

## UCAS announces Tariff points rollout for apprenticeships

Apprenticeships will be allocated UCAS Tariff points from next year, UCAS has announced today (13 December).

The aim of this new initiative is to ensure students are aware of all the pathways available into higher education. It forms part of UCAS' broader aim to support students take their next steps and support a diverse range of progression routes into university or college.

The new model will see:

- Tariff points awarded to apprenticeships at Level 3 (England, Wales and Northern Ireland) and SCQF Level 6 (Scotland) for those applying for 2026 entry onwards;
- the number of Tariff points determined by the expected amount of time spent in study and work, and competency (achieving a 'pass' grade/band 8);
- size bands and grade bands aligned across all four UK nations, meaning an apprenticeship expected to last 24 months will get the same number of points regardless of where it was taken.

Over 200 written responses were submitted during a four-week consultation earlier this year on UCAS' proposed model, which was developed following widespread engagement with the sector.

The majority of respondents were in favour of the proposal, with 74% strongly supporting or supporting the model. Colleges showed the highest level of support with 89% in favour, followed by 85% of schools and advisers, and 77% of universities.

The move was supported by qualification regulators across the UK including Medr and the **Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education, where Jennifer Coupland, Chief Executive Officer said:** "I'm delighted that UCAS has taken this important step, as apprentices who work hard to meet rigorous industry standards should be able to progress easily to university if that's what they want. Apprenticeships are already recognised by prestigious employers and professional bodies. Getting recognition from universities completes the hat-trick. Apprenticeships are different to academic routes but they are now equally great."

In addition to overall support for the proposed model, respondents said they would appreciate more time to prepare for Tariff points on apprenticeships. In response to this feedback, UCAS rescheduled the proposed implementation timetable from September 2024 to May 2025, to give university admissions teams sufficient time to adopt the new proposals.

UCAS will continue to review the initiative and work with the sector to develop and deliver information, advice and guidance on the new Apprenticeship Tariff. This includes helping higher education providers understand the size and scope of apprenticeships so they can compare them with other post-16 qualifications as part of their admissions processes.

Also today, UCAS is sharing details of its new CV builder tool with teachers and advisers, to support lesson planning and preparation for National Apprenticeship Week 2025.

UCAS' engagement with employers found that 60% of employers require a CV to apply for an apprenticeship, and increasing numbers of university and college students are also seeking part-time work alongside their studies. However, many young people, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds find it difficult to create a CV. This new tool will allow students who are seeking an apprenticeship, part-time or graduate employment to build a professional industry-standard CV on UCAS.com.

**Dr Jo Saxton CBE, Chief Executive, UCAS said:** "Bringing parity to vocational and technical qualifications was one of my key priorities during my time as chief regulator at Ofqual, and I am delighted that UCAS is continuing that drive for parity by allocating Tariff points to apprenticeships.

"The strong support for our proposed model from all four UK nations demonstrates the value of a shared national admissions service, which can help level the playing field and ensure more students can benefit from the transformational experience of higher education."

**Lindsay Conroy, Head of Apprenticeships at UCAS, said:** "Over my 20 years in the apprenticeship sector, one of the constants that I have heard from teachers, advisers, providers, employers and students is that they want to know if apprenticeships can be used to access higher education. Students are at the heart of everything we do at UCAS, and this move to include apprenticeships in the UCAS Tariff will really help to show them a more visible pathway to UK higher education and support progression for all.

"The tariff model also aims to help universities and colleges understand the size and scope of apprenticeships, so they can compare them with other post-16 qualifications as part of their admissions processes, ensuring an informed and fair admissions system.

"The majority of responses to our consultation were supportive of the model, and we have carried out further engagement with all those who gave feedback. We believe every student, regardless of their path, should have access to a wide range of higher education options, and that the new model is the fairest and most equitable method possible."

**Dr Navina Evans CBE, Chief Workforce, Training and Education Officer at NHS England, said:** "A Level 3 apprenticeship in health is a fantastic route to beginning a rewarding career in the NHS and we welcome its inclusion in the new UCAS Tariff, which recognises the value of the qualification and will help inspire more young people to work in health and social care.

"The UCAS Tariff will also help apprenticeships become a robust, recognisable pathway into higher education, broadening the pool of talent entering healthcare careers and widening access to degree apprenticeships.

"I'd encourage anyone interested in working in healthcare to consider an apprenticeship as it's a brilliant way of taking your first step into a fulfilling career."

**Ben Rowland, AELP Chief Executive Officer added:** "AELP fully supports the introduction of UCAS Tariff points for level 3 apprenticeships starting next year. Recognising the achievements of apprentices is crucial in helping to establish true parity between academic and technical education pathways. This initiative will broaden opportunities for individuals, paving the way to better access to higher education and future success."

**Simon Pirotte, Chief Executive of Medr, said:** "We welcome this excellent news for apprentices. The learning that apprentices receive is valuable and transferable. Allocating UCAS tariff points in Welsh apprenticeships

recognises that, and this change ensures that any apprentices that may want to apply to higher education will have their experience and learning properly taken into account when they do.”

**Tom Hall, Senior Policy Officer at Colleges Scotland said:** “Colleges Scotland supports pathways for learners into Higher Education, and assigning UCAS Tariff points to apprenticeships would help this. It would contribute to positioning apprenticeships on an equal footing with other programmes of study – recognising the value of college-based education and apprenticeships as part of this, strengthening the development of those pathways.”

**David Hagedyk, Chief Executive of ColegauCymru said:** “ColegauCymru believes that allocating UCAS Tariff Points to Level 3 Apprenticeships will provide greater parity of esteem between apprenticeships and other more academic forms of learning, and further will help to raise the value of apprenticeships in the context of higher education entry. A strong apprenticeships system is fundamental for our learners, for our businesses, and for economic growth”.

## ENDS

### Notes to Editor

The four-week consultation received feedback from regulators, governments, sector bodies, apprenticeship training providers, universities and colleges, schools, awarding bodies, and apprentices.

The Tariff makes up one part of the overall admissions process - universities and colleges also consider an applicants’ knowledge, skills, personal statement and references when assessing applications and making offers.

You can read the summary of responses to the consultation and FAQs on the new Apprenticeship Tariff [here](#).

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### UCAS

UCAS, the Universities and Colleges Admissions Service, is an independent charity, and the UK's shared admissions service for higher education.

UCAS’ services support young people making post-18 choices, as well as mature learners, by providing information, advice, and guidance to inspire and facilitate educational progression to university, college, or an apprenticeship.

UCAS manages almost three million applications, from around 700,000 people each year, for full-time undergraduate courses at over 380 universities and colleges across the UK.

UCAS is committed to delivering a first-class service to all our beneficiaries — they're at the heart of everything we do.