

Your essential guide to T levels



What are T levels?

T levels are new 2 year study programmes primarily aimed at 16-18 learners, including a technical qualification which may be taught in a classroom, workshop or simulated work environment.

These level 3 programmes will equip young people with the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to enter skilled employment in a particular occupation, or to continue to study that technical subject at a higher level.

T levels will start to be introduced by the government in 2020 as a phased approach (see timeline), and are currently being collaboratively developed by the Department for Education (DfE), the Institute for Apprenticeships (IfA), education providers and employers.

What occupations will they apply to?

The introduction of T levels follows the [‘Sainsbury Review’](#) of technical education, which recommended grouping technical education options by the skills required to work in 15 different industries.

T levels will be available in these industries:



agriculture, environment and animal care



business and administration



catering and hospitality



childcare and education



construction



creative and design



digital



engineering and manufacturing



hair and beauty



health and science



legal, finance and accounting.

Routes intended to be delivered through apprenticeships:



protective services



social care



sales, marketing and procurement



transport and logistics.

What's in a T level?

T levels will offer learners a mixture of classroom-based learning and 'on-the-job' experience.

Programmes will include a technical qualification, a substantial work placement, as well as English, maths and digital content.

Technical Qualifications

The content of the technical qualification will be based on the same occupational standards as apprenticeships, with their content defined by employers and others.

Awarding organisations will have to tender to offer the technical qualification for each occupational cluster.

Work placement

T level study programmes must contain a meaningful work placement with an employer lasting between 45-60 days.

Different ways of carrying out work placements are being piloted to see which work best for specific industries and providers. DfE will confirm how work placements should be delivered, and review and confirm proposed target standards for work placements, once these pilots have been completed.

Specialist skills

Specialist skills for the chosen industry or occupation will be based on the standards for apprenticeships, but will be delivered in a 'classroom-based' environment including, for example, workshops and simulated working environments. T level learners will aim to achieve 'threshold competence', which will provide evidence of achievement in work-specific skills that shows they can work in their chosen industry.

Structure, assessment and grading

The structure, assessment and grading for T level courses was part of a recent government consultation, which has now closed.

DfE is analysing the consultation feedback and is due to publish its response in the spring. Current proposals for structure, assessment and grading, as well as updates for education providers can be found on the government's [Introduction of T levels](#) policy page, where the consultation responses will also be published when available.



How will T levels work with other level 3 study programmes?

T levels will become one of 3 major options when a learner reaches level 3, alongside apprenticeships and A levels.

When they complete a T level study programme, learners will be able to choose between moving into:

- a skilled occupation
- higher or degree level apprenticeships
- higher level technical study, including higher education.

DfE will be reviewing which qualifications it should fund at level 3, and intends to engage with interested parties throughout the design of the review.

When will they be introduced?

T levels will be introduced over 3 years, starting from the 2020-21 academic year, with all pathways from all routes available by 2022. Check out our timeline infographic for further information.

How will they be funded?

The DfE has committed additional funding specifically for T levels – rising to an extra £500m per year.

The additional funding recognises that T levels will give learners more learning time than many current technical education options – in some cases an increase of 50%.

Getting involved

The government wants to understand more about the type of support providers need to make the introduction of T levels successful, and will be running 3 surveys in the spring.

You can find out more on the [government website](#).

