***REVIEWING YOUR APPROACH TO EMPLOYER ENQUIRIES***

*A tool for colleagues to review, assess and improve their systems and processes for incoming employer enquiries about T Levels*

# ***INTRODUCTION***

As employer engagement colleagues, you play a vital role in promoting T Levels to employers and supporting them to offer high-quality industry placements for T Level students.

You are often the first point of contact for employers who have questions or concerns about T Levels and how they can get involved. So, it’s important that you have effective systems and processes in place to handle incoming employer enquiries, provide accurate and timely information, and follow up with appropriate actions.

This document provides a framework for you to review and improve your systems and processes for incoming employer enquiries about T Levels.

It is based on four principles:

* ***Customer focus***: You should aim to provide a positive and consistent customer experience for employers who contact you about T Levels and meet their needs and expectations.
* ***Clarity and accuracy:*** You should ensure that you have clear and accurate information about T Levels and industry placements, and that you communicate it effectively to employers.
* ***Collaboration and coordination:*** You should work collaboratively and coordinate with other colleagues, teams, and partners who are involved in T Level delivery and employer engagement and share relevant information and feedback.
* ***Continuous improvement:*** You should monitor and evaluate your systems and processes for incoming employer enquiries and identify and implement areas for improvement.

# ***REVIEWING YOUR APPROACH***

There are four sections, each covering a key aspect of your systems and processes for incoming employer enquiries about T Levels.

For each section, you will find a set of statements that describe good practice, and a rating scale that allows you to assess how well you are performing against each statement. You will also find some suggestions for improvement that you can consider implementing if you identify any gaps or weaknesses in your current systems and processes.

The four sections are:

1. Recording and tracking employer enquiries
2. Responding to employer enquiries
3. Providing information and guidance to employers
4. Following up and closing employer enquiries

You can use the tool for reflection and action planning, either individually or as a team. You can also use it as a basis for discussion and feedback with your manager or other colleagues. You should aim to review your approach at least once a year, or more frequently if there are significant changes in your systems and processes, or in the T Level policy and delivery landscape.

This tool is not intended to be a comprehensive or prescriptive checklist, but rather a flexible and adaptable guide that you can use to suit your own context and needs. You may find that some statements are more relevant or applicable to you than others, depending on your role, responsibilities, and level of experience. You may also want to add or modify some statements to reflect your own systems and processes, or the specific needs and expectations of your employer customers.

# ***Section 1: Recording and tracking employer enquiries.***

This section covers how you record and track the employer enquiries that you receive about T Levels and industry placements, and how you use this information to monitor and report on your performance and impact.

| Statement | Rating | Suggestions for improvement | Actions |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| There is a clear and consistent system for recording and categorising the employer enquiries received, such as a CRM system, a database or spreadsheet. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current system and ensure that it is fit for purpose, easy to use, and secure.  Make sure you record all relevant information about each enquiry, such as the date, time, source, mode, employer name, contact details, sector, size, location, enquiry type, and enquiry status.  Use consistent and meaningful categories for your enquiries, such as general information, specific information, expression of interest, request for support, complaint, or feedback.  Ensure your system is accessible by all colleagues who engage with employers. |  |
| There is a clear and consistent system for tracking the progress and outcomes of the employer enquiries received***,*** *and* | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Track all the relevant information about each enquiry, such as the actions taken, the responses given, the referrals made, the follow-ups scheduled, the outcomes achieved, and the feedback received. |  |
| Information collected is used to monitor and report on performance and impact in handling employer enquiries | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Use consistent and meaningful indicators for your progress and outcomes, such as response time, resolution time, satisfaction rate, conversion rate, or impact rate.  Review your current system and ensure that it allows you to generate and analyse the information that you need to monitor and report on your performance and impact.  Set and review your targets and objectives for handling employer enquiries, such as the response time, resolution time, satisfaction rate, conversion rate, or impact rate.  Produce and share regular and timely reports on your performance and impact, such as dashboards, charts, tables, or narratives, with T Level colleagues and senior leadership teams.  Use the information from your system to identify and celebrate achievements, and to identify and address your challenges and areas for improvement. |  |

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# ***Section 2: Responding to employer enquiries.***

This section covers how you respond to the employer enquiries that you receive about T Levels and industry placements, and how you ensure that you provide a positive and consistent customer experience.

| Statement | Rating | Suggestions for improvement | Actions |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| I respond to employer enquiries promptly and within the agreed timeframes, such as within 1 working day for emails and phone calls. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current response time and ensure that it meets the needs and expectations of your employer customers, and that it is aligned with your organisational standards and policies.  Have a system or a process for prioritising and managing your workload, and that you allocate sufficient time and resources for responding to employer enquiries.  Have a system or a process for acknowledging and confirming the receipt of employer enquiries, and for informing employers of the expected response time and the person responsible for handling their enquiry.  Follow up with employers if there are any delays or changes in the response time, and that you apologise and explain the reasons for any inconvenience caused. |  |
| I respond to employer enquiries professionally and courteously, and I use appropriate language, tone, and format, depending on the source and mode of the enquiry, and the profile and preferences of the employer. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current communication skills and ensure that they are suitable and effective for responding to employer enquiries, and that they are aligned with your organisational standards and policies.  Use clear and concise language, and that you avoid jargon, acronyms, and technical terms, unless they are relevant and explained.  Use a positive and friendly tone, and that you express interest, empathy, and appreciation, where appropriate.  Use a consistent and professional format, and that you follow the conventions and etiquette of the source and mode of the enquiry, such as email, phone, or webchat.  Tailor your response to the profile and preferences of the employer, such as their sector, size, location, and level of familiarity with T Levels and industry placements. |  |
| Employer enquiries are responded to accurately and effectively, employers are provided with the information or the support they need, or they are referred to the appropriate person, team. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current knowledge and skills and ensure that they are sufficient and up to date for responding to employer enquiries, and that they are aligned with your organisational standards and policies.  Secure access to and use reliable and relevant sources of information and guidance about T Levels and industry placements, such as the [T Levels website](https://www.tlevels.gov.uk/), the [T Levels employer support site](https://employers.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb), or the [T Levels schools and colleges support site](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb).  Understand and address the needs and expectations of the employer, and that you provide the information or the support that they require, or that you explain why you cannot handle their enquiry yourself.  Have a system or a process for referring employer enquiries to the appropriate person, team, or organisation, if you cannot handle them yourself, and that you inform the employer of the referral and the expected follow-up. |  |

# ***Section 3: Providing information and guidance to employers.***

This section covers how you provide information and guidance to employers about T Levels and industry placements, and how you ensure that you communicate effectively and persuasively.

| Statement | Rating | Suggestions for improvement | Actions |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial information and guidance provided for employers is clear, accurate and sets out key features and benefits of T Levels and industry placements.  As engagement progresses information and guidance provided is relevant and tailored to address employer’s specific needs and interests, such as their sector, their occupation, their skills gaps, their recruitment challenges, their business goals, and their industry placement capacity and readiness. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current information and guidance materials and ensure that they are clear and accurate, represent your school’s or college’s offer and are aligned with the latest T Level policy and delivery updates.  Use simple and straightforward language, and explain any jargon, acronyms, or technical terms, if they are relevant and necessary. Adapt and customise the information and guidance that you provide and use the language and terminology that is familiar and relevant to each employer.  Use visual aids, such as diagrams, charts, or infographics, to illustrate and highlight the key features and benefits of T Levels and industry placements, where appropriate.  Conduct thorough and effective needs analysis, ask open-ended and probing questions, to understand and identify the specific needs and interests of each employer.  Use examples, case studies, or testimonials, to demonstrate how T Levels and industry placements can meet the specific needs and interests of each employer, where appropriate.  Check and verify the information and guidance that you provide, and that you correct any errors or inconsistencies, if you find any. |  |
| Information and guidance provided to employers is engaging and persuasive and motivates them to get involved in T Levels and industry placements, such as by highlighting the benefits, addressing the challenges, overcoming the objections, and providing the incentives. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current information and guidance materials and ensure that they are engaging and persuasive, and that they motivate different types of employers to get involved in T Levels and industry placements.  Use positive and enthusiastic language, that expresses confidence and conviction, to engage and persuade employers.  Link the features of T Levels and industry placements to the benefits and the impact for employers, where appropriate.  Anticipate and address the potential challenges, objections, or concerns that employers may have, and that you provide solutions, reassurances, or alternatives, where appropriate.  Inform and remind employers of the incentives and the support available for them to get involved in T Levels and industry placements. |  |

# ***Section 4: Following up and closing employer enquiries.***

This section covers how you follow up and close the employer enquiries that you receive about T Levels and industry placements, and how you ensure that you provide a satisfactory and complete customer service.

| Statement | Rating | Suggestions for improvement | Actions |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Employers are followed up regularly and proactively, kept informed of the progress and the outcome of their enquiry. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current follow-up system and ensure that it is effective and efficient, and that it meets the needs and expectations of your employer customers, and that it is aligned with your organisational standards and policies.  Have a system or a process for scheduling and managing your follow-ups, and that you allocate sufficient time and resources for following up with employers.  Have a system or a process for contacting and communicating with employers, and that you use the appropriate source, mode, and frequency, depending on the type and the status of the enquiry, and the profile and the preferences of the employer.  Follow up with employers regularly and proactively and ensure that you keep them informed of the progress and the outcome of their enquiry, or that you check if they need any further information or support. |  |
| Employer enquiries are closed effectively and efficiently once resolved or completed, or they are transferred or escalated, if they require further action or intervention. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current closure system and ensure that it is effective and efficient, and that it meets the needs and expectations of your employer customers, and that it is aligned with your organisational standards and policies.  Have a system or a process for closing and archiving your employer enquiries, and that you follow the relevant procedures and protocols, depending on the type and the status of the enquiry.  Close employer enquiries effectively and efficiently, and that you ensure that they are resolved or completed, or that they are transferred or escalated, if they require further action or intervention.  Inform and confirm with employers the closure of their enquiry, and that you thank them for their interest and involvement, and that you invite them to contact you again, if they have any further questions or concerns. |  |
| Feedback is sought from employers about their experience and satisfaction with the service provided, and this is used to evaluate and improve systems and processes for handling employer enquiries. | |  |  | | --- | --- | | Strongly agree | 5 | |  | 4 | |  | 3 | |  | 2 | | Strongly disagree | 1 | | Review your current feedback system and ensure that it is effective and efficient, and that it meets the needs and expectations of your employer customers, and that it is aligned with your organisational standards and policies.  Have a system or a process for seeking and collecting feedback from employers, and that you use the appropriate methods and tools, such as surveys, questionnaires, interviews, or focus groups.  Seek and collect feedback from employers about their experience and satisfaction with the service that you provide, and that you ask relevant and specific questions, such as about the response time, the communication skills, the information and guidance quality, the follow-up and closure quality, and the overall satisfaction and recommendation.  Use the feedback from employers to evaluate and improve your systems and processes for handling employer enquiries, and that you identify and implement areas for improvement, and that you share and celebrate your good practice and success. |  |