T-LEVELS
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

HOW TO PREPARE STUDENTS

A GUIDE FOR EDUCATION PROVIDERS ON HOW TO PREPARE STUDENTS FOR INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS

HM Government

T-LEVELS

CONTENTS

T-LEVELS

INTRODUCTION

This guidance document is intended for use by the internal industry placements team within education providers.

Our findings from delivery of industry placements during the 2017 to 2018 and 2018 to 2019 academic years showed that some education providers took an ad hoc approach to student readiness. This often resulted in early termination of the placement due to a lack of readiness and this impacted upon employer relationships and student motivation to take on another placement. We believe student preparation is an instrumental component in the overall success of the industry placements for the provider, employer and student.

TIPS AND CONSIDERATIONS FOR STUDENT PREPARATION

To enable a student to get the most out of their industry placement, you need to ensure that the student is suitably prepared and set up for success. This means:

- Ensuring the placement is directly related to the course and is the type of work the student is interested in doing after finishing their studies.
- The student feels familiar with the subject matter of the work, confident in the value they are bringing to the organisation and clear about the benefits of the industry placement experience for both them and the employer.
- The student understands "professional" standards of behaviour, suitable attitudes and expectations for the workplace.

Prior to the placement, the industry placement objectives template is completed and agreed between the provider, employer and student.

The following suggested content for student preparation is split into **Technical skills preparation** relevant to their course of study as well as **Employability skills preparation.**

Technical skills preparation

T Level programmes are designed to equip students with the skills and knowledge to succeed in skilled employment. There are some basic skills and knowledge that are essential to be covered in practical lessons before a student starts a placement, e.g. learning to wash hair on a hairdressing course. Other more complex skills can be taught later in the programme, e.g. using thinning scissors.

T-LEVELS

All curriculum leads should be familiar with the technical qualification (TQ) content and curriculum of the T Level Course so they can **identify the technical skills** that are needed to be delivered prior to a student starting an industry placement and ensure that these are covered. Practical sessions may be tailored sufficiently so that individual students can fill specific gaps in their experience and knowledge.

Where possible, education providers may engage with organisations to offer the student a first "taste" of commercial work with visits to different types of businesses in their area of interest. This may help to identify those students who might need more physical or emotional support prior to beginning their placement.

Some education providers have developed **a list of "basic skills training"** which has to be completed and confirmed by a tutor prior to a student going on an industry placement. This ensures that a student is not going into the industry placement having missed some essential training.

Some students will have gained prior experience of work through part-time jobs. (In some cases, a part-time job may qualify as an industry placement – see FAQs below.)

Course-specific skills

Technical skills preparation helps students to maximise their opportunity while on placement and enables employers to immerse students within more complex aspects of their business. Employers we have spoken with have used this as a measure when interviewing students for industry placements.

Some routes (including agriculture, construction, environment and animal care) require students to be fully briefed in areas such as health and safety, construction site safety or animal handling before they start a placement. Industry placement teams should consult course tutors, prospective employers, as well as the TQ content to inform preparation design.

Examples can include:

ROUTE	TECHNICAL SKILLS EXAMPLES
Agriculture, environment, animal care	FPEA spraying, chainsaw use, tractor driving, use of veterinary medicines

Construction	CSCS, forklift driving, manual handling, dynamic risk assessment. Built environment students may need to know how to use theodolites
Catering and hospitality	Food and hygiene, food storage,
Legal, finance, accounting	GDPR awareness, accounting packages, spreadsheets
Health and science	COSHH, lifting and handling
Creative design	Software packages, e.g. Photoshop and coding skills
Hair and beauty	Use of thinning scissors, hair colouring,
Engineering and manufacturing	IOSH, lathe operation, CNC
Business and administration	Microsoft packages, GDPR
Digital	GDPR, software packages
Education and childcare	Safeguarding

Student log book

A student log book allows students to keep track of their progress alongside their course studies throughout their industry placement. Before they start their placement make sure students know how/when to use the log book and how to record progress towards their learning goals. The learning goals should focus on developing and honing these technical skills.

Employability skills preparation

Many education providers already have an employability skills programme in place. This may be designed and delivered internally or with awarding bodies such as City & Guilds, NOCN and Edexcel. Some education providers use learn-to-work programmes which can help students develop their own self-reflection skills, creating tasks to work through and areas for improvement.

Kudos offers tips in CV writing, employability skills, interview skills and job searching capabilities. Barclays' Life Skills and Accenture's Skills to Succeed Academy also provide some great resources for employability skills preparation.

Feedback identified that education providers' existing preparation programmes designed for work experience typically needed developing to ensure students met the additional

expectations of industry placements. An example 'best practice' curriculum you may wish to follow is laid out below.

INDUCTION AND 'ROUTES TO SUCCESS'	CORE SKILLS WORKSHOP	EMPLOYER WORKSHOP	COMMUNICATIONS AND INTERVIEW PREPARATION
Aim: To prepare people to make the most of their volunteering and Industry Placement.	*Aim: To strengthen their competency in key skills valued by employers.*	*Aim: To prepare students for their industry placement.*	*Aim: To prepare young people to excel in a stressful interview situation.*
Objectives: • To understand what makes a 'great' volunteer. • To set SMART development objectives – both for the programme, and to support their longer term career objectives. • To be better prepared for the challenges and opportunities whilst volunteering.	Objectives: • To develop simple strategies for managing their time and being organised in their approach. • To understand what makes a high performing team. • To feel more confident in entering the work place.	Objectives: • To understand the skills and behaviours the industry is looking for in candidates. • To understand how to research key aspects of the business, including brand, values and services. • To reflect on their skills and experiences learned and how to present them in a CV.	Objectives: • To reflect on the skills and experiences learned and be able to deliver this in a compelling narrative at interview. • To strengthen communication skills. • To learn techniques to handle nerves during stressful situations.

Some of the best practices for employability workshops were:

Maximising student attendance
- **Concise, benefit-focussed messaging.** Attendance increased when a short, simple message was shared with students in advance which outlined the practical benefits to them (as opposed detailed subject matter).
- **Stick to the timetable.** Attendance increased when training was delivered as part of the standard timetable, in the same room the students would normally meet.

Design principles
- **Co-design materials:** Employers help to design training materials, ensuring students are clear about the skills and behaviours they value in their industry.
- **Employer encounters:** Students have the opportunities to meaningfully engage with potential employers during workshops, broadening their understanding of future careers and developing their networks.
- **Interactive training in soft skills alongside work experience:** Students receive training in the soft skills valued by employers, whilst having the chance to practice these skills in the workplace.
- **Feedback and reflection:** Students receive specific feedback on areas for development and time and support to reflect on their experiences.

T-LEVELS

Feedback from education providers also demonstrated that students who had volunteering experience prior to beginning their industry placement were more likely to complete, or to react positively to the experience. This does require up-front planning, well before a student is prepared for their industry placement. Best practice suggests that the best ways to get students volunteering were:

Helping students to get started
- **Incentivise**: Employment-related incentives are more appealing than access to events / consumer-type rewards.
- **Make the volunteering tangible**: Students responded well to charity representatives coming into college to talk about the kind of volunteering opportunities available, and the skills students could gain by taking part.
- **Be there on day one**: Attending students' first day of volunteering has a significant impact on their likelihood to engage and complete their placement

Design principles
- **Stretch responsibility and independence**: Students are pushed to organise and manage their own volunteering schedule directly with their charity partner, helping improve time management and organisation.
- **Promote common goals**: Students are confronted with a shared challenge to work towards with different people, improving their confidence engaging and working with people from different ages and backgrounds to their own.
- **Volunteering reflects charities' day-to-day work**: Students gain practical hands on experience of the work place in a real-world setting, as opposed to a special project, giving them a better understanding of the skills and behaviours required in a professional setting.

The following section sets out topics that we would consider important to cover (as a minimum) in employability skills preparation. The first sub-section includes core topics that are likely to be part of existing work experience preparation programmes and the second sub-section focuses on additional content needing to be covered in advance of industry placements:

CORE CONTENT (FROM EXISTING WORK EXPERIENCE PREPARATION PROGRAMMES)

Job search

This is especially helpful for those students who are likely to self-source their own placement, for example useful websites, setting up email alerts, employer contacts, how to engage an employer from first contact and speculative letters to employers. It could also include support to develop ability to speak confidently to prospective employers on the phone.

Research

Students should be equipped with skills to source their own employer, research the employer they have been matched to or that have an interview with so they feel well-prepared. They can refer to this during the assessment and induction process.

CV writing

Some students may have limited work and life experience, making it difficult for them to write a full CV. Many education providers and employers commented that student CVs were not of the standard expected, so additional sessions here might be required. Tools available from Start may be a good starting point.

Interview skills

Guidance on interview preparation is essential as many employers requested to interview students before offering them a placement. Students often lacked ability or confidence at interview and this may play a role in their level of engagement.

Interview training could include helping students prepare answers to some basic questions. A good starting point is helping students grasp the basics of an Elevator Pitch, a technique to help make the right first impression and a useful lifelong skill. This may cover the following (without limitation):

- "Tell me about yourself."
- "What skills do you have?"
- "Why do you want to work here?"
- "What are your strengths and weaknesses?"

Additional content which could be covered in preparation for industry placements

"You cannot not communicate!"

Studies show that when we communicate our message comes across in three main ways:

1. verbal - what we say
2. tonal - how we say it
3. physically - our body language

In percentage terms we communicate in each of the following areas by:
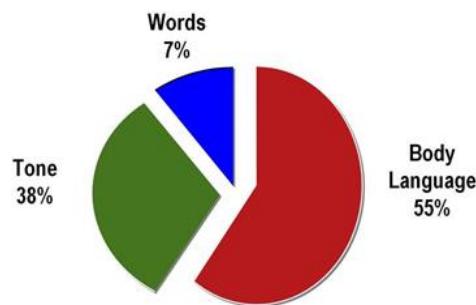
If this is the case, then we leak information all the time about how we are feeling. If a student is asked a hard question at an interview their body language will leak how they are feeling unless they take control of it. Controlling body language takes a bit of practise but is easily mastered and once they can do this they are their way to increasing interview success.

Here are some useful tips on interviews that you can share with your students:

Rapport
Rapport means a mutual liking between two people based on trust. Have you ever met someone for the first time and started speaking and after five minutes felt like you have known them all your life?

If the answer is yes then you have experienced rapport.
It is an unconscious process between people.
It means you have unconsciously recognised similarities between yourselves. There is an old saying, 'people like people who are like themselves.'

If you can master rapport you will be well on your way to improving your chances of success at an interview. Here are the basic tools for building rapport.

- Matching and mirroring is when to adopt the same body posture as the person you are speaking with. For example, if they lean to one side in their chair, you wait 30 seconds and casually adopt the same body posture. Matching and mirroring are very powerful tools to build rapport and sends an unspoken message you are like them.
- Building rapport using tone of voice is when you closely match the tone of the person speaking with you. For example, their voice may be quite low. To match the tone of voice you may lower your voice slightly when you speak.
- Key phrases are another useful tool when it comes to building rapport. We all have key phrases we use all the time. For example, this may be something you say all of the time when you're checking if someone has understood you. Your key phrase in this instance might be, "Do you see what I'm saying?" It may be "Awesome", a key phrase you may say if something good happens.

Asking questions at interview
Always have a minimum of four interview questions to ask the employer. e.g. What do you like about working here?

Your interview questions need to be relevant to the job on offer and ideally open-ended questions.

Example interview questions
- What part of your job do you enjoy most?
- What challenges does your team face on a day-to-day basis?
- What skills and experiences would an ideal candidate have?
- What qualities are necessary for someone to excel in this role?
- What are your expectations of the industry placement?
- What are the next steps?

"What would I need to do to impress you during my industry placement?"
This is a good question for many reasons. Firstly, the employer would need to visualise you in the role to answer this. This is a good thing. It also shows the employer that you're thinking ahead and demonstrates your enthusiasm to do your best in the role. It shows the employer your drive and

commitment, and that you want to add value and make a valuable contribution to their business too.

"What challenges could I face during my industry placement?"
By asking this question you are showing good awareness and vision. We are all likely to encounter challenges when we start in a new role, and this question demonstrates you are plugged in to reality. It shows you recognise that you are likely to encounter some challenges. It shows you are thinking ahead and are prepared to plan and address them in order to succeed.

"What do you think are the most important qualities for someone to excel in this role?"
This question can often lead to valuable information not outlined in the job description. It can help you learn about the company culture and expectations so you can show that you are a good fit. Where possible you could match yourself to these qualities.

"What are your expectations for this role during the industry placement?"
This question will help you identify the employer's expectations for the person in this position. It will also give you some guidance on what the employer is looking for from a successful industry placement.

"What is the typical career path for someone in this role?"
This question will show the employer you are thinking beyond the industry placement and have intentions to work within this industry full-time. It shows you are interested in the company and how it develops staff talent from within.

"Can you tell me more about the day-to-day responsibilities of this role?"
This question will help you learn more about the role and what you can expect from it during your time with the company. By asking this question you will gain valuable insight and be able to decide if the role offered fits with your expectations or career aspirations.

"How would you describe the values of the company?"
This question will help you decide if you are a good fit with this organisation. The employer will likely speak about the team dynamics, their professional development and employee support.

"What are the next steps in the interview process?"
When you ask this question you are demonstrating how eager you are to move things forward. The employer will also tell you about the timeline of the interview process. This will help you follow up your interview. You may need to call or email the company if you have not heard from them the day after the decision date.

"What is an open-ended question?"
If you start your question with any of the following word it will be an open-ended question and the employer cannot answer you with a "yes" or "no" response.

Open ended questions start with: **Who, What, Why, When, Where, How.**

Closed questions start with: **Do, Is, If.**

ATTITUDES AND BEHAVIOUR IN THE WORKPLACE
Some employers reported non-completion of industry placements due to behavioural issues, e.g. timekeeping, communication and language. It is imperative that students have a firm understanding of what expectations employers have of employees in the workplace. Education providers should provide support on planning travel to work and reminders of the importance of punctuality, telephone and email etiquette and dress codes.

Attitudes and behaviours at work
Employers will expect you to be able to interact with colleagues and customers in a polite, professional and courteous manner. If you cannot meet this expectation your time with the organisation is likely to be short lived.
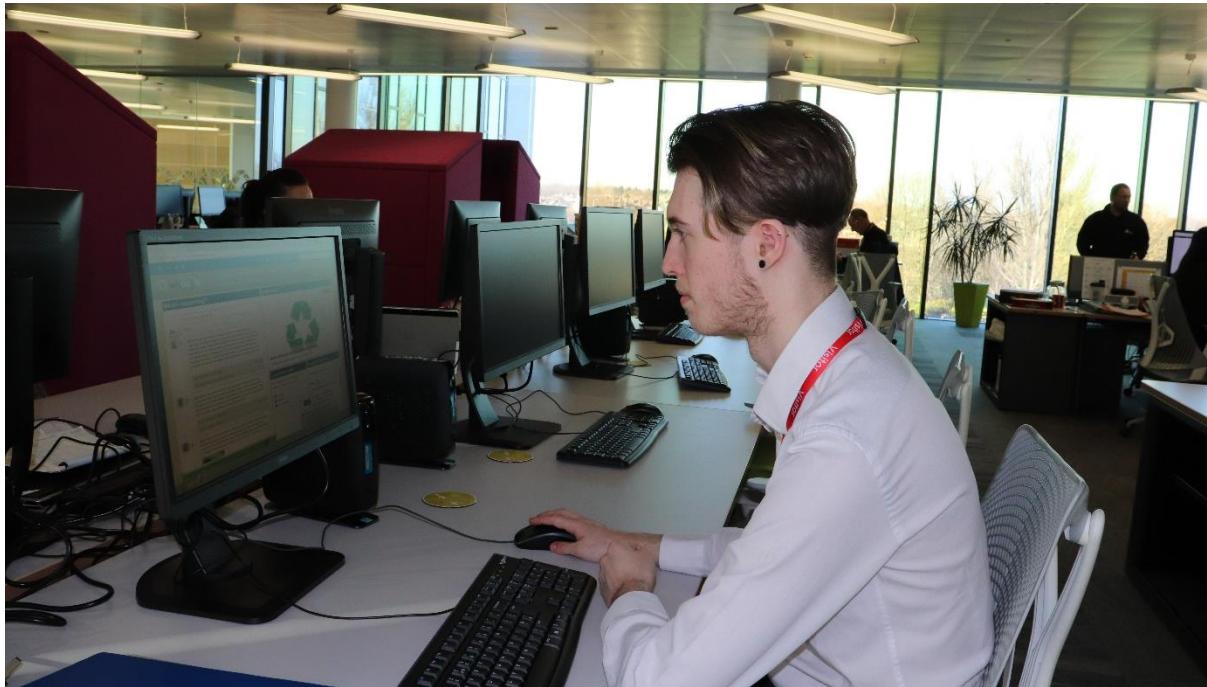
Nowadays organisations view customers as people outside the organisation but also people within the organisation. This means colleagues from other departments or colleagues located in different parts of the organisation are customers too.

Organisations, normally with ten or more employees, have formal policies in place around health and safety, equal opportunities, equality and diversity, disciplinary procedures and acceptable behaviour.

Knowing what is expected of you before you start work is a real advantage.
Policies are general guidelines that control an employee's actions in a company. Procedures outline methods of handling activities and can be more specific than policies. For example, a policy may state that an employee is entitled to expenses for certain business items. Procedures establish a specific method (form required, expense codes to be used, date the form has to be sent in and the person responsible for sending in an expense claim.

It is important you understand what the employer expects from you when you start working for them. Within your first week of starting employment your employer should put you through a formal induction programme explaining its key policies and procedures.

Companies have written policies around conduct and behaviour to protect themselves and their employees from harassment, racial abuse, sexual harassment, abuse of the internet,

T-LEVELS

substance misuse and things like dress code and restrictions on working with the competition.

Why do companies have policies?
Internal company policies are a set of documented guidelines that establish standards in areas such as proper procedures and employee behaviour. In many cases, internal policies must meet certain legal requirements, such as those regarding an employee's right to privacy. The types of policies companies implement vary widely, depending on the nature of the business and the management's philosophy.

Substance abuse
Substance abuse can affect an employee's attendance and productivity. In work environments such as construction or handling hazardous materials, it can even pose a safety risk. Many companies institute a policy regarding disciplinary measures for work-related substance abuse, such as terminating a worker for consuming alcohol in the workplace. They may also provide a method for employees to seek confidential guidance or treatment for dealing with a substance abuse problem, such as an employee counselling program.

Dress code
Some companies require employees to dress in a certain manner when on the job. In an office environment, male workers may have to wear a tie, while women may have to dress in appropriate business attire to promote a professional atmosphere. Workers who deal with the public often must wear a uniform to promote the company's brand or to provide easy recognition for customers. A common example is the Post Office or postman's uniform.

Dress for Success - Charities involved in the dress to impress campaign
Note: Some students may have difficulties in procuring appropriate attire for their industry placement. You may also want to consider organisations like *SmartWorks* and *Suited & Booted*.

Computer use
Companies may implement a policy governing the use of computers in the workplace in an effort to increase productivity and limit Internet surfing. They can also place limitations on sending or receiving personal emails or instant messages. Security-conscious companies may require employees to sign a release that allows employers to monitor email or Internet activity. This helps ensure that confidential information stays within the organisation and prevents

employees from sending threatening or harassing emails to colleagues.

Purpose of personnel policies and procedures

Developing clearly written policies and procedures that are documented, updated, and followed brings structure to an organisation and assists in the day-to-day decision-making processes. Policies and procedures need to be flexible to the needs of the company and enforced across the organisation. Policies and procedures also serve as an internal control method so managers cannot take free license to make creative or unauthorised decisions.

Types of policies

Policies provide several types of information that new and established employees need to know. New employees need to understand things like dress code, breaks and lunch practices, working hours, electronic equipment use, treatment of company property and confidential information handling. All employees must understand policies in regard to holiday, sick time, leaving early, holiday pay, medical leave, and benefits. Supervisors and managers have policies that explain discipline processes, coaching and counselling employees.

Relationship of policies and procedures

There is a relationship between policies and procedures. For each clearly defined policy, there needs to be a written communication on how to apply the policy, how it is enforced, whom it affects, and who is in charge. Policies and procedures need to be accessible to all employees. Some companies develop manuals or handbooks to provide to employees. Other companies may keep the information in a software package accessible by computer. For example, if an employee reviews the policy on applying for a holiday, a procedure should be available to explain the necessary steps.

Policies required by law

Some policies are required based on legal responsibility. Companies must provide a work environment that is free from any form of sexual harassment. Based on this requirement, some companies have established a "zero tolerance" sexual harassment policy that can lead to immediate termination in some cases. The Equalities Act 2010 prohibits companies from discriminating against any present or potential employee on the basis of race, sex, religion, country of origin, and colour. In response, companies have strict policies for recruiting, selecting, and treating employees.

Managing anxiety

Strategies on managing stress and anxiety are equally important for students to help them recognise triggers and physical responses to stress and strategies for how to manage these feelings. This may be particularly relevant for students with greater needs.

Communication

Ensure student preparation includes their rights and responsibilities in social interactions in the workplace, such as the right to be treated fairly and with respect and the responsibility to treat their colleagues in the same way. Help students recognise the difference between passive, aggressive and assertive communication styles to help them understand how they should be communicating with colleagues at work.

Financial management

It has proved helpful to work with students on simple financial management strategies, especially when industry placements are not paid.

Risk management

You have a responsibility to ensure that, as far as practicable, when a student starts an industry placement, they are ready to follow best health and safety practice (informed through policies and procedure) and are able to complete independent dynamic risk assessments to avoid putting themselves into potentially hazardous situations.

The preparation of a student for managing risk should cover:

- Health and safety training
- Identification of risks and dynamic risk assessment
- Assessment of a student's understanding and knowledge of health and safety (you may consider an awarding body external assessment)

You may want to consider additional training, such as:

- Basic first aid training
- Safe manual handling

Students should not start an industry placement until all basic health and safety training has been completed and a vocational tutor has gained assurance that the student is well prepared for working in industry.

T-LEVELS

Timing of student preparation

You need to plan for students completing industry placements of a minimum of 315 hours (45-50 days on average). The only exception currently is the Early Years Educator occupational specialism, within the Education and Childcare T Level, that must be for a minimum of 750 hours.

The most successful model is to focus on spending the first two terms of a 2 year programme preparing a student for a placement prior to the industry placement starting. Education providers should support these activities and ensure that a student is not sent on an industry placement with substantive gaps in any area. For example, some students found that a summer placement was unsuccessful due to not having enough time to complete preparation in advance.

SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION AND TIMELINE

Below is a suggested timeline of student preparation communication that has worked well for some education providers:

ASAP	The term before placements begin	4 weeks before placements begin
Introduction of industry placement co-ordinator to students	Presentation on how to organise a placement	Presentation on what to expect and how to prepare

Short introduction of the industry placement co-ordinator by course manager in the first couple of weeks
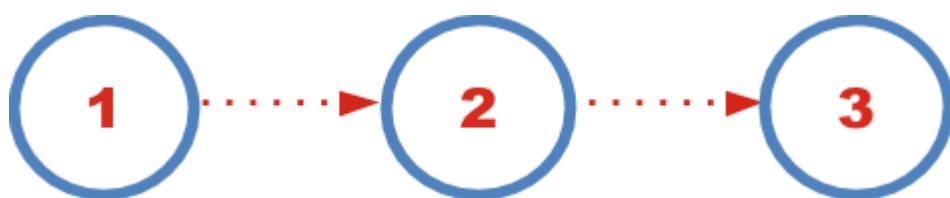
Confirm that students are aware that they will undertake an industry placement as part of their study programme. No presentation required.

Initial presentation given early when term starts on how to organise a placement

Explain what an industry placement will entail

Explain how it fits around the programme of study and the options available for undertaking the placement hours. Note that industry placements are best arranged within reasonable distance of the student's home so that transport is manageable.

Purpose of industry placements

Highlight the greater opportunities students have for building and developing technical skills related to their course, to gain deeper knowledge, to develop "employability skills" such as communication and problem solving and to gain a meaningful reference from an employer, and/or to link with organisations and businesses that will help them identify a future career pathway.

Case studies

Share case studies and/or preferably invite student(s) who have completed an industry placement to talk about the different benefits for them of undertaking the placement. Ideally, one of these past students will have self-sourced their placement and be able to talk about how they did so and encourage other students to do the same. 13 video and 11 written case studies were produced by DfE and are available here.

Examples of good placements

Outline features that make a good placement: clear learning goals, aspirational opportunities to explore a chosen career path, good constructive feedback and committed students.

Role of the industry placement coordinator (or similar contact according to your staffing structure) in securing a placement

Communicate how they will support the students in finding a suitable placement. This can be done by having a one-to-one with each student to: talk through and identify their career aims and suitable types of work; provide details of potential employers the student can contact; and help review the student's CV and application letters.

Arrangements to support students with SEND or LLDD

Clarify that industry placements are for all students and the industry placement coordinator will take account of how best to accommodate any student who might need additional support. See section below on supporting students with SEND or LLDD.

How to self-source a high-quality placement
Emphasise that self-sourcing is as an excellent way to find a placement that matches what the student really wants. See separate guidance on How to find your own industry placement. Recommend an initial contact in person or by email/telephone/letter. Once a placement is confirmed, notify the industry placement coordinator who will then visit the potential placement to carry out suitability checks such as a health and safety risk assessment.

Awareness of health and safety and safeguarding risks
Highlight your organisation's safeguarding policies, procedures and contact numbers. You should carry out due diligence to ensure that the business provides a safe working environment. Explain to parents/guardians and students that employers have the same health and safety duties to students as they do to their employees to help reassure them. See also: *Employer Information Guide and Health & Safety, Insurance & Safeguarding Guidance* for more information on this topic.

Financial arrangements for travel and subsistence.
In some placements, students may receive payment or expenses. You can use the 16-19 Bursary Fund to support students with travel and subsistence costs.

TRAVEL TRAINING

Both through the 2017 to 2018 pilot and the 2018 to 2019 academic year, providers reported back on issues with students and travel. Providers from inner cities and rural locations discuss difficulties with some students being able to travel independently.

The difficulties faced by students from inner cities are different to those faced by rural students. For example, some rural student may face a journey of over two hours travel to and from their industry placement. **One thing to note is travel over two hours can be counted toward the hours worked on their industry placement.**

One common thread is some students are not confident when it comes to travelling over distance. They may not have the skills or confidence to plan their journey, especially if it requires multiple changes from buses and trains.

One inner city provider told us they had two placements fall through as students with mental health found the travelling too onerous. The anxiety these students felt was not picked up during initial assessment.

[Travel Training, a good practice guide](#) By Department of Transport. Although this is not a current publication, it may provide some useful tips for helping students prepare for industry placements.

When to start looking for a placement.
Note the importance of starting early, i.e. "NOW!"

FAQs may include:

Can I use my current part-time job as my industry placement?
A part-time job may qualify provided it meets essential criteria of an industry placement, including it:

- Being directly related to the student's course of study;
- Being the minimum placement hours;
- Meeting quality assurance standards in terms of health and safety, safeguarding, insurance etc;

- Involving appropriately challenging work and occupationally-specific learning goals which are agreed between the education provider, student and employer;
- Being with an external employer.

Will I get paid or not?
Industry placements are about providing you with high quality, meaningful training, not work. Therefore, students are not entitled to a salary as the placement is forming part of your course of further education. There is no legal requirement or expectation that T Level students will be paid.

Are my expenses paid?
This is also dependent upon the employer; some may choose to support students with their travel and subsistence expenses. Education providers can also consider using the 16-19 Bursary Fund to support students.

Presentation given about 4 weeks before placements begin

Short reminder of the purpose of the placement
Reminder of points in previous presentation, plus note the need to identify some relevant learning goals.

Importance of making a good impression and how to build a good relationship
Cover aspects such as dress, attendance, punctuality, language.

Reminder of awareness of safeguarding risks
Highlight safeguarding policies, procedures and contact numbers.

Awareness of the need to inform you of an accident or if any issues arise
Provide your contact information or the relevant person who the student should contact in these circumstances.

Requirement to keep a record of days worked and complete the student log book
Explain what is expected, how to keep track of their progress and the benefit of doing this.

Responsibilities and touchpoints with industry placement contact
Outline and agree at what points the industry placement contact will be in touch and visiting, including any initial "set-up visits", progress review visits and end of placement visit. Note that it is important to communicate regularly and share telephone/e-mail details.

FAQs may include:

What do I do about my coursework and exams?
The education provider should support with any questions around timetabling and revision needs.

REVIEW OF STUDENTS THROUGHOUT PLACEMENT

Students' progress should be tracked and reviewed before, during and at the end of the placement by you, employers and students themselves.

BEFORE PLACEMENT

Before delivering student preparation, it is recommended that you carry out a baseline student assessment to gauge how well they are prepared for the world of work. This allows you to:

* Understand knowledge gaps, concerns and areas of support required at both an individual and group level.
* Ensure students have reflected on their strengths and areas for development.
* Design relevant student preparation that will support students and meet their needs.

Another assessment should be carried out after preparation but still in good time before placements are due to begin so that you can:

* Identify any remaining areas of concern.
* Build students' confidence as they reflect on their growth in knowledge and skills.
* Make changes to future preparation materials to further improve the student experience.

DURING AND AFTER PLACEMENT

Ongoing tracking helps to demonstrate the progress of the student which will give them confidence as well as identify any possible obstacles or issues which can be addressed promptly. It is a requirement for you to visit the employer and student at least three times during an industry placement: at the beginning, the middle and the end. This gives you, the student and the employer the opportunity to review the student's progress against their learning goals and adjust

them as necessary.

Reviews during the industry placement can also enable information to be collected from employers which can then be used to feed into and contribute to future curriculum planning. Where a significant number of employers identify that students are not prepared with a specific skill, the curriculum can be modified for future years to take account of the feedback.

It would be useful for the industry placement team to establish systems through which employer feedback on the preparation of the student (not just their progress) is formally requested, noted and shared with curriculum areas.

Template reviews to be completed by the student, employer and you (or the relevant person at the education provider) can be found in the appendices.

PREPARING STUDENTS WITH SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITY (SEND) OR WITH LEARNING DIFFICULTIES AND/OR DISABILITIES (LLDD)

We know that many education providers have considerable experience in supporting students with SEND and LLDD. This section shares some feedback and learning from education providers to help you prepare your SEND and LLDD students to take part in their quality, supported industry placements.

A key learning is the importance of **allowing additional time** (possibly an extra term) for the process of sourcing an appropriate industry placement. This allows for:

- A clear understanding of the student's profile, needs and aspirations.
- Working in partnership with parents/guardians of the student.
- Communication and agreement with employers of how to make the industry placement suitably accessible and feasible.
- Reasonable adjustments to be made in the workplace (such as learning aids; suitably quiet environments).
- "Job carving"/ redesigning to tailor a role to the talents and abilities of the individual.
- Appointment of suitable workplace mentors and/or job coaches.

T-LEVELS

HOW TO ENGAGE AND SUPPORT STUDENTS WITH SEND OR LLDD

The Education and Training Foundation has produced an excellent, comprehensive, free online learning toolkit (the **"Toolkit"**) funded by the DfE. It includes step-by-step guides, tips, videos and tools to help providers and teaching staff support students with SEND or LLDD to achieve and fulfil their ambitions. You simply need to complete an online registration to gain access.

You will need to assess students individually to build a vocational profile of information covering the student's work aspirations as well as medical conditions, additional learning needs, ability to travel independently etc. You can then source appropriate placements, carry out risk assessments and health and safety checks with the student's profile and needs in mind.

It is helpful to work in partnership with parents/guardians to find suitable placements, keep them informed, share success stories and case studies, listen to any concerns or reticence they may have and make sure they are comfortable with the details of the placement, safety and levels of support in place.

To help facilitate a smooth start to a supported placement and to minimise concerns for students and their parents/guardians, consider rehearsing aspects of the placement in advance such as: the commute; agree advance visits to the employer to set up the work station and check accessibility; and enable the student to meet and get to know and trust their job coach, workplace mentor and/or line manager.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A SUPPORTED AND ACCESSIBLE INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

Support from education provider, workplace mentor and job coach
Students with SEND/LLDD will need different levels and types of support depending on their individual needs. For more detail, please refer to a Guide to SEND for industry placements resource. Some students, particularly those with complex needs, may need you to organise a job coach in order to benefit fully from the placement. A job coach will work with a student on a day-to-day, individual basis within the workplace. Job coaches are trained in systematic instructions meaning they learn specific tasks/activities in the workplace and then break them down into ways in which their student can

then learn the tasks. This support will be tapered down, and eventually withdrawn, once the student is comfortable with the tasks.

The majority of students with SEND/LLDD do not have complex needs, but they are still likely to need additional support during their industry placement and education providers should consider carefully what help they will need, such as learning aids or a workplace mentor (an existing member of the employer's staff who should be appropriately trained to support students with SEND/LLDD in the workplace).

You will need to reassure the employer that they will receive all necessary support before and during the placement. The level of support will be at such a level as to maximise the success of the student's experience and be manageable and reasonable for the employer. Some education providers have offered to give employers SEND/LLDD training to help both students on industry placements and the employer more generally.

It is important for your designated contact to check in regularly with the student, employer, mentor and/or coach and parent/ guardian during the placement to track their performance and progress. This regular contact can allow you to assess whether the level of support is adequate, and to take prompt action where necessary.

Job "carving" or redesign
This is a great way to promote inclusivity and involves tailoring a role to suit the talents of a particular individual. For the purposes of an industry placement, it might mean changing some elements of an existing role whilst ensuring that students with SEND/LLDD are able to learn, develop and demonstrate the necessary skills for their course.

Reasonable adjustments to workplace
Examples of reasonable adjustments that may be necessary for accessibility include:

- Providing learning aids (checklists, picture prompts for tasks);
- Allowing time out for anxiety and frustration;
- Creating environments suited to particular students (e.g. quiet, clean, not too bright for autistic students); and
- Physically accessible – use of ramps and lifts.

T-LEVELS

References and further resources

Here are some specialist organisations and resources which can provide further detailed guidance and information:

- British Association for Supported Employment (BASE)
- Education & Training Foundation - SEND: Sources of Support Toolkit
- United Response
- DfE Guidance on Supported Internships

T-LEVELS

APPENDIX 1: PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE STANDARDS

Professional behaviour and attitudes you need to demonstrate in the workplace
Display professionalism • Are courteous and respectful to other staff and members of the public • Have good attendance and time keeping • Are calm under pressure • Are reliable, and you contact your manager directly if you are unable to attend work due to illness or another reason • Are enthusiastic and interested in your work • Do not get distracted by personal issues or your mobile phone whilst at work, and only use your phone during formally recognised breaks or in an emergency • Always adhere to organisation policy and procedures, including around health and safety, equal opportunities, equality and diversity, appropriate IT use, disciplinary procedures, and acceptable behaviour • Maintain confidentiality regarding any of the information you access whilst on your placement. This includes not gossiping and keeping confidential any personal information that work colleagues share with you • Do not do anything which may bring you and/or the education provider into disrepute i.e. which would negatively affect the reputation of you or your education provider • Dress appropriately for the employer's work environment
Produce results • Complete your work to an agreed standard, with very few or no errors • Are organised, plan your work effectively, prioritise tasks, work independently as needed and meet deadlines • Always ask for support or clarity if you are unsure of what you need to do • Want to learn and develop your skills • Want to receive feedback and act on any feedback given
Work well as part of a team • Build good relationships with your colleagues, understand what your role in the team is and show a positive attitude to working as part of a team • Treat all colleagues with respect • Listen effectively to different points of view and respond in a professional way

• Are a supportive team member, proactively offering help and support to the team
Communicate appropriately
• Use a polite and professional tone and language when communicating with colleagues and customers • Produce clear, well written work which uses the right tone for the audience, and has very few or no mistakes • Share your thoughts and present your ideas clearly • Follow instructions and listen carefully to what you need to do • Use positive and open body language, including maintaining eye contact, to show that you are approachable and ready to listen • Are confident to check your understanding of tasks you've been asked to do, and ask for clarification as needed
Take responsibility for your actions
• Are open to feedback and act on feedback given • Are honest if you make a mistake and seek to learn from your mistakes, so it does not happen again

T-LEVELS

APPENDIX 2: TEMPLATES

These documents are available to download in word in the student log book resource.

STUDENT READINESS: SELF-ASSESSMENT TOOL

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. All of the information you provide will be treated confidentially. This means:

- Your answers will never be shared or discussed individually
- Your answers will never be linked to your name in any research or publication
- Your answers will not change anything in your programme experience

The survey is completely voluntary.

How confident do you feel with regards to each of these statements?

	Not confident at all	Not very confident	Neutral	Confident	Very confident
I know how to write a good CV and cover letter					
I can speak clearly to employers about my skills and experiences at an interview					
I know how to research the organisation that my industry					

placement will be with					
I have the employability skills that I need for my industry placement (e.g. teamwork, communication and problem solving)					
I have the technical skills and knowledge that I need for my industry placement					
I understand the professional behaviours and attitudes that employers will expect me to display on my industry placement (e.g. time keeping, dress code, adhering to health and safety rules)					
I understand that the industry					

placement will be a valuable addition to my CV					
I understand how I will benefit from completing my industry placement					

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree / disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am good at communicating my thoughts and ideas in a way that is easy for others to understand					
I am confident in my writing skills					
I listen well to other people					
I respond positively and can adapt when things					

aren't going to plan					
I am confident at working in a team					
I respect the different views and opinions of others					
I am good at being on time					
I am good at organising the things I have to do					
I am motivated and eager to learn in a workplace setting					
I am always keen to improve and like to receive feedback on my performance					
I can often think of creative solutions to problems					
I am confident in					

making decisions					33
I am confident in asking questions if I am unsure					

T-LEVELS

STUDENT READINESS: TUTOR ASSESSMENT TOOL

Review of Student Readiness for Industry Placement

Name: _____

Course: _____

Provider: _____

Date: _____

For each of the aspects for student readiness, please mark (with an X) whether the student does not meet expectations, meets expectations, or exceeds expectations in doing an industry placement.

Please refer to **Appendix 1** as a reference guide outlining the professional behaviours and attitude standards we expect students to demonstrate during the industry placement. As this is prior to the industry placement, please make a judgement about the standard you think the student is at currently. Please consider the knowledge and technical skills relevant to their course of study to determine their readiness.

	Behaviour & Social Skills	Knowledge & Technical Skills
Does not meet expectations		
Meets expectations		
Exceeds expectations		

[If student is not meeting expectations, please provide further details including what improvements the student needs to make in order to be ready for their placement.]

Signed by Course Tutor: _____

Name of Course Tutor: _____

Date of assessment: _____

T-LEVELS

STUDENT PROGRESS: TUTOR MID-POINT REVIEW

Review of Student Progress on Industry Placement

Name: _____
Course: _____
Provider: _____
Employer: _____
Date: _____

For each of the aspects for review, please mark (with an X) whether the student is not making sufficient progress towards their learning goals, is demonstrating sufficient progress towards their learning goals or is exceeding against their learning goals at the midpoint. Refer to the progress indicators that outlines the work-based behaviours and the technical ability standards that students are expected to demonstrate during their placement.

	Behaviour and Social Skills	Knowledge and Technical Skills
Not making sufficient progress		
Demonstrating sufficient progress		
Exceeding		

Feedback/notes:
[Please provide any feedback on where the student is not making progress and what improvements you would like to see so that the student can make the most of the industry placement. Outlining next steps may be useful.

Review progress against learning goals (outlined in the Industry Placement Agreement):
What specific knowledge has the student enhanced and/or acquired during this placement?
What practical skills has the student applied and/or further developed during this placement?
What knowledge/skills will be focused on during the remaining time on this placement?

T-LEVELS

Please assess the quality of support given by the employer:
___Below expected standard
___Meeting expected standard
___Exceeding expected standard

Signed by: _____   (Provider)

Signed by: _____   (Employer)

Signed by: _____   (Student)

T-LEVELS

APPENDIX 3: PROGRESS INDICATORS

OVERALL DESCRIPTORS		
Needs improvement (Not making progress)	**Good (Demonstrating progress towards their learning goals)**	**Excellent (Exceeding against their learning goals)**
Mid-point review Unlikely to meet their learning goals by the time they complete their placement, without additional support.[1] **Final review** Has not shown progress towards their learning goals.	**Mid-point review** Showing potential and are likely to meet their learning goals by the time they complete their placement. **Final review** Has demonstrated progress towards their learning goals.	**Mid-point review** Working beyond expectations and already on track to exceed their learning goals.[2] **Final review** Has exceeded against their learning goals.
BEHAVIOURS		
Students will be expected to demonstrate sufficient progress towards their learning goals through displaying the <u>appropriate workplace behaviours</u> throughout their placement		
Needs improvement	**Appropriate behaviours**	
Lacks professionalism • Is not courteous and respectful to other staff and members of the public • Attendance and time keeping is poor • Gets easily stressed when under pressure • Demonstrates very little enthusiasm and interest in their work, does not engage with	**Displays professionalism** • Is consistently courteous and respectful to other staff and members of the public • Attendance and time keeping is good • Is mostly calm under pressure • Demonstrates enthusiasm and interest in their work, engages well	**Consistently demonstrates professional behaviour** • Always courteous and respectful to other staff and members of the public • Attendance and time keeping is excellent • Always able to maintain calm when under pressure • Demonstrates a lot of enthusiasm and

---

[1] This must be a trigger point for providers and employers to discuss with the student to identify why they are not making progress and what extra support they need
2 It may be that original learning goals should be updated to provide greater stretch/challenge in these circumstances

their work and is easily distracted • Does not follow company policy and conduct, such as not following the dress code, behaviour, and confidentiality • Is not reliable	with their work and is not easily distracted • Adheres to company policy and conduct, including dress code, behaviour, and confidentiality • Mostly reliable	interest in their work, always engages well with their work and is never distracted • Always adheres to company policies and conduct, including dress code, behaviour, and confidentiality • Very reliable
Produces poor results • Regularly misses deadlines • Does not plan their work effectively and is unable to prioritise tasks • Completes their work to a poor standard, with lots of errors • Is not able to work independently, as needed, as requires full support to complete tasks • Does not ask for support or clarity when unsure of what to do • Shows little interest in wanting to learn and develop their skills	**Produces good results** • Regularly meets deadline • Plans their work effectively and is able to prioritise most tasks • Completes their work to a good standard, with few errors • Mostly of the time is able to work independently, as needed • Often seeks support or clarity if unsure of what they need to do • Is eager to learn and develop their skills most of the time	**Produces excellent results** • Always meets deadlines • Always plans their work very effectively and is able to prioritise all of their work • Completes their work to a very high standard, with no errors • Is always able to work independently, as needed • Always asks for support or clarity if they are unsure of what do • Proactively seeks opportunities to learn and develop their skills
Does not engage or work well as part of a team • Has not build good relationships with colleagues and does not understand their role in the team	**Works well as part of a team** • Has built good relationships with most colleagues and mostly understands what their role in the team is	**Works well within a team and actively seeks to support others** • Has built very good relationships with all colleagues and understands what

• Does not show a positive attitude to working as part of a team • Does not listen to different points of view and responds in a non-professional to views different from their own • Does not treat members of the team with respect • Does not offer help to support team members	• Most of the time shows a positive attitude to working as part of a team • Listens to different points of view and mostly responds in a professional way to views different from their own • Mostly treats members of the team with respect • Most of the time will offer help to support team members	their role in the team is • Always shows a positive attitude to working as part of a team • Always listens effectively to different points of view and always responds in a professional way to views different from their own • Always treats members of the team with respect • Is always proactive in offering help to support team members
Communicates ineffectively • Written communications are unclear, they do not use the right tone for the audience and have lots of mistakes • Are not able to share their thoughts and present ideas clearly • Does not use polite and professional language when speaking to colleagues / customers • Does not follow instructions and listen carefully to what they need to do, so they do not	**Communicates appropriately** • Most written communications are clear, they use the right tone for the audience, and have few mistakes • Are able to share their thoughts and present ideas clearly most of the time • Uses polite and professional language most of the time when speaking to colleagues / customers • Most of the time follows instructions and listens carefully to what they need to do, so they understand what is needed	**Excellent communicator** • Written communications are always clear, they use the right tone for the audience and with no mistakes • Are always able to share their thoughts and present ideas clearly • Always uses polite and professional language when speaking to colleagues / customers • Always follows instruction and listens carefully to what they need to do, so they always understand what is needed

understand what is needed • Does not use positive and open body language to show that they are approachable and ready to listen	• Most of the time uses positive and open body language to show that they are approachable and ready to listen	• Always uses positive and open body language to show that they are approachable and ready to listen
Fails to take responsibility for actions • Is not open to feedback and does not act on it • Is not honest if they have made a mistake and gives excuses for poor performance or blames others • Does not learn from their mistakes	**Takes responsibility for own actions.** • Most of the time is open to feedback and acts on it • Most of the time is honest if they have made a mistake and most of the time does not excuses for their behaviour or shifts the blame • Most of the time learns from their mistakes	**Takes full responsibility for own actions** • Is always open to feedback and acts on it • Is always honest if they have made a mistake and does and never gives excuses for their behaviour or shifts the blame • Always learns from their mistakes

| TECHNICAL ABILITY |
|---|
| By the end of the placement, students will be expected to have demonstrated sufficient progress against the technical skills set out in their <u>individual learning goals</u> and must be reviewed as a <u>minimum of 'Good'</u> or 'Excellent' against the criteria below in order to meet the industry placement completion criteria |

Needs improvement	Good	Excellent
Technical understanding Has none or little understanding of how their technical skills can be effectively applied in the workplace and does not apply the skills with any accuracy	*Technical understanding* Has a good understanding of how their technical skills can be effectively applied in the workplace and applies the skills within with a good degree of accuracy	*Technical understanding* Has an excellent understanding of how their technical skills can be applied effectively in the workplace and applies the skills with a very good degree of accuracy
Confidence Has none or very little confidence in	*Confidence* Has some confidence in applying technical	*Confidence* Has high confidence in applying technical

applying technical skills learnt in the classroom, within the workplace, and displays none or very little confidence in the development of new occupationally relevant skills	skills learnt in the classroom, within the workplace, and displays some confidence in the development of new occupationally relevant skills	skills learnt in the classroom, within the workplace, and displays high confidence in the development of new occupationally relevant skills
Independence Is able to do simple tasks but struggles with complex tasks without full support and/or supervision.	*Independence* Is able to do simple tasks and is mostly able to carry out complex tasks accurately, with minimal support and/or supervision	*Independence* Is able to do simple tasks and always carries out complex tasks accurately and independently, with minimal support and/or supervision
Efficacy Is not able to deliver the expected outcomes through the practice and repetition of tasks and activities	*Efficacy* Most of the time is able to deliver expected outcomes, through the practice and repetition of tasks and activities	*Efficacy* Is always able to deliver expected outcomes, through the practice and repetition of tasks and activities
Efficiency Struggles to do simple tasks to the correct standard and within deadline	*Efficiency* Is able to do simple tasks and most of the time is able to do complex tasks to the correct standard and within deadline	*Efficiency* Is able to do simple tasks and is always able to do complex tasks to the correct standards and within deadline
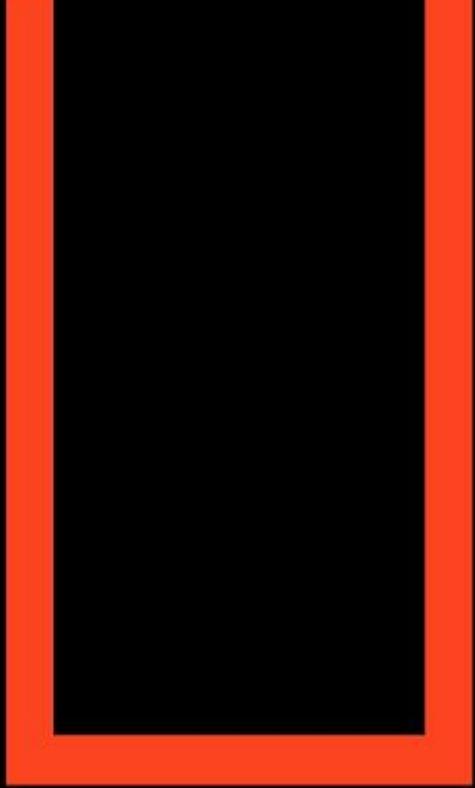
T-LEVELS
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

Industry placements are a core part of the T Level courses.
Visit www.tlevels.gov.uk.