

An overview

Updated
July 2024

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WELCOME TO UTC SOUTH DURHAM

UTC South Durham is an innovative school and 6th Form with a careers and technical focus. It is located on the Aycliffe Business Park in County Durham, a thriving community of 250 business and over 14,000 employees. Ofsted again rated the UTC as Good across all categories in the most recent inspection in March 2024.



University Technical Colleges are a network of specialist technical schools across the country, designed to ensure that young people are ready for the world of work. The 14-19 age range takes students through their GCSEs or A-levels, alongside specialist engineering and other technical qualifications. Students also undertake a full programme of workplace learning, consisting of visits to employers and universities, work experience placements and industry-led projects.



UTC South Durham opened in September 2016, having been founded by the University of Sunderland, Hitachi Rail and Gestamp, and currently works with over 150 regional businesses. Students rise to the challenge of being young professionals in a demanding business environment. They all travel further than their local school or 6th Form and undertake a full working week of 30 hours. This results in over 150 hours of additional education for each student per year.

Founding Members
of UTC South Durham



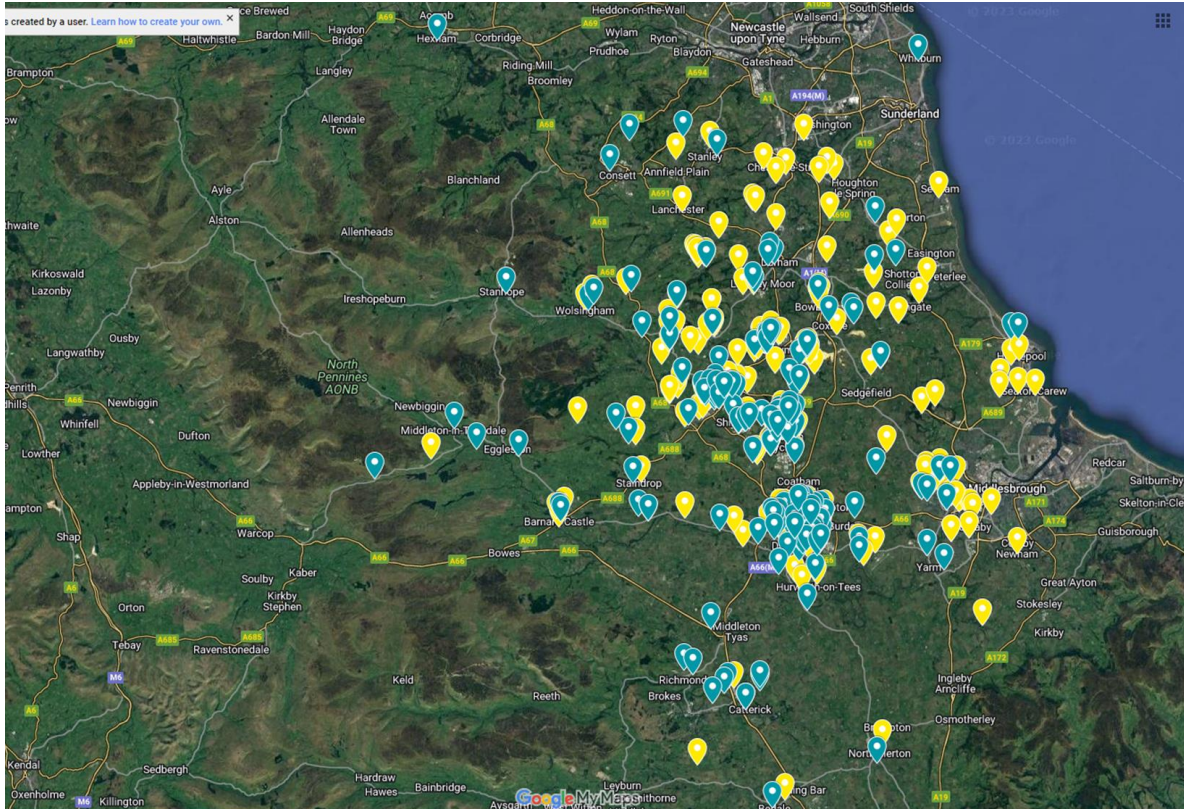
Lifechanging



OVER 150 EMPLOYER PARTNERS



The UTC has built a strong reputation amongst businesses and a track record of students progressing to STEM careers, either to university courses or directly into apprenticeships (many at degree and higher level). Having career ready young people is a key focus and the Employer Advisory Group ensures that industry needs are well understood; they have specified our technical equipment, helped to shape the curriculum and are heavily involved in projects, placements and mock interviews. It is this focus which brings students from across the North East.



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES 2021-26

UTC South Durham has the following key objectives for the next five years. The top three are focused on our students, articulating the elements of the Student Leaver Profile, while the bottom three are broader organisational objectives.

1. Ensure our students are **career-ready**, through a relentless focus on the **Student Leaver Profile** and giving them high quality **experiences**.
2. Establish an outstanding **academic and technical education** for all of our students, through high quality teaching and learning, leading to excellent outcomes.
3. Support all students to be **life-ready** and mature as young adults, by developing their **Core Skills**, confidence and wellbeing.
4. Amplify our **positive reputation** amongst potential students, the sub-regional community, and education and business sectors as the place to be for academic, technical and career education.
5. Ensure long-term viability through **strategic expansion**, with a wider age range and programmes to meet the needs of our learners and business partners.
6. Run an **efficient organisation** to ensure good use of staff, quality of support services and financial value.

Student Leaver Profile

The SLP has been developed by the UTC community. It was created by a network of industry partners, students, parents, community leaders, staff and Trustees.

The focus for our education is to ensure that our students are career and life ready. It describes the skills, knowledge and experiences which our students leave the UTC with and therefore is a clear statement of our Curriculum Intent.

The SLP ensures that our students are ready for their careers and it cements our commitment to a balanced education which goes well beyond that delivered by most schools. It drives everything we do for our students.

“Your students are so confident and articulate”
Katherine Cowell, Regional Director, DfE, May 2022

“They were so impressive, passionate and focused”
Kevin Mothersdale, Deputy Director, ESFA, September 2022

“I was extremely impressed by your students; their passion for the college was evident. You clearly give students access to exciting futures and provide an essential role in the skills pipeline for businesses both locally and nationally”
Michael Gove, Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Community, February 2023

“It is obvious that your students are getting an exceptionally positive experience of their education”
Lee Owston, Acting National Director of Education, Ofsted, May 2023

“I was very pleased to visit UTC South Durham and meet with such motivated, enthusiastic and ambitious students”
Bridget Phillipson, Shadow Secretary of State for Education, November 2023



UTC ETHOS

The UTC is very different from most schools. Our students have actively chosen to come to us – we respect that decision and recognise that they are taking their career seriously by undertaking 30 hours of lessons a week (compared to 25 in most schools) and additional travel time.

We treat them as young professionals and expect them to rise to that challenge. Students are on first name terms with staff; we are colleagues, working together on their careers.

We work very closely with parents in supporting their children. Parent feedback shows the impact of the UTC education and 95% say that they would recommend the UTC to other parents.

DESTINATIONS

Destinations (young people going on to meaningful next steps and careers which are suitable for them as individuals) are the reasons for UTCs existing. This focused approach to education is new to the North East of England and employers and parents say that young people leave UTC with strong core skills and a confidence that sets them up for future careers.

Careers guidance is strong from the moment that students join the UTC and the professional and career experiences mean that they can see first-hand the options open to them and have a gradually more bespoke experience as they progress through the UTC.

Students leave the UTC ready for the next stage of their career. Leavers from our 6th Form over our first 5 years achieved six times the national average of apprenticeships and all students who wanted to go to university have done so.



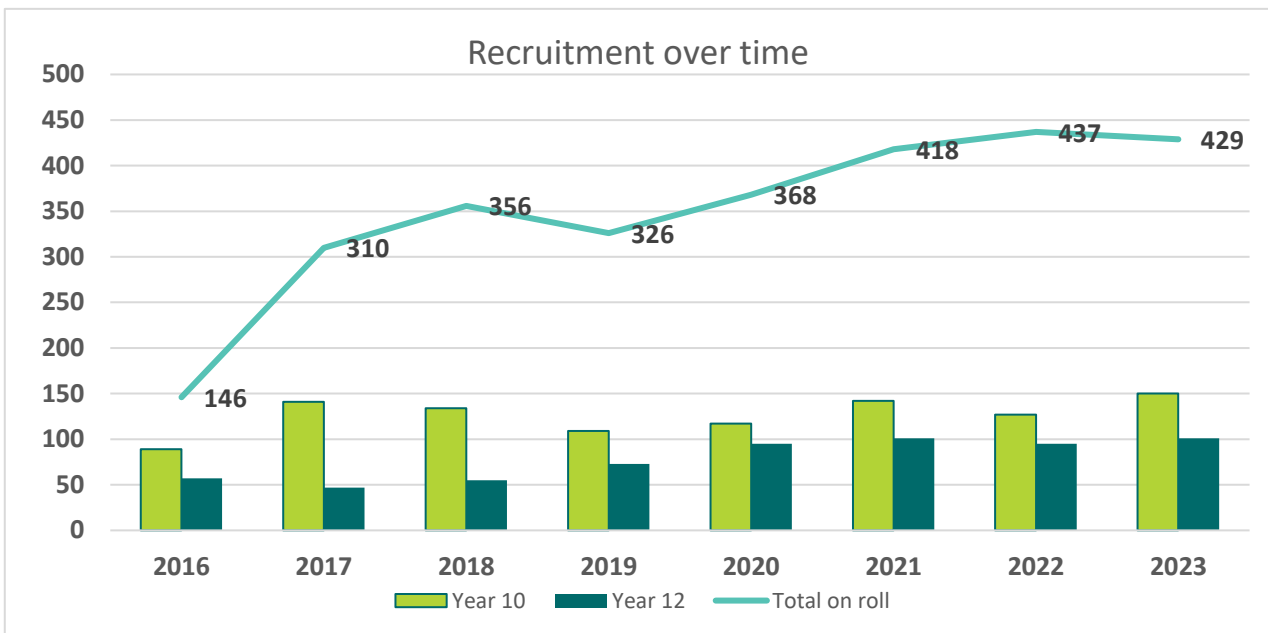
“When I started my apprenticeship as a Project Manager I was really surprised that the others didn’t know how to run a meeting or what a CV is even though they are two years older than me. It feels strange being in charge on site, since I’m only 16, but it’s great because I’ve already had a pay rise and I’ve only been there for a few months” *Year 11 alumna four months in to starting her degree programme apprenticeship with Wilmot Dixon as a Project Manager*

CONTEXT OF THE UTC

Key milestones



- 2013** Need for technical education in the region and skills gap identified. Steering Group formed by founding partners (University of Sunderland, Hitachi, Gestamp)
- 2015-16** Site identified within Aycliffe Business Park
Building project, recruitment of staff and students.
- Sept 2016** **Year 1 – 146 students.** UTC South Durham opens on time with Y10 and Y12 students. 13 teaching staff and 7 support staff.
- Sept 2018** **Year 3 – 356 students.** January 2019 - Ofsted Inspection – Good in all categories
- Sept 2021** **Year 6 – 418 students.** Approval for expansion, with £1.1 million new T-level facilities
- Sept 2023** **Year 8 – 429 students.** March 2024 - Ofsted Inspection – Good in all categories



FACILITIES

Current	New
<p>Engineering Hall</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry standard machinery Robotic Arm Machining Fabrication and Welding CNC manufacturing <p>CAD Suite and computing rooms</p> <p>Specialist science labs</p> <p>High quality classrooms</p> <p>Sixth Form Common Room</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pool table, table football TV <p>Sixth Form Balcony and Study Area</p> <p>Fitness Suite</p>	<p>Opened Sept 2023</p> <p>£1.1 Million Specialist Engineering Annex For T-Levels</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAD suite Mechatronics Lab Materials testing Advanced Manufacturing <p>£265k Specialist equipment budget</p>

CURRICULUM

The UTC curriculum is unique and takes a very different approach to other schools. The 4 key principles behind the curriculum are:

- A. Employer led
- B. Destination focused
- C. Balanced academic, technical and workplace learning
- D. Student wellbeing focused

KS4 Curriculum

KS4 students follow a timetable of 30 hours per week and a core curriculum of GCSE qualifications in Maths, English Language and Literature and Science. All study Engineering Manufacturing while having a range of technical option choices which are not available in most schools. Because of the UTC's technical focus, we do not offer qualifications in a range of subjects, as listed below. We are clear about our purpose and offer and meet with every family for a 1:1 meeting to ensure that their child is making a good decision about joining us which will support them in their likely future direction.

Our Student Leaver Profile is at the heart of our curriculum. The PaCE (Professional and Careers Experiences) curriculum includes all aspects of careers education, citizenship, PSHE, SMSC and RE.





Everyone studies	Options subjects	We don't offer
English Language	Engineering Design	Languages
English Literature	Systems & Control	History
Maths	Computer Science	GCSE PE
Science (Triple or Combined)	Design & Technology	RE
Engineering Manufacture	Geography	Art, Music, Drama
PaCE (Professional and Career Experiences)	Business	
	Information Technology	

Post-16 Curriculum. KS5 students follow one of three pathways depending on their career direction:



POST-16 AT THE UTC

A-levels & equivalent 2 years		T-Level 2 years	Level 2 PEO 1 year
Engineering	Tech Engineering	Single full qualification (worth three A-levels)	Performing Engineering Operations:
Maths	Maths* Further Maths*	Academic, technical and workplace learning	- Fabrication and Welding
Science	Physics* Chemistry* Biology* Applied Science	45 days of industry placement	- Mechanical Engineering
Technology	Computer Science* Product Design*	Occupational specialisms:	GCSE English and Maths Enrichment
Social Sciences & Humanities	English* Geography* Business Tech Sport	- Mechanical design and development	
Half qualifications	EPQ (½) Core Maths (½)	- Manufacturing, machining & toolmaking	
			
Enrichment			
Work experience, Industry projects, visits, careers advice, interview practice, international trips, Lord Baker award, personal development			

T-levels are new, career-focused Post-16 qualifications and the UTC was selected in the first wave of providers to offer Engineering T-levels, starting in September 2022. These innovative qualifications involve a blend of core academic learning, with technical activities, project work and 45 days of work experience. Students chose an occupational specialism which will help them focus skills on their chosen career path.

T LEVEL

80% UTC
20% WORK



T-LEVELS

THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

Year 1 - Core curriculum

- 2 exams (Maths and Science, Engineering)
- Employer set project
- 45 days of industry placement

Year 2 - Occupational specialism

1. Mechanical Engineering – Design and Development
2. Manufacturing – Machining and Toolmaking