

# VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS



**VOCATIONAL ROUTES INTO  
THE DIGITAL SECTOR**



# WHAT IS THE DIGITAL SECTOR?

**Do you enjoy working with computers?**

**Do you have a good attention to detail?**

**Do you enjoy solving problems or are you a creative thinker?**

**If so, a job in the digital sector could be the perfect job for you.**

The digital sector is all about careers related to computer hardware and software, communications and network technologies. We will always need jobs within the digital sector and there are a wide range of varied jobs and many career options available. Salaries for digital jobs are generally higher than many other sectors and there are jobs for people of all abilities.

Jobs in the digital sector generally fit into the following categories : technical roles, business roles or creative roles and each type requires different sorts of skills.

- Technical digital jobs often require specialist knowledge and focus on the creation and use of various technologies.
- Business roles often relate to using digital systems.
- Creative digital roles often focus on delivering content for the end-user. They're usually expressive and more artistic than other areas.

Jobs exist within all types of companies from tech startups through to the large and global companies. The digital sector can also be a great option for individuals with disabilities or learning disorders.

# WHY THE DIGITAL SECTOR?

THE DIGITAL SECTOR IS ENORMOUS AND IS ONLY SET TO GROW; DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY IS PART OF NEARLY EVERYTHING WE DO AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS MEAN THAT NEW JOBS AND CAREERS ARE EMERGING ALL THE TIME.



The UK digital sector employs just under **THREE MILLION PEOPLE** which is 9% of the UK workforce.



The UK tech sector has grown more than **6X FASTER THAN THE WIDER ECONOMY**



In five UK cities - Oxford, Cambridge, Reading, Belfast and Newcastle - **MORE THAN 10%** of the population are now employed in the digital tech sector.



The average advertised tech salary is **UP TO 50% HIGHER** than the average for all vacancies in the UK and is regularly increasing.

# WHAT KIND OF JOBS EXIST IN THE DIGITAL SECTOR?

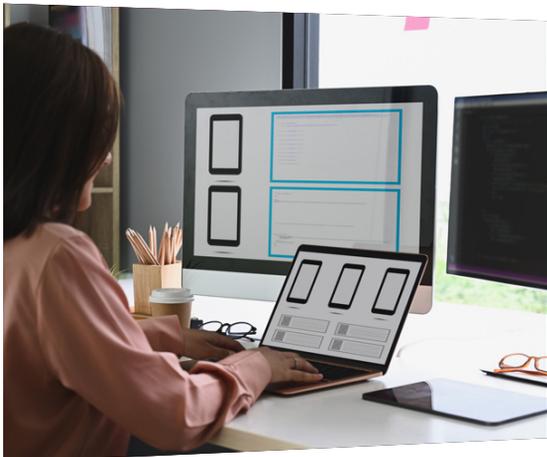


## SOFTWARE DEVELOPER

Also known as a computer programmer, this job focuses on writing computer code to create and implement new software.

## DATA ENTRY CLERK

Responsible for transferring data from paper formats onto computer systems.



## WEB DESIGNER

Web designers are responsible for planning, designing, and creating the layout of a website or web pages. They use code to combine text, graphics, video, and other content to create something appealing to the user.

## QA ANALYST

QA analysts are problem-solvers. They test websites and software to check for bugs and problems, documenting their findings as they go. Often, they work closely with developers to deliver a successful project.



## Where these jobs may take me?

There is lots of scope in the digital sector for progression and training which means that you can easily change your role or move up in your current role.



# IS IT FOR ME?

## SEE HOW MANY OF THE SKILLS BELOW YOU ARE GOOD AT:

- Logical
- Good at problem solving
- Attention to detail
- Good with computers
- Reliable
- Patient
- Focussed
- Enjoy repetitive jobs
- Happy to work in indoor setting
- Like quiet environments
- Good at following instructions
- Work well on own

# TYPICAL WORKING CONDITIONS

- You will normally work in a building with other employees although some digital companies now allow people to work from home.
- The majority of jobs will require you to work during the day only, however there will be some companies who need people 24/7 so employees may work night shifts, weekends or holidays.
- Generally the environment will be quiet, clean and you will rarely be required to wear a uniform.

## HOW TO DEVELOP SKILLS

If you're hoping to get a job in the digital sector, technical knowledge such as coding or using social media is important for certain jobs, however many employers will mainly be looking for a combination of soft skills such as problem solving, logical, good attention to detail and creativity. If you can show the employer that you have experience of demonstrating these skills this will help show that you are suited to the role.

It will also help if you can show that you have an interest in computers and technology. There are many free online courses available called MOOCs you can access to show this.

Examples:

"I have a really good eye for detail and I will always spot mistakes in books when I'm reading."

"I really enjoy coding and I have been teaching myself Python by completing a python Programming Essentials MOOC course."

"I am really creative and an example of this is when I designed a marketing campaign for a pretend business at school. This included a webpage, digital billboard and a magazine advert."

# CASE STUDY: ACCENTURE



**Kian**  
**Apprentice App Developer**

## **What did you want to do when you left school?**

When I left school I wanted to be a maths teacher and I was very fortunate to do my work experience at an IT consultancy and my first day in the office completely changed my outlook, I knew this was definitely what I wanted to do.

## **What attracted you to work in the digital sector?**

Definitely the money, there's always job opportunities available. Each job role is different and there's a lot of variety.

## **How did you find out about the apprenticeship with Accenture?**

It was through my sixth form at the time and Accenture came in for an apprenticeship fair and handed out fliers. I was very interested and keen to get the position.

## **What is the best thing about being on an apprenticeship?**

The money that you're earning, the work experience that you're getting along the way and overall, it's really good. You're treated equal to every other employee and I couldn't recommend it more.

## **If someone has learning difficulties, would that prevent them following a career in the digital sector?**

Learning disabilities wouldn't disqualify anyone from getting into the digital sector, my manager for example is on the autism

spectrum and he's one of the smartest men I've ever met. He's a very, very capable, very intelligent man and very inspirational to me as well.

## **What skills have you learnt?**

Some of the skills I've learnt since being on the apprenticeship are definitely teamwork, getting to work with new people everyday day and getting the work done is definitely one of the key things. Leadership because there's a lot of side of desk and charity activities that you can do.

## **Since you've been at Accenture, what is the best piece of advice you've been given?**

It would be that we're all human and we all make mistakes. It doesn't matter how high up you are, you know something will slip up, but it's ok to make mistakes as long as you learn from them.

## **What do you hope to have achieved in the next five years?**

I would like to be within an associate manager or managing position, hopefully within tech architecture.

## **Do you have any advice for someone interested in doing something similar to you?**

My advice is not to be discouraged, keep applying if a position turns you down, keep going as there will be an opportunity out there for you. Just take everything that you can to strengthen and build a CV, build a portfolio and strengthen your skills and confidence as well.



# ROUTES INTO THE DIGITAL SECTOR

In many cases, GCSE-level qualifications will be enough to get you started, but if you do not have these there may be some alternative routes you can take.

Subjects like ICT and Computer Science will help you to test out your interest in this type of work. Maths, media and business are also useful.

Many tech companies offer apprenticeships aimed at school leavers. Some examples of apprenticeships available include:

- Software development technician
- Digital user experience professional
- Cybersecurity technologist

If you can't find a job, full-time vocational qualifications could help you get your foot on the career ladder. Also search for free online part time courses (MOOC's).

T Levels available in the following:

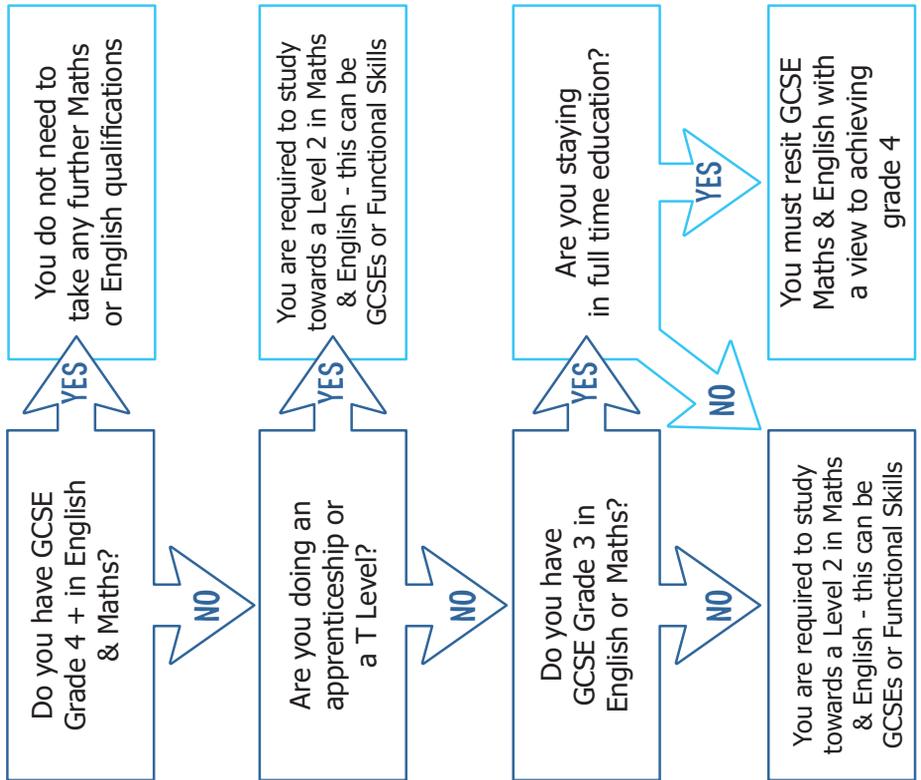
- Digital Business Services
- Digital Production, Design and Development
- Digital Support Services

The following Pathway Map (page 9) will help you understand the different levels and options available.

To search for courses, go to <https://www.findcourses.co.uk/>

# VOCATIONAL PATHWAYS

**DO I NEED TO DO EXTRA MATHS OR ENGLISH STUDY?**  
(REQUIRED BY 16 TO 18 YEAR OLD OR 19 TO 25 IF HOLDING AN EHCP)?



## LEVEL ONE

- Functional Skills
- Supported Internships / Study Programmes
- Traineeships
- Pre-Apprenticeships

## LEVEL TWO

- GCSEs
- Intermediate Apprenticeship
- BTEC Level 2 / NVQ 2
- Supported / Inclusive Apprenticeship

## LEVEL THREE

- BTEC Level 3 / NVQ 3
- A Levels
- T Levels
- Advanced Apprenticeship
- Paid Employment - if over 18

## LEVEL FOUR +

- Higher Apprenticeship
- Higher Technical Qualifications
- University / Degree

\*there maybe some exemptions to this - always check with providers

	Description	Entry Requirements	What it could lead to
<b>Functional Skills</b>	An alternative to GCSEs for maths, English & ICT with a more practical and real life context	None	Apprenticeship Traineeship
<b>Supported Internships / Study Programmes</b>	A structured study programme/ partnership based mainly with an employer	ECHP	Paid employment Supported apprenticeship
<b>Pre-Apprenticeships</b>	A programme of study aimed at exploring different industries and job roles	Up to the training provider / employer	Traineeship
<b>Traineeship</b>	A work focussed study programme that prepares you for an apprenticeship or work	Have little or no work experience and qualifies below Level 3	Apprenticeship Supportive employment
<b>Supported Inclusive Apprenticeships</b>	A real job with training and a salary	ECHP	Paid employment
<b>Apprenticeships</b>	A real job with training and a salary	Employer dependent. Age 16+ Evidence of interest and ability to complete	Higher level or degree apprenticeship University or college Paid Employment
<b>BTECs / NVQs - Technical / Vocational qualifications</b>	Qualifications that teach you how to do tasks specifically related to the industry and role you want to be in	Course dependent	Apprenticeship University or college Paid employment
<b>T Levels</b>	A technical study programme similar to 3 A levels with an industry placement which takes up 20% of the course	Set by each school/ college	Apprenticeship University or college Paid employment

# FIND OUT MORE

**To find out more about technical and vocational training and support for additional needs:**

[https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/2021-05/Your%20Options\\_FINAL%20VERSION.pdf](https://resources.careersandenterprise.co.uk/sites/default/files/2021-05/Your%20Options_FINAL%20VERSION.pdf)

## **OTHER USEFUL LINKS:**

**Apprenticeships:**

<https://www.gov.uk/apprenticeships-guide>

This includes a link to the Find an Apprenticeship Service, where apprenticeship vacancies are listed and can be applied for. Where an employer is Disability Confident, the logo will display on their vacancies in the service: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-apprenticeship>

**Further information is also available here:**

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/a-guide-to-apprenticeships#history>

For more information on the English and maths flexibilities available for some people with learning disabilities and difficulties, see here: <https://resources.amazingapprenticeships.com/resources/changes-to-english-and-maths-requirements-for-apprenticeships/>

For more information on Access to Work and apprenticeships, visit this webpage: <https://www.gov.uk/access-to-work>

**Traineeships:**

[www.getingofar.gov.uk/traineeships](http://www.getingofar.gov.uk/traineeships)

[www.gov.uk/find-traineeship](http://www.gov.uk/find-traineeship) to search for traineeships near you

[www.gov.uk/government/publications/traineeship-providers](http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/traineeship-providers)

Supported internships - <https://www.preparingforadulthood.org.uk/downloads/supported-internships/fact-sheet-supported-internships.htm>

Digital Careers - <https://nationalcareers.service.gov.uk/job-categories/computing-technology-and-digital>.



Produced in conjunction with:

