



Department
for Education

Post-16 Pathways Update

October 2026

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T Levels Week takes place next week, from 19 to 23 October 2026, and we want providers across the country to make it a week to remember! It is your chance to celebrate everything that makes T Levels special, shine a spotlight on your students and staff, and showcase the powerful partnerships you have built with employers.

Join in and show what T Levels can do. Share an inspiring learner journey, celebrate a brilliant industry placement, thank an employer partner, spotlight your teaching team or host an event in your local community. However you choose to take part, help us fill the week with real stories, proud moments and great examples of technical education in action. **Download the T Levels Week toolkit** for ready-to-use promotional assets, social media resources, themed badges and online meeting backgrounds, then share your activity using #TLevelsWeek.

Make T Levels Week your own

- Celebrate your students: share learner stories, achievements, destinations and memorable moments from their T Level journey.
- Bring industry placements to life: feature the skills students have developed, the projects they have contributed to and the employers who have supported them.
- Open your doors: organise a showcase, taster session, employer panel, careers event or campus tour for prospective students, parents and local partners.
- Put your people in the spotlight: recognise the teachers, support staff and employer partners who make T Levels possible.
- Take the celebration online: use photos, short videos, quotes, blogs and social media takeovers to tell your T Level story throughout the week.

Suggested focus for each day – feel free to use your own!

- **Monday 19 October** – Motivation Monday: showcase the impact of T Levels through data, insights and key benefits.
- **Tuesday 20 October** – Trailblazers Tuesday: highlight where T Levels can lead, from skilled employment and apprenticeships to higher education.
- **Wednesday 21 October** – Workplace Wednesday: celebrate employers and the value of industry placements in developing future talent.
- **Thursday 22 October** – Thriving Thursday: hear directly from students and graduates about their T Level journeys and achievements.
- **Friday 23 October** – Future Friday: look ahead to the future of vocational and technical education and how T Levels will continue to sit within the evolving qualifications landscape.

Let's make T Levels Week impossible to miss. Join providers across the country in celebrating technical education, inspiring future learners and showing employers how they can get involved.

As we celebrate T Levels Week, we're also excited to share that details of two new T Levels planned for first teach in September 2028 will be published on GOV.UK:

- Sport, Physical Activity & Health T Level
- Social Care T Level

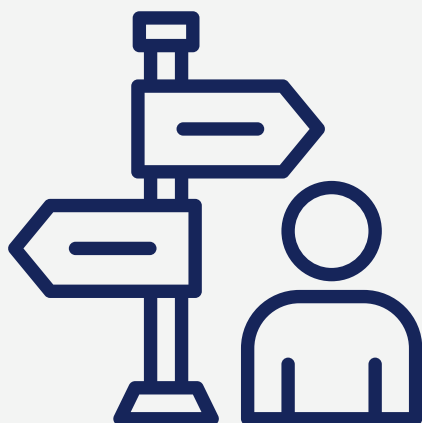
These new qualifications will broaden the T Level offer and support more students to access high-quality technical education that prepares them for progression into employment, apprenticeships and higher-level study.

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How we are approaching Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG)

How are you preparing students, parents, employers and staff for the 2027 changes?



Students and Parents

- Early communication through school engagement activities (assemblies, careers/SEND fairs and work-related learning activity- Y8-Y11).
- Website and Open Evening materials updated to reflect the 2027 curriculum offer **Courses – Thomas Rotherham College**
- Prospectus integrating information from DfE CEIAG materials **J9507-TRC-Guide-2027_28-WEB.pdf**
- Planned promotion linked to T Level Week.

Employer and Education Partners



- Engagement to build on existing stakeholder connections for work-related learning and staff industry insight (V and T Levels).
- Development of place-based partnerships through civic and education networks to source T Level Business Management and Sport, Leisure and Exercise industry placements, and to support the scaling of Health placements.
- Messaging focused on employer pipelines, benefits (including ESG Goals) and workplace behaviours and skills, alongside clear asks and timelines.
- Sharing the Implementation Plan with University partners and discussing progression.



Staff

- Curriculum reform identified as a Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) priority and standing agenda item at meetings.
- Cross-team meetings (including SEND colleagues), supported by a standardised FAQ document to ensure consistent responses to enquiries.
- Subject panel representation.
- Flexible CPD via one disaggregated INSET day.
- Clear programme-level ownership, with new T Level Pathway Leadership roles and responsibilities established one year prior to implementation.
- Direct support to subject teams from the careers team with partnerships for work-related learning, progression map planning and Industry Placements.





How we are approaching Careers Education Information Advice and Guidance (CEIAG) (continued...)

From your experience, which CEIAG messages are resonating most strongly with students, and why?

- Students respond best when discussions start with programmes and progression pathways rather than qualification reform itself. The phased approach to implementation can be confusing for students, particularly where qualifications are changing at different times.
- Promotion of industry placements and work-related learning appears to be a strong engagement point and a way of explaining the differences between courses rather than the qualification type.
- Familiar GCSE and A Level language (rather than level 2 and level 3 terminology) provides a useful starting point for conversations.

If you were advising a provider that is just beginning its preparations for CEIAG, what are the first three actions you would recommend?

1. *Engage progression and employer partners early.*

Work with feeder schools, universities, HTQ and FE providers, employers and careers partners to establish clear progression routes and messages. Their involvement helps ensure learners, parents and staff can see where programmes lead, provides confidence in the new offer and helps create a shared understanding across the local system.

2. *Ensure the whole organisation understands the curriculum offer and qualification changes.*

Build understanding beyond curriculum teams. Admissions, SEND, careers, marketing, subject staff and senior leaders all need a clear understanding of the new offer, progression routes and key learner messages. Refresh marketing materials and learner-facing information early so communication is consistent.

3. *Focus CEIAG on progression rather than qualifications.*

Start conversations with destinations, opportunities and learner aspirations rather than qualification reform. In our experience, progression pathways, work-related learning and industry placements resonate more strongly with learners than discussions about qualification structures.



CONTACT US

VISIT our provider webpages.

STAY INFORMED by signing up to our mailing list and share this link with colleagues so that they are up-to-date with news and information about qualifications reform.

CONTACT US via our email to make suggestions about what you would like to see in future newsletters.

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WATCH AND DOWNLOAD: WORKING TOGETHER TO DELIVER OUR POST-16 REFORMS WEBINAR

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T-LEVELS V LEVELS

On Monday 12 October we held a Ministerial webinar 'Working together to deliver our Post-16 reforms'. The **webinar slides** and **recording** are available now.

UPDATED Post-16 Pathways Implementation plan

Plan ahead with the latest delivery timetable. The updated Post-16 Pathways Implementation Plan sets out the key milestones for introducing V Levels, Foundation Certificates, Occupational Certificates and new T Levels from 2027. It includes the latest information on subject rollout, qualification development, progression routes and changes to existing T Levels, helping providers prepare their curriculum, workforce and learner communications for the transition.

V Level UCAS Tariff Points:

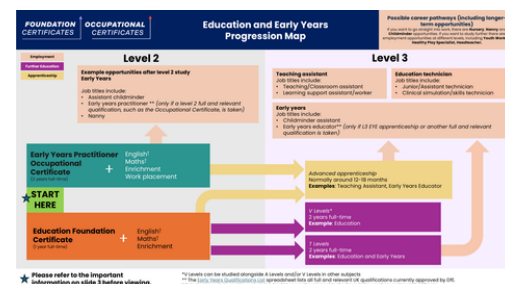
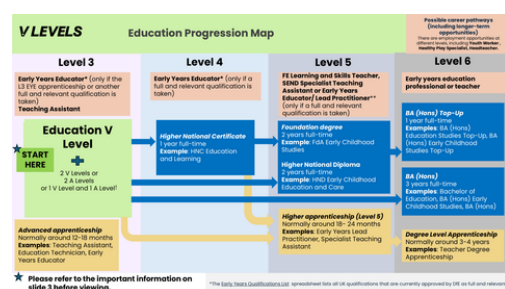
Throughout the consultation and our continued engagement with the sector we heard the importance of confirming the V Level UCAS tariff points in order to support progression. We are pleased to confirm that V Level tariff points, at grades A* to E, will be equal to those of A Levels, as announced by UCAS on 17 September 2026.

Progression Maps published

Help learners see where the new qualifications could take them. New example progression maps are now available for the first subjects being introduced from 2027, giving providers a practical way to bring future study, training and career options to life.

These progression pathways are designed to provide a clear and accessible overview of the opportunities available to learners after completing the first V Levels, Occupational Certificates, or Foundation Certificates. These include routes into further study, higher education, apprenticeships and longer-term careers. Use them in careers conversations, learner and parent engagement, staff briefings and curriculum planning to explain the opportunities each pathway can open up.

Explore the new progression maps and start using them to help learners understand their options, make informed choices and connect their longer term ambitions.



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SIGN UP

EVENTS AND TRAINING



Technical and Vocational Professional Development



Funded by
UK Government

Delivered by



Register on the TVPD platform to book your place and access the full range of events, networks and resources available through the programme.

The Association of Colleges is offering a range of fully funded TVPD events this October to support providers delivering technical and vocational qualifications. Providers are encouraged to register on the TVPD platform to access webinars, networks, resources, and events.:



Upcoming Provider Insight Days – Book via the TVPD Platform

We have places available on our upcoming in-person Provider Insight Days, offering an opportunity to experience technical and vocational education delivery in practice, share insights and learn from other providers.

Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group: Wednesday 21 October 2026
East Kent Colleges Group: Thursday 22 October 2026

To book your place: **Log in to the TVPD Platform**, navigate to the Library and select View Event for your chosen Provider Insight Day. You can then enrol using the booking option at the bottom of the event page

Please share these opportunities with relevant colleagues and teams who may wish to attend.

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EVENTS AND TRAINING

SEND AND INCLUSION IN-HOUSE TRAINING MATERIALS

The government committed to strengthening support for **children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND)**, including the development of high-quality training materials to support post-16 settings and schools.

DfE has now published the first set of **SEND In-House Training Materials**, designed to help settings strengthen inclusive practice, support staff development and reduce the time needed to develop training materials locally. Further materials will be published throughout the academic year.

Many post-16 settings already provide training on SEND and inclusion and these materials have been developed to support that work by providing free, editable resources that leaders can use and adapt within their own setting i.e. for staff development days or staff meetings.

Claire Heywood, Vice Principal at Kidderminster College, who provided feedback on the materials, said:

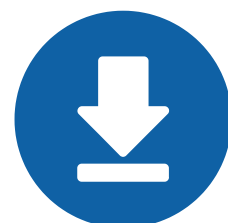
"The strongest feature of these materials is that they place inclusive practice at the heart of high-quality teaching, recognising that meeting the needs of learners with SEND is an integral part of effective teaching and learning. The attention given to vocational and technical learning, learner independence, progression and preparation for adulthood means the resources feel both evidence-informed and genuinely relevant to the further education sector. Crucially, they provide staff with practical approaches and tools that can be readily applied in the classroom and workshops to support the success of all learners."

These free DfE materials have been informed by Education Endowment Foundation (EEF) guidance and developed by Ambition Institute



At a glance:

- **Free SEND and inclusion training materials**
- **Designed for leaders (e.g. head of teacher development or heads of SEND) delivering teaching and support staff development**
- **More materials are coming throughout the year, sign up for updates and to give feedback.**
- **Available – [SEND and Inclusion Training for Post-16 Settings](#)**



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ACTION: DOWNLOAD our UPDATED Post-16 Pathways resource pack

Making the most of the Post-16 Pathways support pack

Get ready for the new post-16 qualifications landscape. Our updated Post-16 Pathways Resource Pack gives education and training providers and careers professionals practical support to prepare for the qualifications being introduced from 2027.

The pack brings together ready-to-use resources to help you brief staff, support curriculum planning and explain the changes clearly to students, parents and carers, employers and other partners. Materials can be adapted for your existing communications, events, outreach and careers guidance.

Download the pack and start using it today. With presentations, planning tools, communications and engagement materials all in one place, it can help your organisation build understanding, encourage informed conversations and share clear, consistent messages about the new pathways and qualifications.

V LEVELS T-LEVELS

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Technical and Vocational Qualifications (TVQ) Resource Pack

Supporting providers and careers development professionals to explain post-16 technical and vocational pathways to staff members, students, parents, employers and others interested in post-16 pathways.



September 2026

POST-16 PATHWAYS

There's more than one way to succeed. Every young person is different and so is their path.



There isn't a best route, only the right one for you.

TECHNICAL AND VOCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS



POST-16 PATHWAYS

Who are V Levels for?

V Levels are ideal for students who:
Want real-world skills without specialising too narrowly.

Are aiming for higher education or work-based training and want applied learning.

Want flexibility while exploring future career options.



V LEVELS

POST-16 PATHWAYS

Available from 2027

V Level: EDUCATION

Ideal for students who want to make a positive difference to learning and development.

What is this course?

A practical qualification that develops knowledge and skills used across education settings from early years through to adult learning.

Skills you'll develop

- Personal communication
- Lesson planning
- Inclusion and learner support
- Critical thinking
- Observation and evaluation
- Reflective practice

You will learn how to:

- Plan, prepare, deliver and assess
- Work with parents, carers and professionals
- Adapt learning to support inclusion
- Assess risks and promote safe learning environments
- Use assessment information to support learner progress

Progression - this qualification can lead to:

- Higher education
- Training
- Apprenticeships
- Pathways into employment in early years and education, other than in a related degree



V LEVELS

POST-16 PATHWAYS

Available from 2027

Foundation Certificate: DIGITAL SYSTEMS AND DATA

Ideal for students who enjoy technology and want a practical introduction to digital skills before progressing to level 3 study.

What is this course?

Are you interested in technology, skills, cyber security and programming? This course introduces the key skills used in today's digital world and helps prepare you for further study at level 3.

Skills you'll develop

- Digital systems theory
- Data interpretation
- Problem-solving
- Communication
- Planning and self-management
- Evaluating and investigating using digital evidence

You will learn how to:

- Work with data in digital context
- Configure and secure digital systems
- Plan and deliver a cyber programme
- Set up hardware and software components and systems
- Research digital information and make evidence-based recommendations

Progression - this qualification can lead to:

- Digital Systems and Data Level 3
- Digital 1 Levels
- Level 3 Computer Science
- Apprenticeships
- Courses in cyber security, software development and data analysis



FOUNDATION CERTIFICATES

What are V Levels?

V Levels are a new flagship vocational qualification that sit alongside A Levels and T Levels. They are designed for students who want vocational learning, real-world skills, and the flexibility to keep their options open. V Levels will be available from 2027.

What can you do with a V Level?
After studying a V Level, a student could progress into related higher education or work-based training, including apprenticeships.



Where do V Levels fit?

V Levels are level 3 qualifications, the same level as A Levels and T Levels.



SUBJECTS AVAILABLE IN 2027:
Accounting and Finance
Digital Systems and Data
Education

AVAILABLE FROM AUGUST 2027

Guide to V Levels

What do V Levels offer?

- A flexible, career-focused alternative at level 3: V Levels are broad, vocational qualifications (the same size as an A Level) that combine applied learning with sector-based knowledge, helping students explore careers without specialising too early.
- Build skills that employers and higher education value: Designed with employers and higher education, V Levels develop practical transferable skills linked to real jobs, supporting strong progression into higher education or work-based training including apprenticeships.
- Clear, high-quality pathways for future success: V Levels can be taken as a full study programme or combined with other qualifications. They are designed so students can progress on successfully as with A Levels, giving clear and flexible routes to their next steps.

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ACTION: DOWNLOAD our Employer resource pack

Employer support pack now available

If you work with employers, or are an employer yourself, our new employer support pack provides a clear overview of the new technical and vocational qualifications being introduced from 2027.

The pack explains how employers can support young people, strengthen their future talent pipeline and engage with local education providers through activities such as industry placements, work experience, mentoring and workplace visits.

We encourage providers, employer representative bodies and stakeholders to share this resource with their employer networks to help raise awareness of the opportunities available and the important role employers can play in developing the skilled workforce of the future.



Technical and Vocational Qualifications (TVQ) for Employers

Resources to support employers to understand post-16 technical and vocational qualification pathways, including:

- V Levels
- Foundation Certificates
- Occupational Certificates
- T Levels
- Apprenticeships



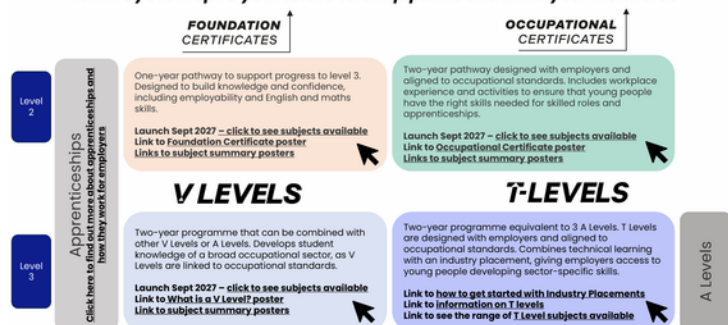
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V LEVELS T-LEVELS

Overview for employers

Pathways to inspire your future talent pipeline and build your workforce



Five ways employers can benefit

- BUILD YOUR WORKFORCE**
 - Access motivated young people studying T Levels and Occupational Certificates to develop skills relevant to your organisation.
 - Gain early access to future talent and reduce recruitment costs and risks.
- STRENGTHEN YOUR FUTURE TALENT PIPELINE**
 - Help students doing V Levels and Foundation Certificates develop employability skills and an understanding of your sector.
 - Improves workforce diversity by widening your recruitment pipeline.
- INSPIRE YOUNG PEOPLE**
 - Raise awareness of careers in your organisation.
 - Help young people understand and get excited about opportunities in your sector.
- BRING IN FRESH THINKING AND FUTURE SKILLS**
 - Gain new perspectives, fresh ideas and up to date skills from young people.
 - Support innovation through projects and workplace activities.
- DEVELOP YOUR STAFF AND NETWORKS**
 - Staff gain experience in supervision, feedback and people development.
 - Strengthen links with education providers, other employers and strategic authorities.
 - Demonstrate commitment to local skills and social mobility.

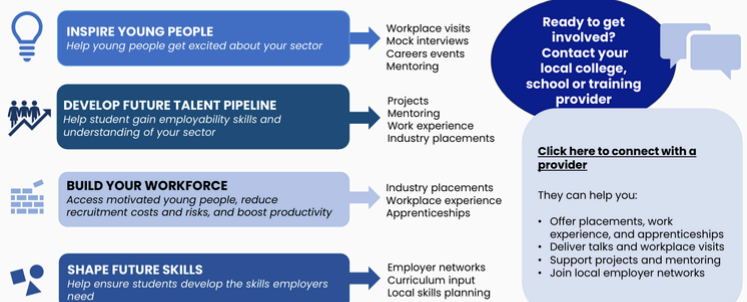
How to get involved

Talk to your local college, school or training provider about:

- ✓ Offering T Level industry placements (flexible delivery options are available) or apprenticeships.
- ✓ Providing work experience opportunities or workplace-based projects.
- ✓ Delivering employer talks or hosting workplace visits to inspire students and raise awareness of career opportunities.
- ✓ Help to shape new qualifications to ensure students develop the skills employers need.
- ✓ Joining local employer networks through your local Chamber of Commerce, Employer Representative Body, or Strategic Authority to support local skills development.
- ✓ Join 1400+ T Level Ambassadors helping strengthen links between employers and education. Find out more – link.

Click to connect with a local training provider

Which employer engagement activity is right for you?



Start with the level of involvement that suits your organisation. Your local provider can help identify the most appropriate pathway and activities.

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THINGS TO DO THIS OCTOBER

Complete the Skills Engagement Survey using the online survey link by 23 October.

The survey gathers provider feedback on qualifications reform, ESOL, the FE workforce, English and maths, Conditions of Funding, T Levels, digital connectivity, and the High Value Course Premium for Construction.

- The survey includes questions on the clarity of the 2026 to 2027 English and maths Conditions of Funding guidance and where further clarification may be needed.
- Feedback will help inform future policy development, guidance, communications, and provider support.
- Providers can use the additional comments section to share feedback that is not covered elsewhere in the survey.

To note:

Use your organisation's UKRLP details when completing the provider information section. Do not include any personally identifiable information in free-text responses. Submit your response through the online survey only.

Prepare for T Level certification

T Level certificates for 2024 start year learners will be printed and posted to your organisation in early November 2026.

Now is the time to ensure your learners industry placement status is correct, learners names are spelt correctly, and we have the correct address for your organisation.

Update your records before 31st October 2026 to ensure delivery of your learners' documents. Find out more [here](#)



Check your T Level data before the R04 and autumn census deadlines – errors cannot be corrected in-year

Use the available guidance and reports to identify and correct errors, including:

- the **Record your T Level data correctly in academic year 2026 to 2027** page which includes a checklist (at the bottom of the page)
- the 16 to 19 funding reports in **FIS**, **SLD** and **COLLECT** to check your T Level students are recorded on the correct T Level programme, have all the required components, and have accurate planned hours recorded to place them in the correct funding bands

Submit your return on or before:

- 4 December 2026 for the R04 return
- 29 October 2026 for autumn school census

Submit early wherever possible. This gives you time to review your data, investigate issues, and make corrections before the deadline.



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READ – FROM T LEVELS TO UNIVERSITY: KEELE'S PROACTIVE APPROACH



Keele have shared their proactive approach, working closely with colleges, students, and sector partners to ensure T Level learners have clear routes into university study.

As T Levels become an increasingly important part of the post-16 education landscape, universities have had to consider how best to support students progressing from these technical qualifications into higher education. At Keele, we have taken a proactive approach, working closely with colleges, students, and sector partners to ensure T Level learners have clear routes into university study.

Responding to a Changing Landscape

Located in Staffordshire, Keele sits within a region that has been at the forefront of T Level delivery. Colleges such as City of Stoke-on-Trent Sixth Form College and Newcastle and Stafford Colleges Group have built strong T Level provision, creating a growing number of students considering university progression. Recognising this early, we worked closely with local providers to understand the opportunities and challenges presented by T Levels and to ensure our policies and support reflected the needs of these students.

Creating Accessible Pathways

One of our first priorities was admissions. We began accepting T Levels on a case-by-case basis in September 2021, but quickly recognised the need for a consistent approach across all subjects. Working with local colleges, we developed a formal framework for T Level entry requirements, which was fully implemented in February 2023.

Alongside this, we invested in staff training to ensure admissions, recruitment and academic colleagues understood the qualification and could confidently advise prospective students. We also developed dedicated outreach activity to help T Level students navigate the UCAS process, explore progression options, and make informed decisions about higher education.

Building Partnerships

Collaboration has been central to our approach. We have hosted networking events for colleges and education leaders, creating opportunities to share best practice and strengthen progression pathways. We have also worked with organisations including the Department for Education and the Association of Colleges, sharing our experiences, and contributing to discussions about the future of T Level progression into higher education.

Delivering Results

The impact of this work can be seen in the growth of T Level applications to Keele. Applications increased from just 10 in the 2022 entry cycle to 86 in 2023, 126 in 2024, 227 in 2025 and 233 for 2026 entry. Offer rates have remained consistently strong, while enrolments have grown from 16 students in 2023 to 40 students in 2025. These figures demonstrate that T Level students can thrive in higher education when universities provide clear progression routes and meaningful support.

Looking Ahead

Our work with T Levels continues to evolve. We remain committed to working closely with colleges, engaging with national partners, and responding to changes in the qualifications landscape. As technical education develops further, including the introduction of new vocational pathways, we will continue creating opportunities to share best practice, strengthen partnerships and ensure students have accessible and ambitious routes into higher education.

Andy Long

Head of UK Student Recruitment and Access

Become a Voice for Technical Education: Join the T Level Ambassador Network

The T Level Ambassador Network (TAN) is inviting passionate providers to step forward and become ambassadors. You can play a key role in raising awareness, strengthening partnerships, and influencing the future of T Levels.

What is the T Level Ambassador Network? – The TAN is a vibrant national and regional community made up of dedicated employers and education providers. Together, they work collaboratively to promote T Levels, share best practice, and build stronger connections between education and industry.

Why become a T Level Provider Ambassador?

Joining TAN as a Provider Ambassador brings a range of professional and organisational benefits, you can:

- Elevate your organisation's profile at both a local and national level
- Build and strengthen relationships with employers and key stakeholders
- Gain access to peer support, learning and sharing with other providers
- Choose your level of involvement, ensuring flexibility to suit your capacity
- Be part of a respected and influential network driving real change

Support to help you succeed

As a T Level Provider Ambassador, you won't be on your own. The network provides a wealth of support and resources designed to help you maximise your impact, including:

- A dedicated Regional Coordinator to guide and support your journey
- Access to practical resources, guidance, and marketing toolkits
- Regular updates and engagement opportunities within the network
- Invitations to exclusive webinars and events
- A digital ambassador badge and access to a LinkedIn support community
- The TAN Mobile App to log your activity and track your impact

Joining the T Level Ambassador Network is more than a professional opportunity, it's a chance to make a meaningful difference in technical education and employer engagement.

Become an ambassador today and help shape the future of T Levels – [**Join the T Level Ambassador Network**](#)

Are you ready to champion technical education and help shape the future workforce?



SIGN UP!



JOIN
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