BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEERING

What a Building Services Engineering for Construction T Level Student could bring to your organisation during an industry placement

T Level students are still learning. They are not expected to arrive with the confidence, technical skills or independence of an experienced employee or apprentice.

Instead, the placement is an opportunity for them to gradually build their confidence and understanding through real tasks, with support and supervision.

For many employers, these students bring enthusiasm, reliability and an extra pair of hands for routine tasks and projects. They can support day-to-day activity, contribute to smaller tasks and help your business identify future talent.

Every student and every workplace is different, but these examples provide an indication of the kinds of activities, support and progression that are typical.

Many employers tell us that what matters most at the start is not technical ability, but attitude, reliability, willingness to learn and the confidence to ask questions.

Think of this student as someone who is:

- keen to learn
- interested in your business
- still building confidence
- likely to need support and reassurance at first
- capable of much more by the end of the placement than at the beginning

Meet a typical student

Liam Morris is 16 and in the first year of his T Level in Building Services Engineering.

He is interested in electrical installation and enjoys practical tasks, but has not had much previous experience of a workplace.

He is polite, reliable and willing to learn. He can be quite quiet at first and may need encouragement to ask questions or speak up. Like many 16-year-olds, he is still developing confidence and may sometimes need reminders about things like timekeeping, asking questions or taking initiative.

At college, he has learned about health and safety, tools, simple drawings and basic installation tasks. He is keen to understand what a real site is like and build his confidence.

What students are likely to know already

Before starting a placement, most students are likely to have developed some knowledge and experience through their T Level course and practical activities in school or college.

This will include:

- an understanding of basic health and safety requirements
- some awareness of site rules, PPE and the importance of following instructions
- experience of working safely in a workshop environment
- some knowledge of electrical systems, tools and materials
- experience of reading simple drawings and instructions
- an understanding of why accuracy, safety and teamwork are important

What students are likely to be ready for

Students are not expected to be fully work-ready from day one. However, most will be able to contribute to a range of activities and gradually take on more responsibility over time.

At the start of the placement	With support and supervision	By the end of the placement
Follow PPE and site safety requirements	Support simple installation or preparation tasks	Carry out simple routine tasks more confidently
Observe work, follow site rules and ask questions	Help prepare materials, tools, equipment or job information	Support routine preparation or site activity more confidently
Read simple drawings and instructions	Assist with cable preparation or simple paperwork	Work more confidently from plans and instructions
Complete simple, low-risk tasks	Record information and communicate with staff	Show greater confidence and reliability

Example tasks and projects
The kinds of activities below are examples of the ways a student could contribute to your organisation during a placement.

Students may support a mixture of site-based, preparation and organisational tasks alongside experienced staff.

Around the site or workshop

- helping prepare vans, tools, materials or equipment before jobs
- supporting stores, stock checks and deliveries
- helping keep work areas safe, organised and tidy
- helping identify and organise materials, fittings or components
- observing how staff approach safe working, testing or fault-finding
- supporting simple site records, paperwork or job sheets

Supporting engineers or installers

- observing installation, maintenance or testing work
- helping with cable preparation, labelling or containment preparation
- helping prepare pipework, fittings or materials for jobs
- assisting with simple low-risk preparation tasks under supervision
- accompanying staff to site visits or customer appointments
- recording information and supporting communication between members of the team

Small projects and wider learning

- helping organise a store room, van stock or equipment area
- supporting a small project linked to site organisation, safety or efficiency
- keeping a simple placement diary to record activities, learning and questions
- contributing ideas or observations about safe working and organisation

What a first week might look like

The first few days of a placement are often about helping the student settle in, build confidence and understand how your organisation works.

Many employers find it works best to start slowly, focusing on observation, safe working and helping the student understand site routines before introducing more practical tasks.

This might include:

- introduction to site access, PPE, card requirements and any limits on what the student can do
- being paired with a named person or mentor for questions and support
- health and safety briefing and introduction to safe working practices
- meeting the team and understanding different roles
- learning how jobs are planned, organised and recorded
- observing work and asking questions
- helping prepare materials, tools and equipment before jobs
- accompanying experienced staff on site visits or jobs
- supporting simple, low-risk tasks alongside an experienced staff member

Some employers may also arrange a short introductory visit before the placement starts, helping the student feel more confident on their first day.

What students are likely to know already

By placements' end, many students work with greater confidence, contribute more independently and take on more responsibility within agreed limits.

For example, they may be able to:

- work more confidently on routine preparation and support tasks
- follow drawings, instructions and site routines more effectively
- understand how different jobs, roles and trades fit together
- prepare tools, materials and work areas with less support
- contribute positively to day-to-day site or workshop activity
- communicate more confidently with staff and customers
- show greater reliability, initiative and understanding of the sector
- reflect on what they have learned about safe working and the jobs realities

What support students may need

Like any new member of staff, students are likely to benefit from some support and guidance, particularly at the start of the placement.

This may include:

- clear explanation of technical language and processes
- clear guidance around site rules, access arrangements and health and safety expectations*
- examples of how documents and systems are used
- opportunities to ask questions
- regular feedback and reassurance
- support to build confidence communicating with new people

* ***The school or college will discuss and agree any site access, PPE, CSCS/card requirements and site induction arrangements with you before the student attends site.***

- The level of support needed should reduce over time as the student becomes more familiar with the workplace, the team and the tasks they are being asked to complete.

A quick reality check

It is important to remember that students are still learning. At the beginning of the placement, they are unlikely to be ready to:

- work on live systems independently
- use tools without instruction and supervision
- make technical decisions alone
- work unsupervised on site
- take responsibility for high-risk tasks
- How this could link to an apprenticeship or future job

How this could link to an apprenticeship, university or future job

For many employers, a T Level placement can be the start of a longer-term talent pipeline.

It may help a student progress into:

- an electrical installation apprenticeship
- a plumbing and domestic heating technician apprenticeship
- a building services engineering apprenticeship
- a site support or trainee role
- further study in construction, building services or engineering
- university study linked to construction management, building services engineering or the built environment
- employment within construction or building services