



Department  
for Education

# **The Technical Baccalaureate Performance Table Measure**

**December 2013**

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## Introduction

The government is introducing a new 16-19 school and college performance tables measure which recognises the highest level of technical training. This will be known as the Technical BaccaLaureate (TechBacc) Measure.

It will recognise the achievement of students taking advanced (Level 3) programmes which include a DfE approved Tech Level, Level 3 maths and an extended project. It will be introduced for courses beginning in September 2014, for reporting in the 16-19 performance tables from 2016.

The TechBacc measure forms part of a set of broader reforms to 16-19 vocational education. In summer 2013, DfE completed a consultation on proposals to establish rigorous standards for level 3 vocational qualifications taken in schools and colleges. Publication of lists of the Tech Levels which are included within the TechBacc measure represents the start of this process.

Establishing a measure for excellence in technical provision will end the perception that vocational education in the UK is a poor second to academic study. By recognising excellence, it will incentivise high-value provision and encourage the most able students to study demanding technical programmes.

Students who achieve the three component qualifications included in the TechBacc will be equipped to apply for technician roles and higher apprenticeships in a wide range of industry sectors. Alternatively, they could enter professional training or university.

## Who is it aimed at?

The measure is aimed at ambitious, talented students who want to pursue a technical career. It will give young people the opportunity to be stretched through high quality and rigorous qualifications, and to demonstrate their personal best.

The group most likely to opt for courses to be included in the measure is the circa 25% of students that study advanced (level 3) vocational qualifications having already achieved grades A\*-C in GCSE maths and English before entering post-16 education.

New Core Maths qualifications are being developed to suit students who have achieved at least a grade C in GCSE maths, and are studying a range of post-16 courses, including academic, Tech Level and Applied General qualifications. Over time, we expect the study of Core Maths to become the norm for students with a GCSE who do not take A level or AS level maths.

The qualifications included in the TechBacc measure will be most suited for young people interested in occupations that require significant theory and technical knowledge acquisition, such as:

- STEM technicians (e.g. IT technicians, various engineering and transportation technical roles, land-based technicians, construction professionals);
- Service technicians (e.g. hospitality, personal services, accountancy, business and law positions);
- Creative technicians (e.g. media, creative industries, craft and design).

# What does the TechBacc performance table measure include?

The TechBacc measure has three components.

## 1. Tech levels

The key component is at least one DfE approved Tech Level, recognised and valued by professional bodies, industry and employers.

As part of the approval process, the government asked professional and industry bodies to endorse high-quality technical qualifications that prepare a young person for entry to a particular occupation. These qualifications are, therefore, aimed at students with a clear idea of the occupation they wish to pursue.

Some Tech Level qualifications will prepare a student for a specific job role by confirming, and in some cases certifying, occupational competence. Others may provide a route into a degree or higher education course that qualifies entry to an occupation (health and engineering professions, for example) or on to an advanced or higher Apprenticeship.

Details of the **Tech Level qualifications** which will 'count' towards the TechBacc measure in reformed performance tables can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vocational-qualifications-for-14-to-19-year-olds>

## 2. Level 3 maths qualification

Many aspects of technical education require the understanding of and ability to apply maths, and there is evidence that those with **level 3 maths** benefit from improved employment prospects and higher wages.

For the TechBacc measure, students will need to complete a level 3 maths qualification.

For programmes taught from 2014 (ie reported in performance tables in 2016), the TechBacc measure will include the following maths qualifications:

- AS/A Levels in Mathematics
- International Baccalaureate Certificates in Mathematical Studies and Mathematics
- AS level in Quantitative Methods (OCR)
- AS/A levels in Use of Mathematics (AQA)

Core Maths qualifications will also be included within the TechBacc measure. The new Core Maths qualifications will suit students who achieve a B or C in GCSE maths, the vast majority of whom currently then drop the subject. They will also be valuable to those with A\* and A grades, who are not taking A/AS level maths – in total around 40 per cent of students every year.

Core Maths will be piloted from 2014. Students successfully completing Core Maths qualifications, along with at least one Tech Level qualification and the Extended Project, as part of a DfE “early adopters” project in 2014/15, will also be recognised as having achieved the TechBacc measure.

The government has announced a £20m programme during 2014-16 to support piloting. This will focus on building capacity to teach new level 3 Core Maths qualifications in schools, sixth form colleges and further education colleges and include providers seeking to promote Core Maths as a part of the TechBacc. A tender process has been launched for a Core Maths support programme, and the Department for Education will make a total of £15m available for early adopter projects in schools and colleges from September 2014.

For programmes taught from 2015 (reported from 2017), only AS/A Levels in Mathematics; International Baccalaureate Certificates in Mathematical Studies and Mathematics; and Core Maths will be included in the TechBacc measure.

### **3. Extended Project Qualification**

The final component is the **extended project qualification**, which will develop and test students’ skills in writing, communication, research, self-discipline and self-motivation. Such skills are in high demand by industry and academia. The extended project component also gives students the opportunity to undertake research projects with an industry-focus, relevant to their vocational programme. It will encourage them to explore further aspects of the occupational area and equip them with a breadth of knowledge and understanding to strengthen their employability.



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