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[Department
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Guidance

16 to 19 funding: large programme uplift

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Applies to England

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1. Introduction

This note sets out the conditions under which 16 to 19 funding allocations will include a large programme uplift. It provides further information to institutions to support them in understanding and planning for the large programme uplift.

2. Latest updates

There are no changes for academic year 2025 to 2026.

3. Purpose

The large programme uplift contributes to the costs of large study programmes and T Levels that are of high quality and that provide additional stretch and challenge.

When study programmes were introduced in the academic year 2013 to 2014, funding was based on the average programme size being 600 hours. However, we recognise that some programmes must be larger to prepare students for further study or work. The same principle applies to T Level programmes where some students may study an A/AS level alongside.

4. Definition of the large programme uplift

The large programme uplift reflects that some programmes are larger than the usual size in terms of hours.

The large programme uplift is only available for high quality programmes that provide students with additional stretch and challenge. This includes:

- programmes of 4 or more full A levels
- the full level 3 International Baccalaureate (IB)
- T Level programmes with at least one A or AS level taken alongside

Students must achieve a minimum grade to be eligible for the uplift.

We will apply an uplift of either 10% or 20% to the full-time national funding rate per student to [large programmes](#) that meet the criteria set out on this page.

We calculate the uplifts based on the national funding rate for full-time programmes (band 4a, band 5 and higher bands) for the relevant academic year.

For students undertaking study programmes, we pay the uplift for 2 years.

For students undertaking T Level programmes, AS levels will attract a 1-year payment and A levels will attract a 2-year payment. More detail is set out in the [T Level programmes](#) and [summary of requirements](#) sections.

Large programmes that take longer than 2 years do not get any additional uplift.

5. Students covered by the large programme uplift

The large programme uplift only applies to 16 and 17 year olds studying large programmes that meet the size and achievement

criteria set out on this page.

However, students aged 18 and over with high needs can also qualify for a large programme uplift. High needs students are those who receive additional learning support funding from their local authority high needs budget (often called top-up funding or element 3).

Any other students aged 18 and over or any students on apprenticeships or supported internships do not qualify for a large programme uplift. The large programme uplift did not apply to traineeships.

6. Large A level programmes

Large A level programmes (identified by 2-year A level qualifications) will attract an uplift.

AS levels do not count in large A level programmes receiving the large programme uplift. We also exclude A levels in General Studies and Critical Thinking.

6.1 Pre-U qualifications

We will not count Pre-U qualifications for the large programme uplift for 2027 to 2028 allocations. This is because the qualifications are being withdrawn; we do not expect any Pre-U teaching to take place after 2022 to 2023, with re-sits available in summer 2024.

A [Pre-U](#) Principal or Research subject certificate graded at M1 or higher (not including 1- year short programmes) is equivalent to 1 A level for the purpose of the uplift. The Pre-U certificate must be part of a programme that is equivalent to 4 A levels or

more to qualify. This can be all Pre-U certificates or a mixture of Pre-U certificates and A levels within a large programme.

6.2 Study programmes of 4 A levels

Students who achieve 4 full A level qualifications at grade B or better in each A level will qualify for an uplift of 10%.

6.3 Study programmes of 5 A levels

Students who achieve 5 full A level qualifications at grade B or better (or minimum grade C for Further Maths) in each A level will qualify for an uplift of 20%.

A student enrolled on a study programme of 5 full A levels but who only achieves grade B or better (or minimum grade C for Further Maths) in 4 of them will attract the 10% uplift.

6.4 Further Maths A level

Students taking Further Maths as one of their 4 or more A levels will qualify for large programme funding when they achieve a grade C in this subject and the remainder of their results are at grade B or better. For example:

Qualification title	Qualification type	Exam grade	
GCE A level in Maths	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large programme uplift
GCE A level in	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large

Chemistry			programme uplift
GCE A level in Further Maths	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large programme uplift
GCE A level in Physics	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large programme uplift
Qualification title	Qualification type	Exam grade	
GCE A level in Biology	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large programme uplift
GCE A level in Maths	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large programme uplift
GCE A level in Further Maths	GCE A level	C	Qualifies for large programme uplift
GCE A level in Physics	GCE A level	B	Qualifies for large programme uplift

7. Large International Baccalaureate (IB) programmes

The full level 3 IB Diploma is a large programme as the International Baccalaureate Organisation (IBO) stipulates that the teaching time for the IB must add up to 1,450 to 1,500 hours across the 2 years of the programme.

Students who complete the full level 3 diploma and achieve 28 or more points will attract a 20% uplift to the full-time national

funding rate for the year in which we make the allocation.
Twenty-eight points is broadly equivalent to grade B at A level.

If a student achieves a pass with 24 points but does not achieve 28 points, then no uplift will be paid.

8. T Level programmes

A/AS levels (excluding General Studies and Critical Thinking) taken alongside T Level programmes may qualify for the large programme uplift.

A student must achieve a minimum merit grade on their T Level programme and minimum grade B on their A/AS level (or minimum grade C for Further Maths) to qualify.

Additionally, any A/AS levels taken alongside a T Level must offer demonstrable additional content that is relevant to the student's programme and which is not already covered by their T Level qualification (including occupational specialism) content.

Qualifying AS levels taken alongside a T Level programme will attract payment for 1 year, reflecting that they are usually taken over 1 year.

Qualifying A levels taken alongside a T Level programme will attract payment for 2 years, reflecting that A level qualifications are usually taken over 2 years.

9. Summary of requirements

9.1 For study programmes

Uplift %	Requirements
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10%	4 full A levels (other than General Studies and Critical Thinking) at grade B or above, or 3 at grade B or above and Further Maths at grade C
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20%	5 full A levels (other than General Studies and Critical Thinking) at grade B or above, or 4 at grade B or above and Further Maths at grade C
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20%	The full level 3 IB Diploma at 28 points or above
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9.2 For T Level programmes

We pay the uplifts for T Level programmes for either 1 or 2 years depending on whether it is for an AS level or an A level, as indicated below.

Uplift %	Requirements
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10% paid for 1 year	A T Level programme with at least a merit grade plus one AS level (other than General Studies and Critical Thinking) at grade B or AS level Further Maths at grade C
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10% paid for 2 years	A T Level programme with at least a merit grade plus one A level (other than General Studies and Critical Thinking) at grade B or A level Further Maths at grade C
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20% paid for 1 year	A T Level programme with at least a merit grade plus more than one AS level (other than General Studies and Critical Thinking) at grade B or AS level Further Maths at grade C
---------------------	--

20% paid for 2 years	A T Level programme with at least a merit grade plus more than one A level (other than General Studies and Critical Thinking) at grade B or A level Further Maths at grade C
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It is very unlikely that a student would take an AS level and an A level in different subjects as well as a T Level. Therefore, students taking a combination of AS and A levels will get the uplift appropriate to the qualifying A level(s) only.

10. Uplift calculation

To identify students who have earned the large programme uplift, we will use attainment data from the latest full year. We will use the learning aims and associated grades at the end of each student's qualifying programme.

We apply the total uplift value after we have applied retention, programme cost weighting and disadvantage to the national funding rate per student. The uplift will attract the area cost uplift where it applies.

Allocations will show the numbers separately for those who get the 10% uplift and those who get the 20% uplift.

As the criteria for implementing the uplift includes student attainment, which comes from data matched in from the National Pupil Database, there will be a 3-year lag. This means, for example, that for allocations for the academic year 2025 to 2026 we will use attainment data from 2022 to 2023.

11. Data collection

There are no additional data collection requirements for the large programme uplift. Institutions must accurately record all large programmes to meet the criteria for the uplift in future funding allocations.

Institutions can submit business cases in the business case window (announced each year) if they believe this methodology does not reflect their delivery. Successful challenge to a large programme uplift must demonstrate that we have not correctly interpreted historical attainment data. Incorrect recording of data is not grounds for a successful challenge.

12. Contact us

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