***developing and mapping your t level employer customer journey***

*A guide for schools and colleges to establish a clear and consistent customer journey for employers engaging with T Levels*

***INTRODUCTION***

Employers play an essential role in the delivery and success of T Levels, as they provide industry placements for students and help shape the curriculum and standards. Whilst employers are likely to benefit from engagement with you and T Level students, this is unlikely to be a high-priority, so as a school or college you’ll need to do all you can to make engagement with you as meaningful and efficient as possible.

An employer customer journey should visualise the steps that an employer takes to interact with your organisation from their perspective. By creating a visual representation of the employer engagement process, you’ll gain insight into the employers’ experiences and the reasons why employers do and don’t engage with you.  You can undertake this activity as part of your initial planning, setting out how you would like your customers to engage with you or as an improvement activity to review how your customers engage with you and identifying changes that can be made.

When developing a customer journey, you will want to identify the touchpoints where customers engage with your organisation, as well as the channels and platforms they use.

Your mapping of the employer customer journey will be specific to you and your organisation. You can use your journey maps in different ways, for example:

* **Process improvement:** As part of your mapping exercise, you could highlight the employer's needs, expectations, pain points, and satisfaction levels at each stage of the journey. Once you’ve identified employer pain points you can make improvements at the necessary touch points and so to your customer service, positioning your organisation for successful engagement.
* **External Communications:** A visual tool can be useful to explain to employers what the likely touchpoints will be and when these may take place.
* **Internal Communications:** Where there are multiple individuals or teams involved having an agreed customer journey will support colleagues to deliver to your agreed customer service standards.

***mapping your customer journey***

The employer customer journey is likely to be variable and possibly lengthy depending on several factors such as employer size, sector, area or areas of interest etc. It is therefore possible that you will have multiple customer journeys depending on some of these factors.

To map a customer journey, you may find it helpful to think about the customer activities against using these 5 keys stages of a typical ‘customer buying journey’.

***AWARENESS***

The most common entry point. Potential employers are not aware of the opportunity to host an industry placement or work with you and students more widely.

Think about all of the awareness raising activity you will be undertaking and include these in your mapping. Do your promotional activities include a call to action?

Other tools and resources which will assist you in your activities to support awareness raising:

* [Marketing Channels](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18080695664530-Marketing-channels)
* [Social media content to get you started](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18110392895378-Social-Media-Content-To-Get-You-Started)
* [Promote your T Level offer on your website](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18110430537746-Promote-your-T-Level-offer-on-your-website)
* [Guidance on digital promotion including course directory and the connect service](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18247082361746-Setting-up-and-maintaining-digital-promotion-tools-for-employers)
* [Introductory employer facing presentations](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18061662934162-Introductory-presentation-for-employers)
* [Newsletter template and sample content](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18110570948626-Newsletter-template-and-content)
* [Campaign email templates](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18074978820754-Email-campaign-templates-targeted-employers-no-relationship)
* [Telephone script](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18075073385490-Phone-script-elevator-pitch)

***INTEREST***

At this stage potential employers are aware of you and the services you can offer. They follow-you on social media, subscribe to newsletters and/or attend events. This is the stage at which the employer is interested but needs to learn more. Perhaps this would include more detailed presentations or meetings about what an industry placement is and how they could be involved. What information do employers need to have move them towards deciding to work with you and/or host an industry placement student?

Other tools and resources which will assist you in your activities to develop interest and further educate employers include:

* [Preparation questions for curriculum](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18061474008210-Preparation-ahead-of-Employer-Engagement-Questions-to-ask-Curriculum-Colleagues)
* [Introductory presentations by Skill Area](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18073822750482-Skill-Area-Introductory-Presentations)
* [Objection handling](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18232399982610-Objection-Handling)

***DECISION***

They want to make a decision and need to assess if what you are offering is the best solution. They will carry out their own research. This stage is about reassuring them and developing their confidence. You may want to think about what case studies or references you can supply employers with to validate the experience of working with you as a positive one. Are there common challenges or objections that employers raise with you and have you got responses to these which are readily available to support a quick response?

Other tools and resources which will assist you in your activities to develop interest and further educate employers include:

* [Objection handling](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18232399982610-Objection-Handling)
* [Case Study Templates](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18075174225938-Case-study-template)

***ACTION / COMMITMENT***

The employer has made the decision to host an industry placement and now you need to deliver on your commitments. Making sure that from the point of agreement this is well organised will give employers confidence in you and ultimately in the industry placement itself. Have you got a clear plan of action, how will you continue to engage with the employer between now and the industry placement starting, who will act as the main point of contact in the school/college?

Other tools and resources which will assist you in your activities to develop interest and further educate employers include:

* [Template for capturing feedback on employer engagement](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18110683957010-Employer-engagement-feedback-template)
* [Key IP Activities and Milestones](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18081073080978-Setting-out-key-activity-milestones-for-employers)
* [Meet the Team](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18080959020178-Meet-the-team-intro)

***loyalty***

This stage is about creating fans and supporters that will become repeat customers and promote their successes of working with you and students. How do you celebrate the successes of both students and employers, is this through events, social media promotions etc?

Other tools and resources which will assist you in your activities to develop interest and further educate employers include:

* [Template for capturing feedback on employer engagement](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18110683957010-Employer-engagement-feedback-template)
* [Case Study Templates](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18075174225938-Case-study-template)
* [Newsletter Template](https://support.tlevels.gov.uk/hc/en-gb/articles/18110570948626-Newsletter-template-and-content)

**Be challenging of yourselves, for each stage ask:**

* **What service / support do you offer employers?**
* **Are you meeting employer expectations and is it timely?**
* **What are your systems for recording / tracking engagement and do you have actions flagged clearly?**
* **Do employers feel valued?**
* **Do employers know who they contact for more information / queries?**
* **Are there any gaps or opportunities for improvement?**

***TEAM ACTIVITY BRIEF***

What you’ll need:

Whiteboard, flipchart paper or a digital whiteboard

Post-its, Pens

Add each of the stages as headings across your paper/whiteboard as follows:

A screenshot of a computer

Description automatically generated

Using post-it notes add all the activities you can think of under each category.

Once you’ve exhausted the activities move the post-its around to show any logical process flows or the order in which things happen.

You can then add layers to your mapping such as:

* indicating who is accountable and responsible for the activities
* adding specific timelines or timescales
* employer satisfaction levels, or where employers find it challenging

Ask yourselves are there any opportunities or gaps for improvement and how can you enhance the employer experience, address the pain points and challenges, and deliver value and benefits to employers.

Your final task is to disseminate your mapping to pertinent colleagues within your organisation, including curriculum or senior T Level leads who are invested in employer engagement activities, as well as those who contribute to these activities or benefit from their outcomes, such as business services colleagues. Test the mapping with them to ascertain their agreement and to identify any potential areas for further refinement.