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[Department
for Education](#)

Guidance

Construction technical excellence colleges: selection criteria and application form

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Applies to England

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The Department for Education (DfE) is establishing 10 technical excellence colleges specialising in construction in the 2025 to 2026 academic year. This is one of the measures announced in [Spring Statement 2025](#) to boost skills in construction, crucial for delivering the government's plans to build 1.5 million homes and progress vital infrastructure projects.

These 10 colleges will be the first to achieve technical excellence college status and will play an active and pivotal role, both in shaping the wider technical excellence colleges programme and in supporting other providers in their region.

There will be 1 construction technical excellence college (CTEC) in each of the following regions:

- East of England
- East Midlands
- Greater London
- North East
- North West
- South East
- South West

- West Midlands
- Yorkshire and the Humber

One region will have 2 CTECs.

Colleges appointed as CTECs are expected to have the capacity and capability to support providers across their region, so that the opportunities and benefits CTECs create are available to all learners without the need for extensive travel, and so that differing skills needs within each region are met.

Through this ‘hub and spoke’ delivery model, CTECs will partner with colleges and independent training providers across their region to share and embed the resources they develop – for example providing access to excellent professional development for teachers and cutting-edge specialist curricula.

CTECs may also broker partnerships between employers and partner providers. Such partnerships could spread opportunities for learners to complete industry placements and facilitate the participation of construction experts in training the sector’s future workforce.

At the Spring Statement 2025, the government committed £100 million over the course of this Parliament to establish the 10 CTECs and to expand construction skills provision. This includes £80 million in capital funding and £20 million in revenue funding over the next 4 years.

While the revenue funding may be made available to CTECs, the specific terms, conditions, and allocation of grant funding will be determined following collaboration with participating organisations to ensure the programme delivers maximum impact and value for money for the UK taxpayer.

We do not guarantee that capital funding will be made available to CTECs. Further details on the separate process for how the capital funding may be accessed and distributed will be provided in due course.

We will work with CTECs, mayoral strategic authorities, and other partners in the skills system to co-design and implement solutions to increase delivery against these 5 objectives:

- boosting construction skills provision in direct response to local and national employer needs
- delivering high-quality teaching practice and curricula in construction courses, including continuous professional development for staff, with an emphasis on site integration and employer input
- leveraging employer engagement and investment in construction skills provision
- collaboration with other further education (FE) providers to boost construction provision and quality both locally and nationally
- clear pathways for learners to progress into work in the construction industry or into higher level education construction courses

The co-design exercise will run from September 2025 to April 2026, but we expect participants to retain their CTEC status and to continue to deliver against the programme's objectives in future years. Participants' eligibility and performance will be monitored and reviewed. If a college with CTEC status no longer meets the criteria or its performance is below the required standard, this status and any associated funding could be withdrawn with other providers being invited to apply.

We reserve the right to alter the eligibility criteria for CTEC status in future years following the co-design exercise.

This application process is for construction technical excellence colleges only. We intend to roll-out additional technical excellence colleges (TECs) specialising in other sectors identified by the industrial strategy as having high growth potential in future years. The number and design of other TECs will need to reflect the needs and landscape of the individual sector. More information on other TECs will be published in due course.

Eligibility criteria

Applications will only be considered from providers that fully meet the eligibility criteria outlined here. Providers that do not meet these criteria should not apply.

To be eligible to apply for construction technical excellence college status, FE providers must:

1. Be a general FE college that is part of the statutory FE sector in England
2. Based on the finance record, have (or expect to have) a finalised financial health grade of 'good' or 'outstanding' for the year 2023 to 2024 as assessed by DfE or the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA), including:
 - no active 'notice to improve' issued
 - no significant concerns raised in any recent DfE or ESFA audits
 - no current, or recent investigations underway
3. Be Ofsted rated 'good' or 'outstanding' in overall effectiveness - colleges who have an Ofsted rating of 'requires improvement' may apply if they can demonstrate through a recent monitoring visit report that they have made significant progress against all areas requiring improvement
4. Offer qualifications in construction at level 2 and above
5. Support either an above average proportion (5.8% or more) of construction learners at all levels compared to the rest of their overall cohort or at least 525 construction learners. Providers who support fewer than 300 learners will not be

eligible. This minimum threshold is based on the number of leavers in academic year 2023 to 2024 from published FE and skills data

6. Have either an above average (84% or more) achievement rate for learners at all levels in construction or at least 440 achieving learners. This minimum threshold is based on published FE and Skills data for academic year 2023 to 2024 [\[footnote 1\]](#)
7. Have experience of one or more of the following:
 - delivering in the construction sector as a partner of a local Institute of Technology
 - being the project lead provider of a Local Skills Improvement Fund project focused on the construction sector
 - being a member of the WorldSkills UK Centre of Excellence
 - registering learners at your institution participate in a WorldSkills or Construction Industry Training Board (CITB) Skills competition in a construction-related field in 2025
 - (Greater London region only) involvement in the Mayor's Skills Academies Green (including Construction) Hubs or hold the Mayor's Quality Mark for Green or Construction

The department reserves the right to adjust one or more competitive criteria to ensure that regional circumstances are appropriately reflected. Accordingly, we have applied an additional relevant criterion for London colleges.

How to apply

Colleges that meet the above criteria need to apply using our [online application form](#) by 11:59pm on Friday 4 July 2025.

Late submissions will not be accepted.

Contact DfE at tec.enquiries@education.gov.uk if you have any questions about the application process.

For DfE Sign-in queries use the [Virtual assistant for education providers and learners](#).

Selection process

The decision to appoint construction technical excellence colleges will be made

by the Secretary of State for Education, in consultation with mayoral strategic authorities where applicant colleges are located within the relevant areas.

DfE will select colleges based on an assessment of overall merit and strategic considerations, ensuring the best fit for the programme's goals, including:

- an assessment of the evidence they provide of their delivery against the [5 objectives](#)
- an assessment of the plans they submit for the first year of the programme
- the number of endorsements from other regional skills partners, this includes, where applicable:
 - FE providers delivering construction-related courses
 - higher education institutions offering construction-related courses
 - employers in the construction sector
 - local skills improvement plan (LSIP) designated [employer representative bodies \(ERB\)](#)

Contact DfE at tec.enquiries@education.gov.uk if you require more detailed information on your local ERB.

Endorsements

DfE will consider endorsements in the selection process. Endorsements:

- are a desirable criterion, not an essential one
- may be used to distinguish between providers if no single candidate in a region achieves a decisive score
- are intended to capture expressions of willingness to collaborate with your college should you be selected as the regional CTEC, because collaboration is key to successful TEC delivery
- are not binding commitments and do not imply exclusivity or formal partnership agreements – including as a delivery partner
- will all be treated equally, regardless of the type of organisation providing them

Endorsing organisations:

- are under no obligation to take any action if the applicant is selected
- may endorse more than one candidate

If no single candidate achieves a decisive score

If no single candidate in a region achieves a decisive score, DfE will adjudicate by carrying out an assessment of the highest scoring candidate and the next highest scoring candidate(s) suitability against the criteria outlined here.

This assessment will not be carried out by officials who conducted the original assessment and moderation of applications.

Selecting the tenth CTEC

The tenth CTEC will be selected once the 9 regional CTECs have been agreed. This final place will be awarded based on composite scores and an assessment of each candidate's capacity to operate beyond their immediate region. In particular, the tenth CTEC will be expected to support cross-regional and national programme activities. This will distinguish it from the regional CTEC in its area, which will remain primarily focused on regional delivery.

Involvement of mayoral strategic authorities

We will consult mayoral strategic authorities in relevant areas to gather their views on which applicants should be designated as the CTEC in their region.

For applicants based in areas without a mayoral strategic authorities, we will seek recommendations from non-mayoral combined authorities with a Level 2 devolution deal. Their input will be based on an assessment of local contextual factors, which may include considerations such as local housing needs, the scale and scope of planned infrastructure projects in the area, and the strategic importance of the applicant within both the regional and national skills system.

In areas where no strategic authority exists, the fact that colleges are unable to obtain a recommendation from a strategic authority will be taken into account when assessing the objective suitability of the college to become a CTEC against other applicants in the same region. It is recognised that colleges that are in areas without a strategic authority will not have the opportunity to obtain a recommendation, and a lack of recommendation will, therefore, not be viewed as a negative. However, where one or more applicants are equal in other respects, the applicant(s) that have been recommended by a strategic authority are likely to be viewed more favourably.

Ways of working for CTECs

We will work closely with CTECs, mayoral strategic authorities, and other partners in the skills system during the policy co-design exercise to run and evaluate our

proposals. Colleges selected should be willing to:

- make a substantial commitment to working with the department both before, during, and after the policy co-design exercise via:
 - regular workshops
 - meetings
 - collaborative sessions
- engage actively in the co-design process, contributing to the development of solutions and sharing best practices
- complete relevant evaluation processes and requirements for the policy co-design exercise, including providing:
 - detailed feedback
 - data on their progress and outcomes
- lead peer learning and support activities for construction skills provision on behalf of their region, including engaging with and providing support to other providers, and working with employers, strategic authorities and ERB-led local skills improvement plans (LSIPs) at either existing regional and national forums or through new engagement structures
- operate inclusively given other regional priorities such as Get Britain Working, Youth Guarantee Trailblazer and Economic Inactivity Trailblazer, and Local Growth Plans
- dedicate sufficient resources, including staff time and expertise, to ensure the successful implementation of the programme's objectives
- participate in the co-design exercise, with the understanding that this does not guarantee the [award of grant funding](#) from DfE

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1. FE and Skills data includes all classroom-based learners aged 16 and over, excluding T Levels and apprenticeships. FE and Skills data, T Levels data, and apprenticeships data are reported separately and should not be combined to calculate overall proportions or achievement rates for all construction learners. However, providers may include apprenticeship and T Level learner numbers in construction for the academic year 2023 to 2024 when demonstrating that they meet the absolute thresholds for total learners (525) and achievers (440), provided that all other eligibility criteria are met. [↩](#)

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