



V Levels: Reflect and Revise

Roundtable Summary Report

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Acknowledgements:

The Edge Foundation would like to thank Ada, the National College for Digital Skills, for generously hosting the roundtable and providing a welcoming space for discussion. We are grateful for their support in bringing together colleagues from across the sector to share their experiences and perspectives on the future of technical education. We would also like to thank all the roundtable participants for their contributions.



The world is changing fast and education needs to keep up. Edge is an independent, politically impartial education foundation. We want education to be relevant to the twenty-first century. We gather evidence through research and real world projects and partnerships and use this to lead the debate and influence policy and practice.

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Executive Summary

The introduction of V Levels represents the next significant phase of reform to England's post-16 qualifications landscape. Positioned as small Level 3 vocational qualifications that can be studied alongside A Levels, V Levels seek to broaden vocational education opportunities while offering greater flexibility for learners. Their development follows the introduction of T Levels, which have transformed the technical education landscape over recent years and generated valuable learning about the realities of implementing large-scale qualification reform.

Recognising the opportunity to learn from these experiences, the Edge Foundation convened a roundtable bringing together further education leaders, curriculum managers, teachers, awarding organisations, employer representatives, government officials and sector bodies (see a full list in Annex A). The aim was to explore how lessons from T Levels could inform the successful design and implementation of V Levels. To complement these discussions, Edge undertook a survey of FE staff to capture the views of practitioners delivering Level 3 or below qualifications across colleges. Together, these sources provide a timely evidence base to inform the development of V level qualifications.

Across both the survey and the roundtable discussions, participants expressed broad support for the ambition to create a more flexible vocational education offer. Many recognised the potential for V Levels to widen participation, increase learner choice and strengthen the relationship between academic and vocational education. However, there was a consistent view that the success of V Levels will depend less on the qualification itself and more on the wider architecture, support and partnerships required to deliver it successfully. Five overarching themes emerged from the discussion:

- **Preparing the FE workforce**
- **Defining the purpose of V Levels**
- **Delivering learning and assessment**
- **Clarity of learner pathways and progression**
- **Communication and system readiness**

Introduction and policy context

This report follows Edge's previous research in 2024, [Student Voices: What are students saying about their experiences of T Levels](#). It identified a series of implementation challenges facing T Levels, ranging from students feeling misinformed about course expectations and variation in delivery due to teacher turnover, to diversity in teaching methods and lack of teaching material. To ensure the next phase of post-16 qualifications reform is a success, it is vital that these delivery challenges are not repeated for the introduction of V Levels.

V Levels are new Level 3 vocational qualifications for 16 to 19-year-olds that will be introduced from September 2027. They are designed to provide broad vocational learning linked to occupational standards while allowing learners to explore different industries before specialising. Each V Level is equivalent in size to one A Level and can be studied alongside A Levels, enabling more flexible study programmes. V Levels are intended to support progression to higher education, apprenticeships and employment.

Following an initial pause and review of defunding Level 3 vocational technical qualifications that overlapped with T Levels (including BTECs) upon taking office in 2024, the Government set out plans to simplify the system offering a three-route Level 3 system comprising A Levels, T Levels, and V Levels in the [Post-16 Education and Skills White Paper](#) in October 2025. The White Paper declared that V Levels would be the "only pathway of vocational qualifications at Level 3", achieved by 'simplifying' the existing range of c. 900 vocational and technical qualifications at Level 3 into this single new pathway.

The Department for Education (DfE) has [confirmed](#) that each V Level will be 360 guided learning hours (equivalent to one A Level) and studied over two years, with a "significant proportion" of applied content. It plans to only have a single V Level per subject, though has left the door open to 'partner' V Levels within the same occupational route, using the example of Maths and Further Maths A Levels. Each V Level may cover a whole occupational route, or only part of the route.

V Levels are framed as a less specialist route compared to T Levels, which are targeted at students who know what general career path they would like to follow, allowing them to focus on a single employment pathway. To avoid overlap between the two qualifications, V Levels can not be "combined in ways that recreate a large technical programme within a single route where a T Level exists".

The DfE published an [Implementation Plan](#) for its 16-19 qualification reforms, including the introduction of V Levels, in June 2026. This outlines a phased approach to introducing V Levels from September 2027, with funding for legacy qualifications removed simultaneously as the relevant V Level begins teaching.

The Department has set out the following timeline for the introduction of V Levels:

Academic year	Subjects to be introduced
2027/28	• Digital • Education and Early Years • Finance and Accounting
2028/29	• Applied Research and Technology • Construction Design • Engineering and Manufacturing • Engineering Design · Health • Healthcare and Clinical Technologies • Legal Services • Management, Procurement and Supply Chains • Leisure, Exercise and Sports • Marketing and Retail • Social Care
2029/30	• Agriculture and Land Management • Animal Care and Management • Protective Services
2030/31	• Arts and Performing Arts • Creative and Design • Travel and Tourism

Following a brief consultation, the DfE published the [subject content](#) for the first three V Levels (to be taught from 2027) in July 2026, with consultations on subject content for the remaining subjects to follow in due course. Qualification materials are due to become available for these first V Levels in Spring 2027, whilst materials for the 2028 batch are scheduled for publication in Autumn 2027.

The roll-out of V Levels is situated within an evolving education policy landscape, with a series of changes announced following the arrival of Andy Burnham as Prime Minister in July 2026. These include a [commitment](#) to launch “new prestigious technical education routes” for 14 to 16-year-olds from September 2028, which will offer “early access to technical education, skills training, work experience and connections with employers”.

Moreover, the Prime Minister has [outlined plans](#) to give mayors control over 16-19 funding and employment support. The DfE has [indicated](#) that this will include funding for school sixth forms, sixth form colleges, further education colleges and independent training providers. Further details are due to be set out in the Autumn Budget in October 2026.

Edge survey: FE Staff perspectives on the introduction of V Levels

A short survey of further education practitioners was carried out to capture early FE sector perspectives on the introduction of V Levels. The survey sought to capture the views of those directly responsible for designing, managing and delivering Level 3 qualifications and under and who therefore may be responsible for delivering V Levels. Respondents included principals and vice principals, assistant principals, curriculum directors, heads of department, quality managers, curriculum leaders and classroom teachers. They represented provision across A Levels, T Levels, Applied General Qualifications, apprenticeships and vocational programmes at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

The survey explored what staff found promising about V Levels, their principal concerns, their current preparedness to teach the qualifications, the challenges they anticipated, and the support they believed would be needed. Although the sample is small (n=27) and its findings should not be read as representative of the sector as a whole, the consistency of several themes provides a clear indication of the issues that matter most to practitioners at this stage of implementation.

Survey responses	27
Prepared to teach V Levels	11.1% (3)
Not prepared	70.4% (29)
Unsure	22.2% (6)

Note: one respondent selected both "No" and "Not sure yet" for preparedness, so the selections total more than 27.



Survey findings

Cautious optimism about flexibility and learner choice

The responses reveal a sector that can see potential in the principle of V Levels but is not yet convinced that the proposed model will meet the needs of colleges or learners. Staff welcomed the possibility of a more flexible Level 3 offer, particularly for young people who may not wish to specialise as early as a full T Level requires. Several respondents saw value in enabling learners to combine vocational and academic subjects, maintain a diverse study programme and keep future options open.

Respondents also identified an opportunity to refresh dated curriculum content and strengthen its relationship to contemporary industry practice. Some hoped that a common V Level brand could make vocational routes clearer to learners, while others welcomed the ambition to improve parity of esteem between vocational and academic education.

"I think V Levels could be an incredible opportunity to offer flexibility to centres, communities and, most importantly, our young people" (Survey Respondent)

A number of respondents said that they felt little or no excitement because too little detail was available about the purpose, content and position of the qualifications. This suggests that confidence in the reform is currently conditional: staff may support the ambition but they need a clearer explanation of how V Levels will work before they can endorse them.

KEY FINDING

Practitioners recognise the potential for greater flexibility and refreshed vocational content, but their support is conditional on much greater clarity about the purpose, structure and value of V Levels.

Lack of clarity dominates early perceptions

The most consistent concern across the survey was the lack of sufficiently detailed and timely information. Respondents raised questions about syllabus content, guided learning hours, assessment models, entry requirements and the relationship between V Levels, A Levels, T Levels and qualifications that will remain available during the transition. Staff also wanted clarity about how universities and employers would recognise V Levels and what destinations the qualifications were intended to support.

This uncertainty has practical consequences. Colleges plan curriculum offers, staffing, timetables, marketing and recruitment well in advance of first teaching. Respondents noted that they would be expected to advise schools, prospective learners and parents before they had enough information to describe the offer accurately.

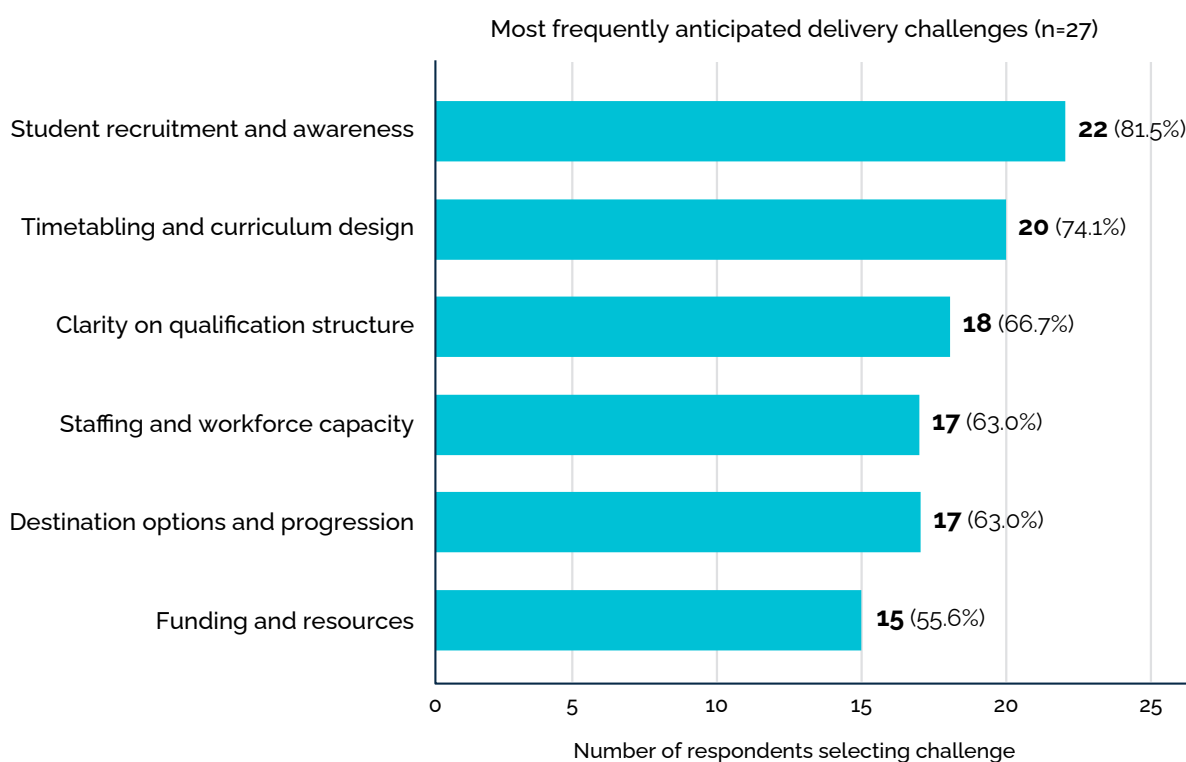
"We need to know the structure, and which qualifications specifically will be run, so we can work out how we can possibly package them into a study programme." (Survey Respondent)

The concern was not simply that information was missing, but that the purpose of the reform remained unclear. Staff repeatedly asked who the typical V Level learner would be, what gap the qualifications were designed to fill, and whether they were intended primarily as progression routes to higher education, employment or apprenticeships.

Anticipated delivery challenges

Staff viewed implementation as a whole-college challenge rather than a matter of replacing one specification with another. The most frequently selected concern was student recruitment and awareness, identified by 22 of the 27 respondents (81.5%). Timetabling and curriculum design followed, selected by 20 respondents (74.1%). Eighteen respondents (66.7%) selected clarity on qualification structure, while staffing and workforce capacity and uncertainty about destination options were each selected by 17 respondents (63.0%). Funding and resources were selected by 15 respondents (55.6%).

Figure 1. Most frequently anticipated challenges in delivering V Levels. Respondents could select more than one option



The proposed size of V Levels was also a concern. Some respondents feared that qualifications of 360 guided learning hours would not provide sufficient depth or breadth in areas such as science, creative subjects, business and digital. They argued that larger vocational diplomas currently offer a coherent full-time programme and support progression for learners who may not meet traditional A Level entry requirements.

KEY FINDING

The leading concerns are interconnected: unclear qualification design makes it harder to timetable programmes, plan staffing, communicate with learners and demonstrate credible progression routes.

Workforce confidence and readiness

The clearest quantitative finding was the low level of preparedness. Only three respondents selected that they felt prepared to teach V Levels. Nineteen selected that they did not feel prepared, while six selected "not sure yet". The overall picture is that confidence is currently low and uncertainty is widespread. The qualitative responses suggest that this lack of preparedness is not primarily resistance to change. Rather, staff do not yet have the specifications, assessment information, teaching resources or qualification combination rules needed to begin detailed planning.

Several respondents also noted that staff moving from BTEC or other vocational programmes may require different preparation from those who have delivered T Levels. Teachers accustomed to internally assessed coursework may need support to deliver externally examined content, while colleges will need to ensure that quality teams, managers and careers staff understand the new requirements as well as classroom practitioners.

"Once it is clear how they will be assessed in detail, we can make them work. National CPD for all staff would be good, alongside funding for resources." (Survey Respondent)

Support colleges say they need

Respondents indicated a need for practical support that would be provided on a reliable and ongoing basis. Colleges want timely information, detailed specifications, assessment materials and clear rules about funding and permitted combinations. Respondents called for implementation funding to cover staff training, curriculum development, resources and marketing. Others wanted national support to explain the new qualifications to feeder schools, learners and parents, comparable to the communications investment made for T Levels.

Finally, respondents wanted reassurance that support would be inclusive. They highlighted the need to consider students with SEND, learners without traditional A Level entry profiles and those who benefit from coursework-based assessment or broad vocational programmes. For these staff, successful implementation means not only creating a new qualification but ensuring that the wider Level 3 system continues to provide credible and accessible routes for a diverse learner population.



Roundtable Outcome: Insights from the Sector

In this section themes from the outcome of the roundtable discussion are outlined, all quotes from the roundtable discussion are anonymous.

Preparing the FE workforce

One of the strongest themes emerging across the roundtable discussions was the importance of preparing the FE workforce well in advance of implementation. As seen in the survey responses above this resonates strongly across the sector. While participants broadly welcomed the ambition to create a more flexible Level 3 technical education offer, there was widespread agreement that successful implementation would require significant investment in workforce development, curriculum planning and professional learning.

Participants frequently reflected on their experiences of introducing T Levels. There was broad consensus that national professional development programmes, awarding organisation training and collaborative networks between providers had supported practitioners well, and could act as valuable foundations upon which the implementation of V Levels could build. Specifically, several participants spoke positively about the role played by the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) in supporting T Level delivery. National CPD programmes, subject-specific training and opportunities to collaborate with colleagues across institutions helped practitioners interpret new specifications and build confidence in delivering unfamiliar content.

However, participants cautioned that these support structures had developed over several years and should not be taken for granted. Several participants suggested that at least one academic year of dedicated preparation would be necessary before first teaching of V Levels if providers were to implement the qualifications confidently. One participant reflected that:

"The biggest lesson from T Levels wasn't about the qualification itself—it was about the time and support colleges needed to get ready."

This view was echoed throughout the discussions. Participants argued that implementation should be understood as a gradual process rather than a single point at which teaching begins. Confidence develops through experience, collaboration and opportunities to test and refine approaches over time.

Defining the purpose of V Levels

The most consistent theme emerging from the roundtable discussions was uncertainty surrounding the fundamental purpose of V Levels. While participants broadly welcomed the Government's ambition to introduce greater flexibility into the post-16 qualifications landscape, many questioned whether there was currently a shared understanding of what V Levels are intended to achieve or how they will complement existing qualifications.

Rather than focusing immediately on curriculum content or delivery, participants repeatedly returned to a more fundamental question:

"What problem are V Levels trying to solve?"

For many, this uncertainty reflected the rapidly evolving nature of the Level 3 qualifications landscape. Over recent years, colleges have adapted to the introduction of T Levels, reforms to Applied General Qualifications, changes to funding arrangements and increasing emphasis on occupational competence. Within this context, participants felt it was essential that V Levels are presented not simply as another qualification, but as part of a coherent and easily understood system.

A recurring discussion centred on the relationship between V Levels and existing Level 3 pathways (A Levels, T Levels, apprenticeships and remaining Applied General Qualifications). While flexibility was widely welcomed, several participants cautioned that introducing another qualification without clearly communicating its distinctive purpose risks increasing confusion for learners, parents and schools.



While awareness of T Levels has increased considerably since their introduction, participants noted that building confidence among schools, parents and employers has taken time. There was widespread agreement that V Levels should benefit from these lessons by establishing a clear identity from the outset, supported by consistent communication across the education system.

Participants also stressed that defining the purpose of V Levels should begin with the needs of learners rather than the structure of the qualification itself. Rather than asking how V Levels compare with existing qualifications, discussions frequently focused on the different educational journeys that young people follow and how the Level 3 system might better accommodate these varied pathways.

Importantly, participants recognised that V Levels have the potential to broaden participation in technical education by offering learners greater flexibility to combine different subjects and tailor programmes to their interests and ambitions. However, they argued that this opportunity will only be realised if colleges, schools and employers share a common understanding of the qualification's purpose and intended outcomes.

Delivering learning and assessment

Although participants expressed optimism about the opportunities presented by V Levels, discussions repeatedly returned to the practical challenges associated with introducing major qualification reform. There was widespread recognition that implementation extends far beyond curriculum design, requiring significant organisational planning, investment and collaboration across colleges and the wider education system.

A significant area of discussion centred on curriculum planning. Participants highlighted the complexity of designing programmes that allow learners to combine V Levels with A Levels or other qualifications while ensuring coherent study programmes and manageable timetables. Many colleges explained that their current curriculum models have evolved around existing qualification structures and that introducing greater flexibility will require substantial redesign. This was viewed as particularly challenging for large multi-campus colleges where curriculum areas, staffing and timetabling are organised across different sites.

Participants also questioned how V Levels would operate within colleges that do not currently offer A Levels. While the policy intention is to provide learners with greater flexibility, some respondents expressed concern that smaller providers or specialist vocational colleges may find it difficult to offer the range of combinations that learners expect. Others highlighted the potential financial implications of delivering small cohorts or highly personalised programmes, particularly within existing funding arrangements.

Funding was a recurring theme throughout the discussions. Participants recognised that introducing new qualifications carries significant costs beyond classroom delivery, including curriculum development, staff training, new learning resources and marketing. Several argued that these “hidden” implementation costs are often underestimated, despite being essential to successful reform. Participants therefore suggested that implementation funding should recognise the wider organisational changes required during the transition to V Levels.

The discussions also reinforced the importance of recognising the diversity of the further education sector. Colleges differ significantly in size, curriculum offer, local labour markets and student populations. Participants cautioned against assuming that a single implementation model would be appropriate across all providers. Instead, they advocated for a flexible approach that provides consistent national expectations while allowing institutions to respond to local contexts and learner needs.

Clarity of Learner Pathways and Progression

Discussions returned repeatedly to the importance of viewing qualification reform through the experiences of young people. While many aspects of the conversation focused on curriculum, implementation and policy, participants consistently argued that the ultimate measure of success should be whether V Levels improve opportunities and outcomes for learners.

There was widespread agreement that one of the strengths of the proposed reforms is the potential to introduce greater flexibility into the Level 3 landscape. Participants recognised that young people have diverse interests, abilities and aspirations and that no single qualification route will meet the needs of every learner. Many welcomed the possibility that V Levels could allow students to combine vocational and academic learning in ways that better reflect their individual ambitions. Several participants reflected that existing qualification pathways can sometimes require learners to specialise at an early stage, limiting opportunities to explore different subject areas or maintain a broader programme of study. In this context, the flexibility offered by V Levels was viewed as an opportunity to support learners whose interests span both technical and academic disciplines.

Yet, learners, parents and teachers need to understand what different qualification combinations mean in practice and where they are likely to lead. Throughout the discussions, participants emphasised that progression routes into higher education, apprenticeships and employment should be explicit from the outset, allowing young people to make informed choices about their future. One participant reflected:

“Students don't choose qualifications because of their name—they choose them because they understand where they'll take them.”

The discussions also explored progression beyond further education. Participants emphasised that universities, employers and apprenticeship providers all have an important role in determining whether new qualifications achieve their intended purpose. Several argued that progression arrangements should be developed alongside qualification design rather than after implementation has begun. In particular, participants felt that higher education institutions should be engaged early to ensure that entry requirements are transparent and consistently understood across the sector.

Participants also discussed the role of careers education and guidance in supporting learner decision-making. Schools, colleges and careers advisers were viewed as essential partners in helping young people navigate an increasingly complex post-16 landscape. Several participants argued that careers guidance should begin earlier and provide balanced information about all available pathways enabling learners to make informed decisions.

Communications and System Readiness

Participants reflected on the considerable progress that has been made in raising awareness of T Levels since their introduction. Many noted that schools, employers and universities are now becoming more familiar with the qualification and increasingly confident in understanding its purpose and progression opportunities. However, participants also recognised that this progress has taken time and has required sustained engagement across the education sector.

Against this backdrop, there was widespread discussion about how V Levels should be introduced to avoid repeating many of the communication challenges experienced during the rollout of T Levels. Participants consistently emphasised that successful implementation will depend not only on the quality of the qualifications themselves but also on the confidence and understanding of those responsible for advising, recruiting and supporting young people. One participant reflected:

"We're only just getting to the point where parents and schools understand T Levels. We need to be careful that introducing V Levels doesn't create another layer of confusion."

Participants stressed that communication should extend far beyond colleges. Schools were identified as a particularly important audience, as teachers and careers advisers are often the first source of information for learners and parents, making it essential that they understand where V Levels fit within the wider qualifications landscape. Without clear guidance and consistent messaging, participants feared that schools may struggle to confidently explain the new qualifications.

Parents were also recognised as a key stakeholder group, who frequently influence decisions about post-16 education and therefore need accessible, balanced information about different qualification pathways. Several participants reflected on the challenges experienced during the introduction of T Levels, where unfamiliar terminology and limited public awareness initially affected confidence in the qualification.

Alongside communication, participants frequently discussed the wider concept of system. While colleges have considerable experience of implementing new qualifications, participants argued that introducing V Levels represents another significant period of change within an already evolving Level 3 landscape. Many highlighted the importance of recognising reform fatigue across the sector, with providers continuing to implement T Levels while also responding to wider curriculum reforms, funding pressures and workforce challenges.

Participants therefore argued that readiness should be viewed as a shared responsibility across Government, awarding organisations, providers and partner organisations. Successful implementation requires more than publishing specifications or announcing policy changes; it depends upon ensuring that all parts of the system are prepared to support learners consistently.

Policy Recommendations

1. Delay the introduction of the first V Level subjects until the 2028/29 academic year and use this pause to build a proper case for the transition.

Whilst the DfE published the subject content for the first three V Levels (Digital, Education and Early Years, and Finance and Accounting) in July 2026, awarding organisations face a tight turnaround to develop subject materials by Spring 2027. We are concerned that this timeframe does not provide sufficient scope for meaningful consultation with the sector on their design.

This also applies to the very short time frame between the materials being published in the Spring and teaching to begin in September, which risks undermining colleges' ability to advise schools, prospective learners and parents on the course offer. Delaying roll-out by a year would allow providers a full academic year of dedicated preparation following publication of the first course materials. This would allow time for key preparatory activities such as curriculum redesign, employer engagement, staff recruitment, assessment planning, and development of marketing materials.

Whilst the phased roll-out approach will help to mitigate some pressure on providers, any widespread delivery challenges faced by the first three V Levels owing to a rushed roll-out risk damaging the V Levels brand itself. The experience of T Levels demonstrates the risk that learners end up feeling misinformed as a result of a rushed roll-out. Conversely, a gradual roll-out will be key to preparing high-quality destinations for learners, by allowing time to build and retain confidence among employers and higher education providers.

More broadly, it is evident from our research that school and college staff lack clarity about the purpose, structure, and value of V Levels. Delaying their introduction would allow DfE time to establish a clear identity for V Levels, based on a consistent communication campaign across colleges and schools (particularly careers advisers), as well as parents. As with any new qualification, the DfE should also not underestimate the challenge of raising wider public awareness, as was the case for T Levels.

Particularly in light of wider changes to the education system, not least the announcement of new technical education pathways at 14-16, the Government needs to establish a strong case for change from the existing suite of Applied General Qualifications to V Levels. The views of college staff gathered for this report demonstrates that this narrative has not yet been established, with a large proportion of the sector unconvinced by the proposed changes. Delaying the introduction of V Levels would allow the Government greater scope to bring the sector with it.

2. Allow learners to combine multiple V Levels and other qualifications in the same subject

With many larger vocational diplomas due to be phased out and T Levels unlikely to absorb a significant increase in student numbers despite their continued expansion, the DfE should avoid imposing excessive restrictions on subject combinations.¹ To meet the needs of students, it should instead adopt an approach that favours flexibility, with specific exceptions where there is an obvious overlap in course content (e.g. an A Level in Business Studies and a V Level in Business and Administration).

1. For the 2027/28 academic year, the DfE has stated that it will "not implement any rules of combination on which qualifications can be combined to form the qualification element of a study programme". <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/post-16-pathways-implementation-plan/post-16-pathways-implementation-plan>

The DfE's suggestion that learners will be allowed to study 'partnered' V Levels addresses some concerns about their size being limited to 360 hours, which in many cases is unlikely to be sufficient to lead to progression to higher education, apprenticeships and related employment. However, partnered V Levels should not be "limited to a relatively small number of circumstances", as the DfE has indicated; rather, students should be allowed to choose from a range of 'partnered' qualifications.

Moreover, where 360 GLH is deemed insufficient for certain subjects, particularly those with large subject content, the DfE should consider the case for a 'double V Level' within the same subject. Ideally, these should be developed in tandem with the initial single subject, rather than being a later addition to the system.

3. Issue guidance on subject combinations and progression pathways, in partnership with mayors, employers and higher education providers

To enable learners, parents and teachers to make an informed choice, the DfE should publish sample subject combinations and the progression pathways these could lead to. Reflecting the mix-and-match approach, these subject combinations should cover V Levels as well as A Levels, Applied General Qualifications, and remaining vocational qualifications (prior to these being defunded). These progression pathways, though illustrative rather than instructive, should be designed in partnership with employers to reflect the skills required by specific sectors, as well as higher education providers to reflect routes into undergraduate courses.

Building on the model of the MBacc in Greater Manchester, the DfE and Skills England should also support Mayoral Combined Authorities to develop 'gateways' comprised of subject combinations (including V Levels) linked to local priority sectors. These gateways should also extend to GCSE subject choice, including vocational routes, and should aim to provide a 'line of sight' to future apprenticeships and employment. As in the case of the MBacc, relevant careers advice, work experience, and employer encounters should be core components of each gateway.

4. Ensure that providers are not left to shoulder 'hidden' implementation costs, by establishing a V Levels capital fund and a short-term funding uplift for providers

Funding allocated to schools and colleges delivering V Levels should not only cover costs associated with classroom delivery, but also additional costs associated with implementation, such as curriculum development, staff training, new learning resources and marketing. To cover these 'hidden' implementation costs, the DfE should ensure that the 16-19 funding formula includes an additional short-term funding uplift for providers delivering V Levels as new subjects are introduced, similar to that provided to support T Level industry placements.

Moreover, though V Levels are predominantly classroom-based, providers will require additional capital funding for investment in facilities, particularly for more practical subjects such as health and social care or construction. A new V Levels capital fund should therefore be set up, similar to the existing fund for T Levels, as a top-up to capital funding pots available to colleges. The DfE should also encourage and support colleges to develop multi-purpose facilities for teaching both V and T Levels, where appropriate.

Annex A: Organisations in attendance at the roundtable

We would like to thank all the organisations for their time and valuable input. The roundtable, held on 16 June 2026, was attended by the following organisations:

- Activate Learning
- Ada College
- Ashford College
- Association of Colleges
- British Chambers of Commerce
- Cambridge OCR
- Capital City College Group
- Chesterfield College
- Edge Foundation
- Fabian Society
- Federation of Awarding Bodies
- Federation of Small Business (FSB)
- London South Bank University (LSBU)
- Manchester College
- National Foundation for Education Research (NFER)
- NCFE
- Sixth Form Colleges Associations
- Strategic Development Network (SDN)
- UCAS
- United Colleges Group / City of Westminster College
- Youth Futures Foundation

Government departments were also present in listening mode.

