



Table 1 Glossary Table

This is a glossary of our most frequently used terms.

Term	Description
Academic progression qualifications	Academic progression qualifications are level 2 qualifications designed to support students who are not ready to progress directly to level 3 academic study immediately after Key Stage 4. They will ensure that post 16 students get the teaching and support they need to progress onto and succeed on to a level 3 course, such as A levels or mixed programmes.
Advanced British Standard (ABS)	<p>On 4 October, the Prime Minister announced his long-term plan for introducing the Advanced British Standard (ABS). The ABS will be a new baccalaureate-style qualification framework for students aged 16-19 and will bring academic and technical pathways together into a single framework. For more information on ABS, please go here. Our qualification reform will continue, including continuing to roll out T Levels and removing duplicative, low-quality courses, that do not deliver the skills employers need.</p> <p>ABS consultation document. Published December 2023. Over the next decade, the government are seeking to introduce the Advanced British Standard (ABS), a new Baccalaureate-style qualification framework for 16-19 year-olds. This consultation document sets out proposals on the way the ABS could work seeking views to continue developing our approach for the ABS and how it is delivered. Found here.</p>
Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs)	AAQs are qualifications designed to be taught alongside A levels and with a clear and direct link to progression into further/higher education.
Large Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs)	Large AAQs are the same size as 2 or 3 A levels (720-1080 guided learning hours) and will typically be taken as the main part of a students' study programme, or alongside 1 A level. Large AAQs will be approved in a limited range of subject areas where a T Level is not available and there is a need for a large academic qualification, providing a clear and direct progression link into higher education.



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Small Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs)	Small AAQs are the same size as 1 A level (150-430 guided learning hours) and are qualifications that can be taken in a mixed study programme alongside A levels. Small AAQs will be approved for funding in subject areas that are strategically important (such as STEM, those supporting the NHS) and those that are less well-served by A levels, such as creative and performing arts or sport. Small AAQs will be a minimum of 40% assessment by examination.
Awarding organisations (AOs)	Refers to individual organisations that design, develop and assess qualifications but are not themselves education providers.
Basic Skills Qualifications	Reformed basic skills qualifications in English and maths at level 1 and entry level will be available for first teach from 2028. Digital qualifications have been reformed separately.
Cycles	Refers to the order in which new qualifications will be submitted for approval and funded according to the new criteria. There are 3 cycles of reform; Cycle 1 – qualifications funded from 2025. Cycle 2 – qualifications funded from 2026. Cycle 3 – qualifications funded from 2027. Cycle 4- qualifications funded from 2028. Detail on subjects included in each cycle can be found in the Guide to the landscape .
Entry level qualifications	Entry level qualifications are available at three sub-levels - 1, 2 and 3. Students can progress from entry level 1 to entry level 3. Entry level qualifications will be considered for funding in cycle 3, for first teach in 2027, or cycle 4, for first teach in 2028.
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages. Reformed ESOL skills for life qualifications at entry level to level 2 will be available for first teach from 2028.



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Funding manual	<p>The funding manual is for awarding organisations who intend to submit reformed and new qualifications for approval in England. It includes the DfE's funding approval criteria including;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• DfE's process to approve qualifications for funding including how and when qualifications will be reviewed.• How and when the moratorium on approving newly regulated qualifications for funding will change.• What will happen to qualifications currently approved for funding.• A summary of how funding approval outcomes will be reviewed.
Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE)	<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>
Knowledge, Skills and Behaviours (KSBs)	<p>Knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the occupational standards co-designed with employers and approved by IfATE. They are what is needed to competently undertake the duties required for an occupational standard.</p>
Level 1 progression qualifications	<p>These are qualifications supporting progression to level 2 or 3 technical study. Level 1 progression qualifications will be considered for funding in cycle 3, for first teach in 2027.</p>
Level 2 and below	<p>This phrase refers to post-16 qualifications at level 2, level 1 and entry level (which includes the sub-levels: entry level 1, entry level 2 and entry level 3).</p>



Term	Description
Non-technical qualifications	<p>Non-technical qualifications are qualifications which are not based on the occupational standards.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternative academic qualifications• Technical progression qualifications, which support progression to a level 3 technical qualification that is not a T Level.• Academic progression qualifications, which support progression to a level 3 academic qualification.• T Level foundation qualifications, which support progression to a T Level.
Occupation	<p>An occupation is skilled employment which has similar requirements across employers and workplaces.</p>
Occupational Maps	<p>Occupational Maps were created by IfATE and group occupations with related knowledge, skills and behaviours into 15 technical routes, making it easier to see the opportunities for career progression within that particular route. Most routes have been split into several pathways. The maps provide a useful guide to show the technical education options available for employers as well as individuals and training providers. These routes date back to the Sainsbury report, published in 2016.</p>
Occupational standards	<p>Occupational standards are listed in the occupational map, each occupational standard provides the knowledge, skills and behaviours (KSBs) that employers have said they need to gain occupational competence in that role. These are co-designed with employers and approved by IfATE.</p>
The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation (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. Ofqual is a non-ministerial government department with jurisdiction in England. See the Ofqual website for further information.</p>
Personal, Social and Employability (PSE) Qualifications –Level 1 and Entry Level	<p>Qualifications, from entry level to level 1, which deliver personal and social skills, employability skills and/or independent living and life skills.</p>



Term	Description
Phases	<p>Refers to the process of reforming post 16 qualifications at level 3 and below. This process is divided into three phases.</p> <p>Phase 1 – removing funding at levels 3 and below due to low or no enrolments.</p> <p>Phase 2 – removing funding from level 3 qualifications due to overlap with T Levels.</p> <p>Phase 3 – introducing new funding approval criteria for technical and non-technical qualifications at level 3 and below and removing funding from qualifications that do not meet those criteria.</p>
Sector subject area (SSAs)	<p>The Sector Subject Area (SSA) classification system is used to classify qualifications into sectors or subject areas.</p>
16-19 Study Programme	<p>All students funded through the 16 to 19 funding methodology must be enrolled on a study programme, or T Level programme, which typically combines qualifications and other activities, and is tailored to each student's prior attainment and career goals.</p> <p>All study programmes must have a core aim. This will be tailored to the needs of the individual and typically include a substantial qualification (academic or technical) or preparation for employment.</p>
Technical Additional Specialist Qualifications	<p>These are specialist level 3 technical qualifications for post 16 students and adults, which go beyond the contents of an occupational standard and allows a student to develop additional knowledge and competencies and specialise within a sector. These qualifications will build on knowledge covered by a T Level or other occupational entry.</p>
Technical cross-cutting qualifications	<p>Qualifications that support employability by allowing post-16 students and adults to develop skills that are relevant across occupations and offering transferable skills e.g. Health and Safety.</p>



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Technical Education	Technical education encompasses any training, such as qualifications and apprenticeships, that focuses on progression into skilled employment and requires 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. References to technical education also include qualifications that many would call “vocational”, especially qualifications at the lower levels of difficulty.
Technical Employer proposed Qualifications	Designed for adults, these are qualifications designed to deliver competence for occupations without a standard, but where there is employer demand.
Technical occupational entry qualifications (TOQs: level 3 and level 2)	These are qualifications delivering competence against an occupational standard not covered by T Levels at level 3 for 16-19-year-olds and all occupational standards for adults. These qualifications aim to support a student to enter, or to progress within, a role. At level 2, these can be two different sizes and at level 3 these can be any size.
Technical qualifications	Technical qualifications will be based on the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) set out in the occupational standards, co-designed with employers and approved by IfATE.
Technical progression qualifications	Technical progression qualifications are a level 2 qualification designed for students who are not ready to progress directly to level 3 technical study immediately after Key Stage 4. They aim to support a student to progress to, and succeed on, a level 3 occupational entry qualification.
T Levels	T Levels are designed for post-16 students wishing to specialise in a specific industry or occupation. They are an alternative to A levels, apprenticeships and other 16 to 19 courses. Equivalent in size to 3 A levels, they develop specialist knowledge and skills that are primarily designed to support progression to skilled employment/ further technical training, based on IfATE’s employer-led occupational standards. Students will undertake an industry placement of at least 45 days in their chosen industry or occupation.



Term	Description
T Level foundation qualifications (TLFQs)	T Level Foundation Qualifications (TLFQs) are a level 2 qualification. Their purpose is to support progression onto level 3 technical study through T Levels. T level foundation qualifications provide a high-quality route onto T Levels for students who would benefit from the additional study time and preparation that it will give them before they start their T Level.
T Level wave overlap lists	This refers to the list of existing qualifications that will have public funding removed for 16-19-year-olds in either 2024 or 2025 as they have been assessed to overlap with a T Level. A qualification overlaps with a T Level if it is a technical qualification which covers the same content standard covered by a T Level and aims to support students into employment in the same occupational area. Find links to the lists here: Wave 1 & 2 list: here Wave 3 list: here Provisional Wave 4 list: here