

ROUTES OF ENTRY INTO CONSTRUCTION

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INTRODUCTION

Construction needs to recruit just under **45,000 new entrants** each year to maintain output and employers across the supply chain are keen to support young people to choose a career in the sector. However, the routes of entry into the industry can be complex and confusing.

Not all occupations have an apprenticeship and not every business is ready to take on an apprentice, but there are many other ways to reach out to the next generation. Every employer can play their part by providing a work placement, sponsorship or employment to those still in education or looking to secure their first job.

With over **35,000 students on a construction-related course** each year looking to take their first step into the industry, employers that understand the different routes of entry into construction are well placed to offer opportunities and recruit their future pipeline of skills.

This guide sets out the most common **Routes of Entry into construction for young people in England leaving school** and how they might suit different employers.



Courtesy of Berkeley Group

The Journey from Education to Employment

To increase the number of new entrants, we must improve the Journey from Education to Employment in construction and Build UK has identified the first steps on this journey as follows:

- **Clear Routes of Entry** - Both employers and those joining the industry understand the different routes of entry and which one is appropriate for them and their occupation
- **Increase in Apprenticeship Numbers** - Effective systems to match potential apprentices with suitable employers
- **Sufficient Training Capacity** - Appropriate resources to deliver the number of new entrants the sector requires.

APPRENTICESHIP

Great for employers that:

- ✓ are in a sector with apprenticeships
- ✓ want to train new entrants in specific trade, manager or professional roles
- ✓ can offer employment for the duration of an apprenticeship



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ want to get a job and start earning
- ✓ are practically-minded
- ✓ are interested in gaining vocational qualifications
- ✓ have a local employer offering apprenticeships
- ✓ know the construction occupation they want to work in



An [apprenticeship](#) is paid employment with a structured programme of learning lasting at least 12 months for people aged 16 and over.

Apprentices spend the majority of their time in the workplace and an average of at least six hours per week in off-the-job training with a college, university or training provider. Off-the-job training may take place on the same day each week or for one or more weeks at a time, known as block release.

There are over 100 construction-related apprenticeships at four different levels covering qualification levels 2 to 7, and the levels of apprenticeships can be found by [. . .](#)

Existing education and qualifications will usually determine the appropriate level for a young person. Some apprenticeships can only be undertaken if the previous level has been completed and most require English and maths GCSEs (additional learning and support will be provided to enable the required standard to be achieved).

Whilst not all construction occupations have an apprenticeship, some specialist trades have [Specialist Applied-Skills Programmes](#) which are considered 'sector apprenticeships'.

Apprentices are paid a salary:

- Those aged between 16 and 18, or 19 and over and in the first year of an apprenticeship, are entitled to the [apprentice rate](#)
- Those aged 19 and over who have completed the first year of an apprenticeship are entitled to the [National Minimum Wage](#).

After completing an apprenticeship, the young person should be ready for employment or can progress to a higher-level apprenticeship.

Funding is available to employers via:

- [Government and/or the Apprenticeship Levy](#) towards training provider costs
- [Government incentives](#) if the apprentice meets certain criteria
- [CITB grants](#) for apprenticeships and Specialist Applied-Skills Programmes.

For apprentices, the relevant CSCS card is the free [Apprentice Card](#).

Get Involved

- ✓ Contact your trade association to confirm there is an [apprenticeship](#) or [Specialist Applied-Skills Programme](#) and suitable [training provision](#) in place
- ✓ Partner with a local [college](#), [university](#) or [training provider](#)
- ✓ Advertise your apprenticeship opportunities to local colleges and on [Talentview](#)

COLLEGE

Great for employers that:

- ✓ are based near a college delivering construction qualifications
- ✓ are keen to engage with education
- ✓ offer work experience
- ✓ employ apprentices



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ want to stay in education but not in school
- ✓ are practically-minded
- ✓ are interested in gaining technical qualifications
- ✓ are keen to get ready for work
- ✓ want to work in construction



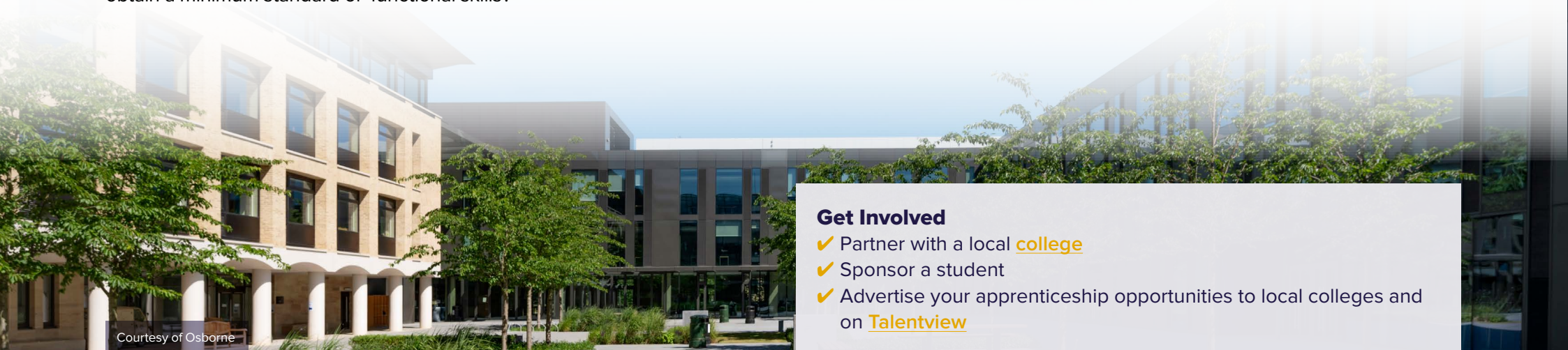
Further Education at a **college** is an alternative to sixth form for students who have completed their GCSEs in Year 11.

Learning takes place in both a classroom and a more practical environment and there may be a requirement for an industry placement with an employer.

Each course will have an entry requirement which is likely to include English and maths GCSEs. Students who have not achieved their English and/or maths GCSEs will usually have additional learning at college to obtain a minimum standard of 'functional skills'.

There is an extensive range of construction-related courses available, examples of which can be found by _____, and students will leave with a variety of options from an apprenticeship or university to employment. If entering employment, their first role in construction is likely to be a trainee role which will provide further training and/or work experience as required.

For students on an industry placement lasting 30 days or more, the relevant CSCS card is the **Industry Placement Card**. For students in employment, the relevant CSCS card is the **Trainee Card**.



Courtesy of Osborne

Get Involved

- ✓ Partner with a local **college**
- ✓ Sponsor a student
- ✓ Advertise your apprenticeship opportunities to local colleges and on **Talentview**

EMPLOYMENT

Great for employers that:

- ✓ want to assess the suitability of a young person before offering formal training
- ✓ want to train new entrants in specific trade, manager or professional job roles
- ✓ can provide suitable supervision



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ are practically-minded
- ✓ have little or no work experience but are motivated to work
- ✓ want to get a job and start earning
- ✓ have an interest in construction and want to try it out



Until they are 18 years old, a young person must:

- stay in full-time education, for example at a college;
- start an apprenticeship or traineeship; or
- spend 20 hours or more a week working or volunteering, while in part-time education or training.

A young person in their first construction job, and not on a formal training programme, is likely to start as a labourer. As well as giving young people experience of working in the industry to see if it suits them, this enables employers to identify potential apprentices and trainees.

It is essential that an induction, health, safety and other essential training, suitable supervision and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) are provided.

Within six months to a year, a suitable occupation is usually identified which will determine the qualifications and training required.

A young person must be at least [school leaving age](#) to get paid the [National Minimum Wage](#) and aged 23 to receive the National Living Wage.

For young people in their first construction job without any qualifications, the relevant CSCS card is a [Provisional Card](#). For those who gain the appropriate qualification, the relevant CSCS card is a [Labourer Card](#).

Get Involved

- ✓ Advertise job vacancies on [Talentview](#)
- ✓ Contact your trade association to understand the formal training and entry routes in your sector

T LEVEL

Great for employers that:

- ✓ are based near a school or college delivering T Levels
- ✓ can offer at least 45 days of work experience
- ✓ want to try out potential employees
- ✓ employ apprentices
- ✓ are keen to engage with education



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ want to stay in education but not do A Levels
- ✓ are practically-minded
- ✓ are interested in gaining technical qualifications
- ✓ want to get work experience



T Levels are an alternative to A Levels delivered in sixth form or at college over two years for 16 to 19 year olds.

Aimed at preparing students for further training or employment, T Levels are focused on vocational and technical skills and include an industry placement with an employer lasting at least 45 days.

There are a number of **construction-related T Levels**, details of which can be found by

On completing a T Level, students will get a nationally-recognised qualification equivalent to three A Levels with UCAS Tariff points, along with practical skills and work experience, giving them a wide range of options from an apprenticeship or university to employment.

There is no funding available for employers that support T Levels. Although a salary is not required, employers are encouraged to pay a contribution towards travel and other expenses during the industry placement.

For T Level students, the relevant CSCS card is the **Industry Placement Card**.



Courtesy of Berkeley Group

Get Involved

- ✓ Read the Government's **Employer Guide to T Level Industry Placements**
- ✓ Partner with a local **school or college**
- ✓ Post your T Level industry placement opportunities on **Talentview**
- ✓ Read Build UK's **Guide to Successful Work Experience**

TRAINEESHIP

Great for employers that:

- ✓ can offer at least 70 hours of work experience
- ✓ want to try out potential employees
- ✓ employ apprentices
- ✓ are keen to build a more diverse workforce



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ meet the criteria for a traineeship
- ✓ have little or no work experience but are motivated to work
- ✓ are not ready to commit to an apprenticeship
- ✓ have an interest in construction and want to try it out



A [traineeship](#) is a skills development programme lasting between six weeks and one year (although most take less than six months) which includes an industry placement of 70 hours or more with an employer.

Traineeships are for 16 to 24 year olds (or 25 year olds with an [Education, Health and Care \(EHC\) plan](#)) who need to gain appropriate skills and experience before starting an apprenticeship or employment. They are **not** designed for those:

- who already have qualifications above GCSE level
- with skills and experience that make them suitable for work
- already in full-time employment, or
- disengaged young people who require intensive support.

Traineeships can be in any occupation and are made up of four core elements which can be found by [this link](#). Some have already been developed with an industry-agreed programme, for example Bricklaying, and employers and training providers can also develop their own to include the core elements.

After completing a traineeship, the young person should be ready for an apprenticeship or employment. Any learning they have undertaken may be considered as prior learning and contribute towards a subsequent training programme or qualification.

Whilst training providers receive [funding from the Education and Skills Funding Agency](#) for the delivery of traineeships, there is no funding available to employers. Although a salary is not required, employers are encouraged to offer a wage and pay a contribution towards travel and other expenses during the industry placement.

For young people on a traineeship with an industry placement lasting 30 days or more, the relevant CSCS card is the [Industry Placement Card](#), otherwise a CSCS card is not required.

As of 1 August 2023, the Government is no longer funding a standalone national traineeships programme. The last start date for traineeships under the programme was 31 July 2023 and training providers will be able to advise on traineeships being offered locally.

Get Involved

- ✓ Partner with a [training provider](#) to find an appropriate traineeship and/or a trainee
- ✓ Post your traineeship opportunities on [Talentview](#)
- ✓ Read Build UK's [Guide to Successful Work Experience](#)

UNIVERSITY

Great for employers that:

- ✓ employ construction professionals
- ✓ want to train new entrants in specific professional or managerial roles
- ✓ offer work experience or industry placements
- ✓ can offer sponsorship



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ have completed Further Education
- ✓ want to stay in education
- ✓ want a university experience
- ✓ want to work in construction
- ✓ have an interest in construction and want to try it out



Higher Education at a [university](#) is for students who have typically completed Further Education and obtained suitable qualifications, such as A Levels, BTECs, HNCs or HNDs.

With the exception of Degree Apprenticeships, courses are usually full-time with learning taking place in a classroom, although there may be an option or requirement for an industry placement with an employer.

Some construction employers sponsor university students, which may include financial support, industry placements and employment at the end of the course.

Each university will determine its entry requirements, which may include particular A Level grades and/or UCAS Tariff points.

There is a range of construction-related courses available, examples of which can be found by [clicking here](#), and students will leave with a variety of options, from continuing their education to entering employment.

If entering employment, their first role in construction is likely to be a graduate or trainee role which will provide further training and/or work experience as required.

For students who require access to site as part of a construction-related Higher Education course, the relevant CSCS card is the [Trainee Card](#). For students on a Degree Apprenticeship, the relevant CSCS card is the free [Apprenticeship card](#). For students on a non-construction-related course undertaking an industry placement in a construction environment lasting 30 days or more, the relevant CSCS card is the [Industry Placement Card](#).

Get Involved

- ✓ Identify which [university courses](#) suit your business
- ✓ Partner with a [university](#)
- ✓ Offer work experience or industry placements
- ✓ Offer sponsorship opportunities
- ✓ Advertise your graduate opportunities to local universities and on [Talentview](#)

UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

Great for employers that:

- ✓ are based near a UTC
- ✓ need technical skills
- ✓ offer work experience
- ✓ employ apprentices
- ✓ are keen to engage with education



Suitable for young people who:

- ✓ have a local UTC
- ✓ are practically-minded
- ✓ have an interest in STEM subjects and/or technical qualifications
- ✓ are keen to engage with construction or the world of work



A **University Technical College (UTC)** is a Government-funded school in an area of high demand for talent with a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering & Maths) focus, which is supported by a local university and a group of industry partners.

A UTC is for 14 to 19 year olds, with students usually joining in Years 10 or 12, and teaching takes place in a smaller, supportive environment.

On leaving a UTC, students will have covered the core curriculum of English, maths and science at GCSE and/or A Level. They will also have one or more recognised technical qualifications, practical skills and work experience, giving them a wide range of options from an apprenticeship to university and making them highly employable.

For UTC students, a CSCS card is neither available nor required.



Courtesy of Osborne

Get Involved

- ✓ Find your nearest [UTC](#)
- ✓ Become an employer partner
- ✓ Offer work experience
- ✓ Advertise your apprenticeship opportunities to the UTC and on [Talentview](#)

CSCS CARDS FOR NEW ENTRANTS

Card	Who	Qualification	Valid	Renewable
Apprentice Card	Apprentices	Registered on a construction-related intermediate or advanced apprenticeship	4.5 years	No
Industry Placement Card	Students aged 16 and over Available from CSCS, ECS, Skillcard & JIB PMES	Registered on a Further Education construction-related qualification or training programme which requires a work placement of 30 days or more	3 years	No
Labourer Card	Labourers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> RQF Level 1/SCQF Level 4 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment (<i>this is a lifetime qualification</i>) SCQF Level 5 REHIS Elementary Health and Safety Certificate NOCN/CSkills Awards Construction Health and Safety (F/618/0738) unit 	5 years	Yes
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A CSCS approved alternative qualification (<i>which needs to be renewed for each new card</i>) 	5 years	No - although a new Labourer Card can be applied for
Provisional Card	Not registered on a qualification or training programme	None	6 months	No
Trainee Card	Students and trainees	Registered for a construction-related vocational, academic or professional qualification	5 years	No

To apply for a CSCS card, the applicant is required to pass the appropriate level of the CITB Health, Safety & Environment Test within the last two years or an approved alternative.