



Department
for Education

Level 3 Pathways in Health and Social Care

Health T Level

Studying a T Level in Health is an excellent way to kickstart a career in health and social care. Learners studying the Health T Level develop the core knowledge and skills that are needed for entry to a range of health occupations. Designed with input from employers, T Levels combine classroom learning with practical experience, equipping learners with the skills and knowledge needed to thrive in this essential sector.

Why choose the Health T Level?

Industry relevant skills and knowledge: T Levels are designed to meet the needs of the health and social care sector because they are based on the occupational standards designed by employers. The curriculum covers a wide range of key topics, and the industry aligned knowledge ensures that learners are well-prepared for the realities of working in health and social care.

Practical experience through industry placements: a key feature of T Levels is the 45-day industry placement, where learners gain hands-on experience in real healthcare settings such as hospitals, care homes, and clinics. This practical experience helps learners develop essential skills, build confidence, and gain an insight into different roles within the sector.



Recognised qualification for employment and further study: T Levels are equivalent to three A levels and are highly regarded by employers and universities. After completing a T Level in Health, learners can progress directly into skilled work, an apprenticeship, or higher education. For example, it can lead to careers as a healthcare assistant, support worker, or care coordinator, or provide a strong foundation for further study in nursing, midwifery, or social work.

Focus on practical skills and professional standards: the qualification emphasises both practical skills and professional behaviours, ensuring that learners develop qualities like empathy, communication, and teamwork—essential for providing compassionate, person-centred care. And because they are based on employer led occupational standards, they prepare learners to meet the demands of roles within health and social care.





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Myth Busting!

Myth: The content in the Health T Level is too science based and not attractive to the cohort.

Myth busted: The content of the T Level provides a well-rounded mix of scientific knowledge and hands-on practical experience, and because the curriculum covers essential scientific principles and applies them to real-world scenarios, learners can see the direct impact of their studies.

Key changes include:

- Emphasis is placed on practical skills, including simulated healthcare environments, lab-based learning, and role-playing patient scenarios. These allow learners to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world settings, making the learning process more immersive.
- Extended industry placements with healthcare providers gives learners real experience in hospitals, clinics, and care settings. This helps them see the direct impact of their learning and builds confidence in their skills.
- The curriculum includes patient case studies and real-life healthcare challenges, helping learners relate their studies to actual patient care and problem-solving in the field.
- The content showcases a variety of roles within healthcare, from nursing and midwifery to radiography and occupational therapy. This ensures learners understand the diverse opportunities available.
- A combination of digital resources, interactive e-learning, and classroom discussions cater to different learning styles.

Explore more resources:

[Lola's T Level journey](#)
[T Levels and the NHS](#)

[5 steps to a T Level in Health- T Levels and Industry placement support for employers](#)
[T Levels- HASO](#)





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Myth: we can't get industry placements in health and social care for the volume of learners that will require them.

Myth busted: With learner satisfaction rates at 78% and placement completion rates above 95%, industry placements are a unique selling point of T Levels. In January 2025 we introduced an updated set of industry placement delivery approaches which will provide more flexibility and unlock opportunities for learners and adapt to the evolving demands of industry.

We have listened to the sector and made changes to Industry placements. Up to 20% of placements can now be remote across all T Level routes, including in the Health route. Placements can now take place at both route level and pathway levels, and small group projects and simulated activities in skills hub and training centres can take place on provider sites. In response to your feedback, we've developed new materials to help you understand and implement the updated delivery approaches.

Resources include: a new animated video which brings to life the updated approaches; a new examples document showing how different approaches can be used in combination; and a new summary document outlining the essential information on industry placements.

Additionally, health placements can be offered at a range of employers and are not limited to hospitals. These can include a wide range of settings such as care homes, primary care providers and specialist health services – providing learners with a chance to develop an understanding of the breadth and depth of roles available, including in social care, wider healthcare roles and in hospital settings.

Myth: the T Level doesn't support those who want a career in social care.

Myth busted: Recognising the need to balance science with practical care skills, the Health T Level curriculum was updated in 2023 following industry feedback. Learners can now benefit from enhanced content on care and often complete **'The Care Certificate'** during their industry placements.

The Department for Education and the Gatsby Foundation have also co-founded the ICS T Levels Network, connecting health and care employers to share best practices and maximise workforce development. [Sign up to the network here.](#)

Myth Busting!





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Exploring Alternative pathways in Health and Social Care

While T Levels provide a comprehensive blend of theoretical knowledge and practical experience, alternative pathways can offer a range of options for learners with varying preferences, career aspirations and starting points.

T Level Foundation Year

The T Level Foundation Year provides a high-quality route onto T Levels for learners who would benefit from the additional study time and preparation before they start their T Level. It includes a diagnostic period to identify the learner's development, learning and support needs and help them make an informed choice about their chosen T Level route.



Apprenticeships: Hands-on learning

For learners seeking practical, workplace-based training, apprenticeships offer a valuable alternative. Level 3 apprenticeships, such as the Senior Healthcare Support Worker, provide practical experience while earning a qualification, aligning with both industry needs and individual career goals.

See more information on possible qualification pathways in the health sector.



Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs)

Learners looking to explore health and social care have the option to pursue Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs) in this area. These qualifications are available for first teach from 2025, with more to follow in 2026.

Designed primarily to support entry into Higher Education, AAQs also provide a strong foundation to continue onto apprenticeships and work. 60% of their content is mandated by the awarding organisation but 40% can be made up of optional components which provide opportunity to meet differing learner needs. They contain space for applied learning as well as more traditional academic learning, and they provide scope for a variety of assessment methods, further meeting the individual needs of learners.

A small AAQ is the equivalent of one A level and learners could study a small AAQ in Health and Social care alongside A levels in subjects such as Biology and Psychology to lead to nursing or Sociology and English Language to lead to a career in social work or teaching. Together with enrichment activities, that could include work experience, this would prepare learners for a pathway for those who wish to progress to study at level 4 and above in Higher Education.

You can click on the [link](#) to understand more about qualifications available for first teach in 2025 and beyond.