



Learning Key
TRAINING ACADEMY

For school leavers, career changers and anyone already working in IT who wants the certificate to prove it. Nothing in here needs you to have decided anything yet.



LEARNER PROSPECTUS · 2026/27

Start the career, not just the course.

Six apprenticeship standards. 35 industry certifications across nine technology partners. Delivered from Middlesbrough, at your workplace anywhere in the UK, or live online.

1,500+

certified graduates

200+

apprentices qualified

95%

learner satisfaction

9

technology partners

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Three ways in, and one way to find out which

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Most people arrive knowing what they want to be and not what to do on Monday morning. This prospectus is arranged the other way round: by route, so you can find the one that fits the life you already have.

ROUTE ONE

An apprenticeship

You are employed, you earn a wage, and roughly six hours of your working week are yours for training. Twelve to fifteen months to a nationally recognised qualification. Best if you want to change career and cannot afford to stop working to do it.

ROUTE TWO

A professional certification

You study for a specific industry certification — CompTIA, AWS, Cisco, Microsoft and others — with up to twelve months to complete it and a free resit on most exams. Best if you are already working and want a credential that moves you.

ROUTE THREE

A conversation first

Twenty minutes, free, no pressure, in person or online. You leave knowing exactly what your next step is — even if that step turns out to be somewhere other than here.

You do not have to know which one you want

Plenty of people call us with “I want to get into IT” and no more than that. The consultation exists precisely for that conversation — and if the right answer turns out to be a university course, a different provider or waiting six months, we will tell you so. Page 28 has the three ways to book it.



Everything here is arranged around one question

Not “what would you like to study?” but “what do you want to be doing in two years?” — because the second question has an answer and the first one usually does not.

“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”

NELSON MANDELA

An academy at the centre of a growing tech region

“Our mission is to be a leading force in IT education — empowering the next generation of skilled professionals through flexible, hands-on training that’s aligned with industry needs and accessible to all.”

Learning Key Training Academy

What that looks like in practice

- **We do not award our own qualifications.** Independent awarding organisations — City & Guilds, NCFE, BCS, Pearson VUE and others — set the assessment and issue the certificate. That is what makes it worth something to your next employer.
- **We are an accredited examination centre.** You sit the exam in the room you studied in, not in a strange building on the worst morning of the year.
- **Support does not stop at the certificate.** CV review, interview practice and career progression are part of the offer.
- **You are not a cohort.** Weekly check-ins, one-to-one tutor time, and a centre you can work from if home is not where you concentrate.

Our values, in short

The academy publishes eleven. These four do most of the work:

Learner-centred — “This is about you, not us.” Courses are designed around what learners need.

Accessibility — “We all have to start somewhere.” Learners from all backgrounds and levels.

Experiential — “We teach you to understand, not just to remember.” Hands-on labs and real scenarios.

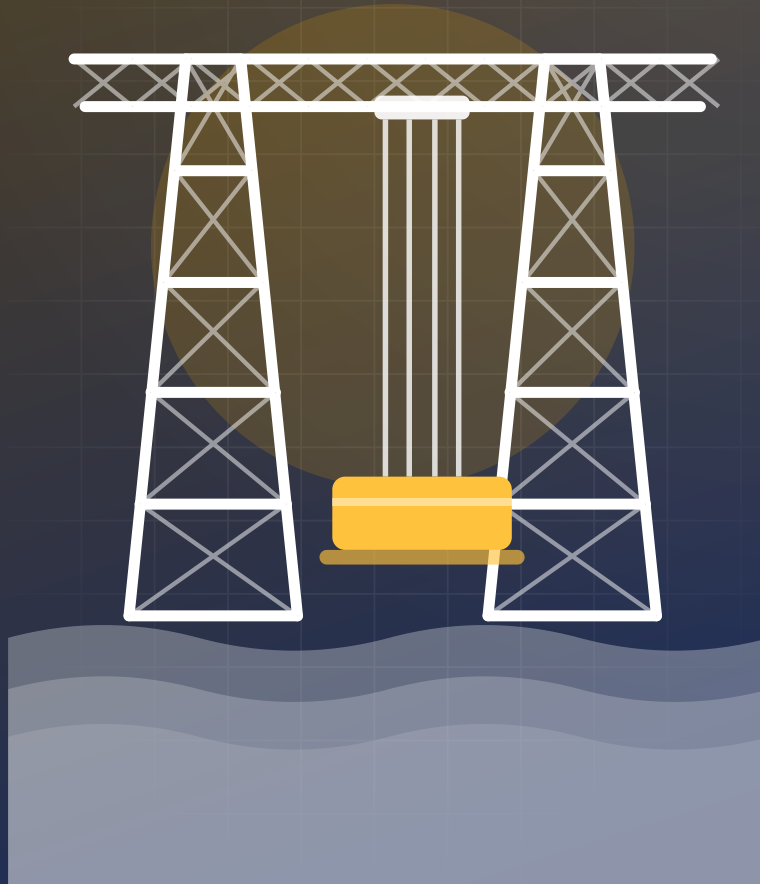
Your future first — everything is driven by helping students succeed in the path they chose.

Where we are, where we teach

The academy is in Middlesbrough, at the heart of one of the fastest-growing tech clusters in the region. Teaching happens in the centre, at your workplace anywhere in the UK, or live online — and on most programmes you can move between the three as your circumstances change.

About the numbers on the cover

1,500+ certified graduates, 200+ apprentices qualified and a 95% learner satisfaction rate are the academy’s own figures — ours, not an inspector’s.



Built in Middlesbrough, delivered anywhere in the UK

A working IT environment rather than a room with desks in it — and a region where the work is arriving faster than the people to do it.

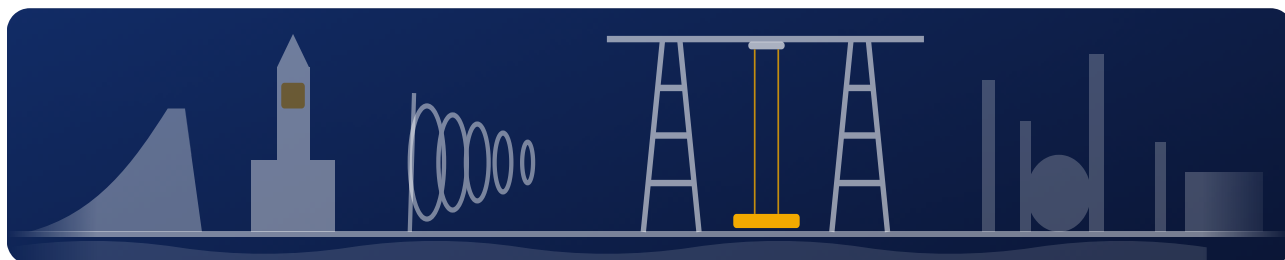
4.7%

of North East employment is in digital and technologies — one of the lowest concentrations in England, against a 7.3% average. The work is here; the people are scarcer.

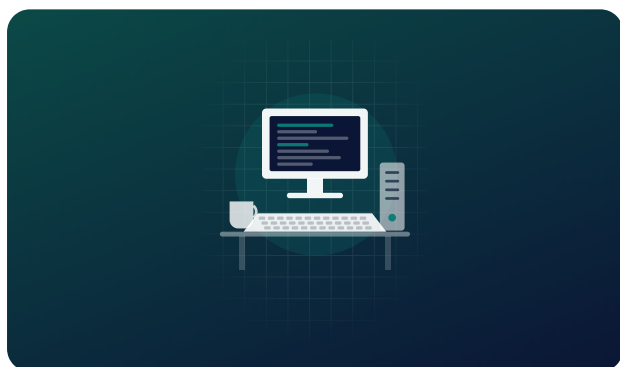
Source: Skills England, Sector Skills Needs Assessment: Digital and Technologies, 2026

69 Newport Road, and wherever else you need us

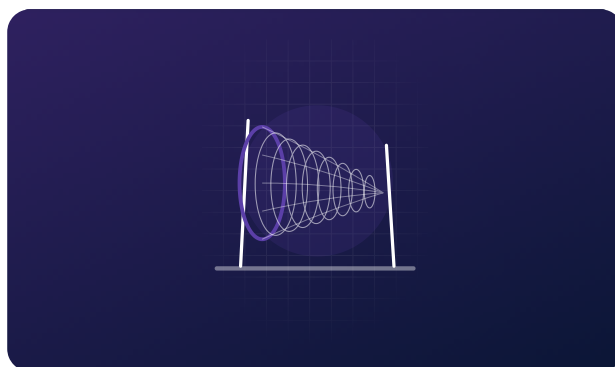
The centre is a working IT environment rather than a room with desks in it: real hardware to break and fix, the software you will be assessed on, and an accredited exam room at the end of the corridor.



Left to right: **Roseberry Topping**, the **Old Town Hall** clock tower, **Temenos** at Middlehaven, the **Transporter Bridge**, and the works along the river. All of it within a few miles of the front door.



Desktops, application software, training simulations and specialised hardware — included with every course, not an extra.



Temenos, Anish Kapoor and Cecil Balmond's sculpture at Middlehaven — a reminder that this town builds ambitious things.



Study here or at home

Full access Monday to Friday, 09:00–17:00, excluding bank holidays. You do not have to be booked into a class to use it.



An accredited exam room

Sit the exam in the building you studied in, under proper conditions, rather than travelling somewhere unfamiliar on the morning.



People, not a portal

Weekly check-ins and one-to-one tutor time. The people who answer the phone are the people who teach.

“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.”

ARISTOTLE, NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

The job you are training for is one somebody is struggling to fill

Every figure on this page comes from Skills England's 2026 assessment of the digital and technologies sector — the same body that approves the apprenticeship standards we deliver. None of it is ours, and all of it is checkable.



2.6 million people were employed across the UK's digital and technologies sector in 2023, producing around £207 billion of economic output.

4.7% of North East employment is in digital and technologies — one of the lowest concentrations in England, against a 7.3% average. The work is here; the people are scarcer.

89% of the additional employment projected in those occupations requires qualifications at Level 4 and above — which is precisely where our Level 4 standards sit.

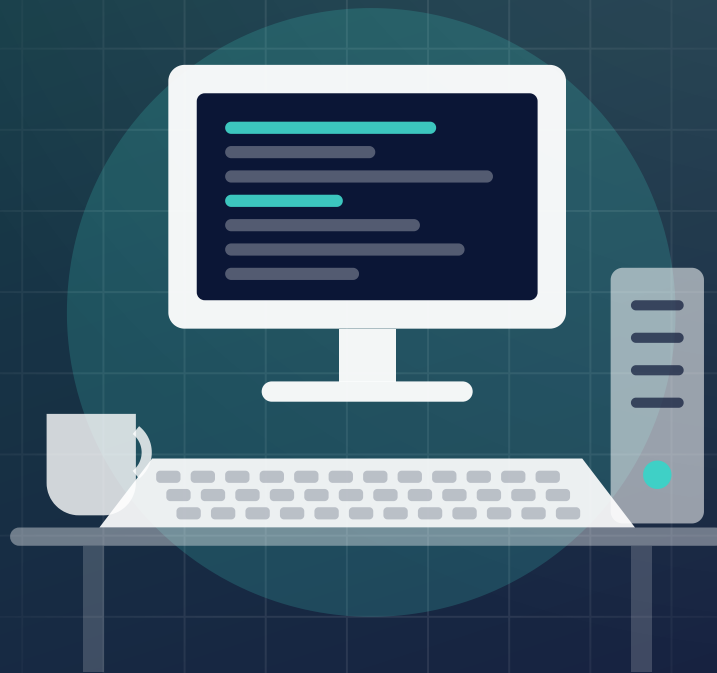
68% of the sector's priority occupations are in critical or elevated demand across the UK economy. A quarter are in critical demand.

52% of UK technology leaders reported an AI skills gap in their organisation, up from 20% the year before.

What that adds up to, in one sentence

There is more work in this sector than there are people qualified to do it, the shortfall is worst at Level 4 and above, and the North East has fewer of those people than almost anywhere in England — uncomfortable for employers, straightforwardly good for you.

Skills England, *Sector Skills Needs Assessment: Digital and Technologies*, 2026. Employment figures are for 2023; demand projections run 2025–2035. Checked 20 August 2026.



The practical details, before the prospectus gets excited

Where, when, how long, what is included, and what you actually need to have done before you can start. All of it in one place, and none of it buried.

“For the things we have to learn before we can do them, we learn by doing them.”

ARISTOTLE, NICOMACHEAN ETHICS

The practical details, before the prospectus gets excited

WHERE

Three modes

In the Middlesbrough centre, on-site at your workplace anywhere in the UK, or live online with an instructor.

WHEN

Mon–Fri, 09:00–17:00

Full access to the course and materials, with the flexibility to work from home or from the training centre during opening hours (excluding bank holidays).

HOW LONG

Up to 12 months

Certification courses run up to twelve months. Apprenticeships run twelve to fifteen. Both are checked against your own pace, not a fixed cohort date.

What comes with every course

- **Facility access.** Desktops, application software, training simulations and specialised technical hardware at the academy – included, not an extra.
- **A free resit.** Every exam includes one free resit, so a bad morning does not become a bill.
- **Official vendor material.** Curriculum developed, maintained and awarded by the technology partner whose name is on the certificate.
- **Exam preparation.** Exam tips, practice questions and study guides run through every programme.
- **CPD confirmation.** Courses carry continuing professional development recognition; the team will confirm the position for the specific course you are considering.
- **Learner support throughout.** The eleven things on page 12.

Free resits and vendor discount vouchers vary by partner. Microsoft is the one exception to the free-resit position; ask the team for the current terms before you book.

Do I need qualifications to start?

For most certification courses, no. Where a certification has a prerequisite – a Cisco CCNP needs the CCNA first, the PMI professional certification needs the associate one – it is stated on the course page. Where nothing is stated, anyone can enrol.

Apprenticeship entry requirements

These are set nationally, not by us. To be accepted onto any of our apprenticeships you must:

- **Age** – be 16 years old or over.
- **Residency** – live in England and have the right to work in the UK.
- **Education status** – not be in full-time education.
- **Employment** – be employed in a contract that allows for training.

Meet all four and you are eligible. Not employed yet? Say so at the consultation – finding the employer is a normal part of the conversation.



Paid work, a real qualification, and no student debt

You are employed and paid from week one, with a protected block of your hours set aside for learning. Twelve to fifteen months to a qualification that belongs to you for life.

100%

of apprenticeship training and assessment is government-funded for an apprentice aged 16 to 24 where the employer's pay bill is under £3 million, up to the funding band maximum.

Source: DfE apprenticeship funding rules 2026 to 2027, version 3, from 3 August 2026

Paid work, real qualification, no student debt

An apprenticeship is a job with structured training attached. You are employed and paid from day one, and an average of six hours of each working week is protected for learning. At the end you hold a nationally recognised qualification that belongs to you for life.

01

Earn while you learn

You gain skills and real work experience while earning a wage. Apprentices are entitled to the National Minimum Wage for apprentices — many employers pay above it.

03

A nationally recognised qualification

Awarded by City & Guilds, an awarding body of 150 years' standing. Our team stays alongside you throughout, helping you get past whatever gets in the way.

02

Supercharge your learning

On-the-job and off-the-job training combined. As a full-time apprentice, an average of six hours a week is dedicated to off-the-job learning — the part that turns doing the job into understanding it.

04

Career prospects that stick

Employers retain the large majority of apprentices who complete their training, and many of those people go on to new responsibilities, promotions and pay rises.

A note on off-the-job hours

You may still see “20% of your time” quoted elsewhere. Since 1 August 2025 the requirement is a published minimum number of hours for each apprenticeship standard rather than a flat percentage. Our programmes work to an average of six hours a week, which is what your employer needs to plan around. Ask us for the current published figure for the standard you are considering.

An apprenticeship suits you if

- You need an income while you retrain.
- You learn better by doing the job than by reading about it.
- You already have an employer — or are willing to look for one with us.

A certification may suit you better if

- You are already employed and want a specific credential.
- You are in full-time education, or outside England.
- You need it done in months rather than a year.

The six standards

Every one of these runs twelve to fifteen months, is awarded by City & Guilds, and requires over 450 hours of real-life application and experience evidenced along the way. What differs is the work you will be doing at the end of it.



IT Systems Support Technician

LEVEL 3

Keeping systems and users running. IT support is not “fixing computers”. It is the frontline function that keeps an organisation running: when systems fail the impact is immediate, and technicians stop that becoming a business-wide problem.

12-15

months

City & Guilds

awarding body

~6 hrs

a week off the job

450+

hours evidenced

You will learn: Hardware, software, networking and troubleshooting; the regulations and laws around IT systems; fixing PCs, laptops, printers, tablets and smart devices; resolving network problems such as DNS and DHCP; repairing underlying application faults.

SUITS YOU IF

You like being the person who fixes it, you are patient with people who are not, and you want a first role that exists in every organisation in the country.

WHERE IT LEADS

IT Systems Support · Cybersecurity Associate · Systems Administrator



Digital Applications Technician

LEVEL 3

Supporting digital tools and platforms. UK employers report real difficulty recruiting for roles that need digital capability. A technician who can make the tools a business already pays for actually work is immediately useful.

12-15

months

City & Guilds

awarding body

~6 hrs

a week off the job

450+

hours evidenced

You will learn: Microsoft 365 including Power Automate, Google Workspace, and AI tools such as Copilot and Gemini; the law around using software applications; information systems and business process; building and configuring AI agents and automated workflows; training colleagues to adopt them.

SUITS YOU IF

You are the one colleagues already ask about Excel or Teams, and you would rather improve how a business works than write software for it.

WHERE IT LEADS

Digital Applications Technician · Business Analyst · Digital Transformation Officer

The six standards / continued



Artificial Intelligence

LEVEL 3

Applied AI in the workplace. AI is moving from novelty to infrastructure across almost every sector. The scarce skill is not research – it is people who can put these systems to work safely inside a business.

12-15

months

City & Guilds

awarding body

~6 hrs

a week off the job

450+

hours evidenced

You will learn: Machine learning, deep learning, neural networks, computer vision, natural language processing, transformers and large language models; the regulations around using AI lawfully; Copilot, Gemini and ChatGPT in business settings; building AI agents and connected, AI-enabled workflows.

SUITS YOU IF

You want to be early in something rather than late, and you are more interested in putting AI to work than in reading about it.

WHERE IT LEADS

AI Administrator · AI Engineer · AI Developer (the last two with further training)



Data Analysis & Statistics

LEVEL 3

Turning data into decisions. Every organisation now collects more than it understands. The person who can turn that into a decision somebody acts on is the one who gets listened to.

12-15

months

City & Guilds

awarding body

~6 hrs

a week off the job

450+

hours evidenced

You will learn: Data structures and variables; extraction, transformation and loading; visualisation and formatting; the law around handling data safely; Excel, Power BI, Tableau, SQL, Python and R; presenting and communicating findings.

SUITS YOU IF

You like finding the thing in the numbers that nobody had noticed, and you do not mind having to explain it afterwards.

WHERE IT LEADS

Data Analyst · Business Intelligence Analyst · Data Scientist (with further training)

The six standards / continued



Network Engineering

LEVEL 4

Design, build and maintain networks. Network engineers build the invisible highways everything else runs on. It is fast-paced, deeply technical, and full of moments where your problem-solving brings whole systems back to life.

12-15

months

City & Guilds

awarding body

~6 hrs

a week off the job

450+

hours evidenced

You will learn: LANs, WANs, MANs, WLANs and VLANs; managing networks lawfully; Cisco Packet Tracer simulations, IP scanners, cable testing and the command line; software-defined networking across multiple sites; configuring real devices in lab conditions.

SUITS YOU IF

You want depth rather than breadth, you are comfortable being methodical, and infrastructure interests you more than interfaces.

WHERE IT LEADS

Network Administrator · Network Engineer · Cybersecurity Engineer (with further training)



Software Development

LEVEL 4

Code, test and ship software. AI-assisted development has changed what a junior developer is expected to do on day one — less repetition, more judgement. This standard is built around that shift rather than around it.

12-15

months

City & Guilds

awarding body

~6 hrs

a week off the job

450+

hours evidenced

You will learn: Designing, planning, developing, testing and deploying software; developing lawfully; source control with GitHub; Python, Java, C# and JavaScript; web technologies including HTML5, CSS3 and React; SQL, PHP and APIs on the back end.

SUITS YOU IF

You have already built something, however small and however badly, and you want to be paid to get good at it.

WHERE IT LEADS

Programmer · Software Developer · Software Engineer

Level 3 or Level 4?

Level 3 is broadly A-level standard and is where most people start. Level 4 sits above it, closer to the first year of a degree, and generally suits someone who already has relevant experience or a Level 3 behind them. If you are not sure which you are ready for, that is a five-minute part of the consultation, not a barrier.

What finishing one actually involves

Who supports you

- **Your training provider** – us. We check in on you regularly.
- **Your tutor** – regular one-to-one meetings you are expected to attend.
- **Your employer** – required to give you the time to complete the apprenticeship.

The qualification

Awarded by City & Guilds and held for life. It does not expire, and it does not need renewing.

Four things to complete

- 01 Summative portfolio**
A document evidencing the knowledge, skills and behaviours that meet the standard. You build it as you go – it is not something to be assembled the week before.
- 02 Final project**
A piece of work of your own choosing that demonstrates the standard in practice. Most people pick something their employer actually needed doing.
- 03 450 hours of on-the-job training**
Completed with your employer, logged as you go. This is the part that turns the qualification into experience an interviewer can ask you about.
- 04 End-point assessment**
You present your final project to an independent examiner. Not us – which is exactly why the result means something.

Roughly how the year runs

WHEN	WHAT IS HAPPENING
Before you start	Eligibility check, employer agreement, and a plan that says which six hours a week are yours
Months 1–3	Induction, the foundations of the standard, and the first entries in your portfolio
Months 4–9	The bulk of the technical content, taught against work you are actually doing; regular tutor one-to-ones
Months 9–12	Final project chosen and built; portfolio gaps identified and closed
Months 12–15	Gateway review, then end-point assessment with an independent examiner
Afterwards	Alumni membership, and a team that will still take your call

Indicative. Your tutor will agree the actual plan with you and your employer at induction, and it moves when your circumstances do.



The credentials employers are advertising for by name

Thirty-five certifications across nine technology partners, each one awarded by the organisation that made the technology – and an honest account of which to take first.

488,000

workers will be needed in the sector's 30 priority occupations between 2025 and 2035 – 239,000 from growth, and 249,000 to replace people leaving.

Source: Skills England, Sector Skills Needs Assessment: Digital and Technologies, 2026

Nine technology partners, one standard of delivery

A certification is a credential the industry already recognises, awarded by the organisation that made the technology. You study with us, you sit the exam with us, and the certificate comes from them.

What every certification course includes

- Full access to the official course and materials for up to twelve months.
- The flexibility to study from home, or in the training centre Monday to Friday, 09:00–17:00.
- Access to academy facilities: desktops, application software, training simulations and specialised hardware.
- One free exam resit on most programmes.
- Exam tips, practice questions and study guides.
- Continuing professional development recognition.
- Ongoing access to your vendor account after you finish.

Vouchers and bundles

Several partners run discount schemes we can put you into — seasonal Cisco and CompTIA vouchers, PMI membership and promotional discounts, Pearson VUE vouchers for IT Specialist, and an AWS voucher for anyone who has been an Amazon employee for a year or more. Ask before you book; they are not always advertised.

Before you enrol, check the exam version

Vendors retire and replace exam versions on their own schedule, sometimes at short notice. The certifications on the next two pages are named rather than coded for exactly that reason. Confirm the current exam version with the team when you book, and you will study for the one you will actually sit.

How a certification course actually runs

STEP ONE

Scope the exam

You and an advisor agree the certification, confirm the current exam version, and set a target date you can hit around your job.

STEP TWO

Study and practise

Official material, at home or in the centre, with the labs and hardware to try things on. Instructor time whenever you get stuck.

STEP THREE

Sit it here

We are an accredited exam centre, so you sit it in the room you studied in — with a free resit behind you on most programmes.

The catalogue



CompTIA

6 CERTIFICATIONS

Vendor-neutral, and the certifications UK job adverts ask for by name more than any other. If you are starting from nothing, you are almost certainly starting here.

CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
ITF+	The gentlest way in. Proves you understand what IT is and how the pieces fit together, with nothing assumed.	Entry
A+ Core 1 & Core 2	Hands-on troubleshooting, supporting and maintaining IT devices. The standard first qualification for a support role.	Core
Network+	Building, managing and troubleshooting networks – the vendor-neutral grounding before Cisco.	Core
Security+	The globally recognised baseline security certification, and the one most security job adverts list first.	Core
CySA+	Detecting, analysing and responding to threats in real time. Security+ is the sensible precursor.	Advanced
CASP+	Enterprise-level security architecture: designing and defending at organisation scale.	Expert



Amazon Web Services

4 CERTIFICATIONS

Cloud infrastructure certifications from the largest cloud provider. Start at Practitioner regardless of how long you have worked in IT – the associate exams assume the vocabulary the first one teaches.

CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
Cloud Practitioner	The foundation. Ideal for beginners to understand the world's most widely used cloud platform.	Entry
Developer Associate	Intermediate, hands-on: designing, coding, deploying and debugging applications on AWS.	Core
Solutions Architect	Proving you can design secure and scalable cloud solutions.	Advanced
SysOps Administrator	Performance-driven: proving you can keep AWS environments running.	Advanced

Starting from nothing?

ITF+ or A+ here, or the IT Specialist certifications overleaf. A failed advanced exam costs more than a passed entry-level one.

The catalogue / continued



IT Specialist

12 CERTIFICATIONS

Foundation certifications awarded through Certiport and Pearson VUE. Short, focused, and each provable on its own. You do not need all twelve – two or three chosen well beat the lot.

CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
Networking	The principles behind how machines talk to each other.	Entry
Network Security	How networks are attacked, and how they are defended.	Entry
Device Configuration & Management	Setting up and administering the hardware an organisation runs on.	Entry
Cloud Computing	The fundamentals of how modern cloud systems work.	Entry
Databases	How data is structured, stored and managed.	Entry
Computational Thinking	Breaking down problems, spotting patterns and designing logical solutions.	Entry
Software Development	The core concepts behind writing software.	Entry
Python	The language most first-time programmers are hired on.	Entry
Java	Enterprise programming fundamentals.	Entry
JavaScript	The language of the browser, and increasingly the server.	Entry
HTML5 Application Development	Building applications for the web.	Entry
Artificial Intelligence	The concepts behind modern AI, without the hype.	Entry

Why they are all “Entry”

Because they genuinely are. Every one of these assumes no prior knowledge, and each is provable on its own – which is what makes them useful when a job advert asks for something you can nearly do, or when you want evidence a field suits you before committing a year to it.

Where they lead

Networking and Network Security lead naturally into CompTIA Network+ and Security+. Python, Java and JavaScript lead into the Software Development apprenticeship. Cloud Computing leads into AWS Cloud Practitioner or Azure Fundamentals. None of them is a dead end.

The catalogue / continued



Cisco Networking Academy

3 CERTIFICATIONS

Routing, switching and modern network infrastructure, taught on Cisco's own curriculum. CCNA is the prerequisite for everything above it – there is no way round it and no reason to want one.

CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
CCNA	The industry's standard networking certification: addressing, routing, switching, security fundamentals and automation.	Core
CCNP Enterprise	Advanced enterprise networking – core architecture plus a chosen specialism. Requires CCNA.	Advanced
CCNP Security	Designing, deploying and troubleshooting secure network infrastructure. Requires CCNA.	Advanced



Microsoft

5 CERTIFICATIONS

Azure and the Microsoft platform. Fundamentals first, then the associate track that matches the job – administration, data, or architecture.

CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
Azure Fundamentals	Beginner-friendly: the core concepts of cloud computing and how Azure delivers them.	Entry
Azure Data Fundamentals	Beginner-friendly: the core concepts behind data in the cloud.	Entry
Azure Administrator Associate	Hands-on and job-ready: managing, securing and optimising core Azure services in real environments.	Core
Azure Hybrid Administrator	Configuring servers and storage on the ground and integrating them with Azure.	Advanced
Azure Solutions Architect	Expert level: designing, building and integrating complex Azure solutions across cloud services.	Expert

Which Microsoft track?

Azure Fundamentals first, always – it is short, it is cheap, and it is the vocabulary every other Azure exam assumes. After that the question is what your job actually is: administration, data, or architecture. Our wider Microsoft catalogue goes beyond the five here; ask for the current list.

The catalogue / continued



EC-Council & ISC2

2 CERTIFICATIONS

The two security credentials employers name in job adverts. Neither is a first certification — bring networking and security grounding with you, and talk to us about timing before you book.

CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
Certified Ethical Hacker (CEH)	EC-Council. Attacking systems lawfully in order to defend them.	Advanced
CISSP	ISC2. Security leadership and governance — a senior credential with an experience requirement behind it.	Expert



VMware & PMI

3 CERTIFICATIONS

Two specialisms that sit alongside the technical tracks: the virtualisation layer underneath most corporate estates, and the discipline of actually delivering the project.

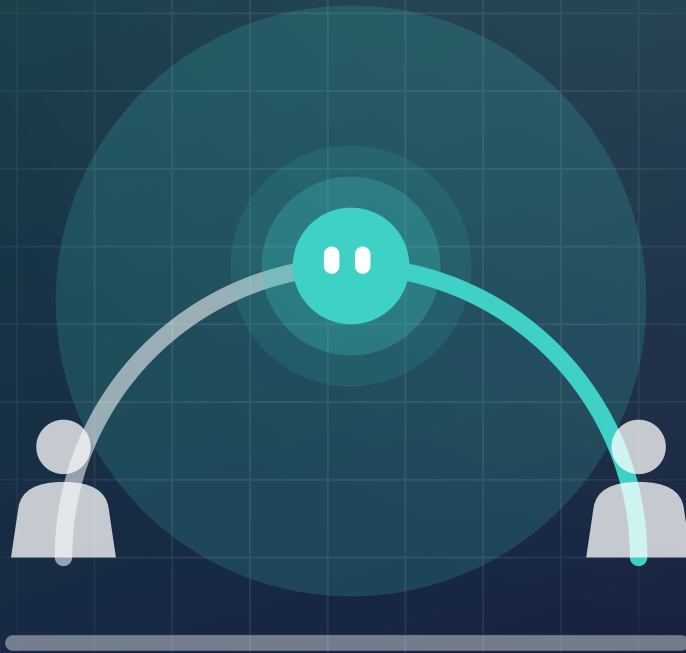
CERTIFICATION	WHAT IT PROVES	STANDS AT
VMware vSphere 8.x Professional	Advanced virtual machine and data centre management. Worth having once you are comfortable with servers.	Advanced
PMI CAPM	Certified Associate in Project Management — the early-career project credential.	Core
PMI PMP	Project Management Professional. Requires CAPM first, and suits somebody who has already led delivery.	Expert

Four routes people actually take

IF YOU WANT TO	A SENSIBLE ORDER
Get a first IT job	ITF+ or IT Specialist foundations, then A+, then Network+
Move into cyber security	Security+, then CySA+, then CEH or CISSP
Move into cloud	AWS Cloud Practitioner or Azure Fundamentals, then an associate certification
Move into networks	Network+, then CCNA, then a CCNP track

Still not sure which of the 35 is yours?

The honest answer depends on the job you want rather than the technology you like the sound of — and that is a twenty-minute conversation, not a decision from a table.



Learning rarely fails for academic reasons

It fails because of a shift pattern, a caring responsibility, or a fortnight where nothing went right. Eleven things exist here to catch that before it becomes a withdrawal.

“It's not that I'm so smart, it's just that I stay with problems longer.”

ALBERT EINSTEIN

Eleven things you get that are not the course

"We believe every individual is equally important and their concerns matter to us." — and here is what that actually buys you.

"How are you getting on?"

Weekly catch-ups

We check in on your progress to make sure you have enough support before it becomes a problem.

"I'm stuck on something, can you help?"

Professional support

That is what we are here for. We put you in touch with the right instructor to get over the learning curve.

"I failed my exam, what do I do?"

A free resit

You get a free resit with our courses. Exams are stressful; this is the part that takes the money out of it.

"How should I prepare for an interview?"

Interview practice

Interviews are nerve-racking without preparation. Come and practise with us until you are ready.

"What's an alumni?"

Alumni membership

Graduating makes you a member: invitations to exclusive training, benefits and networking events hosted by major UK companies.

"Do I have to go?"

Always here for you

Not at all. Some of our first graduates are still with us. Ongoing support and training whenever you need it.

"Where do I feel like studying today?"

Flexible learning

Both, whenever. Study online from home and in the training centre — you do not have to pick one.

"Where should I do my exam?"

Examination centre

We are an accredited examination centre. Take the exam right where you studied for it.

"I wish my CV was better"

CV review

Our team reviews it, corrects it, and shows you how to polish it so it reads professionally.

"I passed! What now?"

Career progression

Aiming higher is a plan, not a hope. Our team knows the routes onward from where you have just arrived.

"It's optional, but it's exceptional"

Bonus recognition

With your permission we promote your achievement on our website and social channels, where potential employers can see it.

If something is getting in the way

Learning rarely fails for academic reasons. It fails because of a shift pattern, a caring responsibility, or a fortnight where nothing went right. Tell your tutor early rather than late — the timetable, the study location and the exam date can all be moved, but not retrospectively.

Workers needed by 2035

UK digital & technology priority occupations

488,000



■ **239,000**

New jobs from growth

■ **249,000**

Replacing people who leave

Skills England, Sector Skills Needs Assessment, 2026



The certificate is the start of the conversation

Where each route leads, what to take next, and why the door does not close when the course does.

89%

of the additional employment projected in those occupations requires qualifications at Level 4 and above – which is precisely where our Level 4 standards sit.

Source: Skills England, Sector Skills Needs Assessment: Digital and Technologies, 2026

The certificate is the start of the conversation

Where our routes lead

IF YOU FINISH	YOU CAN GO ON TO
IT Systems Support	Systems administration, cyber security associate roles, or a Level 4 standard
Digital Applications	Business analysis, digital transformation
Artificial Intelligence	AI administration now; AI engineering or development with further training
Data Analysis	Business intelligence; data science with further training
Network Engineering	Network engineering, then cyber security engineering or cloud
Software Development	Developer and engineer roles across web, back end and AI-assisted delivery
CompTIA A+ / ITF+	Network+, then Security+, then CySA+
Cisco CCNA	CCNP Enterprise or CCNP Security

Alumni membership

Graduating makes you an alumnus: standing invitations to training, benefits and networking events hosted by some of the largest companies in the UK, and a door that stays open when you want to move again.

“Some of our first graduates are still with us. We’re not going anywhere, because we’re here to help our students reach the lifestyle they want.”

Learner support, Learning Key Training Academy

Learner stories

We publish graduates’ stories in their own words, with their permission, at learningkey.co.uk/success-stories. We do not write them for people.



Four sets of hands, and only one of them is ours

Skills England defines the standard. We prepare you. An independent awarding organisation assesses you. A further set of bodies inspects how the centre is run.

68%

of the sector's priority occupations are in critical or elevated demand across the UK economy. A quarter are in critical demand.

Source: Skills England, Sector Skills Needs Assessment: Digital and Technologies, 2026

Who assesses you, and who assesses us

Awarding organisations

They set the assessment and issue the certificate, independently of us. We cannot pass our own learners.

City & Guilds — an awarding body for 150 years.

NCFE — recognised by Ofqual, established 1981.

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT — established 1957.

Pearson VUE — 21 million exams a year, 5,500 centres.

Certiport · CIMA

Technology partners

Their curriculum, their labs, their exam objectives. We are authorised to deliver it and held to their standards to keep that authorisation.

Amazon Web Services

Cisco Networking Academy

Microsoft Learn Academy

TP-Link Learn & Training Centre

Accreditors and regulatory bodies

Organisations that assess us rather than our learners, plus the national body that defines what the qualifications contain.

Skills England — approves and maintains the national apprenticeship standards we deliver against. What each standard contains is set nationally, not by us.

The CPD Certification Service — established 1996, present in over 100 countries. Grants continuing professional development accreditation to our centre.

Pitman Training — established 1837; over a million courses completed worldwide.

Delivery partners

Organisations we work alongside to deliver training, rather than ones that assess us or award your certificate.

NC Group — established 2017. Workforce development in health and safety, engineering and construction.

The Digital College — established 2011. Designs, develops and delivers accredited online vocational training courses.

Clinical and public sector

Not IT, and worth saying plainly: these relationships sit behind the clinical and public-sector training the academy also delivers.

The Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health

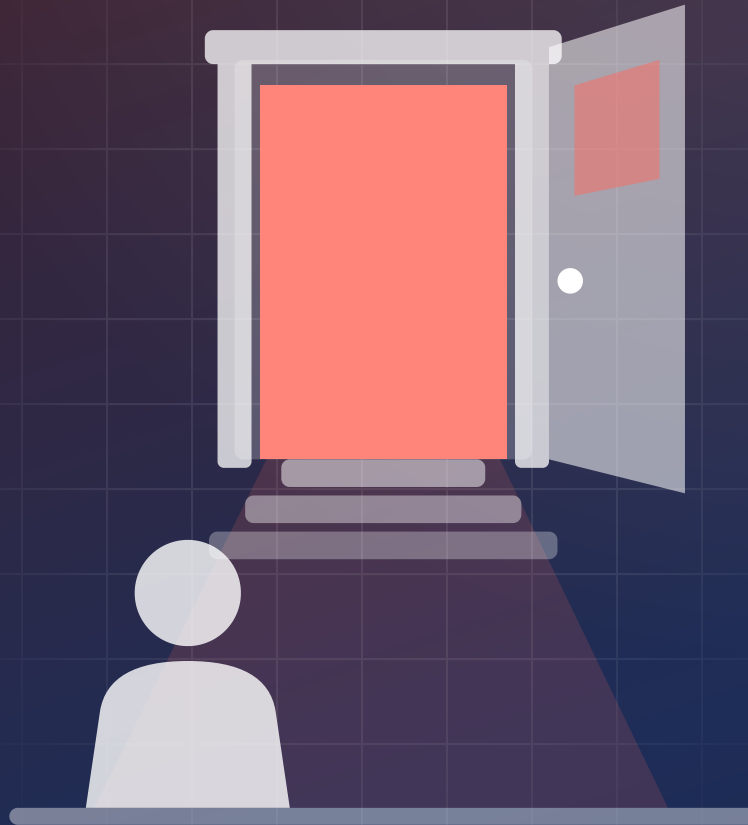
The Royal College of Emergency Medicine

NHS

Why the distinction matters to you

A training provider that also marks its own work is not offering you very much. Here the roles are deliberately separate: Skills England defines the standard, we prepare you against it, an independent awarding organisation assesses you, and a further set of bodies inspects how the centre is run. Four sets of hands, and only one of them is ours.

Founding dates, member and country counts are as published by each organisation. Partner and vendor names and logos are the trademarks of their respective owners.



Twenty minutes, free, and no obligation attached

You will leave knowing exactly what your next step is — even if that step turns out to be somewhere other than here.

“The expert in anything was once a beginner.”

HELEN HAYES

Why there are no prices in this prospectus

Not evasion. A printed price is either wrong for most people who read it, or out of date by the time they do – and for a good number of readers the honest number is nothing at all.

IF YOU TAKE AN APPRENTICESHIP

You do not pay for the training

Apprenticeship training and assessment is funded through your employer, not through you. You are an employee earning a wage from week one, entitled to at least the National Minimum Wage for apprentices – and many employers pay above it.

What it costs you is the commitment: an average of six hours a week of protected learning, a portfolio built as you go, and 450 hours of evidenced work.

IF YOU TAKE A CERTIFICATION

It depends on which, and on how

The price moves with the certification, whether you bundle several, whether your employer is paying, and which vendor discount schemes you qualify for – seasonal Cisco and CompTIA vouchers, PMI membership discounts, Pearson VUE vouchers for IT Specialist, and an AWS voucher for anyone who has been an Amazon employee for a year or more.

Most of those are not advertised. Asking before you book is worth actual money.

100%

of apprenticeship training and assessment is government-funded for an apprentice aged 16 to 24 where the employer's pay bill is under £3 million, up to the funding band maximum.

Source: DfE apprenticeship funding rules 2026 to 2027, version 3, from 3 August 2026

What is always included

- The official vendor course and materials, for up to twelve months.
- Access to the centre and its hardware, Monday to Friday.
- One free exam resit on most programmes.
- The eleven support services on page 22.

You will get it in writing

Before you commit to anything: the course, the exam, the resit position, and any funding you qualify for. If the number changes afterwards, it will not be because we were vague about it now.

Three steps, and the first one is free

01 Tell us your goal

A first role, a promotion, or a specific gap you know you have. You do not need to arrive with a course in mind — most people do not.

02 We map the route

Twenty minutes with an advisor, free and with no pressure: apprenticeship, certification, or something we do not offer and will point you at instead.

03 You start

In Middlesbrough, on-site at your workplace anywhere in the UK, or live online.

It is free, and it stays free

No charge and no obligation. You can have the conversation and go elsewhere, and you are talking to a trainer rather than a call centre working through a script.

Book a free consultation

Online learningkey.co.uk/career-consultations

Phone 01642 800 881

Email hello@learningkey.co.uk

In person 69 Newport Road,
Middlesbrough TS1 1LA

What to bring

Nothing at all. It helps if you can say what you have done before and what your week looks like, but there is no form to fill in first and nothing to prepare.



You do not need to know which direction before you come in. Working that out is the whole point of the twenty minutes.

What happens in the twenty minutes

Where you are now — including the things you taught yourself and never got a certificate for, which most people undersell. Where you want to be, even if that is only “out of what I am doing now”. Then what actually gets you there: which certification employers in that field are advertising for, in what order, and how long each one realistically takes alongside a job.

If the answer is no

Sometimes the right next step is a university course, a different provider, or six months of experience before any certificate would help. We will say so. It costs us a booking and saves you a year.

You are also free to book one, go away and think about it for three months, and book another. Nobody will chase you.

Questions people actually ask

How do I enrol?

Online through our secure portal, or by contacting the support team by phone, by email, or in person at the Newport Road centre.

Can I access materials afterwards?

Yes — ongoing access to digital resources through your vendor account. If the account plays up, our IT support team sorts it.

Are there prerequisites?

Prerequisites are stated on each course page and in the catalogue on pages 11 to 14. Where none are stated, anyone can enrol.

What if I fail the exam?

Most programmes carry one free resit. Before you sit it again we go through the score report and are specific about what to work on — taking the same exam twice without changing anything rarely produces a different result.

How long will it take?

Certification courses run up to twelve months and vary with the syllabus. Apprenticeships run twelve to fifteen months. Check the specific course before you commit.

Can I switch between studying here and at home?

Yes, whenever you like. Plenty of people use the centre when they need to concentrate and home when they do not.

Do I need my own laptop?

Not to study here. The centre has desktops, application software, training simulations and specialised hardware, all included. Most people also work from home, and for that a reasonably modern machine helps.

What does it cost?

It depends on the route, and for apprenticeships much of it may not fall to you at all. We would rather quote you accurately than print a number that turns out to be wrong for your situation. Ask at the consultation.

Anything not answered here

Ring **01642 800 881** and ask. You will not be passed to a script — the people answering are the people who teach.



Learning Key
TRAINING ACADEMY

Twenty minutes, free, no pressure.

You will leave knowing exactly what your next step is. Book at learningkey.co.uk/career-consultations, call 01642 800 881, or walk into the centre on Newport Road.

01

Apprenticeships

Six standards, 12–15 months, awarded by City & Guilds. Earn while you learn. Pages 5–8.

02

Certifications

Nine technology partners, up to twelve months, free resit on most exams. Pages 9–11.

03

Support

Weekly check-ins, CV review, interview practice, an exam centre and alumni membership. Page 12.

VISIT

Learning Key Training Academy
69 Newport Road
Middlesbrough TS1 1LA

TALK TO US

01642 800 881
hello@learningkey.co.uk
learningkey.co.uk

Course content, delivery arrangements, entry requirements and partner information in this prospectus were correct as published at learningkey.co.uk in August 2026. Exam versions change on vendor schedules — confirm the current version when you book. Graduate and satisfaction figures are the academy's own.