

What's new in T-LEVELS?

Key things careers professionals need to know

T Levels are evolving, with new subjects, updated occupational specialisms and more flexible delivery arrangements coming over the next few years. These changes aim to strengthen quality, widen access and give students clearer, more manageable pathways. Below is an overview of five key updates, plus simple messages you can share directly with students, colleagues, parents and carers.

What's new?

How to explain the changes

Two new T Levels in Social Care and Sport will be available to students from September 2028.



The T Level in Sport will be built around real job roles in the industry, including careers such as high-performance coaching and personal training. The detail of the occupational specialisms will be confirmed once providers and employers have been consulted.

The T Level in Social Care will be based on the skills needed to be a Lead Adult Care Worker. It will include a specialism focused on Adult Social Care, helping students prepare for roles supporting adults in different care settings.

There are 7 T Level subject areas currently being considered for development for 2029 and 2030.



Subjects for 2029 and 2030 will be confirmed after more testing and planning. Final confirmation will come in early 2027 for new T Level subjects starting in 2029 and by September 2027 for the following year. The subjects being considered are:

2029

- Catering & Hospitality
- Expansion of Creative & Design
- Expansion of Agriculture & Land Management and Animal Care & Management
- Hair and Beauty
- Protective Services

2030

- Art & Performing Arts
- Travel & Tourism

The T Level in Finance is being withdrawn, with the final cohort commencing from September 2026.



The T Level in Finance is being withdrawn. Students interested in careers in the finance sector can consider a T level in Accounting or in Management and Administration.

A V Level in Accounting and Finance will also be introduced from September 2027, offering a high-quality, albeit smaller, qualification with broad transferable knowledge.



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Occupational specialisms

Occupational specialisms for each T Level are reviewed regularly to ensure that they are the right fit to meet the needs of employers, and to equip students with the skills and knowledge to progress to industry.

What's new?

Building Services Engineering will have a new occupational specialism, Low Carbon Heating Engineering, from September 2026.

These occupational specialisms will have no further enrolments after the 2025/26 cohort:

- Dental Nursing (Health T Level)
- Metrology (Science T Level)

These specialisms will have no further enrolments after the 2026/27 cohort:

- Control and Instrumentation & Structural Engineering (Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing T Level)
- Control and Instrumentation (Maintenance, Installation & Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing T Level)
- Composites Manufacturing Technology (Manufacturing, Processing & Control for Engineering and Manufacturing T Level)

How to explain the changes

An occupational specialism is the part of a T Level where students focus on a specific area of the industry and build deeper, job-ready skills.

T Levels are regularly checked to make sure the occupational specialisms match real job roles and give students the skills employers are looking for. Some occupational specialisms are being added, and some are closing to new students over the next few years.

If a student is choosing their T Level in the next couple of years, they'll be guided towards the occupational specialisms that are available, up to date and linked to real opportunities in the industry. The aim is to make sure every student is learning skills that employers value and that lead to strong next steps.

Not all T Level providers offer every occupational specialism, even if they offer the T Level, so it is important to check what is available.



Explore the occupational specialisms available on the T Level subject pages:
tlevels.gov.uk/students/subjects

Assessment

The Department for Education is working with Ofqual and awarding organisations to make T Levels more manageable for providers to deliver at scale.

What's new?

Content that is not essential for demonstrating threshold competence and easing the assessment load will be reduced, with a particular focus on cutting the staff hours needed to run and administer assessments.

How to explain the changes

T Levels are being made easier for providers to manage and to improve access for students. Courses are being streamlined to focus on the knowledge and skills that really matter for future jobs.

Ofqual will also be asked to consult on a more flexible approach to Core exam resits, so students can retake only the element they need rather than repeating the full set.

Work is underway to make core exam resits more flexible, so students only retake the part needed, rather than re-sitting the whole exam. This is to ensure T Levels remain high quality, while making assessment more manageable and supportive for students.

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Industry placements

The Department for Education has published updated guidelines for providers responsible for delivering T Level industry placements. The guidelines outline new flexibilities in place to make placements easier to deliver, encourage more employers to host, and to reflect real-world working patterns. The aim is to make industry placements more achievable and open up access to a wider range of students. The changes are outlined below.

What's new?

How to explain the changes

Placements with multiple employers are permitted for the industry placement (previously a maximum of two were allowed).

The industry placement can now be split across more than one employer. Most students will still work with one or two employers, but more are possible if it helps students see different parts of the industry or if it offers a more in-depth experience.

More remote hours are permitted, including being able to work from home. However, it is recommended that where possible, no more than 20% of the placement should be spent remotely.

Where remote working is common in an industry or within that employer, more remote hours are now permitted where it makes sense for the student and employer. The expectation is that most placements will still be face to face in an employer setting.

An increased proportion of placement time can take place using small team projects or within a skills hub. In addition, extra placement time can be used on work taster activities, which could help students develop better understanding of an industry and make informed choices of where to complete the rest of their industry placement.

Students can spend more time undertaking a small team project, work in a skills hub or training centre, or complete further work taster activities as a way of completing part of their industry placement, which will sit alongside a face-to-face industry placement.

The industry placement should be overseen by someone from industry rather than those involved in teaching. Detailed processes must be in place to support students, including additional support for those with SEND.

Industry placements must be overseen by an industry professional. This allows a student to complete their industry placement on a provider site so that they can receive additional support and supervision. The industry professional will set tasks and check progress, with extra support available for students with SEND.

Clearer, more defined expectations in place that the provider will work with the student to agree individualised and stretching learning goals which are linked to the industry placement objectives.

Students agree their own learning goals for the placement, so that the tasks they undertake match what they need to learn. The provider will work with students to set goals that are personalised, challenging and linked to what the placement is designed to help them achieve.

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Foundation Year

The T Level Foundation Year will ultimately be replaced by the new Further Study pathway, following these steps:

2026: The T Level Foundation Year continues in its current form.

From 2027: It will be renamed the Foundation Year, reflecting progression to a wider range of level 3 routes.

Strengthened delivery: The Framework for Delivery will place a clearer focus on level 3 preparation and the option for providers to offer the programme without a qualification will be removed.

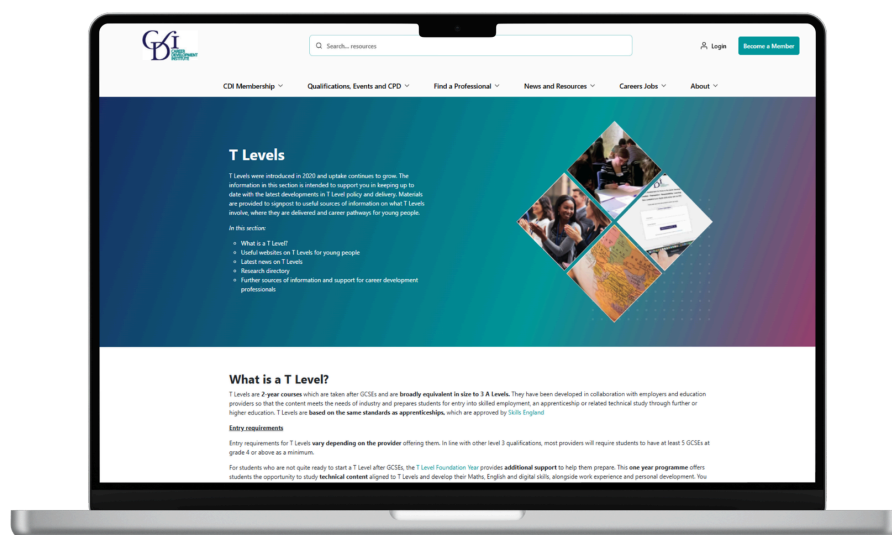
Phasing in new routes: As Further Study pathways and Foundation Certificates are introduced in each subject, the Foundation Year will be phased out in those areas.

Subject-by-subject transition: Once a Further Study pathway is available for a subject, the Foundation Year will stop running for that subject.

How to explain the changes

The Foundation Year is staying the same for 2026, then from 2027 it will be renamed and strengthened to help students prepare for any level 3 course, not just T Levels. As new options like the Further Study pathway and Foundation Certificates are introduced in each subject, the Foundation Year will be phased out in those areas. These changes build on what already works and are designed to give clearer, more flexible routes into level 3.

CDI Resource Hub



Stay informed on T Levels by visiting the CDI Resource Hub:



thecdi.net/resources/technical-education-resource-hub/t-levels