

JARGON BUSTER

Entering the automotive industry can be exciting, but it often comes with a whole new language to learn. From technical workshop terms to qualification levels, job titles, and emerging technologies, the sector uses a wide range of phrases that can feel confusing if you're new to it.

This jargon buster is designed to make things easier by breaking down common automotive terms into easy-to-understand explanations. Whether you're a student exploring your first career steps, a parent or adviser supporting someone into the industry, or a career changer looking to understand how things work, this guide will help you navigate the terminology with confidence.

AUTOMOTIVE & TECHNICAL TERMS

EV (Electric Vehicle): A vehicle powered solely by electricity.

Hybrid Vehicle: A vehicle powered by both an engine and an electric motor.

ICE (Internal Combustion Engine): A traditional engine powered by petrol or diesel.

ADAS (Advanced Driver Assistance Systems): Safety technologies like lane assist and automatic emergency braking.

MOT: The annual roadworthiness test for vehicles over three years old (UK).

QUALIFICATION AND TRAINING TERMS

Accreditation: A professional recognition of current skills, usually renewed regularly.

Apprenticeship Standard: A modern structured training programme built around industry requirements.

Apprenticeship Framework: The older style of apprenticeship (still used in some regions).

CPD (Continuing Professional Development): Short courses to keep skills up to date.

HNC/HND: Higher education qualifications focused on applied engineering and technology.

IMI Qualification: Training created or accredited by the IMI, available at all levels.

Level 1–4: UK qualification levels, progressing from introductory to higher technical.

NVQ/VRQ: Work-based (NVQ) or classroom-based (VRQ) vocational qualifications.

Technical Certificate: The theoretical part of a vocational course.