ROUTES OF ENTRY INTO CONSTRUCTION



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Courtesy of TClarke

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INTRODUCTION

The construction sector in England needs to recruit 36,340 extra workers per year until 2030 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 CITB estimating that there are around 120,000 students on a construction-related further education course at any time looking to take their first step into the industry, employers that understand the different routes of entry 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

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APPRENTICESHIP

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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 for people aged 16 and over, which can take from eight months to six years to complete, depending on the type and level of the apprenticeship.

Apprentices spend the majority of their time in the workplace, with at least 20% of normal working hours spent 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 around 100 construction-related apprenticeships covering qualification levels 2 to 7, and the levels of apprenticeships can be found on page 3. Build UK has also published information on the Degree Apprenticeships in Construction offered by its members.

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 have the appropriate skills and knowledge to progress to a higher-level apprenticeship or full-time employment.

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 all apprentices except Foundation Apprentices, the relevant CSCS card is the Apprentice Card which is free of charge. For Foundation Apprentices, the relevant CSCS card is the Industry Placement 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 Go Construct Careers

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APPRENTICESHIP LEVELS

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Apprenticeship	Description	Level	Equivalent Education Level
Foundation	Entry level with a broad introduction to a sector	2	GCSE
Intermediate	Entry level for most trade occupations	2	GCSE
Advanced	Entry level for some trade occupations Advanced level for other trade occupations Supervisory level	3	A Level or T Level
Higher	Management level	4 5	Higher National Certificate Higher National Diploma or Foundation Degree
Degree	Professional level	6 7	Bachelor's Degree Master's Degree

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COLLEGE

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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 GSCEs will usually have additional learning at college to obtain a minimum standard of 'functional skills'.

There is an extensive range of construction-related qualifications available, examples of which can be found on page 5, and students will leave with a variety of options from an apprenticeship or university to employment.

Qualifications that are college-based with no on-site experience are Occupation-Related Non-Competence Qualifications, and on entering employment an individual's first role in construction should provide further training and/or work experience as required. Qualifications that include on-site experience are Occupational Competence Qualifications and require a student to demonstrate competence in the workplace.

For students on an industry placement lasting a minimum of three weeks, the
relevant CSCS card is the Industry Placement Card. For students in employment and registered for a recognised construction-related Occupational Competence Qualification or an academic qualification, the relevant CSCS card is the Trainee Card. For students registered for an Occupation-Related Non-Competence Qualification, a CSCS card is **not** required as they will not be on site.

Get Involved
- ✔ Partner with a local college
- ✔ Sponsor a student
- ✔ Advertise your apprenticeship opportunities to local colleges and on Go Construct Careers

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FURTHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

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Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC)	Specialist work-related qualification
Diploma	Level 2 or 3 qualification with no work-based learning that takes up to two years to complete full-time
Higher National Certificate (HNC)	Level 4 vocational qualification that takes one year to complete full-time or two years part-time
Higher National Diploma (HND)	Level 5 vocational qualification that takes two years to complete full-time or three to four years part-time
National Vocational Qualification (NVQ)	Work-based qualification that recognises the skills and knowledge a person needs to do a job

Construction-related BTEC, HNC and HND courses include:

- Building Services
- Civil Engineering
- Construction Management
- Electrical Engineering
- Engineering
- Mechanical Engineering
- Quantity Surveying

Construction-related NVQ courses include:

- Construction Management
- Decorative Finishing and Painting
- Plastering
- Site Supervision
- Trowel Occupations (Bricklaying)
- Wood Occupations

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EMPLOYMENT

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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, 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 21 to receive the National Living Wage.

For young people in their first construction job and not registered for any qualifications, the relevant CSCS card is the Provisional Card. For those registered for a construction-related Occupational Competence Qualification, the relevant CSCS card is the Trainee Card. For young people that continue to undertake labourer tasks, the appropriate qualification should be obtained and the relevant CSCS card is the Labourer Card.

Get Involved

- ✔ Advertise job vacancies on Go Construct Careers
- ✔ Contact your trade association to understand the formal training and entry routes in your sector

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T LEVEL

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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 technical skills and include an industry placement with an employer lasting approximately 45 days (a minimum of 315 hours).

There are two construction-related T Levels:

- Building Services Engineering for Construction – appropriate for careers in electric installation and maintenance, plumbing, or heating
- Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction – appropriate for careers in surveying and design, civil engineering, building services design, or hazardous materials surveying

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.

Whilst 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.

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 Go Construct Careers

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UNIVERSITY

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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 accredited construction-related courses available, including:

- Architecture
- Architectural Technology
- Building Surveying
- Civil Engineering
- Construction Management
- Quantity Surveying

Students will leave university 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 Apprentice Card which is free of charge.

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 Go Construct Careers

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UNIVERSITY TECHNICAL COLLEGE

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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.



Get Involved
- ✔ Find your nearest UTC
- ✔ Become an employer partner
- ✔ Offer work experience
- ✔ Advertise your apprenticeship opportunities to the UTC and on Go Construct Careers

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CSCS CARDS FOR NEW ENTRANTS

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Card	Who	Qualification	Valid	Renewable
Apprentice Card	Apprentices (except Foundation Apprentices)	Registered on a construction-related apprenticeship	4.5 years	No
Industry Placement Card	Students aged 16 & over and Foundation Apprentices	Registered on a Further Education construction-related qualification or training programme which requires the completion of a minimum three week placement.	2 years	No
Labourer Card	Labourers	• RQF Level 1/SCQF Level 4 Award in Health and Safety in a Construction Environment *(this is a lifetime qualification)* • SCQF Level 5 REHIS Elementary Health and Safety Certificate • NOCN/CSkills Awards Construction Health and Safety (F/618/0738) unit • A CSCS approved alternative qualification *(which needs to be renewed for each new card)*	2 years	Yes – can be renewed for a further 5 years if continuing in a labouring role
Provisional Card	Not registered on a qualification or training programme	None	6 months	No
Trainee Card	Students and trainees	Registered for a recognised construction-related Occupational Competence Qualification or academic qualification	5 years	No
		Achievement of an approved Level 2 (or higher) construction Occupation-Related Non-Competence Qualification	2 years	Yes – can be renewed for a further 3 years upon evidence of registration onto a recognised construction-related Occupational Competence Qualification or academic qualification

This guide references cards issued by CSCS Cards Limited, which is one of the card schemes that make up the CSCS Alliance. New entrants may need a card from an alternative CSCS Alliance card scheme depending on the occupation.

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.

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