T Levels

Department for Education
Background to the Sainsbury Panel review

The Independent Panel on Technical Education was tasked with advising Ministers on actions to improve the quality of technical education in England.

A compelling case for change

- A confusing multitude of qualifications and issues with the market-based approach to qualifications
- Conclusions were underpinned by substantial research and analysis

The Panel recommended comprehensive reform

- The development of 15 technical routes to skilled employment
- The development of new flagship technical education programmes to sit within these routes – T Levels
- A radical streamlining of existing technical qualifications, aiming to simplify the system for students and employers
- Government accepted all of their recommendations and we are now on track to deliver the first three T Levels for teaching from September 2020
In future, young people will be able to make a clear choice at 16 – whether to pursue an academic or technical path.

### Academic

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A levels</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-based qualifications delivered over 2 years by school sixth-forms, sixth-form colleges and FE colleges</td>
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**Purpose:** To prepare students for higher education

### Technical

<table>
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<th>T Levels</th>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom based programmes delivered over 2 years by an FE provider (80% in the classroom and 20% on the job)</td>
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<th>Apprenticeships</th>
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<tr>
<td>Work based training for a minimum of 12 months (80% on the job and 20% off the job e.g. in an FE college)</td>
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**Purpose:** To prepare students for entry into skilled employment (including higher level apprenticeships), either immediately or after higher levels of technical education (L4+)
What is a T Level?

- T Levels are **new two year, level 3 technical education courses** coming in September 2020.

- They will follow GCSEs and will be roughly **equivalent in size to 3 A levels**.

- T Levels have been **developed in collaboration with employers** and businesses so that the content meets the needs of industry and prepares students for work.

- T Levels will offer students a mixture of classroom learning (80%) and ‘on-the-job’ experience (20%) during an **industry placement of a minimum of 45 days**.

- They will provide the **knowledge and experience** needed to open the door into skilled employment, further study or a higher apprenticeship.
What makes T Levels different from previous reforms to technical education?

- T Levels are part of a comprehensive reform of technical education, alongside apprenticeships and the National Retraining Scheme.
- We want T Levels to be part of a long-term solution to ensure that employers get the skilled workers they need for future prosperity.
- Rather than adding new qualifications to an already complex system, the ultimate aim of these reforms is to simplify the qualification landscape.
- The purpose of T Levels is clear – we are not attempting to achieve multiple goals across vocational and academic education.
- T Levels are designed by reference to the world’s best technical education systems, with much longer hours than other qualifications, a meaningful industry placement, and the inclusion of English, maths and digital skills.
- In contrast to previous reforms, we are directly involving employers in the development of T Levels, and they are setting out the knowledge, skills and behaviours required for each occupational area.
T Level programme

1800 hours\(^1\) over two years (with flexibility).

TQ outline content is set by T Level panels and approved by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

**Technical Qualification (TQ)**

*Between 900-1400 hours*

**Core**

20% - 50% of the total TQ time

- Knowledge and understanding of the concepts, theories and principles relevant to the T Level and the broader route
- Core skills relevant to the T Level
- Assessed through an external examination and a substantial, employer-set project

**Occupational specialisms (min. 1 per TQ)**

50% - 80% of the total TQ time

- Knowledge, skills and behaviours required to achieve the level of competence in an occupational specialism needed to enter skilled employment
- Maths, English and digital skills integrated where they are necessary to achieve competence
- Assessed synoptically through rigorous practical assignments.

**T Level Industry Placement**

Between 315-420 hours

- Undertaken with an external employer
- Minimum of 45 days
- Students develop technical skills and apply their knowledge in a workplace environment
- Provider should pay for/contribute to travel and subsistence costs, if not covered by the employer
- Employers not expected to pay students

**Maths and English requirements**

- Students are expected to achieve a level 2 in maths and English. This can be achieved through GCSEs (grade 4 and above) or level 2 Functional Skills (pass)
- T Level panels are free to set higher maths and English requirements, where necessary

**Other requirements set by T Level panels**

- Occupation-specific requirements included, where possible, if they are essential for skilled employment e.g. licence to practice qualification or professional registration

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Including 150 hours (on average) for Employability, Enrichment & Pastoral (EEP) provision.
T Level Development

- The introduction of T Levels is a **major Government change** programme comprising several work streams.

- We have learnt the **lessons from previous reforms** and there are clear reasons as to why T Levels are well placed to succeed.

- **Key delivery partners** are Further Education providers and employers – as well as the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, Ofsted and Ofqual.

- **Co-design and consultation** are key – we have consulted widely during the development of T Levels and continue to ‘reality check’ with key partners along the way.

- **T Levels will be offered under a single licence.** Following a procurement process, the successful awarding organisations who will develop the first three T Level qualifications were announced on 12th February.
Employers: T Level Panels

- T Level panels are made up of employers, professional bodies and providers. They are managed by the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education.

- The panels set out the knowledge, skills and behaviour required to perform skilled occupations in their industry – ensuring that T Levels will be relevant and hold real value in the workplace.

- Panels use the approved standards which are common to apprenticeships as the basis for outline T Level content. They also advise on specific maths, English and digital skills requirements necessary for occupational competence.
Employers: Industry Placements

- All T Level students will be required to undertake a meaningful and relevant **industry placement of around 45 days**

- Industry placements will give students the opportunity to **apply their learning in the classroom to a real life working environment**

- **Industry placements have to be occupationally specific** and focussed on developing the practical and technical skills required for the profession or trade for which a student is studying

- **Employers will be involved in defining the learning objectives** so that the workplace learning reflects current industry requirements and the set tasks are relevant

- The students’ experience will be very much ‘**hands on**’ - so they are in a better position to enter skilled work
T Level Delivery

- The first three T Levels to be delivered in September 2020 will be Digital, Education & Childcare and Construction.

- We are starting initial delivery in 2020 with a small number of high-performing providers so that we can provide them with the support they need.

- In January we launched the ‘expressions of interest process’ for providers to deliver T Levels in 2021 and will announce the selected providers in June 2019.

- A further seven T Levels will be delivered in 2021, completing the rollout of the Digital and Construction routes and introducing courses from the Health and Science route.

- The remaining 15 T Levels in Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care; Business and Administrative; Catering and Hospitality; Creative and Design; Engineering and Manufacturing; Hair and Beauty; Legal, Finance and Accounting will be rolled out from 2022 onwards – details to be confirmed in due course.
Rollout of T Levels from 2020 onwards

- Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care Route
  - Animal Care and Management
  - Agriculture, Land Management and Production

- Business and Administrative Route
  - Human Resources
  - Management and Administration

- Catering and Hospitality Route
  - Catering
  - Design, Surveying and Planning

- Construction Route
  - Onsite Construction
  - Building Services Engineering
  - Design, Surveying and Planning

- Creative and Design Route
  - Craft and Design
  - Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions
  - Media, Broadcast and Production

- Digital Route
  - Digital Support and Services
  - Digital Business Services
  - Digital Production, Design and Development

- Education and Childcare Route
  - Education

- Engineering and Manufacturing Route
  - Manufacturing and Process
  - Design, Development and Control
  - Maintenance, Installation and Repair

- Hair and Beauty Route
  - Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics

- Health and Science Route
  - Science
  - Healthcare Science
  - Health

T Levels for 2020 delivery
T Levels for 2021 delivery
T Levels for delivery in 2022 onwards (rollout to be confirmed)
T Level Funding and Support for Providers

- **T Levels will be backed by additional investment** of £500m per year once fully rolled out. In November 2018 we launched a consultation on how funding will be distributed to providers from the 2020/21 academic year.

- In January we launched a **£38 million capital fund** to support the initial roll-out of T Levels from September 2020.

- We have allocated nearly **£60 million** to providers to help them build their capacity to deliver industry placements.

- We are also investing **£5m into the National Apprenticeship Service** to raise awareness and promote industry placements.

- We are investing up to £20m over the two years to March 2020 to support providers as they prepare for the introduction of T Levels – including **£8m for a new bespoke T Level Professional Development Programme**, led by the Education and Training Foundation.
T Levels – Strategic Communication Plan

- Our T Level communications campaign will launch in 2019, ensuring that parents, teachers, students and the wider public know about T Levels and where they fit among other choices after GCSEs. This will aim to:
  - **Raise awareness** of T Levels, what they are, where they can lead and how they fit in with other 16+ choices.
  - **Increase understanding** of how T Levels fit with wider technical education reform
  - **Build confidence** and create positive perceptions of T Levels and technical education

- This will be **implemented in a phased approach**, taking account of estimated student numbers and key decision making times:

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<tr>
<th>Phase 1 (2018-19):</th>
<th>Increasing audience insight, developing our branding strategy, direct content delivered to parents, young people, employers and FE providers</th>
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<td>Phase 2 (2019-2021):</td>
<td>Supporting launch and rollout in the early adopter areas through advertising / social media channels, ramping up each year</td>
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<td>Phase 3 (2021 onwards):</td>
<td>Communications will be significantly increased to target a wider group of young people, providers and employers</td>
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T Levels context

There are a number of other changes being made to technical education which are related to T Levels and will have an impact on their delivery:

- A **transition offer** will prepare students to successfully move onto a T Level, targeted at young people who are not ready to start a T Level at age 16, but who can realistically achieve it by age 19.

- We have committed to carrying out a **review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below**, excluding A levels and GCSEs. The aim is to simplify the current qualification landscape so that all qualifications meet 3 principles: to have a distinct purpose, to be good quality and to support progression to good outcomes.

- Progression from T Levels – we are **reforming higher technical education** and expect to publish proposals (Levels 4/5) for formal consultation in 2019.

- **Making informed choices** – we are providing training to make sure that Careers Leaders and careers professionals are equipped to provide advice and guidance on T levels to young people.
Next Steps to the launch of T Levels

- We continue to work closely with the selected 2020 providers to ensure they have the support they need for first teaching
- We will announce the selected providers to deliver T Levels in 2021 in June 2019
- Building on our work to promote T Levels, communications will ramp up each year as more T Levels are introduced and student numbers increase
- We will work with the Education and Training Foundation as they develop and rollout the professional development programme for teachers of T Levels
- We will continue to implement the extensive programme of support for industry placements
- In January, the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education assumed responsibility for approving the content and procurement for T Levels and DfE will continue to work with industry and awarding organisations as the T Level roll out continues