



Department
for Education

New, reformed level 3 qualifications

[Link to the 74
new approved
qualifications
for first teach
2025](#)

Technical Occupational Entry Qualifications

Technical Occupational Entry Qualifications are new 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 learner to enter, or to progress within, a role. At level 3, these can be any size.

Technical Occupational Additional Specialist Qualifications

These are specialist level 3 technical qualifications for post 16 learners and adults, which go beyond the contents of an occupational standard and allows a learner 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.



Alternative Academic Qualifications (AAQs)

AAQs are new qualifications that will be available for delivery from 1 August 2025, offering an academic qualification with elements of applied learning in a range of subjects at level 3. AAQs also attract UCAS tariff points.





PROGRESSION

HIGHER EDUCATION

An academic study programme at level 3 should support progression to higher education (HE), although some learners may choose to go into employment, including Apprenticeships. Learners on technical study programmes, including T Levels, can also progress to higher education as their next step.

UCAS

We know that acceptance of the new qualifications by UCAS and the points allocated to them will be a key factor in preparation for their delivery. We are working with UCAS and universities to ensure that they understand the new qualifications landscape. All level 3 qualifications on the Ofqual register are included in the [UCAS Tariff](#), including the new qualifications.

Higher Technical Qualifications (HTQs) – level 4 and level 5 qualifications, such as Foundation Degrees, Higher National Certificates (HNC) and Higher National Diplomas (HND) – may be a progression option for some learners.

SKILLED WORK

Technical qualifications provide clear pathways to employment because they are based on the knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSBs) outlined in employer-designed occupational standards. These standards are directly applicable to specific job roles. Technical qualifications often highlight practical, hands-on training, which is essential for acquiring the technical skills needed for particular occupations.



APPRENTICESHIPS

Higher and degree apprenticeships are a training option that could be the next step after completing a level 3 qualification, allowing individuals to attain a Higher National Certificate (HNC), Higher National Diploma (HND), foundation or undergraduate degree. These apprenticeships function similarly to other apprenticeships, with individuals spending up to 80% of their time on-the-job training, while the remaining 20% is dedicated to training with a college, university, or registered training provider.

