



Career of the week

3D Printing Technician

3D printing technicians make different products, such as medical implants, car parts, aircraft parts or fashion accessories

Average salary (a year): £19,000 (starter) to £38,000 (experienced)

Typical hours (a week): 37 to 42 week (between 8am and 6pm, on a rota)

You can get into this job through:

College

You could take a course in creative design, model making or engineering to help you to find a job.

Specific courses you could take to become a 3D printing technician include:

- Level 2 Certificate in Computer Aided Design
- Level 3 Award in 3D Computer Aided Design
- Level 3 Diploma in Engineering Technology
- T Level in Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing

Entry requirements

You may need:

- 2 or more GCSEs at grades 9 to 3 (A* to D), or equivalent, for a level 2 course
- 4 or 5 GCSEs at grades 9-4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths for a T level

Apprenticeship

Apprenticeships you could take to become a 3D printing technician include:

- Lean Manufacturing Operative Level 2 Intermediate Apprenticeship
- Digital Engineering Technician Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship
- Engineering Technician Level 3 Advanced Apprenticeship

Entry requirements

You'll usually need:

- some GCSEs, usually including English and maths, or equivalent, for an intermediate apprenticeship
- 5 GCSEs at grades 9 to 4 (A* to C), or equivalent, including English and maths, for an advanced apprenticeship

Work

You may be able to start as an assistant in a 3D printing workshop and train on the job to become a technician.

You'll find it helpful if you have some experience in manufacturing, model making, printing, technology or design.

Skills and knowledge

You'll need:

- knowledge of manufacturing production and processes
- to be thorough and pay attention to detail
- knowledge of engineering science and technology
- the ability to operate and control equipment
- analytical thinking skills
- the ability to work well with others
- the ability to analyse quality or performance
- knowledge of maths
- to be able to use a computer and the main software packages confidently



Day-to-day tasks

As a 3D printing technician you might:

- make digital models and prototypes based on a customer's needs
- operate 3D scanning and printing machines
- clean, sand, polish or apply finishes to products
- work out how much it will cost to create parts or products
- inspect products to check quality and pack them for delivery
- service and repair equipment

Working environment

- You could work at a manufacturing plant, in a factory or at a research facility.
- Your working environment may be noisy.
- You may need to wear safety clothing and use safety equipment.

Career progression

With experience you could:

- move into researching new 3D materials
- train to develop new 3D printing software and hardware
- specialise in a certain area of 3D printing, such as prosthetics or models
- train others in 3D printing techniques and methods