

T-LEVELS

THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

ENGAGING STUDENTS AND PARENTS/ GUARDIANS

***A GUIDE FOR EDUCATION
PROVIDERS ON HOW TO ENGAGE
WITH STUDENTS AND THEIR
PARENTS/GUARDIANS ABOUT
INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS***



HM Government

T-LEVELS

CONTENTS

Context	3
Best practice in engaging students and parents	4
Student engagement	4
Parent/guardian engagement	7
Overcoming objections from students and their parents	11
Objection handling - Learnings	12
Engaging students with SEND or LLDD	15
How to engage and support students with SEND or LLDD	17
Considerations for a supported and accessible industry placement	17
References and further resources	18
Appendix 1: Draft letter for parents	19
Appendix 2: Suggested communication and timeline	23

T-LEVELS

CONTEXT

Two-thirds of businesses found relevant work experience either critical or significant in candidates when recruiting. Work experience is an important facilitator for young people entering, and succeeding, in the workplace. Around two-thirds (65%) of employers reported that relevant work experience was a critical or significant factor when taking on (any aged) new staff. (Source: [Employer Perspectives Survey 2016](#)).

Current 1-2-week work experience placements, which are not specific to a student's course, don't enable students to develop technical skills that employers need, meaning there are critical skills shortages in the economy. That is why the Department for Education (DfE) made a commitment that all 16 to 19-year-old students following a new technical education route will be entitled to a quality industry placement to arm them with the technical skills they need to give them the best possible chance for entering skilled employment.

Industry placements will be a mandatory part of new T Levels. T Levels are rigorous, classroom-based, technical study programmes at level 3, designed to support entry to skilled employment in technical occupations at level 3 and above. A substantial, high quality industry placement with an external employer will be an essential part of each T Level.

These industry placements will give students a valuable opportunity to put their learning into practice, develop their technical skills and become more employable. Students will spend a minimum of 315 hours (on average, 45-50 days) with up to two external employers in a role directly relevant to their course.

In the 2017 to 2018 academic year, 21 education providers and hundreds of employers piloted industry placements for approximately 2,500 students on related level 2 and 3 vocational and technical courses. In the 2018 to 2019 academic year, over 300 providers received Capacity and Delivery Funding to develop their ability to deliver these new industry placements. The learning from this has identified sector areas and situations where there is a need for differing approaches.

This resource has been designed to support implementation of industry placements. For more information on the capacity and delivery fund (CDF) for the 2019 to 2020 academic year, please visit the [CDF General Guidance](#) and [CDF Principles for High Quality Work Placements](#).

T-LEVELS

BEST PRACTICE IN ENGAGING STUDENTS AND PARENTS

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Early communication

One key lesson learned which was common to most education providers was that students should be informed about the industry placement **prior to enrolment**. As part of their full-time study programme, they will be expected to participate in a minimum 315 hour (on average 45-50 days) placement in industry.

Working with admissions, marketing and curriculum teams

Many education providers have indicated a belief that they feel they started the communication process too late as students were only told about the industry placement after enrolment. This led to early withdrawals and non-starts with the principal reason cited being students' other work commitments. If an industry placement is presented as something aspirational and as an integral part of the course, the student is far more likely to be engaged.

It is crucial to take a strategic approach to communications - there has to be buy in at all levels of your organisation so that staff understand what industry placements are and are able to communicate the benefits to students, parents and guardians.

Please also refer to the [strategic approach to industry placements resource](#).

See Appendix 2 for a suggested communications timeline.

Marketing

It is highly recommended that you put together some marketing material explaining what an industry placement is and listing potential benefits that can be used when communicating with students, parents and guardians. Developing your own case studies using students who have completed industry placements, can provide an exceptionally strong message. Some providers have fed back that they have asked industry placement students to help design the marketing material to try and ensure maximum impact for the next academic year's students.

T-LEVELS

The Department for Education have released 11 written and 13 video case studies that can be used to demonstrate the advantages of Industry Placements, which can be found [here](#). Promoting industry placements on your website, social media channels and in your prospectus can be extremely effective in attracting students and provides a USP for your organisation. It also helps place industry placements in an aspirational light. See Appendix 1 for a list of benefits of industry placements.

"I would definitely recommend industry placements to other students. I feel I'm more confident and independent. I've met a much wider range of people and it's helped me develop new skills. It's widened my horizons, including how I see my career developing and has given me higher aspirations. It's been a great stepping stone, I feel more trusted, so it's built my confidence. Employers are looking for a mixture of technical knowledge and practical ability; this gives you the best of both worlds." (Joe, industry placement student)

Admissions

It's essential that industry placements are introduced to students as early as possible, with consistent messaging across the provider, from staff involved in admissions to curriculum staff and the senior leadership team. If you can outline the practicalities of why the industry placement is a great opportunity and when it will take place at enrolment, or even before, it will become a less daunting prospect for the student.

Curriculum

Curriculum staff need to be strong advocates of industry placements and it's essential that they can convey the benefits of the placement. Ideally, they will be involved in the design of the industry placements and have contact with the employer so they can highlight the specific benefits of the individual placements with each student. In some cases, providers have indicated that, where curriculum staff haven't been fully involved, there has been a negative impact on student engagement.

"I see amazing changes in students who have completed 45-day industry placements. They are completely different to how they are in college. In placement, students transform. They feel more grown up, more independent, they see really what it's like in the real world. I think industry placements are wonderful" (Gill Aouya, Industry Placement Officer, CONEL)

T-LEVELS

Students' other commitments

It is critical to find out about students' other commitments as early as possible. One approach that worked well was to build a **detailed student profile** covering finances, work, extracurricular activities, aspirations and work preferences. This was useful in finding placements which fit with students' needs and aspirations and therefore reduced the number of non-completions

Part time jobs

Many students **rely on part-time work** to fund their expenses while in education. This can be managed if identified early. Where industry placements are unpaid, you can use your Capacity and Delivery Funding and 16-19 Bursary Funding to help towards travel and other costs. Some employers may be willing to cover expenses such as travel, lunch and work clothing/equipment.

In certain cases, a student's existing part-time job may qualify as an industry placement provided it meets certain essential criteria of an industry placement, including:

- Directly related to the student's course of study and occupationally-specific.
- Minimum of 315 hours (on average 45-50 days).
- Meets education provider's quality assurance standards in terms of health and safety, safeguarding, insurance, etc.
- Involves appropriately challenging work and learning objectives which are agreed between the education provider, student and employer - SMART targets
- The employer or employers (maximum of 2) are external.

Travel planning

Another area to focus on is assessing and helping to develop students' employability and soft skills, so they feel more confident in their ability to step into the workplace. Helping students plan travel can also be highly beneficial. If you are capturing information such as the student's postcode, if they can drive etc, then it's possible to map the students onto placements in locations that are most feasible for them to get to.

Aspirational placements

Students are for more likely to engage with industry placements if they are presented as something aspirational. Students buy in to the idea of a placement if it is a quality placement and somewhere they would aspire to work. A detailed job description and stressing positive outcomes, such as the

T-LEVELS

placement potentially leading to employment or an apprenticeship are also highly beneficial. Not giving a student plenty of detail about the placement can lead to student disengagement. Sharing written and digital case study examples can be a powerful way of leveraging engagement. Some advantages of an industry placement include:

- Offer students hands-on practical experience of their chosen industry
- Help students develop as a person (e.g. confidence)
- Open up doors, giving students experience and connections
- Give employers access to top talent and are a solution to the skills gap
- Provide a route into higher level apprenticeships
- Gives students a competitive edge – applications and personal statements

For more advantages of industry placements, please see pages 10-11.

Self-sourcing

Where possible, it's highly beneficial for students to source their own placements – the placement will then be something they're interested in at a company they would like to work at. The placement is less likely to break down if the student has sourced their own placement. Please refer to the how to [find your own industry placement](#) guidance resource for more information.

PARENT/GUARDIAN ENGAGEMENT

Education providers have found that it is important to engage parents and guardians in the right way. Some parents have objected initially to industry placements on the grounds that it is unpaid labour. Providers have sought to address this by **highlighting the benefits** of a placement in terms of extra technical experience, developing essential skills and the fact that many placements lead to paid job offers and apprenticeships. See the next section for a list of further benefits to highlight to parents/guardians.

Tips for engaging parents and guardians

- Providers have found it really useful to have a full job specification they can share with parents and guardians, as well as information on the timings of the placement days, exactly where the placement is etc.

T-LEVELS

- Share as much detail as possible, so the parent or guardian knows their child will be safe, but also what they'll get out of the placement, including the SMART targets linked with their course and what they'll actually be doing at the employer.
- Reassure parents and guardians about the support students will receive during the placement - highlight the regular contact with provider staff, including mid and end point reviews, regular catch ups on the phone and what safeguarding procedures are in place, including a named member of staff to contact if they have concerns.
- Some providers also get parents and guardians to sign the employer / provider / student industry placement agreement so all parties know what to expect and feel involved. Agreeing targets and outlining the student's roles and responsibilities whilst on placement can highlight why doing an industry placement is so valuable.
- Parents and guardians can also be a source of industry placements - they may be involved in relevant sectors or have contacts who are. If you can involve them in the establishment of the placements, they're likely to be more comfortable with them.
- If parents of students who have done industry placements can take part in case studies or speak at launch events, this can also be persuasive.

"We would definitely take an industry placement student again, even if they were half as committed as Naomi, they would still be good... It's very refreshing and inspiring to be able to help in giving someone this opportunity. Naomi has gone on to do a degree now and she might be interested in doing some research at the end of her degree. It would be great to know we have contributed in some way to her development." (Dr Peter Sarkies, Head of Epigenetic Inheritance & Evolution Group, LMS)

Launch events

To maximise engagement, providers recommend running a **launch event/ information evening** for parents and guardians and students to explain the benefits and positive outcomes of industry placements.

It's always helpful to point to success stories at these events and even better to bring it all to life with students from the previous year's placement describing their experience and how it has benefited them - a fellow student probably has even more credibility than even a tutor or member of curriculum staff.

T-LEVELS

It is highly recommended to have host employers at the launch event, to talk about the benefits of industry placements and their experience of hosting students. This should help make placements aspirational in the eyes of students and their parents and guardians, as well as provide reassurance. If an employer can highlight why they have been involved, this can demonstrate that industry placements aren't just 'free labour'. Putting together case studies with your employer partners can be highly beneficial, particularly if they can highlight the fact that the placement is course specific and that the theory learned in the classroom and the practical experience gained on placement go hand in hand.

Using employer connections to engage students

An effective way of engaging students to go on an industry placement is by using the employer to help 'sell the placement'. One provider pitched digital industry placements at the local city council to students but didn't get much interest. The industry placement coordinator arranged a visit to take a group of students to the council to have a tour and meet the staff, after which 5 students applied for the placement. Alternatively, you could get employers to visit to speak with students about their sector or their firm specifically. If this is logistically hard to arrange, set up a video conference.

"Our model is to progress our employees internally. Industry placements are the perfect opportunity to do this - to get fresh, raw talent into the business, giving them exposure to us our business and to put into practice what they learn in the classroom" (Laura Ennion, Talent Coordinator, Horwich Farrelley)

T-LEVELS



BENEFITS OF INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS FOR STUDENTS

It goes without saying that enthusiasm from staff and tutors goes a long way to encouraging students and parents that industry placements are a unique opportunity and a valuable addition to their course. Some of the benefits of a placement include an opportunity for the student to:

- Be part of a new and exciting opportunity. Industry placements are aspirational - a T level will be equivalent to 3 A-Levels and the placement is a key part of that. Experiences of work give young people a competitive advantage - about 80% of employers think work experience is essential and two-thirds of employers would be more likely to hire a young person with work experience over someone with none. (Source: Gatsby Benchmarks)
- Build and develop their technical skills, increasing their competence and ability to progress into skilled employment.
- Develop their employability "soft skills" such as communicating, adapting to change, teamwork and problem solving.
- Increase confidence and take that confidence back into the classroom - an industry placement actually helps with the academic side of the course, particularly for people who don't learn best in a classroom.

T-LEVELS

- Gain a deeper knowledge of the running of a business and understanding of how it responds to change as well as commercial principles generally.
- Gain a much deeper understanding of the sector they're doing the placement in as well as an understanding of what jobs are available in that sector and what those roles entail.
- Secure a job or an apprenticeship with the employer following the end of the industry placement and upon completion of their course.
- Receive a fuller, more meaningful employer character reference that will help in applying for future job roles or higher education. Whatever their path in life, an industry placement can help them stand out.
- Network and connect with other organisations linked to the industry placement that will help in identifying future job roles.
- Experience personal growth: to develop self-reliance, step outside their comfort zone, build confidence and learn about themselves to identify their strengths and preferences for future career options.

See Appendix 1 for a suggested **draft letter** that could be sent to parents to introduce and explain industry placements.

OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS FROM STUDENTS AND THEIR PARENTS

Bringing in any significant change should be managed carefully and is likely to be met with a range of responses. This section draws on lessons learned from education providers to help you prepare for and pre-empt common objections or disengagement from students or their parents/guardians with regards to undertaking industry placements.

Staff should be encouraged to take a coaching approach involving active listening, asking open questions to get to the root of the objection, reflecting back and showing understanding. This is likely to be conducive to co-creating a practical plan to address practical obstacles and emotional concerns upfront.

T-LEVELS

OBJECTION HANDLING - LEARNINGS

The following are real examples of issues which arose together with how the education provider dealt with and/or intends to resolve each scenario going forward:

Issue	Suggested solutions
<p>Student disengagement on certain courses</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students on courses which are more likely to lead to university (such as Applied Science) seem less motivated to complete placements. This may be because they prioritise successful completion of studies, university applications, interviews and entry exams. • Business students can be less engaged due to their course being very broad in nature so some may not know which area they want to go into. • Some students felt that related work experience had already been completed. • Some students' future career aspirations can differ from the course that they are studying or result in very specific requests for placements. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly communicate the benefits of industry placements and share success stories. • Emphasise to students and parents that a good way to ensure students are interested is to source their own placement. • Ensure the industry placement is closely linked to the student's interests and field of study. • Encourage Business Admin students to research and narrow down the type of organisation they are interested in and recognise the value of a placement for whatever field they may choose to go into. • Make it clear that although not all students will get their first choice of placement, there are significant benefits to be derived from all relevant placements.
<p>Student withdrawal before placement start</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A couple of students were adamant that they 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making the placement a requirement of the course will enable providers to be tougher about participation.



T-LEVELS

<p>didn't want to undertake a placement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General fears of entering workplace, including not being up to standards expected by employers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensuring students are aware of the industry placement requirement before enrolment will help to set this expectation. • Comprehensive training and preparation should also help reduce student fears of not meeting employer expectations. • Additional support from relevant staff, such as arranging pre-meetings between the employer and the student or accompanying students to practise the commute to employers before placement can ease anxiety of travelling (for student and parents/guardians).
<p>Employer withdrawals</p> <p>There is a proportionately higher number of employer withdrawals in certain courses which is consistent across education providers, e.g. Engineering (Motor Vehicle) and I.T.</p> <p>The reasons for this and more generally seem to relate to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor student behaviour, attitude and understanding of what is expected in the workplace. • Lack of social/teamwork skills, student preferring to work alone. • Not enough work to keep student engaged for full placement. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional rigour, planning and training needed in student preparation, starting from the first year of the course. • Comprehensive training and preparation should also help reduce student fears of not meeting employer expectations. • Provider needs to maintain standards for quality industry placements and should work with employers to help them understand examples of what does/does not amount to engaging and appropriate work for the student. • Maintain regular communication with employers on matters

T-LEVELS

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-attendance by students or actively telling employer they didn't need to come any more. • Lack of communication between employer and education provider. 	<p>around attendance and behaviour. Step in and resolve issues promptly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a system of monitoring student attendance such as time sheets which need to be signed off by the employer and submitted back to the you. • Alternative option suggested by one employer is an app to enable the student to register when they arrive at work and for the employer to confirm attendance and report behaviour issues.
<p>Practical barriers to accepting placements</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing work/finances: students already have paid work alongside their studies as essential income. • Extra expenses: Students may not be able to afford extra subsistence and commuting costs to the placement. • Responsibilities: Students who are parents don't have the flexibility to juggle their placement days into the weekends and evenings. • Travel: Some students are not confident to travel into the centre of a big city and use transport alone • Study time: Students already dedicate spare time to coursework/exam revision for course. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In certain cases, the paid work may qualify as an industry placement. See guidance on page 6 where this is allowable. • Employer may offer free lunch or reimburse travel costs. • For institutions that are delivering industry placements in the 2019 to 2020 academic year through the CDF, this funding can be used to cover travel and subsistence costs, as well as additional 16 to 19 Bursary funding that is being made available. • Placement structure may need to be configured to fit with student's existing family/study commitments, e.g. less time per week for a longer overall duration. • It is important to remain responsive and flexible.



T-LEVELS

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accompanying students to practise the commute to employers before placement can ease anxiety of travelling (for student and parents).
<p>Unsupportive parents</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some placements are not being completed or students are withdrawing due to parents not supporting the programme. A few parents see it as free labour and are not happy with the travel arrangements (e.g. too far, unsafe). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold a launch event/parents evening at the start of the programme to get parents involved, engaged and aware of the benefits. • Encourage parents to think of possible placements in their own networks.

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

We know that many education providers have considerable experience of supporting students with SEND and LLDD. This section shares some feedback and lessons learned from education providers to help you secure quality, supported industry placements for your SEND and LLDD students. Please refer to the [SEND guidance resource](#) which goes into this topic in a lot more detail.

It is worth highlighting that a provider's on-site facilities can now be used for students with special educational needs or disabilities for up to 105 hours of the placement, where they are occupationally relevant to the student's field of study, to help students build up their confidence and work skills. This must be in the best interests of the student and carefully aligned to their learning and development objectives.

T-LEVELS

A key learning for education providers 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/carers of the student;
- An individually designed student preparation programme to be designed and delivered to meet the needs 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 - a job coach will work with a student on a day to day, individual basis within the workplace. They 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.

VIDEO CASE STUDY

This [video](#) from a city-based education provider helps bring to life an example of a successful supported internship in a leisure centre café. It includes a job coach and other measures that could be applied to industry placements.

"It's hard for people with disabilities to access work because of barriers. Being in a wheelchair I couldn't even see over the scanner, but Walsall Housing Group are really supportive and I can ask for anything I need. I've found the placement really manageable on top of my studies. Learning about theory and practical office skills and overcoming difficulties has given me a sense of what the future could be. Industry placements help to make it possible for more people like myself to find employment." (Kiran, Industry Placement Student)

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 help students with SEND or LLDD 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 they may have and make sure they are comfortable with the details of the placement, safety and levels of support in place.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR A SUPPORTED AND ACCESSIBLE INDUSTRY PLACEMENT

Support from the education provider, workplace mentor and job coach

Students with SEND/LLDD will need different levels and types of support depending on their individual needs. 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 to prepare for or during their industry placement. You 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 look

T-LEVELS

at how to support students with SEND/LLDD in the workplace). A provider's on-site facilities can now be used for students with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) for up to 105 hours where they are occupationally relevant to the student's field of study.

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.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER RESOURCES

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

- [British Association for Supported Employment \(BASE\)](#)

T-LEVELS

- [Education and Training Foundation - SEND: Sources of Support Toolkit](#)
- [United Response](#)
- [DfE Guidance on Supported Internships](#)

APPENDIX 1: DRAFT LETTER FOR PARENTS

Below is a draft initial contact letter for parents/guardians explaining the new T Level qualifications and answers to some commonly asked questions.

[Insert Address]

[Insert Date]

RE: New Industry Placements Scheme for Students

Dear Parent/Guardian,

I write to tell you of a new programme affecting your child/young adult in the [Insert AY] academic year regarding industry placements.

These industry placements will be a core part of qualifications in the future, but we are offering them to students now. They are designed to give students a valuable opportunity to put their learning into practice, develop excellent skills and become more employable. Your child/young adult will spend 315+ hours (on average 45-50 days) working for an employer in a role directly relevant to their course. There are a select group of education providers running industry placements in [Insert AY] and we are among that select group who will provide your child/young adult the opportunity to get ahead of their peers.

What you need to know

- 315 hours minimum in the workplace.
- This is in response to new reforms to technical education and work readiness.
- The placement will be a good fit with the student's course, meaning they will be able to develop the technical skills required to work in that industry.
- Students will have to travel to the employer's premises instead of to college/school during this time. Those



T-LEVELS

eligible for support for expenses such as travel and subsistence will continue to receive it. If your child does not currently receive this support but you are concerned about or unable to cover any additional costs, please let us know.

- The placement for your child/young adult will take place during [Insert term], from the following date [Insert date] for [x] days, over [x weeks].
- It is essential that students complete their placement. This is a vital part of their learning programme and will prepare them for their next step/the workplace.

Benefits of industry placements: for students

Students highlight that industry placements offer:

- A great way to build and develop technical work-related skills
- A valuable source of personal development that helped them improve communication, problem solving and management skills - making them more aware of the behaviours expected at work and thus making them more employable
- A useful opportunity to gain a deeper knowledge of the running of a business and to understand how it responds to change, as well as general commercial principles
- A useful way of building a valuable working relationship with an employer, resulting in a fuller and more meaningful employer reference to use for future employment
- A valuable addition to their cv to increase employability
- Better understanding of the nature of the work they are interested in pursuing
- Further development of course based learning in a practical work environment
- Involvement in an industry placement should make a significant difference to a student's employment prospects. It will do this by supporting them to gain valuable technical and 'soft skills' that will improve their employment prospects.

The benefits of doing a placement are outlined in DfE approved written and video case studies which can be found [here](#) and [here](#). [Or include a link to your own website/social media if you are using examples]

T-LEVELS

Frequently asked questions (FAQs)

1. My child/young adult hasn't had a good experience with work experience in the past - why would industry placements be any different?

Traditional work experience involves a student working for just 1 or 2 weeks and are often not placed within a role or business that is relevant to their studies and interest. The new industry placements will be for a minimum of 315 hours (on average 45-50 days) with students placed within businesses that are relevant to their courses, meaning they will be able to develop and hone the skills they really need.

2. Will my child/young adult be making the tea and photocopying?

No. Industry placements are a big step above work experience. Students will be given relevant tasks to gain the experience they need to make a start in their career. It will be related to their course of study and help them gain valuable experience and develop the skills they need to progress.

3. But won't this take them away from their studies?

No - the industry placement will be planned to fit well with their studies so they will be prepared for the placement and it will add real value to their course. Our senior management, curriculum leads and tutors have worked closely with the Department for Education to ensure this is the case.

4. How can I be sure they will receive a good placement?

We will match your child with an employer that is directly relevant to their course. We will ensure that the employer has relevant work and provides a good standard of line management so the student can receive the coaching and support needed to learn and work well. The student will have the opportunity to provide us with a list of their preferred employers they would most like to be placed with. This will be done in good time before the industry placement.

5. What about their part-time job?

We will provide plenty of notice regarding when the industry placement will take place to allow the student to change shifts if needed.

6. What does my child/young adult need to do?

- They must attend the placement.
- They will be accountable to a line manager at the business who will expect them to meet standards in areas such as professionalism, time-keeping, communication and teamwork.

T-LEVELS

- They must adhere to all health and safety rules at the business.
- They need to complete a log book during the placement, reflecting on their learning and development.

7. What checks will be done to make sure this is safe?

We will run due diligence on all employers for health and safety, insurance and safeguarding purposes.

8. Why industry placements?

The Department for Education is making a number of reforms to Technical Education in order to ensure that students leave their course with "the skills, knowledge and expertise that employers want". These reforms will introduce T Levels - two-year, classroom-based technical training programmes, which will provide a high-quality option alongside traditional A level options.

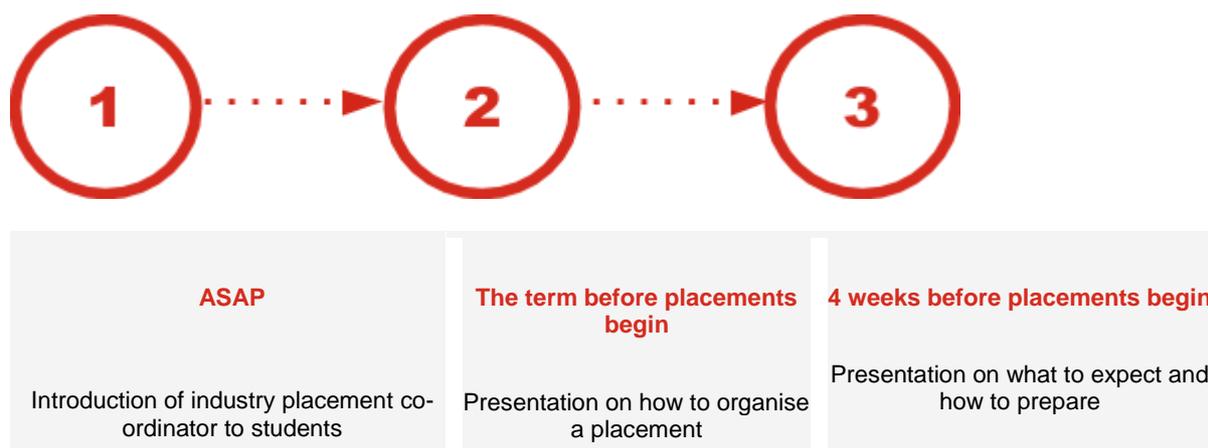
For more information speak to [Insert name and position of relevant contact].

Yours Sincerely, [Insert Name of Tutor/ Senior Staff Member]

T-LEVELS

APPENDIX 2: SUGGESTED COMMUNICATION AND TIMELINE

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



Short introduction of the industry placement co-ordinator by course manager as soon as possible.

Confirm that students are aware that they will undertake an industry placement as part of their study programme. If at all possible, make students aware the year before they start placement. It's a good idea to use case studies to highlight successes and the aspirational nature of industry placements.

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 315 hours (an average of 45-50 days), if different models are available. Note that industry placements are best arranged within reasonable distance of the student's home so that transport is convenient.

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

T-LEVELS

and businesses that will help them identify a future career pathway.

Case studies

Outline 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.

Examples of good placements

Outline features that make a good placement. Note importance of being switched on to health and safety, outlining both the employer's responsibility and the student's responsibility.

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 above on supporting students with SEND or LLDD and the [Guide to SEND for industry placements guidance resource](#) for more detail.

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 [Empowering students to self-source industry placements](#). 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

T-LEVELS

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 and Safety, Insurance and Safeguarding Guidance](#) for more information on this topic.

Financial arrangements for travel and subsistence.

In some placements, students may receive payment or expenses. Where industry placements are unpaid, Capacity and Delivery Funding and 16-19 Bursary Funding to help towards travel and other costs could be used to cover expenses.

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 a minimum of 315 hours (45 - 50 days on average);
- Meeting quality assurance standards in terms of health and safety, safeguarding, insurance etc;
- Involving appropriately challenging work and occupationally-specific learning objectives which are agreed between the education provider, student and employer; and
- 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 in academic year 2018 to 2019 or their funding from the Capacity and Delivery Fund to support students.

T-LEVELS

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 specific objectives.

Importance of making a good impression and how to build a good relationship

Cover aspects such as dress, attendance, punctuality, language.

Tips on ["How to get 100% organised for day one"](#).

Reminder of awareness of safeguarding risks

Highlight safeguarding policies, procedures and contact numbers.

Awareness of legislation around hours worked

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 point 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.

See also separate guidance [**How to prepare students for industry placements.**](#)



T-LEVELS

THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

Industry placements are a core part of the new T Level courses. The first T Levels start September 2020. Visit www.gov.uk/dfe/t-levels.

Learning providers can make enquiries regarding industry placements by using this [online enquiry form](#) to contact the Education & Skills Funding Agency or you can speak to your local ESFA team.

