



Department
for Education

Post-16 Pathways Update

August 2026

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T-LEVELS

T Level results 2026

This is the fifth year of T Level awarding, with 19,665 students receiving results today. The overall pass rate is 92.6%, with over two thirds of students achieving a merit or above (68.9%). This means over 40,000 students have achieved their T Level since first awards in 2022, including three new subjects for the first time this year- Craft & Design, Animal Care & Management and Media, Broadcast & Production.

One of the things that sets T Levels apart from other technical qualifications is their crucial 45 day industry placement. This is where young people can truly experience their chosen field and prepare for the world of work. Around a quarter of those that get jobs afterwards, do so with their T Level industry placement employer. **It's great to see that 97.2% (19,113 students) of students from this year's cohort have completed their industry placement,** with some students still working towards completing their placement at a later date.

This is a huge accomplishment for these young people who have worked so hard over the past two years, supported by their fantastic schools and colleges. We are delighted that over 90% of the students from every completing cohort have now achieved their T Level.

Full breakdowns of this year's results can be viewed here.



T LEVELS WEEK 2026

T Levels Week is a key moment during the year when we celebrate the achievements of T Level providers, students and employers delivering industry placements. T

This year's T Levels Week will take place from **19-23 October**. Please mark the dates in your diaries and we'll be in touch later in the year with more details.



ACTION: Are your T Level details up to date?

Ahead of the new academic year, make sure your organisation and course details are up to date so students and employers can find your T Level courses.

[Click here to update your details](#)



CONTACT US

VISIT our provider webpages.

STAY INFORMED by signing up to our mailing list and share this link with colleagues so that they are up-to-date with news and information about qualifications reform.

CONTACT US via our email to make suggestions about what you would like to see in future newsletters.

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ACTION: DOWNLOAD OUR Post-16 Pathways resource pack

Deep Dive: making the most of the Post-16 Pathways support pack

To support the introduction of new post-16 pathways, we have developed a **Post-16 Pathways Resource Pack** for education and training providers and careers professionals.

Why these resources matter

The pack brings together a wide range of practical resources to help providers communicate with staff, students, parents and carers, employers, and other stakeholders. Designed to support communications, engagement activities and curriculum planning, the materials can be integrated into existing outreach and guidance programmes to build awareness and understanding of the post-16 qualifications landscape. The support pack provides ready-made communications, planning tools, presentations and engagement materials to help make conversations about post-16 pathways and qualifications more straightforward and consistent.

Technical and Vocational Qualifications (TVQ) Resource Pack



Supporting providers and careers development professionals to explain post-16 technical and vocational pathways to staff members, students, parents, employers and others interested in post-16 pathways.

What is included in the support pack?

- Information and guidance on post-16 pathways and qualifications, including T Levels, V Levels, Foundation Certificates and Occupational Certificates.
- New branding materials for Occupational Certificates, Foundation Certificates and V Levels.
- Resources for students, parents/carers and employers, including explainer leaflets, posters, template communications and frequently asked questions (FAQs).
- Materials for staff and careers professionals, including presentations, qualification explainers, pathway overviews and implementation resources.
- Student progression materials, featuring illustrative learner journeys and progression routes at Levels 2 and 3.
- Resources for higher education providers to support understanding of new qualifications and progression opportunities.
- Editable templates and communications assets that can be tailored to local audiences and settings.
- Planning, implementation and careers support materials, alongside provider guidance and T Level resources.
- Key policy publications and reform documents, including consultation responses, implementation plans and supporting information on post-16 qualifications reform.

NEW BRANDING

V LEVELS

FOUNDATION CERTIFICATES

OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES

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EXPLAINERS/POSTERS

What are V Levels?

V Levels are a new flagship vocational qualification that sit alongside A Levels and T Levels. They are designed for students who want vocational learning, real-world skills, and the flexibility to keep their options open. V Levels will be available from 2027.

What can you do with a V Level?
After studying a V Level, a student could progress into related higher education or work-based training, including apprenticeships.

Where do V Levels fit?
V Levels are level 3 qualifications, the same level as A Levels and T Levels.

Guide to V Levels

What do V Levels offer?

- A flexible, career-focused alternative at level 3: V Levels are broad, vocational qualifications (the same size as an A Level) that combine applied learning with sector-based knowledge, helping students explore careers without specialising too early.
- Build skills that employers and higher education value: Designed with employers and higher education, V Levels develop practical, transferable skills linked to real jobs, supporting strong progression into higher education or work-based training including apprenticeships.
- Clear, high-quality pathways for future success: V Levels can be taken as a full study programme or combined with other qualifications. They are designed so students can progress as successfully as with A Levels, giving clear and flexible routes to their next step.

SUBJECTS AVAILABLE IN 2027:
Accounting and Finance
Digital Systems and Data
Education

AVAILABLE FROM AUGUST 2027

Department for Education

POST-16 PATHWAYS

Who are V Levels for?

V Levels are ideal for students who:

- Want real-world skills without specialising too narrowly.
- Are aiming for higher education or work-based training and want applied learning.
- Want flexibility while exploring future career options.

V LEVELS

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POST-16 PATHWAYS

There's more than one way to succeed. Every young person is different and so is their path.

Apprenticeship Work based learning

T LEVELS
Technical option

A LEVELS
Academic option

V LEVELS
Vocational option

Occupational Certificates
(part of the Occupational Pathway)

Foundation Certificates
(part of the Further Study Pathway)

There isn't a best route, only the right one for you.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

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LEARNER JOURNEYS

FAQS

SUMMARY POSTERS



PARENT AND STUDENT FAQ

Your questions answered on Technical and Vocational qualifications including T Levels, V Levels and level 2 pathways.

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POST-16 PATHWAYS Available from 2027

Foundation Certificate: EDUCATION

Ideal for students who enjoy helping others learn, develop and succeed and are interested in working in educational settings.

What is this course?
 This course introduces students to teaching methods and education practice across various age groups and in different education settings. It is designed to prepare students interested in pursuing further study in education, early years or child development.

Skills you'll develop

- Communication
- Planning
- Organisation
- Teamwork
- Observation
- Decision making

You will learn how to:

- Plan learning activities
- Communicate with learners, families and professionals
- Support inclusion and participation for all learners
- Carry out risk assessments and promote safety
- Interpret assessment information to support student progress

Progression – this qualification can lead to:

- Education V Level
- T Level Education & Early Years
- Apprenticeships
- Further study in teaching, education, childcare or child development

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COMPARISON DOCUMENTS

SLIDE PACKS AND VIDEOS

OFFICIAL

Comparing level 2 and 3 post-16 pathways September 2031 onwards

Pathway	Academic (A Levels - Level 3)	Technical Occupational T Levels - Level 3	Vocational (V Levels - Level 3)	Work-based (Apprenticeships - Level 2/3)	Further Study (Foundation Certificate - Level 2)	Occupational Occupational Certificate - Level 2
Where would you study for these?	At a post-16 college (FE or Sixth form) or school based sixth form provision.	At a post-16 college (FE or Sixth form) or school based sixth form provision.	At a post-16 college (FE or Sixth form) or school based sixth form provision.	Work for an employer and part-time study.	At a post-16 college (FE or Sixth form) or school based sixth form provision.	At a post-16 college (FE or Sixth form) or school based sixth form provision.
Main focus	Academic study to support progression to higher education.	Employer-designed to prepare for skilled employment or further study.	Vocational qualification with applied learning and practical assessment with core knowledge and understanding - content linked to occupational standards set by Skills England.	Job-specific training in the workplace with part-time study.	Provides a broad mix of vocational knowledge and practical skills, alongside English/Maths support and preparation for advanced learning.	Designed to help students gain the technical skills, knowledge and employability, with support in English/Maths.
Assessment type	Primarily examination but some subjects include non-examined assessment (NEA).	Core typically 2 hr written exams and externally set project in controlled conditions) and the Occupational Specialist (externally set project style assessment).	To be confirmed - Ofqual consultation on regulatory requirements is live and will close on the 2 July 2026. It covers how the qualifications must be designed, assessed, and awarded.	End point assessment.	To be confirmed - Ofqual consultation on regulatory requirements is live and will close on the 2 July 2026. It covers how the qualifications must be designed, assessed, and awarded.	To be confirmed - Ofqual consultation on regulatory requirements is live and will close on the 2 July 2026. It covers how the qualifications must be designed, assessed, and awarded.
Length of study	Usually 2 years full-time study.	2 years full-time study.	2 years full-time study.	Usually 1-2 years.	1 year full-time study.	2 years full-time study.
Study/training focused	Classroom-based.	80% classroom-based, some with workshops, labs and specialist settings, 20% industry placement.	Classroom-based.	Work-based, while studying for a qualification (training and study accounts for at least 20% of normal working hours).	Classroom-based.	Classroom-based, some with workshops, labs and other specialist settings.
What could they lead to?	Progression to Higher Education (Undergraduate degree/ HTQ), or an apprenticeship.	Progression to skilled employment, higher education (Undergraduate degree/ HTQ), or a higher-level apprenticeship.	Progression to higher-level study (Undergraduate degree/ HTQ), or work-based training including an apprenticeship.	Progression to skilled employment, higher education (Undergraduate degree/ HTQ), or a higher-level apprenticeship.	Progression to level 3 study: V Levels, T Levels or A Levels, or an apprenticeship.	Primarily progression to skilled employment or an apprenticeship.

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*This does not include other qualifications such as GCSEs, International Baccalaureate Diploma, Access to HE Diploma, Core Maths, Extended Project Qualifications, Performing Arts Graded Examinations, Advanced Extension Awards, Level 3 NVQ and Level 3 ESOL.

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Post-16 Pathways: Implementation Plan and Strategic Transition Planning Statement

Technical and Vocational Qualifications Directorate, Department for Education

June 2026

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[DOWNLOAD TODAY](#)



SOCIAL MEDIA CONTENT

POST-16 PATHWAYS

What are V Levels?



V Levels are a new flagship vocational qualification for 16–18 year olds that sit alongside T Levels and A Levels.



Designed for students who want vocational learning, real-world skills, and the flexibility to keep their options open.

V LEVELS

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



POST-16 PATHWAYS

Who is the Occupational Certificate for?

The Occupational Certificate is suited to students who:

- Know what kind of job or career they want to work towards.
- Want a clear and structured route into employment.
- Would like to build English and maths skills.
- Would benefit from two years of support to develop skills, confidence and workplace readiness.



OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES



POST-16 PATHWAYS

What is a Foundation Certificate?



The Foundation Certificate supports progression to V Levels, T Levels and A Levels. Designed to give students time to build knowledge, skills and confidence so you are ready for level 3 study.



Get ready for A Levels, V Levels or T Levels

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

FOUNDATION CERTIFICATES



How you can use the resources

The resources can be used across a range of activities and audiences, including:

- Curriculum planning, careers programmes and tutorials.
- One-to-one careers advice and guidance.
- Open evenings, recruitment and transition events.
- Parent engagement and information sessions.
- Staff briefings, induction and training.
- Governor updates and curriculum discussions.
- School-college partnerships and careers hub activities.
- Websites, social media and learner communications.
- Employer engagement and work experience planning.
- Raising awareness of qualification reforms and supporting informed choices.

The Post-16 Pathways Resource Pack is available to download and share, helping providers access the information and resources they need to support students, families, staff and employers as the qualifications landscape evolves. It will also be updated at regular intervals to ensure that it reflects the most up to date information.

DOWNLOAD TODAY



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CONTENT PUBLISHED FOR THE FIRST V LEVELS AND LEVEL 2 QUALIFICATIONS

On 16th July, we published the subject content for the first V Levels, Foundation Certificates and Occupational Certificates in:

V Levels:

- Accounting and Finance
- Digital Systems and Data
- Education

Foundation Certificates:

- Digital Systems and Data
- Education

Occupational Certificates:

- Early Years Practitioner
- Culinary Skills
- Hospitality

The subject content has been set following a 6-week publication consultation. It sets out the national requirements for these first subjects, including on technical knowledge, understanding and skills, and will provide the framework for awarding organisations to create the detailed qualification specifications. The new qualifications will be taught to 16–19-year-olds from September 2027.

[Click here for further details and links to the published content.](#)

[Download posters showing summaries of the subject content.](#)

We have also **finalised our list of qualifications** that will have 16–19 funding approval removed from 1st August 2027, alongside policy statements in relation to continued funding for Access to HE Diplomas for those aged 18 and above, and the continued funding of large qualifications in Land and Wildlife Management and in Countryside Management whilst we scope out the potential for a new T Level in Habitat management.

POST-16 PATHWAYS

Available from 2027

V Level: DIGITAL SYSTEMS AND DATA

Ideal for students who enjoy technology, problem solving and using digital tools to improve the way people and organisations work.

What is this course?
A practical and applied digital qualification designed to develop knowledge and skills in data, cyber security, systems and digital solutions.

Skills you'll develop

- Data analysis
- Cyber security awareness
- Technical problem solving
- Critical thinking
- Collaboration
- Professional communication

You will learn how to:

- Analyse and present data to support decision making
- Identify and respond to cyber security threats
- Configure, test and maintain digital systems
- Design digital solutions to meet user needs
- Work responsibly with AI and emerging technologies

Progression – this qualification can lead to:

- University courses in Computing, IT or Data Science
- Higher or Degree Apprenticeships
- After further study, IT-related careers

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V LEVELS

POST-16 PATHWAYS

Available from 2027

Occupational Certificate: EARLY YEARS PRACTITIONER

Ideal for students who enjoy working with babies and young children and want a direct route into the early years sector.

What is this course?
A career-focused qualification that prepares students to work with babies and young children in early years settings such as nurseries, pre-schools and reception classes.

Practical experience
Includes significant workplace experience to help build real-world skills and confidence.

Skills you'll develop

- Communication and teamwork
- Caring and professional behaviour
- Problem solving
- Observation skills
- Responsibility

You will learn about:

- Child development from birth to age 5
- Safeguarding and child protection
- Working with families and professionals
- Environmental sustainability in childcare
- Responding appropriately to first-aid situations
- Supporting learning through play

Progression – this qualification can lead to:

- Employment as an Early Years Practitioner
- Careers supporting children's learning and development
- Apprenticeships in the early years sector

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OCCUPATIONAL CERTIFICATES

POST-16 PATHWAYS

Available from 2027

Foundation Certificate: DIGITAL SYSTEMS AND DATA

Ideal for students who enjoy technology and want a practical introduction to digital skills before progressing to level 3 study.

What is this course?
Are you interested in technology, data, cyber security and programming? This course introduces the key skills used in today's digital world and helps prepare you for further study at level 3.

Skills you'll develop

- Digital systems literacy
- Data interpretation
- Problem solving
- Communication
- Planning and self-management
- Evaluating and investigating using digital online tools

You will learn how to:

- Work with data in a digital context
- Configure and secure digital systems
- Plan, test and develop simple programs
- Set up hardware and software components and systems
- Research digital information and make evidence-based recommendations

Progression – this qualification can lead to:

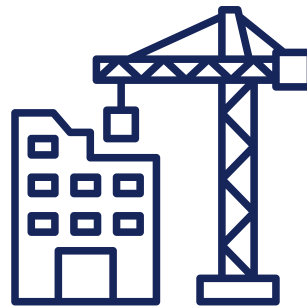
- Digital Systems & Data V Level
- Digital T Levels
- A Level Computer Science
- Apprenticeships
- Careers in IT, cyber security, software development and data analysis

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ACTION: CHANGES TO THE CONSTRUCTION SCHEME CERTIFICATION SCHEME (CSCS) INDUSTRY PLACEMENT CARD



The CSCS Industry Placement Card helps students access construction sites as part of their industry placement. For some occupational specialisms in construction, students may require a CSCS card to access sites and undertake placement activities.

Providers play an important role in supporting eligible students with applications for Industry Placement Cards and should ensure they are following the latest CSCS requirements. It is important that students apply for the card scheme relevant to the construction pathway being followed.

Providers should:

- review the updated Industry Placement Card requirements on the CSCS website
- check the latest CSCS guidance on accepted health and safety qualifications and assessments
- ensure staff involved in industry placements are aware of the changes
- continue to support eligible students to apply for the appropriate card where this is required for access to construction sites and industry placements

For the latest information on eligibility requirements, accepted health and safety qualifications and how to apply, providers should refer directly to the CSCS website.

[CSCS Industry Placement Card](#)

[The CSCS Industry Placement card – T Levels support for schools and colleges](#)

[Specific requirements in the Construction skill area – T Levels and industry placement support for employers](#)

[CITB Funding and Support](#)

UPDATE: MORE MEDICAL SCHOOLS OPENING ROUTES FOR T LEVEL STUDENTS

Progression opportunities from Health T Level



Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) is recruiting T Level students to both its new Medicine with Gateway Year programme and its standard five-year medicine course, creating additional progression opportunities into medicine for T Level students. Simon Cork at ARU continues to engage with other medical schools on T Levels, with further updates expected later this year.

In addition, Keele University, the University of Leicester and the University of East Anglia (UEA) now accept applications from T Level students to their Medicine with Gateway/Foundation Year programmes. These six-year programmes include an additional foundation year before students can progress onto the medical degree.

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UPDATES FROM GATSBY CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Gatsby congratulate all students receiving their results today and recognise the dedication of the teachers and colleagues in providers who have supported students throughout their studies.

As preparations continue for the new academic year, teachers can find free, quality-assured, classroom-ready T Level teaching resources, plus communities of practice that currently support over 1,600 teachers across all routes, here:

www.technicaleducationnetworks.org.uk



Celebrating student success

Wondering 'what's next' for your students? Gatsby Charitable Foundation have produced a range of case studies showcasing student progression pathways post-T Level. Hear from T Level graduates across a range of subjects and destinations:

<https://www.technicaleducationnetworks.org.uk/destinations/>

NEW RESOURCE Rotational Industry Placements

This new section of the NHS Employers upscaling guide explores how a rotational industry placement can raise career awareness, increase capacity and improve the placement offer. It includes sections exploring the benefits and practical considerations as well as examples of rotational placements in action.

Introducing a rotational industry placement offer



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EDUCAS update

Free classroom resources on Employer Set Project and Practical Mathematics for Building Services Engineering T Level teachers.

Free teaching resources for T Level Building Services Engineering are now available on Gatsby's Technical Education Networks (TEN) website. The new resources focus on Employer Set Project and Practical Maths and are free, classroom-ready, and quality assured by awarding bodies – making them a really useful addition for anyone delivering the T Level. You can access them [here](#).



Occupational specialism in Low Carbon Heating Engineering

Launching in September 2026, the Occupational Specialism in Low Carbon Heating Engineering will equip students with the skills needed to work confidently with modern, sustainable heating technologies. The qualification focuses on the installation, commissioning, and maintenance of systems such as heat pumps and low temperature heating solutions, combining hands on training with industry aligned technical knowledge. This new pathway supports the UK's transition to low carbon heating and ensures students are ready for the emerging demands of the sector. For more information, please visit the [Eduqas T Level website](#).

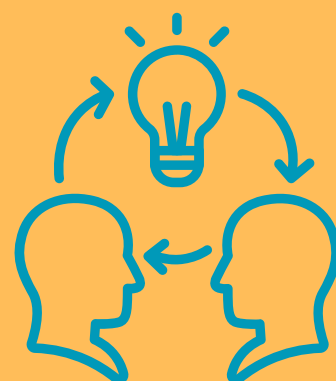


NCFE update

Congratulations to all your T Level students receiving their results today – we look forward to hearing about how they have used this qualification to progress to their next steps.

If you'd like to share any success stories with NCFE, please contact us via marketing@ncfe.org.uk.

As we look ahead to the new academic year, remember that you can [sign up to the upcoming Education and Early Years T Level events and webinars with NCFE's Provider Development team](#).



Pearson update

[Vocational Qualifications Bulletin July 2026](#)
[T Levels July 2026 update](#)

Ofqual Qualifications Reform hub

Ofqual have [created a hub on gov.uk](#) to hold information about qualifications reform in a single place.



Visit it here: [Qualification Reform Hub](#)

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Become a Voice for Technical Education: Join the T Level Ambassador Network

The T Level Ambassador Network (TAN) is inviting passionate providers to step forward and become ambassadors. You can play a key role in raising awareness, strengthening partnerships, and influencing the future of T Levels.

What is the T Level Ambassador Network? – The TAN is a vibrant national and regional community made up of dedicated employers and education providers. Together, they work collaboratively to promote T Levels, share best practice, and build stronger connections between education and industry.

Why become a T Level Provider Ambassador?

Joining TAN as a Provider Ambassador brings a range of professional and organisational benefits, you can:

- Elevate your organisation's profile at both a local and national level
- Build and strengthen relationships with employers and key stakeholders
- Gain access to peer support, learning and sharing with other providers
- Choose your level of involvement, ensuring flexibility to suit your capacity
- Be part of a respected and influential network driving real change

Support to help you succeed

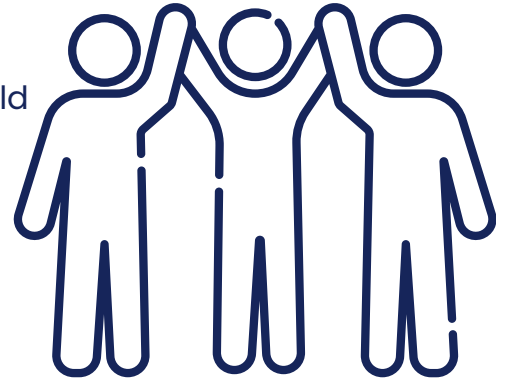
As a T Level Provider Ambassador, you won't be on your own. The network provides a wealth of support and resources designed to help you maximise your impact, including:

- A dedicated Regional Coordinator to guide and support your journey
- Access to practical resources, guidance, and marketing toolkits
- Regular updates and engagement opportunities within the network
- Invitations to exclusive webinars and events
- A digital ambassador badge and access to a LinkedIn support community
- The TAN Mobile App to log your activity and track your impact

Joining the T Level Ambassador Network is more than a professional opportunity, it's a chance to make a meaningful difference in technical education and employer engagement.

Become an ambassador today and help shape the future of T Levels – **[Join the T Level Ambassador Network](#)**

Are you ready to champion technical education and help shape the future workforce?



SIGN UP!



JOIN
TODAY

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