

Digital and ICT Apprenticeship Roles and Career Pathways

This short guide has been developed by the Local Government Association in association with Spark & Associates, using the knowledge and experiences of Local Authorities (LAs) across England. It aims to help councils and their staff understand the career opportunities available through apprenticeships.

Building a Career in Digital and ICT Supported by Apprenticeships

What this Career Pathway Guide Shows

This pathway shows how a career in Digital and ICT within a council can be developed through apprenticeships, from entry-level roles through to professional and leadership positions.

This guide provides a broad Digital, ICT, Data and AI career pathway, illustrating how careers can develop across a range of digital and technology roles that often span multiple council directorates and functions.

Digital careers are central to how councils operate and transform services supporting infrastructure, cyber security, data, customer access, automation, and digital transformation. Apprenticeships provide a structured way to build skills, progress careers, and gain professional qualifications. They can also support councils to develop specialist capability in emerging areas such as cyber security, data, artificial intelligence and digital transformation.

Why this matters (for councils and learners)

Local authorities operate in a highly competitive market for digital and technology skills. Apprenticeships provide a practical way to attract new talent, develop existing staff, support succession planning and build long-term workforce resilience.

Clear and well-communicated progression routes:

- support recruitment and retention
- create opportunities for career development and progression
- help build sustainable in-house digital capability and talent pipelines and reduce reliance on external suppliers.

How to use this Guide

This guide outlines typical entry points, progression routes, and relevant apprenticeships across digital, ICT, data and technology roles. Entry into digital careers may also include routes such as A Levels or T Levels (e.g. Digital Production, Design and Development or Digital Support and Security), which can provide a foundation for apprenticeships or entry-level roles. Development pathways are not always linear, individuals may:

- move into specialist areas such as cyber security, data, systems infrastructure or user experience
- progress into leadership, service improvement or digital transformation roles
- move across service areas to broaden their technical and operational experience
- combine technical expertise with project, product or people management responsibilities.

Job titles and roles may vary between councils, so it is important to review apprenticeship content and assess suitability based on the role requirements and individual prior experience. Training providers and employers can support this through initial assessment and guidance.

Details of apprenticeship standards and career progression routes can be found on the [Skills England website](#), including their [Occupational Maps](#).

Understanding progression

The pathway diagram on page 3 illustrates how careers can develop across digital and ICT roles, from entry-level to senior and specialist positions. It highlights:

- typical entry routes into digital careers
- progression between levels and specialist areas
- relevant apprenticeships that support technical and professional development.

Progression may involve changes in role, responsibilities or technical specialism, or increased responsibility within an existing role.

Typical Career Progression Routes

This table shows typical job roles by level in Digital, ICT, Data and AI within a council, alongside examples of relevant apprenticeships.

Guide to typical progression in digital careers linked to apprenticeship / qualification levels:

- **Entry (L2–3):** Build core digital, technical, data or content skills
- **L4:** Develop technical or specialist expertise in areas such as infrastructure, cyber, systems, data or analysis
- **L5–6:** Progress into advanced specialist, product, design or transformation roles
- **L7:** Progress into senior technical, strategic or leadership roles (subject to policy/funding availability).

Career Stage	Typical Roles+	Example Relevant Apprenticeships
Entry and Early Careers (Level 2/3)	ICT Support Assistant / Service Desk Analyst Digital Support Technician Data Assistant Content Creator / Web Content Assistant / Digital Communications Officer Administrative roles with digital responsibilities	Software and Data Foundation Apprenticeship (L2) Hardware, Network and Infrastructure Foundation Apprenticeship (L2) Digital Support Technician (L3) IT Solutions Technician (L3) Data Technician (L3) Information Communications Technician (L3) Content Creator (L3) Multi-Channel Marketer (L3) Business Administrator (L2/ L3) Customer Service Practitioner / Specialist (L2 / L3)
Technical and Developing Roles (Level 3/4)	ICT Officer / Infrastructure Support Officer / Systems Support Officer Network Engineer Data Analyst / Business Intelligence Officer / Business Analyst Cyber Security Officer / Information Governance Officer Business Systems Officer Applications Support Officer Digital Product Officer / Manager	Network Engineer (L4) Data Analyst (L4) Business Analyst (L4) Cyber Security Technologist (L4) Data Protection & Information Governance Practitioner (L4) Applications Support Lead (L4) Digital Product Manager (L4)
Professional and Specialist Roles (Level 5/6)	Infrastructure Manager / Senior Cyber Security Officer Senior Data Analyst / BI Lead / Head of Performance Intelligence Data Engineer UX Researcher / Service Designer / Digital Transformation Officer Digital Programme Manager / Product Owner Software Developer / Applications Developer Digital Marketing Manager	Data Engineer (L5) AI Leadership Apprenticeship Units (L5) Digital User Experience (UX) Professional (L6) Service Designer (L6) Digital & Technology Solutions Professional (L6) Cyber Security Technical Professional (L6) Digital Marketer (L6)
Strategic and Leadership Roles (Level 6/7)	Head of ICT / Head of Digital Transformation Chief Digital Officer / Enterprise Architect Head of Data and Analytics AI, Data and Digital Innovation leadership roles	Data Scientist (L6) Artificial Intelligence (AI) Data Specialist (L7)* Digital & Technology Solutions Specialist (L7)* Leadership / specialist development (subject to availability)

+ Job titles are illustrative examples and may differ by council

Digital and ICT Apprenticeship Pathway

Pre-Entry, e.g.:

✓ A Levels

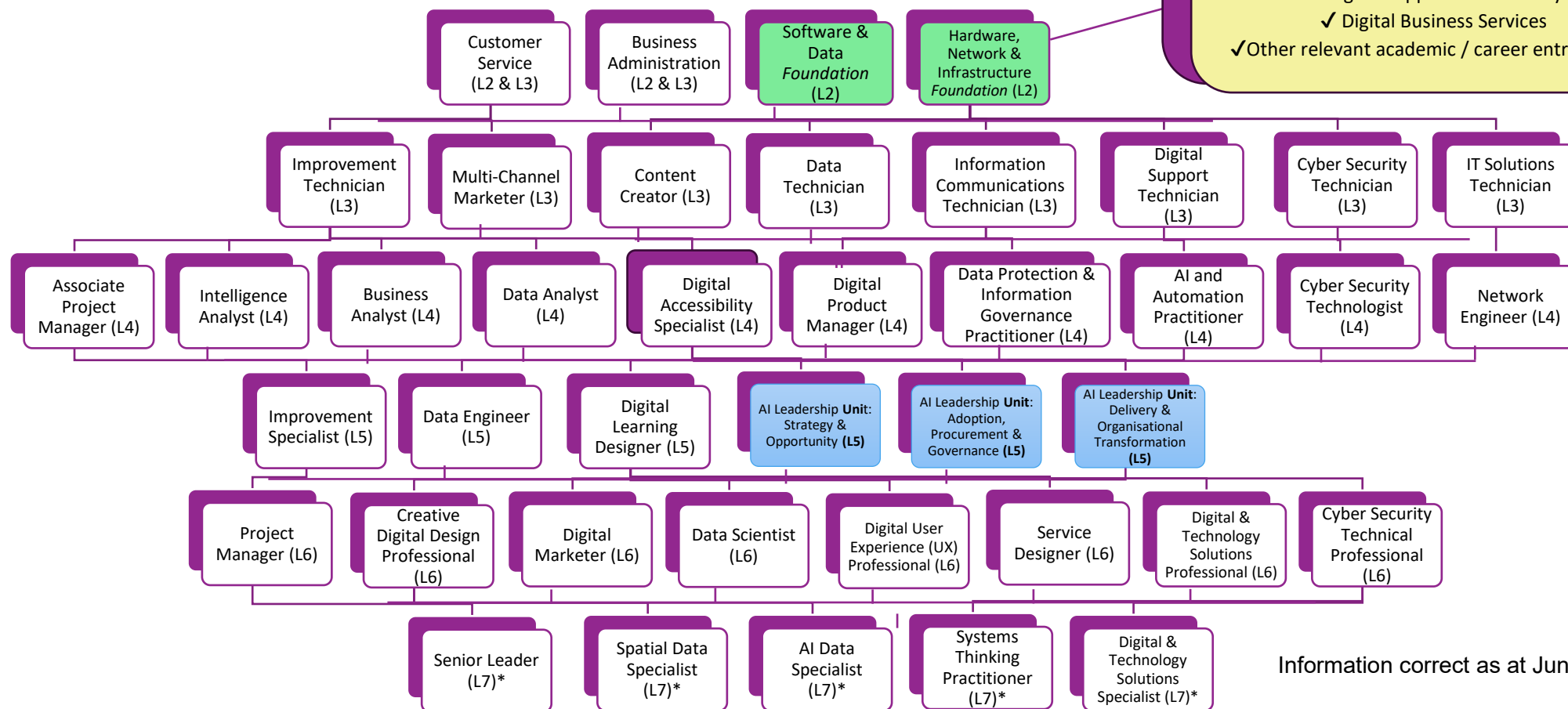
T Levels in:

✓ Digital Production, Design and Development

✓ Digital Support and Security

✓ Digital Business Services

✓ Other relevant academic / career entry routes



Information correct as at June 2026

*Apprenticeship availability, particularly at higher levels, is subject to policy changes. Funding for Level 7 apprenticeships is subject to current government policy and eligibility criteria.

Also check **Skills England's Revisions Status Report** detailing the apprenticeships undergoing revision, showing the stage they have reached and an overview of why they are being reviewed.

Opportunities Across Departments

Digital, data and technology roles are often found across multiple council services, not just within ICT or digital teams. Roles may sit within customer services, communications, transformation, planning, regulatory services, business support, HR, schools, adult social care and other operational areas, reflecting the increasingly cross-cutting nature of digital and data services across local government. This can support both career progression and apprenticeship workforce planning across the organisation.