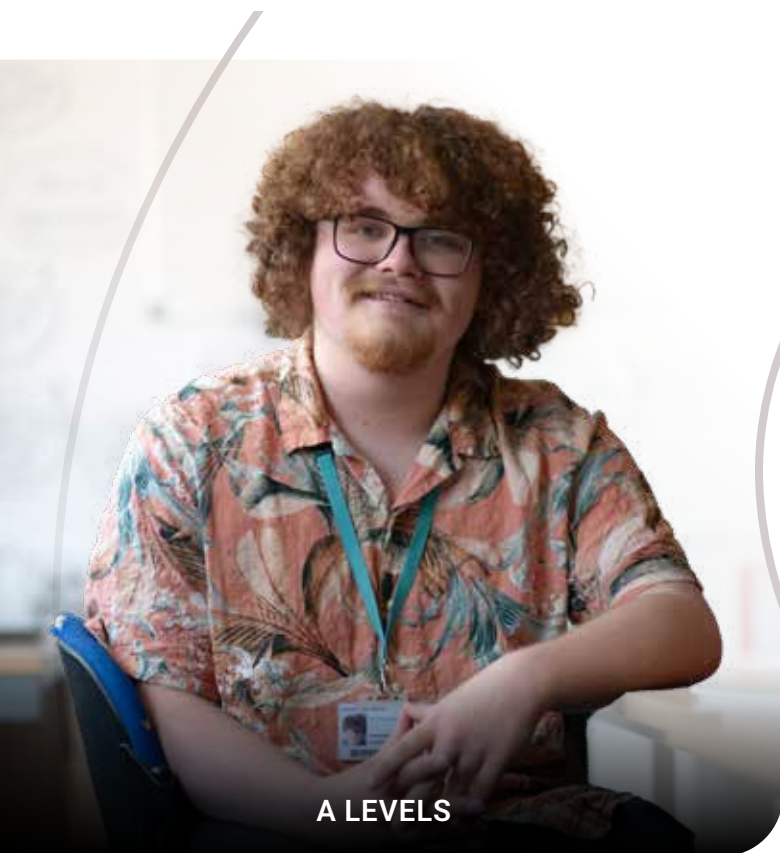


PATHWAYS

WHICH SHOULD YOU STUDY?



TRANSFORMING LIVES



PART OF **UCS**
COLLEGE
GROUP

WHY STUDY A LEVELS?

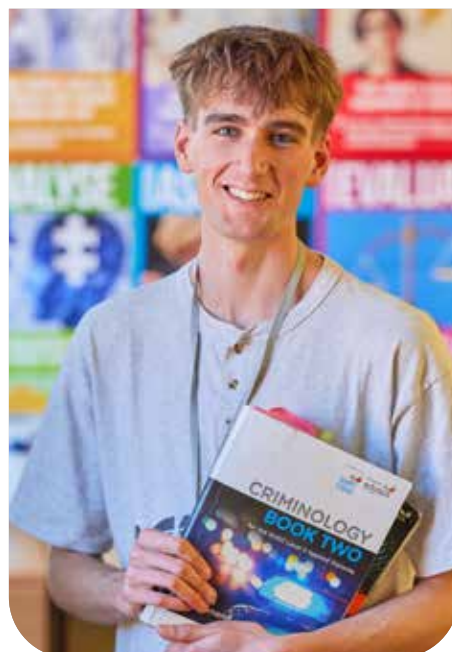
Following GCSEs, A Levels is often the obvious choice for your 6th form education. They are subject-based qualifications that can lead to university, further study, training or employment.

REASONS TO STUDY A LEVELS?

- 1. A Level subjects are exciting and varied.** At UCS College Group, there are over 25 A Level subjects to choose from. Some of these will be familiar, Art & Design, Computer Science, Biology, French, Geography and Physics, but college may be the first opportunity you've had to explore subjects like Criminology, Psychology, Law, Politics, Sociology or Fashion & Textiles! You should choose subjects that fit well together and are accepted for your preferred university course. Our team can help you decide what works best for you and your career goals.
- 2. A Level students get great results.** In 2025, A Level students delivered an exceptional performance, achieving above the national average. Impressively, the majority of subjects achieved a 100% pass rate, demonstrating the consistently high standards across the curriculum.
- 3. A Levels are great if you prefer class-based learning.** Most GCSEs are academic subjects that are taught in a classroom environment, so if you thrived at school and achieved great results, it may be a sign that this setting suits you. A Levels are also often classroom, studio or lab-based, but you will also be encouraged to do your own research and study outside of lessons.
- 4. A Levels lead to Higher Education.** A Levels accrue UCAS points and help you meet the entry requirements for university. They are a traditional route to Higher Education and previous college students have gained places at prestigious universities such as Oxford, Cambridge, Imperial College London, Bristol, Birmingham, Exeter, Cardiff, Durham, Edinburgh, and many other Russell Group universities.
- 5. A Level students aim for Oxbridge.** If you aspire to a place at a top university, our Honours Academy and Aspire Programme can help you work towards your goal. They prepare you for the competitive applications process, providing everything from master classes to mock interviews, visiting experts to alumni Q&As. If you dream of Oxbridge or a medical career, there are specific pathways and support available.
- 6. A Levels are widely recognised by universities and employers.** A Levels are established and well-respected qualifications, recognised and valued by universities and employers as a sign of academic ability.
- 7. A Level students get one-to-one support.** You will have weekly sessions with a personal tutor and be part of a tutor group. Your tutor will help you set personal development targets and support you throughout your time at college. Our Wellbeing teams also offer a range of support services that you can tap into if you need.
- 8. A Level students go on trips.** As part of your A Level study, you may have the opportunity to go on field trips. For example, Sociology students have visited HMP Bristol, Law students the Houses of Parliament, and students learning languages have been to France, Italy and the Czech Republic.

Offered at
Bridgwater College
& Strode College

- 9. A Level enrichment gives you the edge.** As well as the extracurricular activities like Team UCS College Group, Student Union and Academies, you can join clubs and activities such as creative writing, the Duke of Edinburgh Award, debating, Model United Nations, Chemistry Olympiad and the Extended Project Qualification (EPQ) a standalone course that looks great on your CV and prepares you for university. You might even want to start a club of your own!
- 10. A Level students receive iPads.** As part of our digital transformation project, moving forward it is our ambition to provide every student studying A Levels with an iPad, to support their learning. The tech makes it easier for you to complete research and wider reading, access multimedia resources and communication tools, and collaborate with your classmates on shared projects and revision materials.



To find out more
about A Levels
offered at Bridgwater
College scan here:



To find out more
about A Levels
offered at Strode
College scan here:

WHY STUDY T LEVELS?

Equivalent to three A Levels, T Levels are two-year technical courses that are transforming education in the UK. They are ideal if you are aiming to get a professional, skilled job or want to progress to university. You will spend 80% of your time in the classroom and 20% in your industry placement.

T Levels are made up of core skills, occupational knowledge, an employer set project and placement.

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT T LEVELS?

- 1. T Level students can progress to university.** T Levels are a more hands-on option than A Levels but are still Level 3 qualifications. As such they are recognised by universities and have the same credibility. This means that if you have a T Level, you can apply for a university course or a degree apprenticeship, such as those available at University Centre Somerset.
- 2. T Levels are designed by employers.** T Levels are for young people who want professional, skilled jobs. They have been created in conjunction with employers who know what they want from their future employees, so T Levels will give you a grounding in the knowledge and skills you will need in your chosen career. Completing a work placement also means you will gain employability skills useful in any workplace.
- 3. T Level students use state-of-the-art facilities.** UCS College Group has invested millions in its T Level facilities, ensuring that T Level students have the best facilities available for their in-class training. This includes a new Digital Suite complete with high-spec computers, Virtual Reality (VR) headsets, conference and break-out rooms. There is also a specialist Health (Nursing) and Early Years training facilities and a

modernised Industry Skills Centre and event and content creation suite, all created to help you gain skills and knowledge in industry-standard settings.

- 4. T Levels are hands-on and in-class.** T Levels are a great stepping stone from the world of school to the world of work. They combine both in-class learning and work experience. If you choose a T Level, you will spend about 20% of the course in an industry placement, getting practical experience in your chosen profession or business sector. The rest of the time, you'll be in-class, gaining the skills and knowledge you'll use in the workplace. It's the best of both worlds!
- 5. T Levels get great feedback.** Our T Level students say they feel inspired and motivated by what they learn both in-class and during placements. Employers have praised T Level students for their attitude, knowledge and ability to work well with colleagues. Some have been so impressed by their T Level placement students that they have offered them jobs, apprenticeships or further training opportunities. T Levels have opened up opportunities for everyone!

- 6. T Level students receive iPads.** As part of our digital transformation project, moving forward it is our ambition to provide every student studying a T Level with an iPad, to support their learning. The tech assists you with your studies, it encourages wider reading and enables you to develop academic independence, complete research and access multimedia.

- 7. T Level students can pick from lots of subjects.** We are the largest provider of T Levels in Somerset, so there are lots of subjects for you to choose from. They include Construction, Digital, Content Creation, Education and Early Years, Health (Nursing), Business Management, Accounting, Animal Management, Nuclear and Engineering – and more are on their way!



To find out more,
scan the QR code.

WHY STUDY TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL COURSES?

Professional and Technical qualifications are also known as BTEC's or vocational qualifications. They are practical qualifications often linked to career pathways or vocations. They are college-based, but you'll learn in industry standard settings such as workshops, salons, studios, stables... it all depends on which exciting course you choose to study!

WHAT'S SPECIAL ABOUT TECHNICAL AND PROFESSIONAL COURSES?

1. Technical and Professional courses link to careers.

As the name suggests, these courses usually relate to specific 'vocations', i.e. careers or job roles. For example, a future police officer could study Uniformed Protective Services, a future chef, Professional Cookery or an aspiring actor or actress could hone their skills in our McMillan and Strode Theatres, while studying Musical Theatre. Whatever your ambition, there's a course to get you started!

2. Technical and Professional courses are hands-on.

Unlike most GCSEs, Professional and Technical courses are practical and help you learn how to do things. You will spend some time in-class exploring theory, but you will also be in workshops, studios, labs or the great outdoors, depending upon the subject you choose. You'll also do work experience, so you can put your new knowledge into practice!

3. Technical and Professional students have lots of choice.

UCS College Group offers one of the widest ranges of Technical and Professional courses in the area. You can pick from nearly 100 courses across a variety of sectors. Subjects include Agriculture, Animal & Equine, Automotive, Motorsport, Beauty Therapy, Business Management, Hospitality, Nuclear/Clean Energy, Engineering, Computing, Carpentry, Electrical

Installation, Painting & Decorating, Art & Design, Media, Music, Musical Theatre, Early Years & Education, Health & Social Care, Sport and Protective Services... just to name a few!

4. Technical and Professional students can build up their skills.

College may be the first chance you've had to do some of these subjects, but don't worry, we will help you begin with a course that suits your current level of knowledge, then work your way up. Some subjects start with Level 1, an introductory level which will give you the core grounding you need to get started. Others will be Level 3, the same as A Levels. You can study some vocational subjects right up to degree level and beyond with us!

5. Technical and Professional students can go to university.

If you achieve good results in a Professional and Technical course, you may be able to apply for a vocational course at university or for a Degree apprenticeship. Check the entry requirements before choosing what to do after school.

6. Technical and Professional courses include English and maths.

English and maths are essential in all walks of life and careers, especially if you hope to own your own business one day. If needed, you may be able to take English and maths qualifications alongside your main vocational subject.

- ### 7. Technical and Professional students use state-of-the-art facilities.
- At school, you'll have spent a lot of time in classrooms. If you choose a vocational course, you'll learn in industry-standard settings, designed like real-life workplaces. For example, Agriculture students train at our 200-hectare working farm, Musical Theatre students have access to the professional McMillan and Strode Theatres, and Hospitality and Professional Cookery students hone their service skills at the Quantock Restaurant, which is open to the public. We have also opened a new Business Hub and an innovative Construction and Civil Engineering building open at our Bridgwater College, and a Health & Early Years Hub in Taunton and Strode Colleges.
- ### 8. Technical and Professional enrichment gives you the edge.
- We offer lots of extracurricular clubs and activities called Academies. Many relate to vocational subjects; 999 Academy, Team UCS College Group, Design, Fashion, Media, Music or Performing Arts. They give you even more opportunities to meet industry figures and work on exciting, live projects, experience that will make your CV or uni application stand out.



To find out more,
scan the QR code.

WHY STUDY APPRENTICESHIPS?

If you're keen to get out of the classroom and into the workplace, and want to gain a nationally recognised qualification that will help kickstart your career, then an apprenticeship could be for you.

WHAT DO I NEED TO KNOW ABOUT BEING AN APPRENTICE?

- 1. Apprenticeships give you lots of choice.** We offer over 100 different apprenticeships across different sectors, relating to 1500 job roles in a wide range of industries. And if you think we only offer subjects like Engineering, Construction and Business, think again! There are Apprenticeships in Computing & Digital, Nuclear/Clean Energy, Agriculture, Fashion & Textiles, Protective Services, Catering & Hospitality, Health & Social Care, and more!
- 2. Apprentices get paid.** If you become an apprentice, you will have the same rights as any employee. This means that you should receive employee benefits, such as paid holiday, as well as a government-set apprentices minimum wage.
- 3. Apprentices train with top employers across the UK.** We work with fantastic employers of all shapes and sizes across the country. Our apprentices are employed by organisations including EDF, the Ministry of Defence, Environment Agency, Thatchers, Mulberry, the NHS, Yeovil Yeo Valley and Wessex Water.
- 4. Apprentices learn the skills employers want.** Apprentices train with employers in a relevant industry setting, so they gain the skills employers are looking for. This practical training looks great on your CV and prepares you well for a career.
- 5. Apprentices learn in college, too.** Apprentices spend most of their time in the workplace but also come to college to gain a nationally-recognised qualification. You might come to college on the same day each week, or come for several days at a time, depending upon what works best for your employer and job role.
- 6. Apprenticeships include English and maths.** English and maths are essential in all walks of life and careers, especially if you hope to own your own business one day. If needed, you may be able to take English and maths qualifications alongside your main vocational subject.
- 7. Apprentices are supported and mentored.** If you become an apprentice, you will be supported and mentored by a specialist team. Your assessor will see you regularly in your workplace and you will learn at a pace suited to you.
- 8. Apprenticeships lead to increased future earnings.** Apprentices often enjoy marked salary increases when they finish their training. Higher Apprentices (Level 4/5) can see increased earnings of an estimated £150,000 over their lifetime. Apprenticeships also help you climb the ranks in the workplace because people know what you can do, and trust the training you've received.

9. Apprentices train in state-of-the-art facilities. At college, you'll train in our industry-standard settings, designed and equipped like professional work environments. Depending upon the apprenticeship you choose, you could find yourself training in a workshop, salon or studio, at our National College for Nuclear (NCfN), our Advanced Engineering Centre, Industry Skills Centre, our 200-hectare working farm, or the Quantock Restaurant to name but a few. We've also opened a new Business Hub, an innovative Construction & Civil Engineering building, and a Health & Early Years Hub.

10. Apprenticeships go up to degree level. We offer Apprenticeships at different levels, so you can progress and complete qualifications from Level 2 (Intermediate) right up to Level 6 (Degree Apprenticeships).



To find out more,
scan the QR code.

WHAT OUR STUDENTS SAY!



JAYMI
formerly of Chilton Trinity School
"Coaching in South Africa, despite the language barrier, really strengthened my verbal and non-verbal communication skills with young people."

EXCELLENCE IN ACTION



KAIQUE
formerly of Robert Blake School
"My course has taught me to communicate, lead, and problemsolve, essential skills I'll carry into my engineering career."

GROWTH MINDSET AND RESILIENCE



SAM
formerly of Haygrove School
"From using chainsaws to climbing trees, safety is emphasised in everything we do."

PERSONAL EMPOWERMENT AND WELLBEING



HARRIET
formerly of West Somerset College
"Through the Somerstage Associates Programme and D14 Dance Academy, we've engaged with agents and built the skills needed for university."

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

To find out more about the UCS College Group Advantage scan here:



NATASHA
formerly of Bishop Fox's School
"I'm passionate about sustainability management, and my work placement has been invaluable in supporting and enhancing my learning."

GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP AND SUSTAINABILITY



FRAZER
formerly of The King Alfred School
"Guest speakers have provided real inspiration and insight, preparing me for university or a degree apprenticeship."

CAREER READINESS



ASHTON
formerly of Pyrland School
"Collaboration is key in the accounting industry, having an iPad helps us work on team projects independently, from anywhere."

DIGITALLY CONFIDENT

TO FIND OUT WHICH PATHWAY AND COURSE IS RIGHT FOR YOU, WHY NOT COME ALONG TO ONE OF OUR OPEN EVENTS...

Open Events are a great way to explore your options. You'll have the opportunity to meet our team of experienced staff, ask questions, tour our facilities and experience what it's like to be part of the UCS College Group community.

For more info,
call our Information
& Advice team
on 01278 441234,
or visit
www.ucscollegegroup.ac.uk



Scan the QR code, explore our events
and register today!

If you know you like to learn by doing things, Technical and Professional qualifications or Apprenticeships might be a good choice for you. If you dream of university and are more academic, A Levels or T Levels may be the Level 3 pathway you wish to follow.

THE IMPORTANT PLACE TO START IS WITH YOU!



Bath Road, Bridgwater
Somerset TA6 4PZ
01278 441234



Rodway, Cannington
Somerset TA5 2LS
01278 455464



Church Road, Street
Somerset BA16 0AB
01458 844400



Wellington Road, Taunton
Somerset TA1 5AX
01823 366366