

A Levels

A Levels are also level 3 qualifications. They tend to follow classroom-based programmes of study and are academic qualifications, concerned with gaining broader knowledge of a subject.

Apprenticeship Standard

Describes the profile and associated knowledge, skills and behaviours of a unique occupation.

A Standard is not a qualification. They set the content for an apprentice's learning journey and the specific knowledge, skills and behaviours the apprentice will be assessed against at the end of their apprenticeship to ensure they have met competence in the occupation (are able to fulfil the requirements of the job role). In brief, they present as a comprehensive job description.

Apprenticeship Standards are written by a Trailblazer Group.

Trailblazer

An apprenticeship 'trailblazer' refers to the group of employers that have formally come together to help develop a new apprenticeship standard for a specific occupation. The trailblazer should be representative of the organisations that would employ someone in the associated occupation, including the type, size and geographical spread.

Apprenticeship Standards must be developed by a trailblazer group, approved and recognised by the Institute for Apprenticeships (IFA).

The trailblazer must work to the IFA's published processes when developing a new standard and must work closely with a dedicated representative from the IFA throughout.

Apprenticeship Training Agency (ATA)

ATAs recruit, employ and arrange training for apprentices on behalf of employers. They are responsible for managing the HR and payroll requirements for apprentices employed by them. To be eligible to operate as an ATA organisations must be registered on the register of approved ATAs. Organisations listed on the register have been through an application process with the ESFA.

Employers use an ATA if they do not wish to/are unable to employ

an apprentice directly. Employers would host the apprentice (provide the work opportunity) for some, or all, of an apprentice's employment contract. The host employer is always responsible for paying the apprentice wage which they would allocate to the ATA to manage on their behalf.

ATAs charge employers a small fee for providing this service.

Apprenticeship Levy

In 2017 introduced an employer levy to fund apprenticeships in England.

The levy is paid by employers with an annual pay bill of £3million or more and is deducted each month from an employer's PAYE bill by HMRC, like a tax. It represents 0.5% of an employer's annual wage bill over the £3million.

Levy payments are turned into monthly apprenticeship vouchers for employers to spend on apprenticeship training and include a 10% contribution from Government. They are spent through an employer's digital apprenticeship service account. Details of how to set up an account can be found [here](#).

Employers that do not have an annual wage bill of £3 million or more do not pay the apprenticeship levy. This represents 98% of employers.

Levy transfer/transfer of levy vouchers

Levy payers have the option to transfer up to 25% (from April 2019) of their annual levy voucher value to other employers to help cover their apprenticeship training costs.

Levy vouchers cannot be used to cover the cost of wages but training only. Registered apprenticeship training providers receive this funding.

Non-levy paying organisations can use transferred levy vouchers. They can only receive these if they have also set up an apprenticeship service account (see details above).

Technical Routes, Occupational Maps and Pathways

Technical routes were created as part of the [Post-16 Skills Plan](#) and are structured around clusters of occupations that share common knowledge and skills, and offer progression to and through skilled employment. **Occupational maps** for fifteen technical education routes in England have been developed.

In each route there are a set of **pathways** that bring together related occupations. For the Creative and Design route, the one with specific technical theatre occupations identified within it, there are currently three pathways set out within the associated occupational route map:

- Craft and Design
- Media, Broadcasting and Production
- Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions.

