

What's the difference between T Levels, traineeships and apprenticeships?

There are various options available to young people once they have finished Year 11 at school. The table below sets out the differences between three popular pathways and provides links of where you can find out more information.

	T Levels 	Traineeships 	Apprenticeships 
Description	A mainly classroom based technical qualification (80% of the time) with industry placement experience included (20% of the time).	A skills development programme to support individuals with their employability skills through a mix of classroom based and workplace delivery.	Typically full time paid employment while gaining qualifications in the chosen field. Mainly based in the workplace with 20% off-the-job training.
Age Range	16-19	16-24* (*25 with a EHC)	16+ (no upper age limit)
Duration	2 years (there is also an optional 1-year transition programme)	6 weeks – 12 months	12 months + depending on the level, the experience of the apprentice and the delivery model.
When can you start?	Usually September intake	Throughout the year	Throughout the year
Level	Equivalent to a Level 3 qualification or 3 A Levels	Typically contains qualifications at level 1 or 2	Includes levels 2 through to level 7 (master's)
English, Maths and Digital skills	If not already achieved, then students would need to achieve GCSE or Functional Skills maths and English.	If grade 4 has not been achieved in maths and English they will continue to be on the programme, but they will not be required to sit the exams.	If grade 4 at GCSE has not been achieved, then functional skills at the appropriate level will be incorporated into the apprenticeship
Additional skills gained	Industry recognised certification and workplace experience.	Employability skills and workplace experience.	Industry knowledge, skills and behaviours, plus sector recognised certification.
Work experience	Minimum of 315 hours industry placement unpaid	A high-quality work placement of at least 70 hours	Full time paid employment which includes 20% paid off-the-job time too.

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How are they assessed?	All elements of the T Level are assessed and graded by the training provider. All elements must be passed for the student to receive their overall grade.	At the end of the traineeship the trainee will have an 'interview experience'. Strengths and development areas are identified to help them progress. Observations, discussions and assessments will be carried out throughout the programme.	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 apprenticeships the apprentice will be required to complete an End Point Assessment.
How are they graded	Pass, Merit, Distinction Distinction* If not all elements are met, they will receive a statement of achievement	Traineeships are not graded.	Pass, Merit Distinction
Salary	Unpaid	Unpaid	Paid at least the National Minimum Wage for apprentices
Additional information	The provider may provide discretionary financial support.	Maybe eligible for travel, meal, and childcare costs	In addition to their salary, the apprentice will receive the company's rewards and annual leave.
Are they included on the UCAS tariff?	Yes	No	It will depend on the qualifications included within the apprenticeship standard.
What are the entry requirements?	These are set by the college, school or other learning provider and will vary across courses.	There are no entry requirements however to be eligible to participate in the programme the individual should not hold a qualification at level 4 or above.	These are set by the employer and/ or stipulated in the Apprenticeship Standard and will vary across different job roles.

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Are they suitable for students with additional needs?	Yes. There are flexibilities around the English and maths requirement and the industry placement to help students with SEND take part.	Yes	Yes. There are flexibilities around the English and maths requirements of apprenticeships and the employer and training provider can access additional support to assist apprentices.
Next steps / progression pathway	Apprenticeships, Further Education, employment	Apprenticeships or employment	Higher/degree apprenticeships, professional quals' and employment.
How to find a	T Level https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/	Traineeships https://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship	Apprenticeship https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship