



AUTOMOTIVE EDUCATION REPORT

Analysis of automotive qualifications and apprenticeships in the UK



Executive summary

Introduction

This report analyses the number of people completing automotive qualifications and starting automotive apprenticeships in the UK. We use data from the four nations' regulatory bodies:

- OfQual - The Office of Qualifications and Examinations Regulation [England]
- SQA - The Scottish Qualifications Authority [Scotland]
- QiW – Qualifications Wales [Wales]
- CCEA - The Council for Curriculum, Examinations and Assessment [Northern Ireland]

These datasets give quarterly updates on certifications awarded for each qualification, with the latest data up to 2023 Q2 (April - June).

We align Scottish qualification levels with those in England and Wales for consistency.

For apprenticeship data, we refer to monthly reports from the Department of Education (DfE) in England on starts and achievement rates.

Summary findings

In the third quarter of 2023, the automotive qualifications and apprenticeships sector shows significant trends and shifts. The total number of vocational certificates issued has increased by 3% from the previous year to 2,373,000. However, the automotive sector sees a 21% decrease in certificates, totalling 19,400, with the most substantial fall in Scotland. This reduction points to a changing landscape in automotive education, averaging a quarterly decrease of 100 in automotive qualifications.

A key trend is that entry-level and Level 1 qualifications are growing by 1% each quarter, while Level 2 qualifications see a similar rate of decline. This shift suggests a growing preference for foundational automotive education. The IMI Level 1 Diploma in Automotive Maintenance emerges as the most popular qualification, indicating a focus on generalist skills, supported by general maintenance qualifications leading with 24% of all certificates issued this quarter.

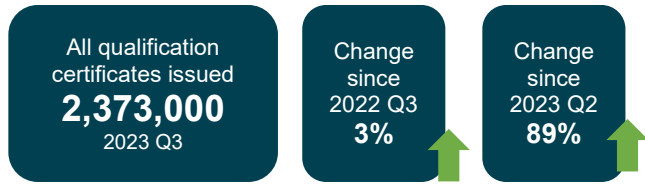
The automotive apprenticeship sector records a record number of enrolments in the first quarter of the academic year, the highest since pre-Covid-19, indicating a resurgence in the automotive field. This is particularly evident in intermediate level apprenticeships, despite a slight decline in overall apprenticeship starts. The rising engagement of under-19s in automotive apprenticeships points to the sector's growing appeal among young individuals and successful outreach to this demographic.

Funding patterns in apprenticeships are evolving, with a decrease in levy-funded automotive apprenticeships, suggesting a shift towards smaller businesses offering these programs. The popularity of pathways like 'Motor Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician (Light Vehicle)' and the significant increase in 'Autocare Technician' apprenticeships reflect changing industry needs and interests.

Overall, the vocational education and training landscape is experiencing a unique development, with automotive apprenticeships increasing against a general decrease in apprenticeship starts. This suggests a shift in vocational training interests, possibly driven by broader economic and educational trends. The automotive qualifications sector is adapting to and leading this vocational evolution.

Vocational qualification certifications

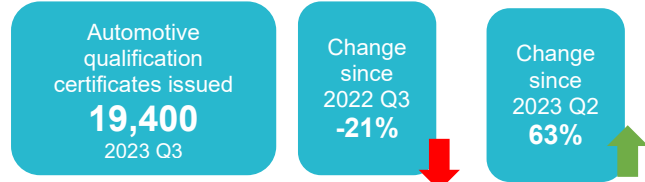
All vocational qualifications



	No.	%chg 2022 Q3
England	2,169,000	3%
Scotland	24,700	-12%
Wales	122,000	0.5%
N.I	56,600	-13%

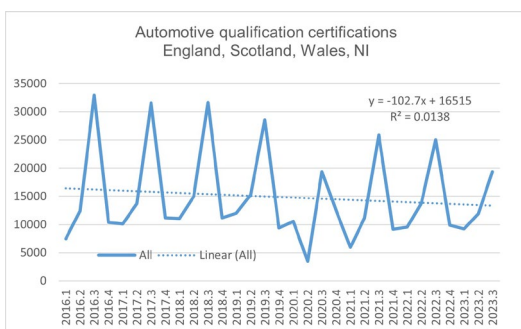
In 2023 Q3, the total number of vocational certificates issued is 2,373,000, marking a 3% increase from the same period last year.

Automotive qualifications



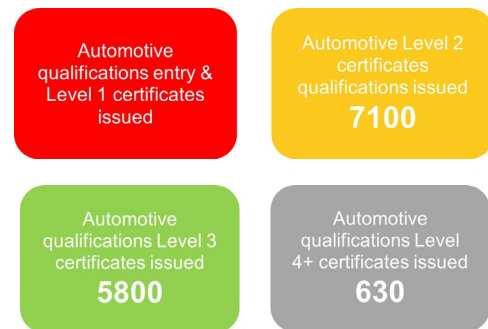
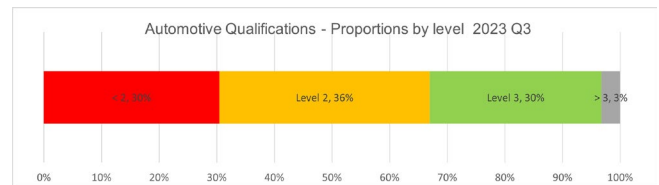
	No.	%chg 2022 Q3
England	17,400	-22%
Scotland	550	-53%
Wales	900	-31%
N.I	570	-13%

In 2023 Q3, the automotive sector issued 19,400 certificates, a 21% decrease from the same period last year, with Scotland having the largest percentage fall.

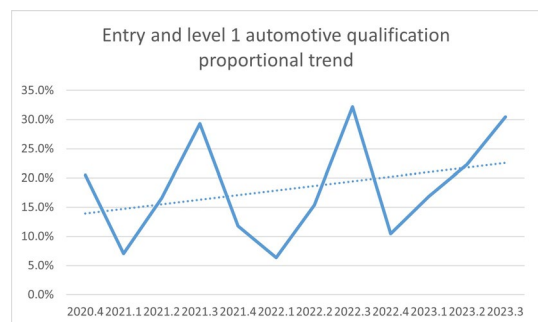
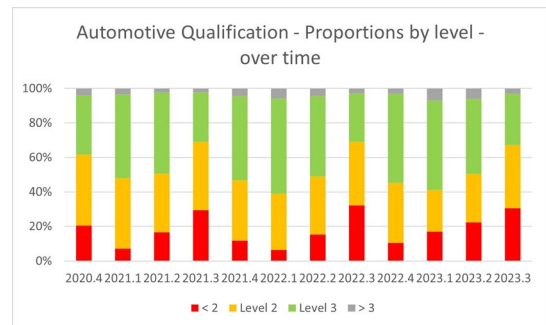


Examining trends, the number of automotive qualifications is reducing on average 100 per quarter.

Automotive qualification certifications – levels



In 2023 Q3, Level 2 (or equivalent) automotive qualifications lead with 7,100 qualifications (36%), while levels 3, and entry and level 1 are each at 30%.



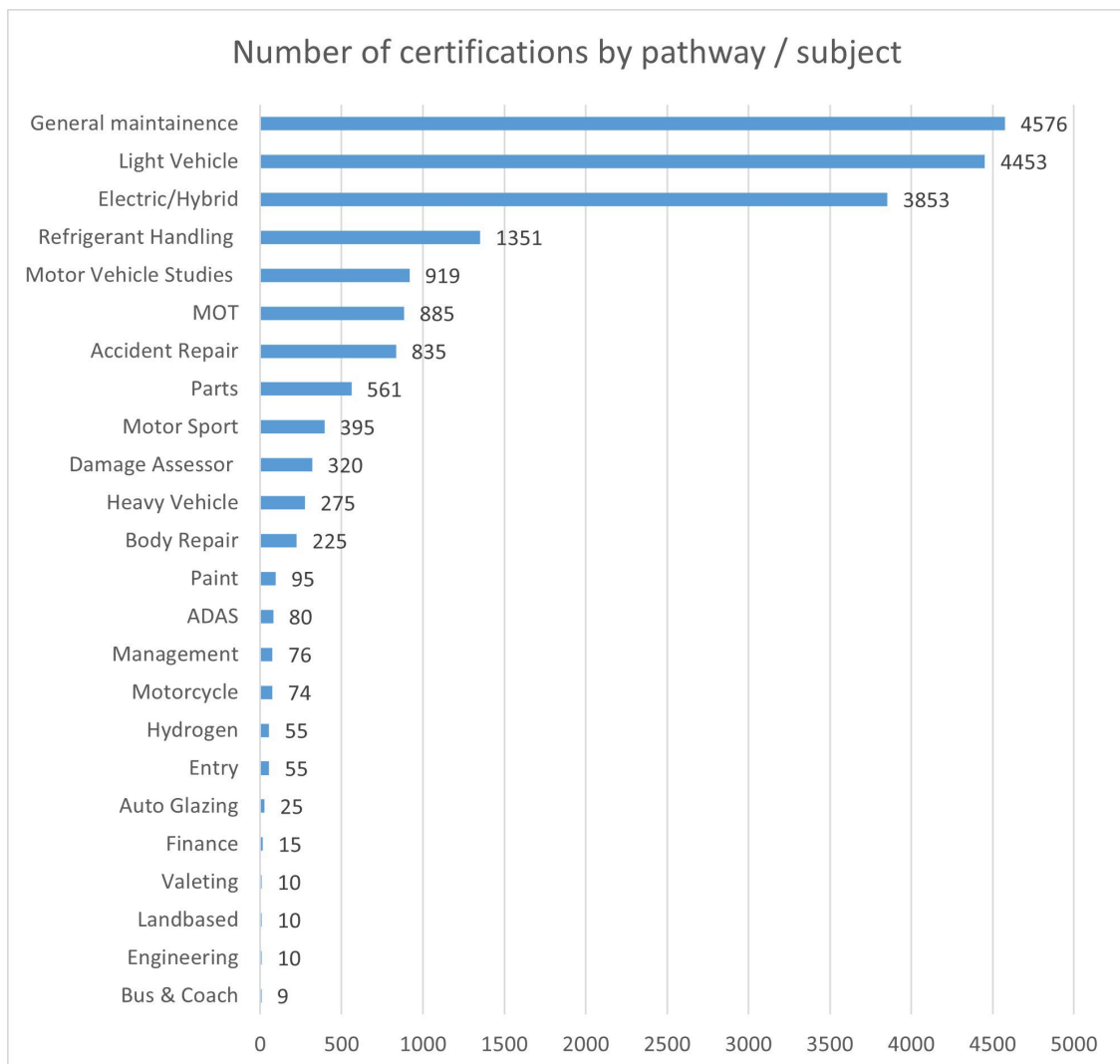
The automotive qualifications landscape is shifting. Entry-level and Level 1 qualifications are growing by 1% each quarter, while Level 2 qualifications are decreasing at the same rate, indicating a preference for foundational automotive education over intermediate-level training.

Top 10 automotive qualifications

Qualification title	No.
IMI Level 1 Diploma in Automotive Maintenance	1750
IMI Level 2 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles (VRQ)	1640
IMI Level 3 Award in Electric/Hybrid Vehicle System Repair and Replacement	1527
IMI Level 3 Award in Automotive Refrigerant Handling (EC842-2006) (VRQ)	1341
IMI Level 3 Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles (VRQ)	968
IMI Level 2 Award in Electric/Hybrid Vehicle Routine Maintenance Activities	793
IMI Level 1 Award in Electric/Hybrid Vehicle Awareness	559
IMI Level 2 Subsidiary Diploma in Light Vehicle Maintenance & Repair Technology (VRQ)	550
City & Guilds Level 2 Certificate in Light Vehicle Maintenance and Repair Principles	430
IMI Level 1 Certificate in Automotive Maintenance	405

In 2023 Q3, the IMI Level 1 Diploma in Automotive Maintenance leads as the top qualification, issuing 1,750 certificates, which represent 9% of all automotive qualification certificates. The top 10 qualifications account for 51% of all automotive certificates issued this quarter.

Automotive qualification certifications – pathways / subject areas



This quarter, general maintenance qualifications are 24% of all automotive qualification certificates, becoming the largest category. Light Vehicle qualifications closely follow at 23%, while Electric/Hybrid qualifications rank third at 20%. This shift from previous trends, where Electric/Hybrid qualifications led in popularity, aligns with the increasing interest in entry-level and Level 1 automotive qualifications, which focus on broader areas like general maintenance.

TechSafe EV

Electric vehicle qualification certifications eligible to obtain Techsafe professional recognition

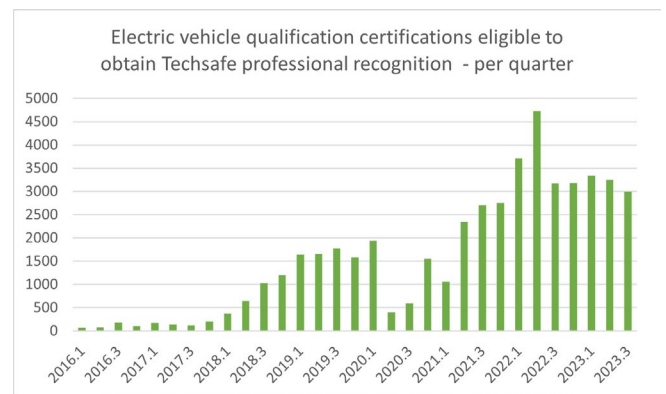
2,990
2023 Q3

Electric vehicle qualification certifications eligible to obtain Techsafe professional recognition

48,700
In total (2016 – September 2023)

In the third quarter of 2023, education regulatory authorities report that 2,909 technicians achieved their Electric Vehicle (EV) certification, increasing the total number of certified EV technicians in the UK to 48,700.

However, the rate at which technicians secure EV qualifications is slowing down, showing little change over the past year. An analysis of the last eight quarters reveals a downward trend, with a 2% decrease, averaging 57 fewer technicians each quarter, in new EV certifications.

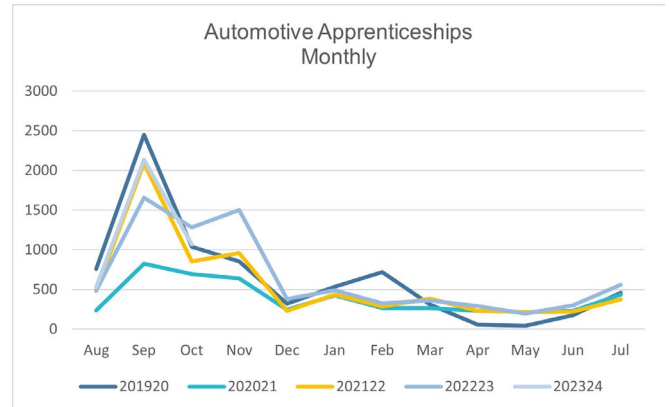
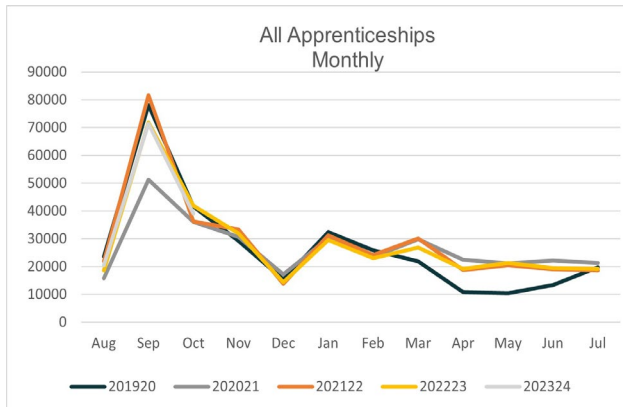


Automotive apprenticeships - England

Apprenticeship Starts – First 3 month comparison (Aug-Oct) academic year 2023/24

All apprenticeships
(Aug – Oct) 2023/24
130,800

Automotive apprenticeships
(Aug – Oct) 2023/24
3,700



In the first three months (August to October) of the academic year 2023/24, there are 3,700 automotive apprenticeship starts, marking a 9% increase from the same period in the previous year. This represents the highest first-quarter performance since the academic year 2019/20.

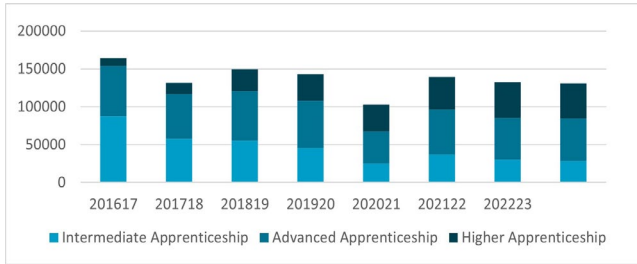
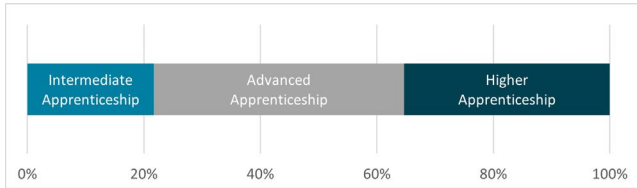
Comparison of apprenticeship subject areas – first 3 month comparison academic year 2022/23 & 2023/24



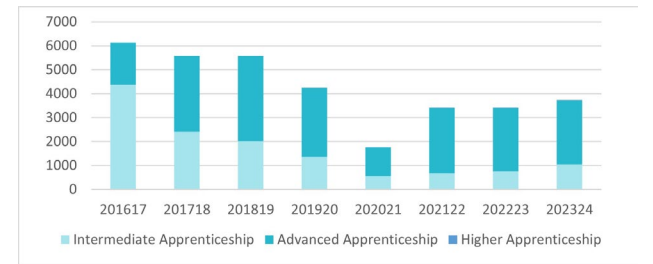
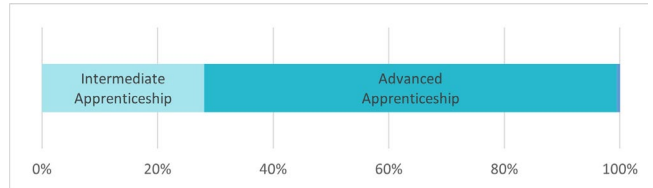
Comparing to other industries automotive has the tenth highest % increase. The all-subjects total has fallen by 1%, this indicates that automotive is bucking the national trend.

Apprenticeship starts – level

All apprenticeships (Aug – Oct) 2023/24
43%
 Advanced apprenticeship



Automotive apprenticeships (Aug – Oct) 2023/24
71%
 Advanced apprenticeship

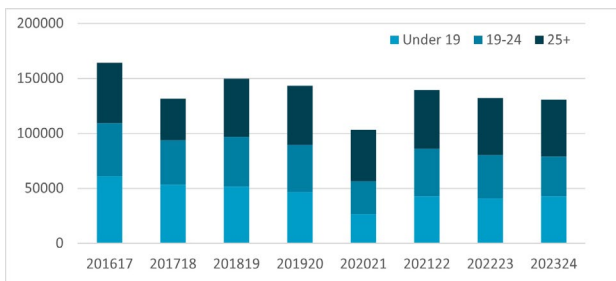
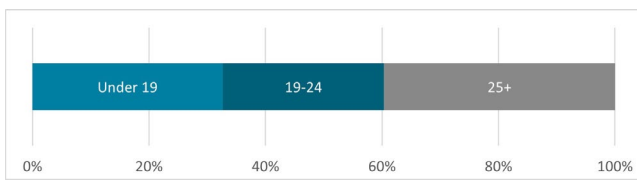


In Q1 of the academic year 2023/24, 43% (56,200) of all apprenticeships are at an advanced level, while a significant 71% (2,700) of all automotive apprenticeships are at this advanced level.

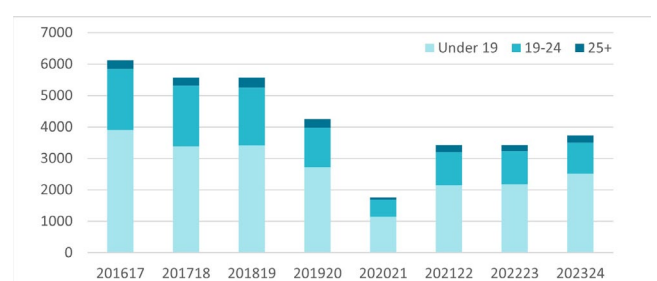
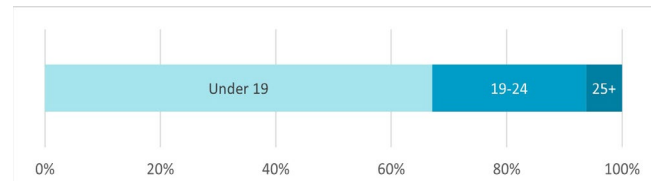
Since 2017/18, most automotive apprenticeship starts are at the advanced level. However, compared to Q1 of the previous year, this proportion has dropped from 77%, with an increase in intermediate apprenticeships. This suggests that the overall 9% rise in automotive starts is primarily in intermediate apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship starts – age profile

All apprenticeships (Aug – Oct) 2023/24
33%
 Under 19



Automotive apprenticeships (Aug – Oct) 2023/24
67%
 Under 19

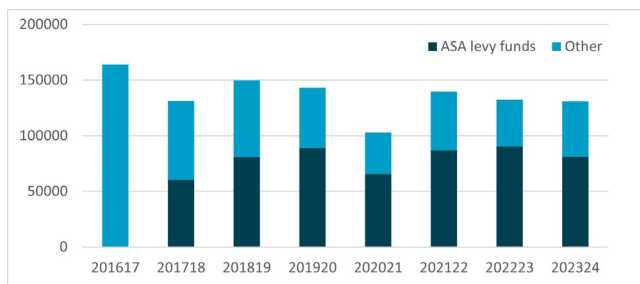
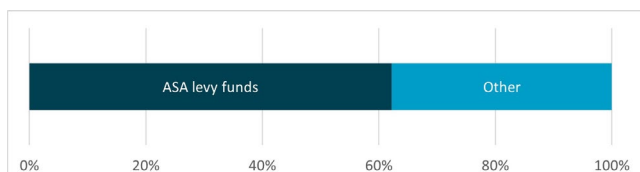


In Q1 2023/24, individuals under the age of 19 make up 33% (42,700) of all apprenticeship starts, while they account for a significant 67% (2,500) of automotive apprenticeship starts.

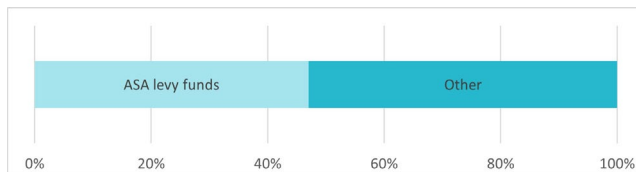
Under-19s have consistently been the primary age group in automotive apprenticeships for the past six years, with their proportion ranging from 61% to 64%. This proportion rises to 64% in Q1 2023/24, indicating an increasing trend of younger individuals starting automotive apprenticeships.

Apprenticeship starts – funding

All apprenticeships (Aug – Oct) 2023/24
62%
 Supported by ASA levy funds



Automotive apprenticeships (Aug – Oct) 2023/24
47%
 Supported by ASA levy funds



In Q1 2023/24, ASA levy funds support 62% of all apprenticeship starts, but only 47% of automotive apprenticeship starts rely on these funds. This marks a decrease from the previous year, where 56% of automotive apprenticeships were levy-funded, now down to 47%.

Top 10 automotive qualifications

Apprentice starts – Automotive Apprenticeships starts by pathway

Automotive Standard	202223	202324	% Change
Accident Repair Technician	63	64	2%
Autocare Technician	762	1049	38%
Bus and Coach Engineering Technician	128	164	28%
Heavy Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician	661	610	-8%
Motor Finance Specialist	**	**	
Motor Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician - Light Vehicle	1482	1498	1%
Motorcycle Technician (Repair and Maintenance)	15	25	67%
Vehicle Damage Assessor	11	19	73%
Vehicle Damage Mechanical, Electrical and Trim (MET) Technician	71	68	-4%
Vehicle Damage Paint Technician	151	135	-11%
Vehicle Damage Panel Technician	73	103	41%
Vehicle Maintenance and Repair	**	**	
All Automotive	3423	3736	9%

In Q1 2023/24, the Motor Vehicle Service and Maintenance Technician (Light Vehicle) pathway is the most popular, with 1,498 starts. The Motorcycle Technician and Vehicle Damage Assessor pathways show the largest increases compared to last year, though their volumes are relatively small. The Autocare Technician pathway experiences a 38% increase from last year and comprises 28% of all automotive apprenticeship starts.

Data sources

- OfQual (England) - Vocational qualifications dataset [Certificates awarded for all vocational qualifications (excluding GCSEs, AS levels and A levels)] 2023 Quarter 3
- SQA Accreditation (Scotland) – Quarterly statistical Reports July – September 2023.
- QiW (Wales) – Vocational and Other Qualifications Quarterly: [A quarterly release that presents data on vocational and other qualification certifications for Wales for the latest quarter] 2023 Quarter 3
- Cea (Northern Ireland) - Technical and Professional Qualifications Bulletin: 2023 Quarter 3
- DfE - Apprenticeships and Traineeships, England - data released 25th January 2024

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