing to specialise in a specific industry, occupation or technical role. They equip a student with specialist knowledge and skills, enabling entry to an apprenticeship or other employment, or progression to a related higher education course. In some cases, these qualifications provide a 'licence to practise' or exemption from professional exams. They are included in DfE's 16 to 18 school and college performance tables.</p>
Technical Certificates	<p>Technical Certificates are level 2 technical qualifications for post-16 students wishing to specialise in a specific industry, occupation or technical role. They cover occupations where employers recognise entry at level 2 or where a level 2 qualification is required before students can progress to a Tech Level. They equip students with specialist knowledge and skills, enabling entry to an apprenticeship, employment or progression to a Tech Level. In some cases, they provide a 'licence to practise' or exemption from professional exams. They are included in DfE's 16 to 18 school and college performance tables.</p>
Technical Education	<p>Technical education encompasses any training, such as qualifications and apprenticeships, that focuses on progression into skilled employment and require the acquisition of both a substantial body of technical knowledge and a set of practical skills valued by industry. Technical education covers provision from level 2 (the equivalent of GCSEs at A* to C or 9 to 4) to higher education (level 6) but it differs from A Levels and other academic options in that it draws its purpose from the workplace rather than an academic discipline.</p>

Term	Definition
	References to technical education also include qualifications that many would call “vocational”, especially qualifications at the lower levels of difficulty.
T Level	A T Level is a rigorous, stretching programme of study at level 3 based on recognised, employer-led standards. T Levels will offer a high quality, prestigious technical alternative to A Levels and be aligned with work-based technical education also delivered at level 3 through apprenticeships. T Levels will be introduced in phases from September 2020.
Wolf Review	<p>The Secretary of State for Education commissioned Professor Alison Wolf of King’s College London to carry out an independent review of vocational education. Professor Wolf’s Review of Vocational Education (2011) is available on GOV.UK.</p> <p>The government’s response to the Wolf Review can be found on GOV.UK.</p>



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