

POST-16 TECHNICAL EDUCATION OPTIONS



There are various technical education options available to consider after Year 11. The table below sets out the differences between two popular technical education pathways for young people and provides links to where you can find out more information.

	 Apprenticeships	T-LEVELS THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION
DESCRIPTION	A job Apprenticeships provide paid employment while gaining qualifications and experience in the chosen field. Mainly based in the workplace with paid time for Off-The-Job Training.	A course T Levels are a mainly classroom-based technical qualification (80% of the time) with industry placement experience included (20% of the time).
FULL OR PART TIME?	Typically full-time but can be part-time by exception.	Typically full-time during term-time.
AGE RANGE	16+ (no upper age limit).	16-19 years.
DURATION	The apprenticeship standard will set out the expected duration of the apprenticeship, with a new minimum duration of 8 months being introduced from 1st August 2025 for some apprenticeships.	2 years (there is also an optional one-year foundation year).
WHEN CAN YOU START?	Throughout the year.	Usually a September intake.
LEVELS	From level 2 through to level 7, but level 2 and 3 are suitable after GCSEs.	Equivalent to a level 3 qualification or 3 A-levels.
ADDITIONAL SKILLS GAINED	Industry knowledge, skills and behaviours, plus sector recognised certification.	Industry recognised certification and workplace experience.

Learn more about apprenticeships and technical education
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ENGLISH, MATHS AND DIGITAL SKILLS	Apprentices aged 16-18 will work towards the attainment of maths and English if they have not already achieved grade 4 at GCSE. There are exceptions for learners holding an EHCP or requiring additional support. For apprentices over 19, the requirement to pass English and maths functional skills qualifications to complete their apprenticeship has been removed, although for some apprenticeships this will still be required.	Students will be required to work towards the attainment of maths and English if they have not already achieved grade 4 at GCSE. However, it is no longer required that they achieve either a grade 4 in English and maths GCSE or level 2 in functional skills to pass their programme.
WORK EXPERIENCE ELEMENT?	No, as it is a paid job.	Minimum of 315 hours unpaid industry placement.
HOW ARE THEY ASSESSED?	The apprentice will be observed, hold discussions and complete written work for the training provider who will grade the work. At the end of the apprenticeship, the apprentice will be required to complete an End Point Assessment. The government is reviewing the way that EPA is conducted, making it more streamlined and simplified.	T Level students will be assessed through exams and an employer-set project related to the subject they are studying. The project will be assessed by the awarding organisation. Students will then gain a nationally recognised certificate which will show their overall grade and a breakdown of what they achieved.
HOW ARE THEY GRADED?	Pass, Merit, Distinction Some apprenticeships will also include eligibility for professional recognition by an authorised body.	Pass, Merit, Distinction, Distinction* If not all of the elements are met, they will receive a statement of achievement.

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ENTRY REQUIREMENTS	Entry requirements are decided by employers with guidance from their training provider and vary in the same way they do for any job. Some apprenticeships will require qualifications, but many employers do not, and will prefer to recruit based on the potential of the individual.	Each educational provider sets their own entry requirements, but many ask for a minimum of 5 GCSEs (grades 4-9).
SALARY	Employer sets the salary. Paid at least the National Minimum Wage for apprentices .	Unpaid.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	Apprentice will receive employee benefits and annual leave.	The provider may provide discretionary financial support.
ARE THEY INCLUDED ON THE UCAS TARIFF?	It will depend on the qualifications included within the apprenticeship standard.	Yes.
NEXT STEPS / PROGRESSION PATHWAY	Higher or degree apprenticeships, further education, professional qualifications or employment.	Apprenticeships, further education or employment.
HOW TO FIND OUT MORE	amazingapprenticeships.com/apprenticeships	amazingapprenticeships.com/t-levels

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