Department for Education

Construction and the Built Environment Learner Journeys

We want every learner to study high quality qualifications which prepare them for their next step– whether this is entering skilled employment or progression onto higher levels of technical or academic study.

Alongside T Levels and A levels, newly reformed qualifications will become available for delivery at level 3 at the start of the 2025 academic year. These are high-quality, aligned to occupational standards in technical routes, and offer learners clear routes to higher education or skilled employment.

Reformed Technical Qualifications are also available at level 2, alongside the existing level 2 offer, including the T Level Foundation year.

These qualifications are:

Alternative academic qualifications (AAQs) which are small AAQs (150-420 guided learning hours).

Reformed technical qualifications which can be Technical Occupational Entry qualifications and Technical Additional Specialist qualifications.

The new qualifications are in the following sector subject areas (SSAs):

· Building and construction
· Child development and well-being
· Engineering
· Health & social care
· ICT practitioners
· Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine
· Science
· Sport, leisure and recreation
· Transport operations and maintenance

You can review which qualifications at level 2 and level 3 are available in each SSA by accessing the lists of approved qualifications.

The Construction and Built Environment Learner Journeys within this document have been developed to provide possible examples of the ways these new qualifications can be combined to create study programmes for 16–19-year-olds and adults. They also highlight progression opportunities as a result of studying the qualifications but are not formal guidance.

You can find out more about study programmes by using the 16-19 study programme guidance.

Department for Education

Learner Journey: Construction and the Built Environment

David (16 years old) wants to do A levels and eventually work in the construction sector.

He has achieved 8 GCSEs Grades 4-6.

David enrols on a level 3 study programme, which could include:
Alternative Academic Qualification- e.g. AAQ in Construction and the Built Environment (360 GLH)
A level Business Studies (360 GLH)
A level Design and Technology (GLH)
Core Maths (180 GLH).

David takes part in work experience in construction which gives him a real-world insight into the construction environment, roles, and teamwork. Part of this involves shadowing a quantity surveyor. Construction managers need leadership, budgeting, and organisational skills so David takes part in Young Enterprise in college to develop these skills.

He attends construction expos, careers fairs, or local regeneration project tours, building familiarity with current practices, regulations, and innovation in construction.

He also completes CAD short courses independently and free online awareness courses on safe working practices.

To develop his leadership, teamwork and communication skill David joined the student council in college and starts a sustainability group because the construction sector is rapidly evolving environmental standards.

He studies a level 3 Core Maths qualification to demonstrate strong numeracy skills that would be essential for managing budgets, measurements, and planning.

David enrols at university to study a degree in Construction Management

Find out more about Qualifications Reform

16 to 19 study programmes guidance: 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK

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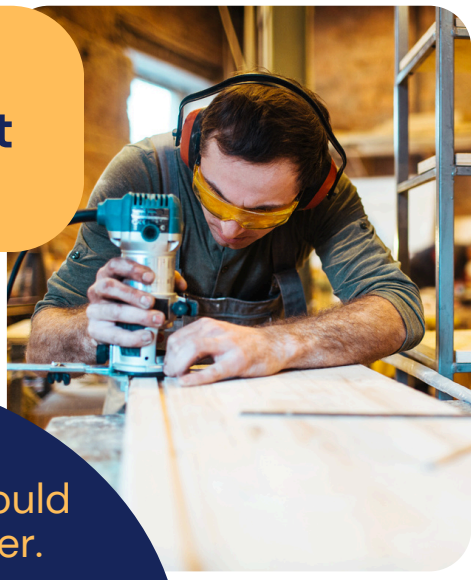
Learner Journey: Construction and the Built Environment



Paul (30 years old) would like to work as a joiner.

Paul enrols on the Level 3 Technical Occupational Entry for Craft Carpenters and Joiners (Diploma).

To enhance his reformed technical qualification, Paul could develop advanced skills such as furniture making, bespoke joinery, or timber framing by working with experienced professionals. Keeping a journal of what he learns, skills he develops, and any feedback he receives could help with career progression and future interviews.

He could also highlight his skills to potential employers or clients through a portfolio and include photos of completed projects, documenting before and after work to show skill improvement.

Networking could also help Paul secure job opportunities, as well as gain valuable advice from experienced professionals. He could do this by:

- Joining industry associations like the Federation of Master Builders (FMB) or The British Woodworking Federation (BWF) to access networking opportunities and industry events.
- Attending trade shows, expos, and local networking events for carpenters and joiners.
- Following key industry figures to stay updated on trends and job openings.

Paul enters employment as a joiner for a local construction company.

Find out more about Qualifications Reform

16 to 19 study programmes guidance: 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK

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Learner Journey: Construction and the Built Environment

Yasmin (16 years old) would like to work in civil engineering but doesn't have the required GCSE grades for the T Level.

Yasmin enrols on the T Level Foundation Year which could include:
Retaking GCSE maths and/or English Level 2 qualification in construction. This includes a project that has been set by a local construction company, work experience, personal development and enrichment activities and pastoral support.

In addition to her face-to-face timetabled lessons, Yasmin has support with GCSE resits (Maths and/or English) through small group or 1:1 tutoring and use of adaptive online tools. She is also introduced to how English and maths skills are applied in the construction sector.

She takes part in study skills sessions and activities to help with time management and revision techniques, develop critical thinking and problem solving skills, and exam strategies, which help to develop her confidence to progress to level 3 learning.

She also takes part in work experience which is tailored to give Yasmin early exposure to the industry, such as a small placement or shadowing in a construction or civil engineering firm and visiting active construction sites (with proper H&S briefings).

In addition to this, Yasmin attends guest speaker sessions or construction careers fairs.

She receives 1:1 reviews to track her goals and academic progress and receives careers guidance. She is also buddied up with a construction T Level student that helps her understand what it is like to do a T Level.

Yasmin progresses onto the Construction T Level in Building Services Engineering for Construction

Find out more about Qualifications Reform

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Learner Journey: Construction and the Built Environment

Philip (16 years old) wants to follow his family into plumbing. He has achieved 5 GCSEs grade 4.

Philip enrols on the Building Services Engineering for Construction T Level, taking the plumbing and heating specialism.

Philip gets holiday work with a local plumber which gives him invaluable insight into the role.
He builds his practical skills at home by practicing using common tools safely and correctly.

Philip has support extra Maths and Science small group or 1:1 tutoring so that he is confident with measuring, calculating flow rates, and understanding heating systems. He is supported with brushing up on functional maths and physics, especially in areas like pressure, temperature, and volume.

His college provide workshops on developing soft skills of communication, reliability, and problem-solving. These workshops also focus on punctuality, neatness, and professionalism, things employers and clients notice right away.

He is encouraged by his tutors to attend trade fairs, college open days, industry expos. They also encourage him to ask questions and be curious during industry placements and always look for ways to learn beyond the classroom.

Philip enters employment as a heating engineer for a larger boiler company.

Find out more about Qualifications Reform

16 to 19 study programmes guidance: 2024 to 2025 academic year - GOV.UK

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Glossary

Term	Definition
A level	Qualification available in a range of subjects at level 3. Usually studied over two years and recognised as meeting entry requirements for further and higher education courses like degrees.
AS level	An AS level is a standalone qualification, available in a range of subjects at level 3 and usually taken after GCSE level in year 12. It is usually studied over one year and is the equivalent of half an A level.
Academic qualification	A qualification with the primary purpose of supporting a student to progress to higher academic study.
Alternative academic qualification (AAQ)	A new academic qualification in strategically important subjects like STEM or those less well served by A levels.
Applied General Qualification (AGQ)	Applied learning qualification for Higher Education (HE) or work; often taken with A levels.
Core Maths qualification	A Core Maths qualification is a level 3 post-16 mathematics course designed for students who have passed GCSE Maths (usually grade 4 or above) but are not taking A Level Maths. It is the equivalent of half an A level.
Extended Project Qualification (EPQ)	An Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) is a level 3 qualification that allows students, typically in Year 12 or 13 (ages 16–18) to choose a topic of interest and complete an independent research project. It is the equivalent of half an A level.
Guided Learning hours (GLH)	The time a learner spends being taught or instructed by – or otherwise participating in education or training under the immediate guidance or supervision of – a lecturer, supervisor, tutor or other appropriate provider of education or training.
Level (of qualification)	One of nine qualification levels in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The higher the level, the more difficult the qualification. Level 3 qualifications include A levels, T Levels, advanced Apprenticeships and AGQs, as well as newly reformed AAQs and Reformed Technical Qualifications.

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Glossary

Term	Definition
Sector Subject Area (SSA)	A classification system for the sectors in which qualifications sit such as 'Health, Public Services and Care'.
STEM	Collective term for the fields of science, technology, engineering and maths.
Study programme	The combination of qualifications and other activities funded for 16–19-year-olds in England by the Department for Education.
T Level	A two-year qualification at level 3, equivalent in size to three A levels and supporting progression to employment or higher education. Based on the same standards as Apprenticeships and available in over 20 subjects.
T Level Foundation Year (TLFY)	This study programme provides a high-quality route onto T Levels for students who would benefit from additional preparation or study time before a T Level.
Reformed Technical qualification	A qualification with the primary purpose of supporting progression to or within employment.
Technical Additional Specialist qualification	Qualifications that allow 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 qualification, e.g., low-carbon construction design, building on the Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction T Level.
Technical Occupational Entry qualification	A qualification based on an occupational standard that supports entry to employment in that occupational area.
Total qualification Time (TQT)	The GLH plus all other time taken in preparation, study or any other form of participation in education or training but not under the direct supervision of a lecturer, supervisor or tutor.