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Department
for Education

Policy paper

Introduction of T Levels

Updated 9 March 2023

Applies to England

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T Levels: what they are

T Levels are new 2-year courses which are taken after GCSEs and are broadly equivalent in size to 3 A Levels. Launched in September 2020, these courses have been developed in collaboration with employers and education providers so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for entry into skilled employment, an apprenticeship or related technical study through further or higher education.

T Levels offer students practical and knowledge-based learning at a school or college and on-the-job experience through an industry placement of at least 315 hours – approximately 45 days.

The courses are available at selected colleges, schools and other providers across England.

Starting dates

T Levels are being gradually rolled out. The first 16 have now been launched and our aim is to have 24 T Levels available.

We have published a list of the [providers offering T Level courses up to September 2024](#).

How T Levels will work with other qualifications

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
- other qualifications not served by A levels or T levels, including sport science, performing arts and small qualifications designed to be taken alongside A levels

The Department for Education (DfE) is streamlining and improving the quality of the post-16 level 3 qualifications system. We are strengthening progression pathways, creating clearly defined academic and technical routes with high quality qualifications leading to further study, and/or skilled employment. This will help students to make good choices and see more easily how their study will help them to progress.

T Levels are based on the same standards as apprenticeships, designed by employers and approved by the [Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education \(the Institute\)](#).

We expect the total time for a T Level to be around 1,800 hours over the 2 years, including the industry placement. This is a significant increase on most current technical education courses.

T Levels differ from an apprenticeship. T Levels prepare students for work, further training or further study. An apprenticeship is typically 80% on-the-job and 20% in the classroom and is more suited to those who want to earn a wage and learn at the same time, and are ready to enter the workforce at age 16.

How T Levels have been developed

Employers and providers work together to develop each T Level, with support from DfE and the Institute. Groups of employers have defined the skills and requirements for each T Level course by participating in [T Level panels](#). This ensures that students taking T Levels will develop the technical knowledge and skills required by employers in that industry.

The T Level panels have developed the [content for the technical qualifications which are part of each T Level programme](#), based on the same standards as apprenticeships. These plans are then tested and reviewed with students, education providers and additional employers.

The technical qualifications for 2020, 2021 and 2022 T Levels have been approved by the Institute.

Structure of a T Level

T Levels require students to undertake both a technical qualification and an industry placement with an employer.

Students are also required to work towards the attainment of maths and English if they have not already achieved grade 4 at GCSE, as students do on other 16 to 19 programmes. However, T Level students are no longer required to achieve either a grade 4 in English and maths GCSE or level 2 in functional skills to pass their programme.

Transition programme

The T Level transition programme is a 1-year post-GCSE study programme designed to support progression to, and success on, a T Level. It's aimed at students who would like to do a T Level but would benefit from additional preparation and support before starting one.

The programme gives students the opportunity to study technical content aligned to T Levels and develop their English, maths and digital skills, alongside work experience and personal development.

You can see a list of [providers delivering the transition programme](#).

The [T Level transition programme framework for delivery](#) has guidance on how the programme should be delivered from academic year 2022 onwards.

Industry placements

Every T Level includes an industry placement with an employer focused on developing the practical and technical skills required for the occupation. These will last a minimum of 315 hours (approximately 45 days) but can last longer.

Employers can offer [industry placements](#) as a block, day release or a mix of these, and can discuss sharing part of the placement with another employer if necessary.

Providers will support employers offering industry placements. This will include

assistance with paperwork, a careful planning process and support with designing the industry placement.

DfE's employer engagement teams work with employers of all sizes and providers on industry placements.

Employers interested in finding out more about industry placements can contact 08000 150 600, email tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk or visit [T Levels and industry placement support for employers](#).

Grading and certification

Students who complete their T Level get a nationally recognised certificate which shows their overall grade and a breakdown of what they have achieved.

The T Level certificate includes:

- an overall grade for the T Level, shown as pass, merit, distinction or distinction*
- a separate grade for the core component, using A* to E
- a separate grade for each occupational specialism, shown as pass, merit or distinction

It also confirms that the student has:

- completed the industry placement
- met any additional mandatory requirements

A student's overall T Level grade is worked out from the grades they achieved on the core component and the occupational specialism(s).

Students who do not pass all elements of their T Level get a T Level statement of achievement which shows the elements they have completed.

If students have attained maths or English qualifications at level 2, this is also referenced on T Level certificates and statements of achievement.

Entry to higher education and UCAS tariff points

T Levels provide several progression options for students, including:

- skilled employment
- an apprenticeship
- higher education

To help T Level students progress into higher education, UCAS tariff points are allocated to T Levels.

UCAS points are allocated to the overall T Level grade. Students must achieve at least an overall pass grade to receive UCAS points.

UCAS tariff points	T Level overall grade	A level
168	Distinction* (A* on the core and distinction in the	AAA*

	occupational specialism)	
144	Distinction	AAA
120	Merit	BBB
96	Pass (C or above on the core)	CCC
72	Pass (D or E on the core)	DDD

To support students that partially achieve their T Level, UCAS tariff points are also available for both elements of the technical qualification:

- an allocation for students that have passed the core component and completed the industry placement
- an allocation for students that have passed the occupational specialism component and completed the industry placement

As the relative weighting of the core and occupational specialism for each T Level varies, the UCAS points for partial achievement will also vary across T Levels. Tariff allocations for partial achievement of each T Level are available on the UCAS tariff calculator.

You can find a list of [higher education institutions who accept T Levels for entry onto one of their courses](#).

Register to deliver T Levels

Providers can [register to deliver T Levels from September 2024](#).

The closing date for registration is 24 March 2023. We recommend that providers register as early as possible so they can take advantage of support that will be offered.

Funding for providers

We recognise that significant additional funding is needed for the successful introduction and delivery of T Levels.

T Levels involve more hours than most current technical qualifications at level 3 and providers are funded for the extra hours involved and for organising industry placements.

Guidance on the [next steps for providers](#) includes more information on how T Levels are funded.

All T Level providers receive funding for state-of-the-art specialist equipment. All providers, apart from independent training providers, can bid for funding to refurbish existing facilities or build new buildings. Over £400 million has been made available so far for [T Levels capital](#).

Support for professional development

To be sure that T Levels deliver great outcomes for learners, we are giving teachers and leaders the support they need to deliver them. [T Level professional development](#) is available from the Education and Training Foundation (ETF), at no charge to all providers delivering and planning to deliver T Levels.

The offer is shaped around the needs of providers and their workforce alongside relevant regional, employer and curriculum needs. It includes:

- [training needs analysis](#) to help identify any gaps in skills and knowledge around T Levels
- [understanding T Levels](#) to help staff in different roles understand T Levels and how they can support their successful introduction
- [T Level role and route-specific training](#) - pedagogical and subject-specific courses, and other activities structured to meet an individual's professional development needs
- [professional development for leaders](#) - support for staff in leadership roles to help with T Level planning and implementation.
- [networks and TRIPs](#) - route-specific networks and T Level resource improvement projects (TRIP) providing opportunities to produce resources for planning and delivering T Levels
- [industry insights](#) - opportunities for staff to increase and update their knowledge by:
 - undertaking placements within industry
 - accessing industry-relevant mentoring
 - participating in group industry collaboration
 - engaging in industry-led workshops

Timeline

September 2020

The first T Level courses started in:

- design, surveying and planning for construction
- digital production, design and development
- education and early years

September 2021

T Level courses started in:

- building services engineering for construction
- digital business services
- digital support and services
- health
- healthcare science
- onsite construction
- science

September 2022

T Level courses started in:

- accounting
- design and development for engineering and manufacturing
- engineering, manufacturing, processing and control
- finance
- maintenance, installation and repair for engineering and manufacturing
- management and administration

September 2023

T Level courses will start in:

- agriculture, land management and production
- legal services

September 2024

T Level courses will start in:

- animal care and management
- craft and design
- hair, beauty and aesthetics
- media, broadcast and production

September 2025

T Level courses will start in:

- marketing

Further planned T Levels

A T Level is planned in Catering, for delivery beyond 2024.

Find out more

Students

Visit our [T Levels website](#) where you can add your postcode to find colleges, schools or other providers who are offering T Levels. You can also find guidance at the [Get the Jump content hub](#).

Watch our [industry placement videos](#) to hear from students and employers who have benefited from industry placements.

Employers

To find out more about industry placements, contact 0800 0150 600, email tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk or visit [T Levels and industry placement support for employers](#).

Providers

The [T Level action plan](#) has detailed information about how we have been developing the T Level qualifications for post-16 students since 2017.

It includes sections on:

- the rollout of T Levels
- case studies
- T Level provider information
- T Level results and certification
- T Levels for adults
- T Level capital
- progression to and from T Levels
- the Ofsted Thematic Review of T Levels
- the role of IfATE in T Level delivery
- industry placements
- communications and marketing

We also have information for providers about the [next steps towards delivering T Levels](#).

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