



Department
for Education

Post-16 Pathways Strategic Transition Planning Statement

Guidance

April 2026

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Policy context

The Strategic Transition Planning Statement (STPS) supports the government’s programme of reform to 16-19 technical and vocational education in England. These reforms were set out in the Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper (October 2025), which built on the findings and early recommendations of the Curriculum and Assessment Review, and were developed further through the Post-16 level 3 and below pathways consultation and its government response (March 2026).

The consultation response confirms the government’s intention to introduce a clear and coherent qualifications landscape at levels 2 and 3 for 16-19 year olds. This includes the establishment of a third, vocational pathway at level 3 through V Levels, that will sit alongside A Levels and T Levels, and the introduction of two distinct level 2 pathways focused on progression either to further study or to skilled employment.

The response also confirms a phased, route-by-route transition to the reformed qualifications beginning from academic year 2027/28 and concluding by 2030/31. The STPS supports the implementation of these reforms by enabling the Department for Education to understand provider intentions and readiness, assess system-wide risks and capacity challenges, and target support to ensure an effective transition to the new 16-19 qualifications landscape.

Summary

This document provides guidance from the Department for Education for institutions delivering, or intending to deliver, post-16 technical and vocational qualifications in England.

It sets out the information that institutions should provide, as far as they are able, in their Strategic Transition Planning Statement (STPS). This forms part of preparations for the introduction of reformed technical and vocational qualifications in academic year 2027/28. The STPS is intended to support institutions in their wider curriculum and transition planning which they are undertaking.

The STPS has been developed in consultation with sector-representative organisations, to ensure that the information requested is proportionate, purposeful and aligned with institutions' strategic planning process.

We're committed to co-design and working collaboratively, so we will be refining these questions with providers before confirming when we publish the Implementation Plan and open the Gov.uk portal for returns. Please share any feedback you may have on the questions with your representative bodies.

You should submit an STPS via the Department's [online portal](#) by 6 July 2026.

You should refer to the [Implementation Plan](#) for further detail, this was published 20 May 2026.

Who this publication is for

The following institutions are asked to submit a Strategic Transition Planning Statement with their best available information:

- FE Colleges
- Sixth Form Colleges
- 16 to 19 Academies and Free Schools
- Schools
- Multi-Academy Trusts with Sixth Forms and Sixth Form Colleges
- Independent Training Providers
- Any other institution that delivers, or intends to deliver, applied, technical or vocational qualifications

Main points

The STPS collects high-level information about institutions planned delivery from academic year 2027/28 of the following:

- T Levels
- V Levels
- Level 2 Occupational Certificates and Foundation Certificates

It also asks about preparedness for transition from legacy provision.

The information provided will be used by the Department for Education to:

- understand system-wide readiness for qualification reform
- identify delivery risks and capacity challenges
- inform national and targeted support as set out in the government’s wider transition planning and implementation activity

The [online form](#) is now available, and we are asking for responses to be submitted by 6 July 2026. This will inform further work by the Department to support transition and will help institutions as they undertake wider curriculum and transition planning that will take place ahead of academic year 2027/28.

Guidance

What is the Strategic Transition Planning Statement

The Department is asking for a Strategic Transition Planning Statement from all post-16 providers that deliver, or intend to deliver, applied, technical or vocational qualifications at Level 2 and/or Level 3.

It is intended to inform the Department’s approach to supporting institutions to transition to reformed qualifications. It should reflect your institution’s overall strategic plan and set out your provisional high-level intentions for curriculum delivery from academic year 2027/28 onwards, as the system transitions to reformed technical and vocational qualifications.

Strategic Transition Planning Statements should be informed by:

- the government’s published [transition plan for technical and vocational qualification reform](#)
- [the Implementation Plan](#)
- [Ofqual’s consultation on regulatory requirements](#)
- [Subject content consultations on V Levels, Foundation Certificates and Occupational Certificates](#)

The statement enables the Department to assess sector readiness and to identify where additional engagement or support may be required to ensure effective national implementation.

We ask that your response is submitted via the online form by **6 July 2026** in order to allow the Department to evaluate the state of readiness of the sector.

There is no requirement to submit a curriculum transition plan as part of the STPS. However, institutions may choose to share any existing curriculum transition plans or supporting documents if they wish. These may set out your approach to introducing T Levels, V Levels and reformed Level 2 qualifications.

Any documents shared are in addition to completing the STPS and cannot be submitted in place of the required information within the form. Shared plans may help the Department for Education to develop a clearer understanding of sector readiness and identify examples of effective practice or areas where further support may be helpful. Institutions should only share documents they are content to provide to the Department.

Guidance for Multi Academy Trusts (MATs)

Multi-Academy Trusts are responsible for ensuring that a STPS is completed for each individual school or college within their trust that delivers, or intends to deliver, post-16 technical or vocational qualifications.

While trusts may wish to coordinate activity centrally, responses must be submitted at individual school or college level, rather than as a single aggregated return at trust level.

This is necessary to ensure the Department for Education has an accurate understanding of:

- local delivery plans and curriculum intent
- capacity, risks and challenges at individual provider level
- variation in readiness across institutions within the same trust or group

MATs are therefore expected to coordinate and quality-assure responses across their institutions, ensuring that each return reflects the specific context and delivery plans of the institution concerned and has appropriate senior oversight prior to submission.

Guidance - Questions

Question	Guidance
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<p>1. Provider details</p> <p>a. What's your name?</p> <p>b. What's your email address?</p> <p>c. Enter your institution's UKPRN or URN.</p> <p>d. What's the name of your institution?</p> <p>e. What's the name of your local authority?</p>	<p>Please include a contact name and work email address to allow the Department to contact you if needed.</p> <p>Include your professional email address to allow the Department to follow up with you if needed.</p> <p>Please provide your organisation's UKPRN or URN. To check your UKPRN click on this link, enter your institution name and click search: https://www.ukrlp.co.uk/</p> <p>This information helps us understand the size and type of institutions planning to transition to reformed qualifications.</p> <p>Please include your institution name (if you are a MAT, please include the name of the school or college, and the name of the MAT)</p> <p>Providing your local authority will support us to correctly match your data during analysis where there are multiple institutions with the same name.</p>
<p>2. Does your institution currently deliver, or plan to deliver, applied, technical or vocational qualifications in the next 3 years?</p> <p>3.</p>	<p>At level 3 this includes qualifications categorised as technical, applied general or occupational within performance tables.</p> <p>If you select no, you will be taken to the end of the form.</p>
<p>3. T Levels</p> <p>a. Which of the following T Levels will your institution deliver in AY 2026/2027 [list of 20 T Level</p>	<p>Indicate which T Level subjects you plan to deliver in 2026-2027 and 2027-2028.</p>

<p>subjects available in the Annex to this document]</p> <p>b. Which of the following T Levels will your institution deliver in AY 2027/28 [List of 20 T Level subjects available in the Annex of this document]</p> <p>c. How many students do you expect for each T Level you selected for academic year 2027 to 2028?</p> <p>d. Which of the following subjects do you plan to deliver qualifications of at least 1080 guided learning hours, that are not T Levels, in the academic year 2026 to 2027?</p> <p>e. [List of subjects - by Sector Subject Area - available in Annex of this document]</p> <p>f. Which of the following subjects do you plan to deliver qualifications of at least 1080 guided learning hours, that are not T Levels, in the academic year 2027 to 2028?</p> <p>g. [List of subjects by Sector Subject area]</p>	<p>Indicate which subjects you plan to deliver Legacy Technical Qualifications in 2026-2027 and in 2027-2028.</p> <p>Use the format: T Level name - number.</p> <p>For example, Health - 120; Science - 80; Digital data analytics - 45.</p> <p>Provide your best estimate by T Level subject, based on current plans and assumptions.</p> <p>These figures do not need to be exact.</p>
<p>4. Delivery of other Level 3 Pathways including V Levels</p> <p>a. Do you currently deliver vocational qualifications in any of the following subject areas?</p> <p>b. [List of V Level subject areas for AY 2027/28 delivery - available in the Annex of this document]</p> <p>b. Do you intend to deliver V Levels in any of these subject areas from the academic year 2027 to 2028?</p>	<p>Indicate whether you currently deliver qualifications in each of the listed V Level subject areas. This includes qualifications of all sizes at level 3.</p> <p>Then confirm whether you intend to deliver V Levels in these areas from AY 2027/28, when they are first made available.</p> <p>Please also confirm whether you plan to introduce, or expand delivery of, A Levels alongside V Levels, where this aligns with learner needs and your local curriculum strategy. This includes if you intend to increase the number of</p>

<p>c. [List of V Level subject areas for 2027 - 2028 delivery available in the Annex of this document]</p> <p>c. As a result of qualification reform, do you intend to start delivering, or to deliver more A Levels (alongside V Levels)? [Yes/no]</p>	<p>students studying A levels or intend to offer more A level subjects.</p>
<p>5. Delivery of reformed Level 2 Pathways - Level 2 Further Study Pathway and Occupational Pathway.</p> <p>a. Do you currently deliver Level 2 study programmes and/or qualifications that support progression to Level 3 or prepare students for employment at level 2 in the following subject areas? (List of Sector Subject areas available in Annex)</p> <p>b. Do you intend to deliver Level 2 Foundation Certificates as part of the Further Study Pathway from AY 2027/28? [List of L2 subject areas for Foundation Certificates available in Annex]</p> <p>c. Do you intend to deliver Level 2 Occupational Certificates (technical qualifications) from AY 2027/2028? (List L2 subject areas for Occupational Certificates available in Annex)</p>	<p>Indicate whether you currently deliver Level 2 study programmes, vocational or technical qualifications, and in which subject areas.</p> <p>Then confirm whether you intend to deliver reformed Level 2 Occupational Certificates (technical qualifications) and /or Foundation Certificates in the subject areas available from 2027.</p> <p>This will help us understand how institutions are planning their transition from legacy Level 2 provision.</p>
<p>6. Challenges with transition and preparedness</p> <p>What are the main challenges your institution faces in preparing for delivery of T Levels, V levels, Occupational Certificates (level 2) and Foundation Certificates (level 2)</p>	<p>Please identify the top two challenges your institution faces in preparing for delivery of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. T Levels 2. V Levels 3. Occupational Certificates (Level 2)

<p>For any qualifications you intend to deliver in 2027/28, are there risks that may prevent delivery going ahead as planned? If yes, What is the reason for your answer?</p> <p>c. Is your organisation already planning or taking steps to strengthen wider student support strategies in response to qualification reform e.g. course tutorship models for V levels between-year progression strategies for T levels, etc. If no, What is the reason for your answer?</p>	<p>4. Foundation Certifications (Level 2)</p> <p>Select from the list provided. This helps us identify where additional support may be needed.</p> <p>You will also be asked whether there are any risks to delivering planned qualifications in 2027/28, and to explain the reasons for your answer in a free-text box.</p>
<p>7. Communications and marketing of qualification offer</p> <p>a. Thinking about recruitment activity for the 2027/28 academic year, how does your institution or trust currently expect to frame its post-16 qualification offer in marketing and communications to prospective students?</p>	<p>Please answer these questions based on your institution or trust’s overall approach to marketing your post-16 offer for academic year 2027/28, from September 2026 onwards.</p> <p>Your responses should reflect how you intend to present reformed and legacy qualifications to prospective learners and parents/carers.</p>
<p>8.</p> <p>a. Please confirm that you/will you share your statement with your CEO/Chair of governing body</p> <p>b. Do you expect your board of governors to be actively engaged in considering your organisation’s strategic preparedness in response to qualification reform?</p>	<p>Indicate whether your completed statement has been, or will be, shared with your CEO or Chair of the Governing Body. This helps us understand the level of institutional oversight and senior engagement with the transition plan.</p>

Annex – list of qualifications/ subject areas

List of 20 current T level subjects (questions 3 a and b)

Route	T Level Subject
Agriculture, Environmental and Animal care	Agriculture, Land Management, and Production
	Animal Care
Business and Administration	Management and Administration
Construction	Design Surveying, and Planning
	Building Services Engineering
Creative and Design	Craft and Design
	Media, Broadcast, and Production
Digital	Digital Data Analytics
	Digital Software Development
	Digital Support and Security
Education and Childcare	Education and Childcare
Engineering and Manufacturing	Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing
	Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control
	Maintenance, Installation, and Repair for Engineering
Legal, Finance and Accounting	Accounting
	Finance
	Legal Services
Health and Science	Health
	Science
Sales, Marketing and Procurement	Marketing

Sector Subject Areas (question 3d)

- 1 - Health, Public Services and Care
- 2 - Science and Mathematics
- 3 - Agriculture, Horticulture and Animal Care
- 4 - Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies
- 5 - Construction, Planning and the Built Environment
- 6 – Digital Technology
- 7 - Retail and Commercial Enterprise
- 8 - Leisure, Travel and Tourism

9 - Arts, Media and Publishing

13 - Education and Training

15 - Business, Administration and Law

Sector Subject Areas (question 5a)

6 – Digital Technology

7.4- Hospitality and Catering

13- Education and Training

V Level subject areas available for AY 2027/28

- Accounting and Finance
- Digital Systems and Data
- Education

Foundation certificates available from AY 2027/28

- digital systems and data
- education and early years

Occupational certificates available from AY 2027/28:

- early years practitioner
- culinary skills
- hospitality

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