



Department
for Education

T Level Action Plan 2020

January 2021

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Foreword by the Minister for Apprenticeships and Skills

September 2020 marked a significant milestone in technical education reform in this country. The successful launch of the first 3 T Levels - being delivered by 44 providers across the country - represents the start of a transformation in our technical education system.

These 2-year technical qualifications, which include a 9-week industry placement, will give young people a clear line of sight from their studies to skilled employment or further training. For too long, our technical education system has featured a myriad of qualifications, which have failed to prepare young people for the world of work. T Levels will be a game changer – and I am hugely excited about the potential that they have to transform young people’s lives and progression opportunities.

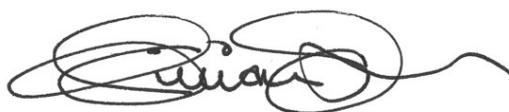
I am tremendously grateful for all the work that providers, employers, awarding organisations and other delivery partners have put into making the first T Levels a reality – a feat made all the more impressive given the challenges that the Covid-19 pandemic has brought to the sector and beyond.

This is just the start. Over the coming years, the rollout of T Levels will continue - by 2023, all 24 T Levels will be available, and the number of providers will have increased. We have approved over 60 providers to deliver from 2021 and over 80 from 2022. We also announced our criteria for 2023 and beyond, which will significantly increase the number of providers and position T Levels as a mainstream option at post-16.

As we progress with the roll out of T Levels, we will continue to work closely with providers, employers, awarding organisations and other partners to support their successful delivery. We have recently announced a support package for 2022 and 2023 T Level providers to aid their preparations for delivery – this will be supported by national communications activity to continue raising awareness of T Levels, with the latest burst having started in November 2020.

As a former apprentice, I know first-hand how life changing technical education can be, and the impact that completing a high-quality industry placement can have on setting learners on their chosen career path and building the skills they need to succeed. In these most unprecedented of times, T Levels will be even more vital for young people, the economy and businesses.

That is why I am so excited about T Levels. And it is a testament to the work of all our partners that the first T Levels were launched in 2020. I look forward to continuing the T Level journey and working with all of you to ensure the new qualifications are a success.



Gillian Keegan MP

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills

Summary

This publication is the fourth T Level Action Plan that the Department for Education has published, and it provides an update on implementation for individuals and organisations interested in T Levels. It gives information on the delivery of the first 3 T Levels in September 2020, and on our continued work with a range of delivery partners towards the full rollout of T Levels. It also provides an update on progress with wider qualification reviews.

Who is this publication for?

This 2020 action plan is for:

- Industry, employers and their representative bodies
- Further and higher education providers, training providers, and their representative bodies
- School leaders, school staff and governing bodies in all maintained schools, academies, free schools, studio schools and University Technical Colleges.
- Local authorities, Local Enterprise Partnerships, Mayoral Combined Authorities, Skills Advisory Panels, and other local partners.

Main points

This action plan includes information on:

- The launch of the first three T Levels in September 2020
- Continuing preparations for delivery in 2021 and 2022
- Update on the rollout of T Level routes and pathways
- Eligibility criteria and how to register for T Level delivery in 2023 and beyond
- Support packages available to T Level Providers and Employers
- Progress with the Level 3 Qualifications Review and Higher Technical Qualifications

The Technical Education Reforms

This fourth T Level Action Plan follows those published [in 2017, 2018 and 2019](#) which provided updates on our progress with the development and implementation of T Levels since the publication of the 2016 Post-16 Skills Plan. The 2020 Action Plan marks the launch of T Levels this September and provides updates on the remaining T Level development areas – including the wider qualifications review - as we work towards the full national rollout of T Levels.

The Skills Plan committed to the implementation of all of the recommendations of the Independent Panel on Technical Education (the Sainsbury Report) to introduce a new system of technical education to provide a high-quality technical option alongside an academic option for students aged 16-19. The introduction of T Levels is central to this ambition. T Levels are new, high-quality, 2-year technical programmes for young people aged 16-19. T Levels will sit alongside apprenticeships as one half of a technical education offer, and will equip students with the practical skills, knowledge and behaviours necessary to get a head start in skilled employment or progress to further study, including higher technical qualifications, higher and degree apprenticeships, and technical degrees.

We and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education have continued to work with employers, FE providers, awarding organisations, Ofqual and other partners to progress the development of T Levels. We have made significant progress over the past year and reached a key milestone in September 2020 with the launch of the first three T Levels, which are being delivered by 44 providers across the country. 33 providers have also launched their own T Level Transition Programme to support young people who would benefit from some additional support before starting a T Level.

We have continued to make significant progress on key areas alongside the launch of the first T Levels. In the past year we have announced that over 80 providers will deliver T Levels from September 2022, as well as setting out our criteria for providers to deliver in 2023 and 2024 – which will significantly increase the coverage of T Levels across the country. We have continued to support teachers and leaders in the development of T Levels through the investment of a further £15 million in the T Level Professional Development offer (TLPD) and a further [£10 million to expand the Taking Teaching Further programme](#) which aims to recruit and train industry experts to teach in the FE sector. We published extensive industry placement guidance to support providers in June, and in October, the Institute announced which awarding organisations will develop the six T Levels to be delivered in 2022.

We are hugely grateful to all our partners for their effort and enthusiasm in making the delivery of T Levels a reality – even in the face of the most testing of circumstances brought on by a global pandemic. We look forward to continuing to work in partnership as we build on the delivery of the first T Levels and progress with the full rollout of T Levels.

Rollout of T Levels

We are introducing T Levels in phases. The first 3 T Levels were launched in September 2020 and our aim is to have all 24 T Levels available from September 2023. Our original aim was to develop 25 T Levels but the Institute, in collaboration with employers, determined that the T Level in Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions should not be developed, as other T Levels would provide a better route into the industry. This decision presents students with a wider range of options, rather than a specific T Level in this area.

The Launch of the first T Levels in September 2020

We are delighted that the first T Levels were launched in September 2020. Reaching this milestone – in the face of a global pandemic - was only made possible by the excellent work of all our delivery partners, for which we are extremely grateful. The following T Levels are now live:

Digital Route	Digital Production, Design and Development T Level
Construction Route	Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction T Level
Education and Childcare Route	Education and Childcare T Level

Providers and students have been incredibly enthusiastic about the T Level journey they are undertaking. It is early in the academic year, but we are already seeing brilliant examples of what providers are offering as part of their T Level courses, including:

La Retraite Roman Catholic Girls School, London:

Students completing the Digital Production, Design and Development T Level at La Retraite in London have taken part in a hackathon event with the Railway Delivery Group. Teams of students worked on ideas to improve the services offered to the growing numbers of rail passengers and presented their ideas to a panel of judges in an online conference. The students displayed very impressive collaboration and presentation skills.

Students have also completed a skill-based workshop with a careers services organisation. This covered a range of activities aiming to give students the vital skills needed in preparing for their T Level industry placements taking place next year – including teamwork and leadership, and building their confidence ahead of entering the workplace.

Havant and South Downs College:

Students have started paediatric first aid training as part of the Education and Childcare T Level. And on the Digital Production, Design and Development T Level, students are already working collaboratively to develop their understanding of Agile methods used in software development.



Truro and Penwith College:

Students have completed their first practical T Level lessons – including using laser and optical levels and recording their findings as part as part of their case study in surveying.



We have also heard from a number of students who are hugely excited about their chosen T Level course, including these students from Strode College:

Jake, who is studying the T Level in Digital Production, Design and Development, said:

“I am really enjoying this course. It focuses on the subjects which I want to develop and expand into a future career. The way the course is taught, giving us freedom to study, also makes me feel more like an adult.”

Jake plans to study software development at university after completing the course.



Olivia, who is studying the Education and Childcare T Level, said:

“I have particularly enjoyed all of the support I have received from all of the teachers, as they have all encouraged me to work hard and be the best version of myself. The course content is varied and balanced, and the College facilities are really good, which is so important when studying a practical based course.”

Olivia plans to study a degree in Early Years Development at Norland College after completing the course.

Aaron, who is studying the T Level in Education and Childcare said:

“I chose to study the T level in Education as I felt it was a good progression route for me. This course will enable me to support children and give them the opportunity to succeed. I really enjoy the work placement part of the course. I am learning many skills at the placement which makes it very rewarding. My teacher and the Learning Support Assistants at Strode are really supportive.”

Aaron plans to seek employment as a teaching assistant after completing the course.



Pupils from Barnsley College, where the first 3 T Levels are being delivered, are also thoroughly enjoying their new courses:

Levi, who is studying the Digital Production, Design and Development T Level, said:

“Since starting the Digital T-Level, I feel supported by the computing staff. They are friendly, helpful and always approachable for anything I need to know. I feel I can ask questions and I am learning new skills and knowledge that I can use in the workplace and put into context for my future career.

The building I study in feels brand new and I am using PCs that are better than my computer at home. There is all the software I need available to me and even some that I have not yet used.”

Jorja, who studying the T Level in Education and Childcare, said:

“In initial lessons we have been doing exercises to further our understanding of childcare and to compare the different childcare provisions. I really enjoy working with the class and other students, and my tutor is really supportive. I chose to study a T Level because I wanted to be able to do a placement and work closely with children. I also wanted to challenge myself. I’m really looking forward to the rest of the year. I want to go to university because I want a career where I can work closely with children that have SEN and those with autism and ADHD.”

Kacey, who is studying the Childcare and Education T Level, said:

“I enjoy learning about the different types of education, such as the EYF and the different types of careers that studying Childcare can lead to. I also enjoy the research tasks that we are set as they allow me to learn more about the course and let me be creative. I would like to become a primary school teacher and the placement is really helping my development. Once I complete my course, I plan on going onto studying childcare further at University.”

2020 T Level Recruitment Information

In the initial years of T Level rollout, we have explicitly focused on quality, rather than quantity – starting with a small group of high quality providers that will grow as the qualifications become more established.

We have collected early recruitment information from the 44 providers that started delivering 2-year T Levels programmes in September 2020 - 33 of whom are also delivering the T Level Transition Programme.

The figures reflect the number of participants on a T Level or T Level Transition Programme as of October 2020. This information is subject to change as providers may continue to accept new students onto these programmes.

This early recruitment information is not official data. It is being published in the interests of transparency and is shared ahead of official provider data returns via the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), school census, HESA and official/National statistics containing figures on T Levels, which the Department for Education will publish in the future.

T Level Programme

Early recruitment information received from the 44 education providers offering T Levels in the 2020 to 2021 academic year shows:

- T Level participants reported for the month of October 2020 were c.1300.
- The proportion of participants by T Level route was:
 - c.400 for the Digital Production, Design and Development T Level
 - c.250 for the Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction T Level
 - c.650 for the Education and Childcare T Level

T Level Transition Programme

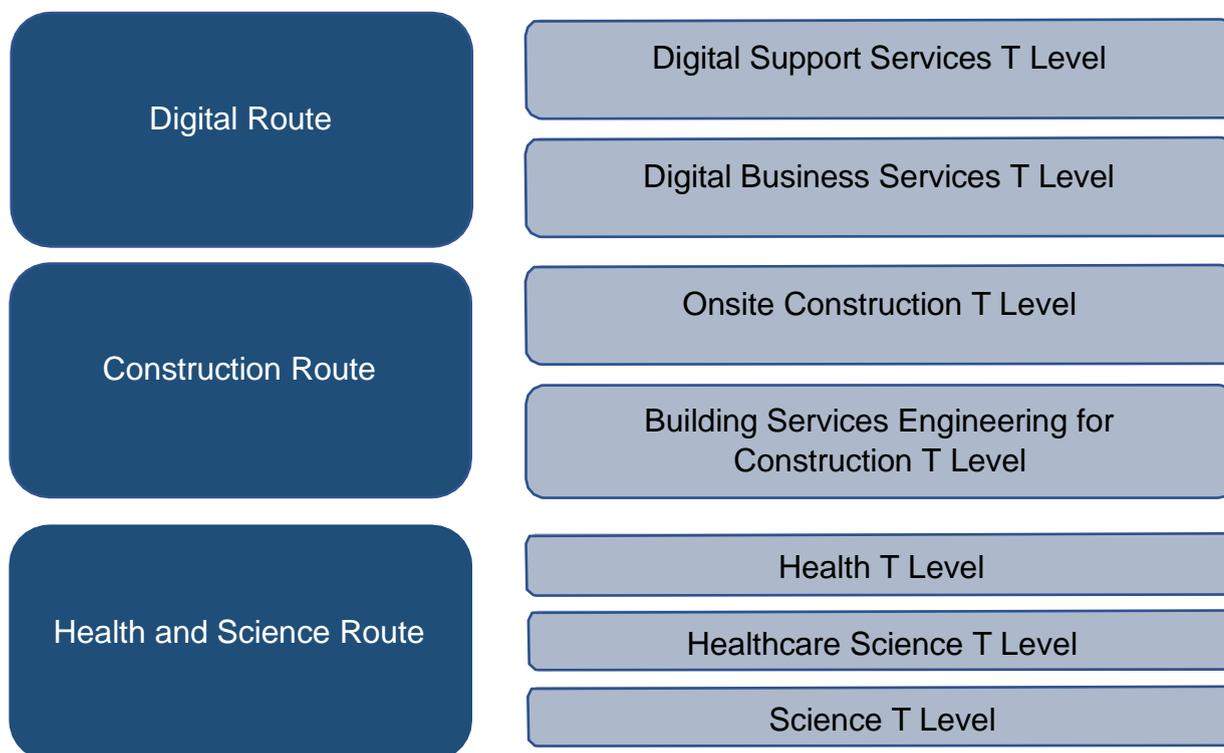
Early recruitment information received from the 33 education providers offering a T Level Transition Programme for the 2020 to 2021 academic year shows:

- T Level Transition Programme participants reported for the month of October 2020 were c.950.
- The proportion of starts by T Level route was:
 - c.400 for T Level Transition Programme for Digital
 - c.150 for T Level Transition Programme for Construction
 - c.400 for T Level Transition Programme for Education

Definition: Participants are students aged 16 to 18 who have enrolled on a T Level or T Level Transition study programme at one of the approved T Level providers. Figures are based on latest provider returns and rounded to the nearest 50 students. Where we have a non-return for October, we have used the last completed return (September 2020).

T Levels from September 2021

A further seven T Levels will be available for delivery from September 2021:



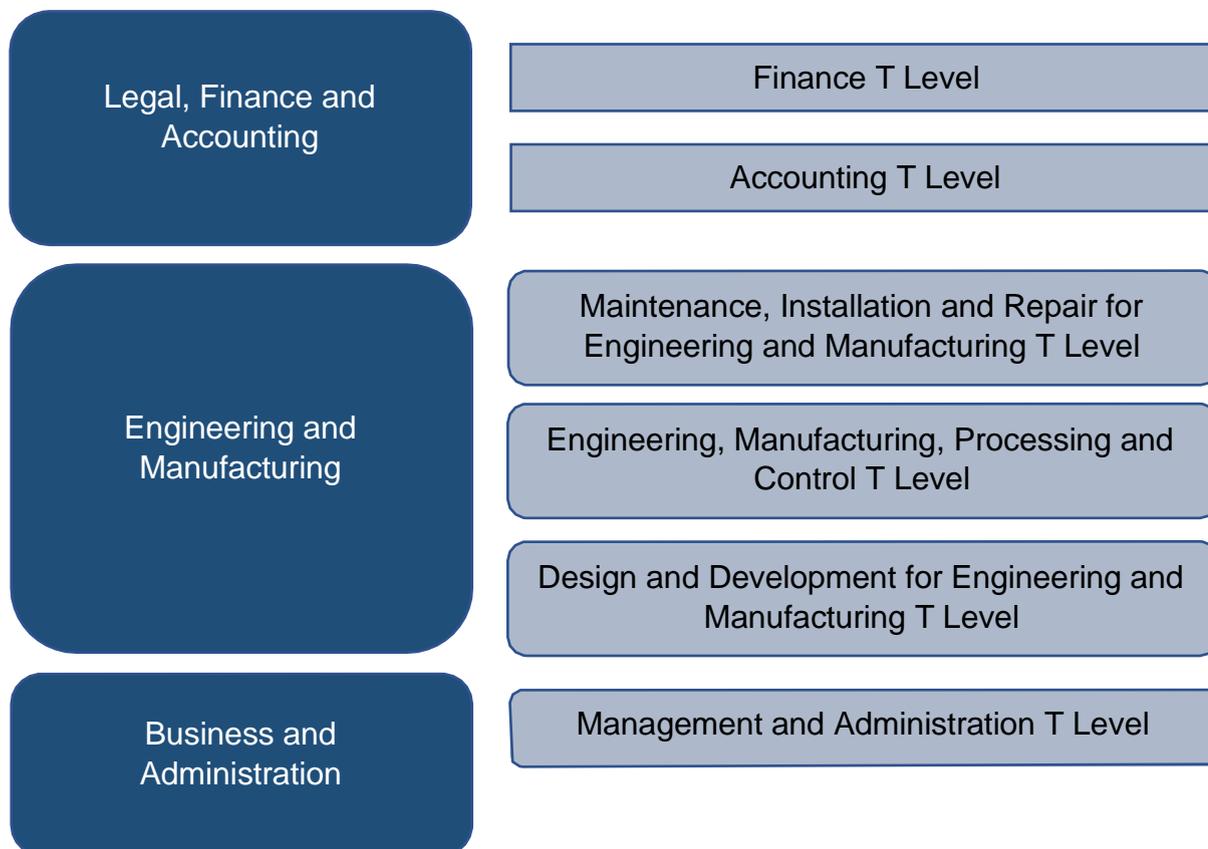
Making these T Levels available in 2021 will enable us to complete delivery of the Digital, and Construction routes and to deliver a further full route in Health and Science. This will bring the total number of full routes delivered by 2021 to 4, with 10 T Levels available.

Since we welcomed 2021 providers to the T Levels programme in June 2019, we have worked closely with them as they progress with their planning and prepare for delivery in September 2021. Each provider has an allocated local Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) contact to offer support and challenge during their T Level journey and to deal with any questions or issues that arise. Further information on how providers have been supported can be found in the [‘Supporting T Level Providers’](#) section below.

These providers also have access to support from the T Level Professional Development Programme (TLPD). The programme will help them to identify CPD requirements among their staff and provides a range of learning options so that they can ensure that teachers, managers, other staff and governors feel prepared to deliver these new programmes. There is more information available in the TLPD section of the Action Plan and on the ETF website [here](#). Additionally, these providers have been able to bid for T Level Capital funding to ensure that they have suitable facilities and equipment for T Level delivery.

T Levels from September 2022

The T Levels which will be available for delivery from September 2022 are:



The outline content for these T Levels has been developed by panels of employers, who have worked intensively with the Institute to create content relevant to occupations in their industry. Employers taking part include Autodesk, EDF, Ofgem, British Army, Bank of England, KPMG and CIPD. We are hugely grateful for the hard work and dedication of all the employers involved in these panels in designing and developing outline content.

As with the first 10 T Levels, the full qualification specification for each of these T Levels will be developed by an awarding organisation (AO). The Invitation to Tender (ITT) was launched by the Institute in spring 2020, and the successful awarding bodies were announced in October 2020.

City and Guilds will develop, deliver and award qualifications in:

- Engineering, manufacturing, processing and control;
- Maintenance, installation and repair for engineering and manufacturing;
- Design and development for engineering and manufacturing; and
- Management and administration.

Pearson will develop deliver and award qualifications in:

- Finance; and Accounting.

Drafts of the technical qualification (TQ) content will be made available to providers throughout the development phase to support their implementation planning.

T Levels from September 2023

We have said that our aim is for all remaining T Levels to be introduced from September 2023. These T Levels are:

Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care	Agriculture, Land Management and Production T Level
	Animal Care and Management T Level
Creative and Design	Craft and Design T Level
	Media, Broadcast and Production T Level
Hair and Beauty	Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics T Level
Catering and Hospitality	Catering T Level
Business and Administration	Human Resources T Level
Legal, Finance and Accounting	Legal Services T Level

As with the T Levels launched in previous years, these courses will be developed by a panel of employers who work extensively with the Institute. Employers who will inform the development of 2023 T Levels include the BBC, The Royal Horticulture Society, Dogs Trust, The Crown Prosecution Service, the British Fashion Council. Our plan for the delivery of T Levels in 2023 is set out in the T Level Providers section of this action plan.

The table below sets out the rollout of all 24 T Levels and reflects the delay of two T Levels – Legal Services and Human Resources – from 2022 to 2023, and the decision to stop the development of a T Level in Cultural Heritage and Visitor Attractions.

Route	2020 Delivery	2021 Delivery	2022 Delivery	2023 Delivery
Education and Childcare	Education and Childcare			
Construction	Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction	Onsite Construction Building Services Engineering for		
Digital	Digital Production, Design and Development	Digital Support Services		
		Digital Business Services		
Health and Science		Health		
		Healthcare Science		
		Science		
Legal, Finance and Accounting			Finance	Legal Services
			Accounting	
Business and Administration			Management and Administration	Human Resources

Route	2020 Delivery	2021 Delivery	2022 Delivery	2023 Delivery
Engineering and Manufacturing			Maintenance, Installation and Repair for Engineering and Manufacturing	
			Design and Development for Engineering and Manufacturing	
			Engineering, Manufacturing, Processing and Control	
Hair and Beauty				Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics
Catering and Hospitality				Catering
Agriculture, Environmental and Animal Care				Animal Care and Management
				Agriculture, Land Management and Production
Creative and Design				Craft and Design
				Media, Broadcast and Production

T Level Providers

We want to ensure that the rollout of T Levels is high quality from the start and our delivery strategy and approach to working with providers reflects this. We selected a small number of high performing providers to deliver the first 3 T Levels in 2020 and teaching has already started. We then selected another group to deliver from September 2021, who could choose to offer any of the 3 T Levels launched in 2020 and any of the 7 available from 2021. We then selected a third group of providers to deliver from 2022, who will be able to offer any of the 16 T levels from across 7 routes which will be available from 2022.

The details of the T Levels that will be rolled out each year is available in the [Rollout of T Levels](#) section above.

As T Levels are rolled out across the country, the number of providers delivering will steadily increase. We have started small – with 44 providers from across the country delivering the first T Levels from September 2020.

Over 60 providers will deliver T Levels from September 2021 - the details of the providers can be viewed [here](#). This group includes a broad range of post-16 providers including further education (FE) and sixth form colleges, an independent training provider, higher education institutions, University Technical Colleges (UTCs), maintained schools and academies.

In June, we announced that over 80 providers had been successful in their expression of interest to deliver in September 2022. This cohort includes a wide range of providers – FE and sixth form colleges, UTCs and schools. Details of these providers can be found [here](#).

Delivery of T Levels from 2023 onwards

2023 will be the fourth year of T Level rollout and, to reinforce T Levels as a mainstream offer for all students, all providers currently funded to deliver 16-19 study programmes will be eligible to deliver some of the available T Levels from September 2023 on the following basis:

- All providers delivering 16 to 19 study programmes can deliver T Levels introduced in 2020 and 2021: and
- Providers with Ofsted Good and Outstanding Gradings can also deliver T Levels introduced in 2022 and 2023.

In early 2021, we will be launching a portal to allow providers to register their intentions to deliver T Levels from 2023 and to access support for planning and preparation, and to

receive up-front T Level delivery funding. We encourage registrations from a range of providers who deliver 16-19 study programmes, including FE colleges, and other providers such as UTCs and other academies.

Looking ahead to 2024, all T Levels will have been delivered for at least a year and we will be moving towards full national rollout. Therefore from 2024, T Levels will be available to be delivered by **all** providers delivering 16-19 study programmes irrespective of Ofsted grading. More information can be found [here](#).

Supporting T Level Providers

We have been working closely with 2020 and 2021 providers to ensure that they have the information and support they need to develop their capacity and capability to deliver T Levels.

2020 and 2021 providers have worked closely with an allocated local ESFA contact, who offer support and challenge during their T Level preparations and are on hand to answer queries or deal with challenges that arise. A number of events and networking opportunities have also been organised for these providers to access. This has allowed our first providers to share best practice between one another and offer peer to peer support to providers delivering in the future.

We have begun working with the successful 2022 providers who will receive the same support to prepare for delivery as the 2020 and 2021 providers. We have recently contracted the Association of Colleges (AoC) to work in collaboration with ESFA local teams to ensure all 2022 providers have a dedicated point of contact as they prepare for delivery. 2023 providers will also have a dedicated point of contact at the AoC when they begin preparations to deliver in the summer of 2021.

As part of this support contract – which will run for an initial 2 years until November 2022 – the AoC will also produce a number of guidance materials and facilitate networking opportunities and other events to support providers in their preparations for delivery. All providers who register to deliver from 2023 will have access to all elements of the support programme.

T Level Awarding

We set out in detail in the [2019 Action Plan](#) the basis on which T Level grades will be awarded.

Students who meet the required elements of their T Level will be awarded an overall grade, in the form of a Pass, Merit, Distinction or Distinction*.

T Level grades are worked out from students' grades for the Technical Qualification (TQ) Core and Occupational Specialisms. These are presented as look-up tables. To ensure fairness, the tables are slightly different for different T Levels depending on the size of the Core Component and Occupational Specialisms.

- There will be just **one** look up table for each T Level.
- And there will always be the same instances of each grade available in each look up table: six Passes, six Merits, five Distinctions and one Distinction*.
- To be awarded a Distinction*, the student must achieve an A* in the Core and a Distinction in the Occupational Specialism(s).

Relative sizes of wave 1 TQ components

Based on the awarding organisations' final specifications, the component sizes and proportions for the first TQs are as follows:

T Level	Core (GLH)	Occupational Specialism(s) (GLH)	Total (GLH)	Proportions %
Design Surveying and Planning	600	600	1200	Core 50% OS 50%
Digital Production Design and Development	600	600	1200	Core 50% OS 50%
Education and Childcare	360	545 - 556 (550 average)	910	Core 40% OS 60%

T Level grading look-up tables for wave 1 TQs

Based on the proportions of components, the look up tables for wave 1 TQs will be as follows:

Design Surveying and Planning Digital Production Design & Development				
		Occupational Specialism		
		Distinction	Merit	Pass
Core	A*	Distinction *	Distinction	Distinction
	A	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
	B	Distinction	Merit	Merit
	C	Merit	Merit	Pass
	D	Merit	Pass	Pass
	E	Pass	Pass	Pass

Education & Childcare				
		Occupational Specialism		
		Distinction	Merit	Pass
Core	A*	Distinction *	Distinction	Merit
	A	Distinction	Distinction	Merit
	B	Distinction	Merit	Merit
	C	Distinction	Merit	Pass
	D	Merit	Pass	Pass
	E	Pass	Pass	Pass

T Levels for Adults

T Levels are currently available to 16-19 year olds, but we want as many people as possible to benefit from these high-quality programmes. We are exploring how T Levels can be extended to adults and this includes the types of flexibility that could be introduced for 19+ learners. The second-stage consultation of the Post-16 Qualifications Review sets out our proposals around how T Levels could be adapted to take account of prior learning and experience, and the flexible delivery needs of adults. We also think that, for some pathways, there may be potential for delivery of the occupational specialisms as standalone qualifications for adults.

T Levels Capital

To deliver world class qualifications providers need to have world class facilities and cutting-edge equipment so that students are ready for work when they finish their T Levels.

We have funded over 75 projects so far to build or refurbish facilities so that students can learn in the brilliant facilities that they deserve, and expect to fund many more projects as we continue to roll out T Levels.

Examples of some of the projects already completed include:

The College of Richard Collyer



Barnsley College



Exeter College



We know that the successful delivery of T Levels is not only about the building or the room the course is taught in, but is also about young people having access to cutting edge specialist equipment so they are ready to contribute as part of their industry placement and ready for work or further study when they complete their T Level.

Thus far the Government has provided:

- £38m capital funding to support wave 1 of T Levels roll out, which has funded 22 building projects and given funding for specialist equipment to all 2020 providers.
- £95m capital funding to support wave 2 of T Levels roll out – the first 56 building projects have now been approved, and all providers delivering a T Level in a new route are to receive funding for specialist equipment.
- £135m capital to support wave 3 of T Level roll out. The bidding process for buildings element of this fund was launched on 13 January 2021, we will confirm how we distribute the specialist equipment element of this fund in winter 2021.

Further information on T Levels capital funding can be found here <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/t-levels-capital-fund>.

Progression to and from T Levels

T Level Transition Programme

Since the publication of the T Level Action Plan 2019, we have made significant progress in implementing the T Level Transition Programme – a new type of 16-19 study programme for students who are not ready to start a T Level but have the potential to progress onto one following a tailored preparation programme. We are delighted that first delivery has begun of the Transition Programme for the first three T Level routes and students are now on the programme, at 33 of the first 44 providers selected to deliver T Levels. For more detail on early recruitment, see [2020 T Level Recruitment Information](#).

We are taking a phased approach to implementation of the T Level Transition Programme, beginning with a subset of early T Level providers with whom we are working closely to understand lessons from early delivery, and scaling up the number of providers involved as the programme develops. The Association of Colleges is working with these early volunteer providers to support them in their preparations and delivery.

In October 2019 we issued a [Framework for Delivery](#) that sets out key components that are nationally set, and information and expectations for how the T Level Transition Programme should be delivered from the academic year 2020 to 2021 for those institutions taking part in its phased implementation. We issued some small updates to the Framework for Delivery in November 2020.

Core content components of the T Level Transition Programme

Diagnostic and guidance period	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•To assess students' capability and support needs in order to tailor their Transition Programme to address these needs.•Help students decide which T Level route they want to prepare for.
English and maths	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•For students who do not hold at least a GCSE grade 4 in English and/or maths and are required to continue studying as per the condition of funding.
Work experience and preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•To develop the skills, behaviours, attitude and confidence that will be needed for students to complete the T Level Industry Placement.
Introductory technical skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Introductory skills and concepts to prepare students for the T Level route they wish to progress to.
Pastoral support and personal development	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•Relevant and meaningful support to address barriers to education, support emotional and/or mental health difficulties, and support the development of study skills, and reflective and resilience skills.

There are some emerging themes from the providers' preparations for first delivery in September 2020:

- Key focus on English & maths: Providers are designing their programmes to include an increased amount of time spent on these subjects and greater contextualisation, including through use of project work and involving vocational tutors in curriculum planning;
- Plans for delivering introductory technical skills: Whilst most providers are including a technical qualification in their programmes, a number have opted to deliver a smaller qualification, to allow more time in the programme for the other components. Some providers have developed this component without embedding a technical qualification, instead considering the T Level Technical Qualification content and identifying the skills and knowledge required to prepare students for studying the T Level;
- Employer involvement: Providers are engaging employers in designing and delivering the programme through a variety of approaches – e.g. planning projects involving employers, or engaging employers in co-teaching, assessing or mentoring students and/or teaching staff – recognising the key role employers can play in ensuring their programmes are embedding the most relevant skills, aligned to industry needs;
- Approach to pastoral support: Providers are adapting their existing pastoral programmes to support students to develop individual learning plans and build the resilience and confidence needed to move onto and succeed in T Levels, as well as a growing emphasis on developing academic study skills and employability skills.

A further 44 T Level providers have signed up to deliver the programme for the first time from September 2021– they are now starting to prepare their programmes, with support from the Association of Colleges.

We expect the number of T Level providers taking part in delivery of the T Level Transition Programme to grow further year on year. In the New Year we will seek to identify those T Level providers who are eligible and wish to develop their T Level Transition Programme for first delivery from 2022.

Progression into Skilled Employment

As more T Levels become available, we want to make sure that students, parents and employers are clear about the range of progression opportunities that they present. The primary aim of a T Level is entry to skilled employment within a specific occupation or sector, and we will continue to work with employers, careers advisors and other stakeholders to raise awareness of these new courses.

T Levels are more substantial than most existing technical qualifications, with longer teaching time and the development of occupationally focused skills and knowledge that have been set by employers as essential for employment. The industry placement will help students to refine their technical and practical skills, knowledge and behaviours, ensuring they are 'work ready'. T Level graduates will be an attractive proposition for many employers.

We are working with the Institute to identify potential progression pathways to employment and apprenticeships for students who take different T Level occupational specialisms. The basis for this work is a detailed assessment of the differences between T Levels and corresponding apprenticeship(s). This work will help employers understand how T Levels will benefit their recruitment pipelines and will support prospective students when considering their options.

Feedback from employers:

Steve Coleby, Managing Director of Lovell Partnerships said:

“Lovell Partnerships is delighted to support T Levels. We see these new qualifications as a great way of bringing talented young people with the right knowledge and skills into construction. With the ongoing skills shortages in the construction trades and professions, industry placements give us a chance to work with young people as a shortcut in the recruitment process, and gives the business the opportunity to assess them as a potential employee. Lovell Partnerships believe that T Levels present an excellent route into the construction sector, and we would be very happy to employ T Level construction graduates on completion of their course.”

Ruth Jennings, Skills Development Programmes Manager, J Sainsbury's plc said:

“Here at Sainsbury's, we're excited about the new T Level qualifications and the opportunities they offer our business. We are actively building industry placements into our talent strategy and see them becoming a key part of talent pipeline. We are also working with providers to explore and plan our initial industry placements and are looking forward to welcoming our first cohort of students to our Digital, Technology and Data division in 2021.”

Tim Chapman, Fujitsu said:

“There is a huge shortage of talented young people entering technical careers, and Fujitsu has felt the effects of this most recently in our Cyber Security business. The lack of fresh talent entering the sector makes it increasingly difficult to secure enthusiastic new employees to fill the necessary talent pipeline. The introduction of T Levels will help alleviate this problem by enabling more students to enter the industry with the skills needed to succeed.”

Progression into Higher Level Apprenticeships

Some T Level graduates may want to progress to an apprenticeship at level 4 or higher, building on the knowledge, skills and behaviours they have secured during their T Level course. In some cases, they may want to work in a more specialist area, which might mean taking an apprenticeship at level 3 or below, particularly where these apprenticeships require 3 or 4 years to complete. In these instances, there will be additional specialist training needed that might be best delivered through a level 3 apprenticeship, which would take into account the prior learning gained through completion of a T Level and result in the duration of the apprenticeships being reduced.

Progression into Higher Levels of Study

T Levels will also provide good preparation for degrees and other higher education courses in related subject areas, including the newly launched Higher Technical Qualifications, which are level 4 and 5 qualifications based on occupational standards. UCAS have announced that T Levels will attract tariff points in line with three A levels. As the qualification materials are made available, higher education providers are considering their entry requirements for the first T Level graduates that may be considering going onto a course of higher education in 2022. Feedback from higher education providers thus far has been encouraging, and we will continue to work with the sector to ensure they have the information they need in order to set their requirements. We are also considering how best to signal career pathways through approved Higher Technical Qualifications and on to skilled employment.

Feedback from higher education providers:

University of Warwick said:

“The University of Warwick welcomes the development T-level qualifications as a new technical route into Higher Education. We believe they could be of particular interest

to learners wishing to further their academic and professional development through our Degree Apprenticeship programmes.

Applicants with T-levels will be given full and fair consideration when applying to Warwick and have equal opportunities to those applying with other recognised qualifications. As with all qualifications, we need to ensure that T-level curriculum content and learning outcomes provide suitable preparation for an applicant's chosen programme. We are confident that this can be achieved through close working between universities and key organisations involved in T-level development”.

Teesside University said:

“As tariffable qualifications, T levels will be incorporated into TU’s admissions policy and we will be working with schools and students to highlight relevant higher education options. We are keen to ensure that T level students can successfully transition to HE if they so wish and developing partnerships and establishing progression routes will be vital”.

University of West England, Bristol said:

“UWE Bristol welcomes applications from T-level learners who wish to continue their studies at University. We believe that the industry placement alongside the excellent technical and professional content delivered in the programmes will prepare future students for the practice-led programmes offered at the University.

Assurance and Regulation

The Institute and Ofqual are working together to quality assure T Level Technical Qualifications (TQs), giving confidence to employers and learners that their needs are met. The Institute and Ofqual have agreed joint governance structures to harness their respective expertise, and reflect their statutory remits, enabling them to collaborate as efficiently as possible with minimal burden for AOs.

The Institute has overall responsibility for TQ approvals, and for ongoing monitoring and performance management in the context of the AO service requirements. The Institute will carry out regular reviews to identify any changes to the TQ that are required to ensure they remain up to date and fit for purpose.

The TQs will be regulated by Ofqual. It is a condition of the Institutes contract with each AO that the AO must be recognised by Ofqual before they can develop and deliver a TQ. Potential suppliers need to meet Ofqual's General Conditions of Recognition, and the Conditions for specific TQs. During qualification development, the Institute and Ofqual will provide feedback to AOs at two key checkpoints before the final product is submitted for Institute approval and Ofqual accreditation.

Ofqual will monitor the TQ in delivery, alongside the Institute's contractual monitoring. The two organisations will agree on the best way to address any issues that arise, through contractual levers, regulatory levers, or a combination of the two.

Working with Ofsted

Learning providers will be accountable for the quality of their T Level offer, and T Level provision will be subject to Ofsted inspection in due course.

We are working closely with Ofsted to ensure they can contribute to the successful delivery of T Levels more broadly and have recently agreed that they will undertake a thematic survey of T Levels and T Level Transition Programme implementation - covering the first two years of delivery.

In the first year of rollout (2020/21), Ofsted will survey a sample of 25 providers delivering T Levels and 12 providers delivering the T Levels Transition Programme

In the 2nd year of rollout, Ofsted will undertake a survey of a further 20 T Level providers, including 10 who were surveyed in the first year. Ofsted will also survey a further 12 T Levels Transition Programme providers in addition to the 12 who were surveyed in 2020/21. 2nd year surveys are planned to take place between January and March 2022.

The survey visits will consist of a focussed 'deep dive' into the implementation of the first T Levels and T Level transition programmes – focussing on educational effectiveness, provider's leadership and management, and the personal development of learners. The intention of the survey is to identify strengths, weaknesses and areas for improvement across a substantial sample of providers to help inform best practice for the wider rollout of T Levels. Providers will be anonymised, and no judgements will be made about individual institutions. Ofsted will publish a final report in 2022.

We recognise that providers delivering T Levels and the T Level Transition programme in the first year of delivery (2020/21) will be significantly affected by Covid-19, and the continuing restrictions placed on them, businesses and wider society. Ofsted will take this into account when they carry out the survey, being clear to recognise the difficulties and limitations this has caused. We also recognise the pressure on providers' time that taking part in the survey will bring during what is a challenging period – Ofsted will make early contact with providers and make every effort to minimise burden.

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education

T Level Panels

T Level panels for the first 16 T Levels were convened in autumn 2017 to prepare the outline content that forms the basis of T Levels, with panels for the remaining nine T Levels established from September 2018. These panels are made up of employers, practitioners, providers and representatives of trade organisations. The panels build on the same occupational standards on which apprenticeships are based, which identify the knowledge and skills and behaviour required for the occupations to which they relate and that should be taught as part of the T Levels.

We are grateful to the ongoing work of employers in setting out their expectations for T Levels, and will continue to work in partnership with them and the Institute as the technical qualification for each T Level is created, through direct engagement with the relevant awarding organisation. These employers have worked with enthusiasm and creativity in order to create high quality content that will support young people into skilled jobs in their sectors.

As T Levels develop, we are consulting with the T Level panels to use their expertise on policy questions, including whether to pause or end development of particular specialisms in response to industry feedback, and on setting objectives for Industry Placements. For example, consultation with the T Level panels informed the decision to create one specialism within the Human Resources T Level, and to streamline the specialisms included within the Legal Services T Level to: Business, Finance and Employment; and Crime, Criminal Justice and Social Welfare. We are also continuing to work closely with professional bodies to ensure that their role in maintaining and promoting professional standards aligns with the expectations set by the T Level panels.

Panel members play a crucial role in championing T Levels as part of our wider communications and engagement strategy. More than 100 panel members have become T Level Ambassadors, and are performing a similar role to support the work of the Apprenticeship Ambassador Network. We are using their advocacy through speaking engagements at stakeholder events, promoting T Level developments across social media channels and via their sector media, as well as encouraging them to generate leads and offer industry placements in their own organisations or in their supply chains. We have also created opportunities for T Level Ambassadors to link into the national communications campaign activity.

T Level Ambassadors also provide us with vital intelligence and evidence from employers and training providers on the ground around how T Level policies and flexibilities work in practice and where amendments might be made.

Development of Outline Content

Outline content created by the T Level panels is tested before being formally approved:

- with providers and higher education institutions to begin to identify the size of each T Level and the funding it may attract and to test progression options beyond the programme; and
- with employers to ensure that it will equip young people with the knowledge and skills that industry needs.

The Institute consults on outline content for new T Levels as it is created by T Level panels. More information can be found [here](#).

Awarding Organisation Procurement

Two awarding organisations were successful in the procurement to deliver and award the technical qualifications for the first three T Levels for delivery from September 2020. They are NCFE, who was awarded a contract to deliver the Education T Level, and Pearson who was awarded contracts to deliver T Levels in Design, Surveying and Planning as well as Digital Production, Design and Development. These TQs are now approved and in delivery from September 2020.

The Institute published the Invitation to Tender (ITT) for the wave 2 T Levels in March 2019 (for delivery in 2021) and on 2 October 2019 confirmed that NCFE and City & Guilds have been chosen to deliver the 7 T Levels from 2021. Qualification approval and accreditation for the T Levels in Onsite Construction; Building Services Engineering for construction; Digital Support Services and Digital Business Services was given in November 2020. For the three T Levels in Health and Science, approval is expected by early 2021. Publication of final materials is expected by January 2021 to allow providers to prepare for first teaching from September 2021.

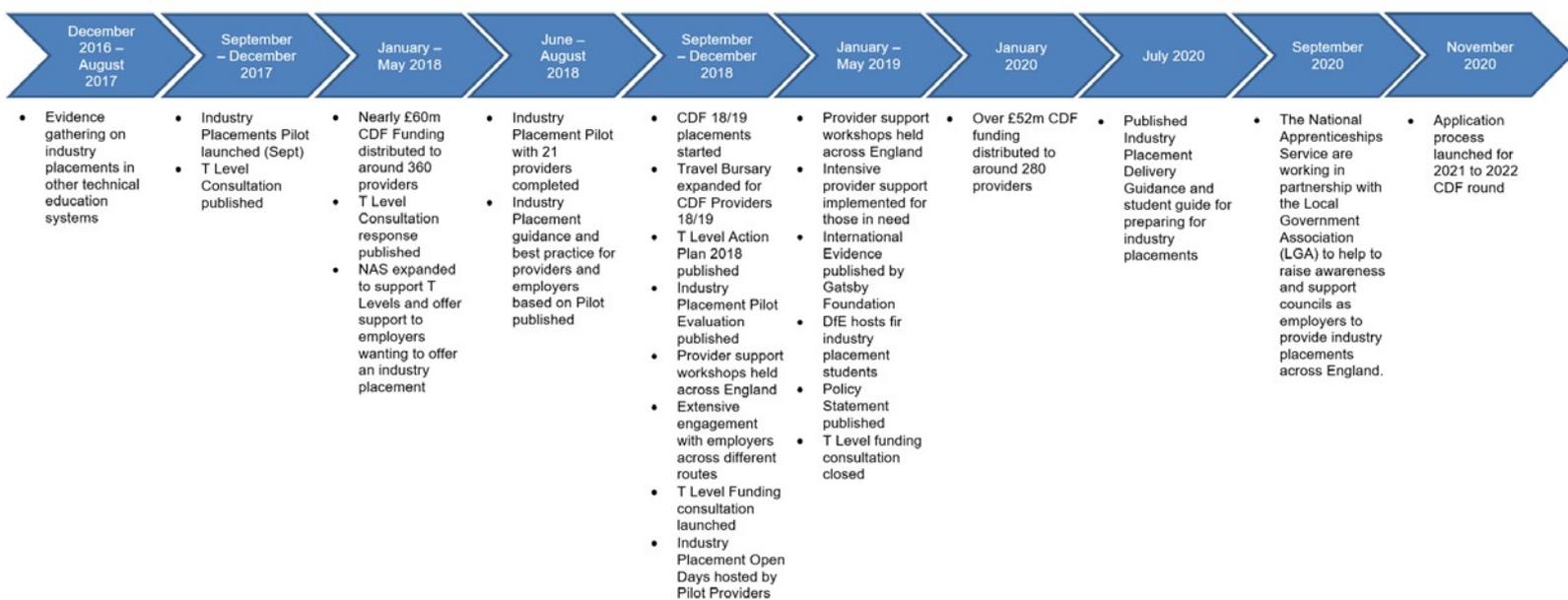
For the wave 3 T Levels (listed in the [T Level rollout section](#)), the ITT was published in January 2020 and successful AOs (Pearson, and City & Guilds) were announced in October 2020, for the delivery of T Levels in 2022.

The ITT for wave 4 T Levels was published in November 2020, with contracts to be awarded in summer 2021, for first teaching in 2023. The Institute will examine options for future development of Legal Services and HR as there were no suitable bids in this procurement round.

Industry Placements

The industry placement element of T Levels is our biggest opportunity to make sure that young people leave education better prepared to be successful and productive in the workplace. However, we recognise that for both education providers and employers, there are challenges in delivering them. That is why we have put in a place a comprehensive support package to help both providers and employers gear up for delivery ahead of T Level roll out. This included testing models early through the Industry Placement Pilots and increasing provider capacity through the Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF). This enabled us to learn lessons, identify best practice and refine the policy well in advance of the first teaching of T Levels in 2020 to 2021, and for providers to build vital capacity well in advance of delivery. We are grateful for the vital part that providers and employers have played a part in this. A summary of all the evidence gathering, interventions and support we have put in place is summarised below.

Timeline of Activity to Date



Dedicated Support for Providers

Industry Placement Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF)

Recognising the significant challenge to deliver Industry Placements successfully, we have put in place significant investment early on to support providers to build capacity to deliver Industry Placements well ahead of T Levels through the CDF. The purpose of the CDF is to facilitate the build-up of providers' capacity and capability to deliver substantial T Level-style industry placements. Across the 2018 to 2019 and 2019 to 2020 academic years, a combined £115million was allocated to hundreds of providers nationwide. In the 2020 to 2021 academic year, we will be allocating a further £52m of funding and providers are

required to deliver industry placements for a minimum 25% of their qualifying funded students, equating to a minimum of 52,000 placements. This minimum delivery target was reduced from the previously published 30% target in light of the impact of Covid-19. In early November, we also launched a final opportunity for providers to access [CDF for the 2021 to 2022 academic year](#).

The funding for Industry Placement CDF will start to reduce from the 2021 to 2022 academic year as we roll out T Levels and industry placements start to be delivered and funded as part of T Levels.

In July 2020 we published two reports that highlighted that providers have found that CDF has made a really positive impact, giving them the opportunity to recruit staff to start preparing for the delivery of T Level industry placements, establish the right infrastructure and procedures within their organisations and to build strong relationships with local employers and continue to develop them. Employers also reported that they appreciated the flexibility of the different placement models published last year which made it easier for them to host learners on placements.

There are industry placement videos and written case studies, which display examples of the work with CDF-funded providers, on the Association of Colleges website [here](#).

Provider Support Package

To complement the funding that we have put in place, we are in the process of contracting an organisation to provide support for T Level providers to help them deliver placements. Providers will be able to access one-to-one tailored advice and support, workshops and webinars, as well as additional guidance where needed. The organisation will also touch base with providers, employers and students during placements and offer support, and highlight and spread good practice. We will encourage providers to take-up this offer.

Dedicated Support for Employers

Employer Support Fund

Through our extensive discussions and consultations with employers, we heard that the additional cost of hosting placements was a potential barrier. We therefore launched a £7m Employer Support Fund pilot in the 2019 to 2020 academic year. The aim was to trial the provision of financial support to employers and to help us to better understand the financial barriers faced by employers to offering placements and how these differ across industries. CDF providers within the South West and West Midlands were invited to take part in this pilot.

Due to the first Covid-19 lockdown, findings from the pilot were inconclusive, and therefore in July 2020, we announced that we will be extending the pilot to continue across the 2020 to 2021 academic year. We have also extended the number of regions covered by the pilot to also include Yorkshire and the Humber and the East of England, in addition to the South West and West Midlands. These regions have been selected to ensure that there is a good mix of area types (for example rural, urban and opportunity areas) plus a mix of employer and provider types. Selecting providers in these regions also allows us to maximise the

number of industry placements that are in the pilot to give us the most robust findings. This will allow us to look at the difference the funding makes to the provision of industry placements depending on industry, employer and area types. Findings from this pilot will be shared with all providers receiving CDF throughout the academic year 2020 to 2021 and we expect to publish a full evaluation in 2021.

Employer Support Package

In addition, an employer support package was introduced throughout the 2019 to 2020 academic year to support employers to effectively plan and implement high quality placements. Following a competitive procurement process, we appointed The Strategic Development Network (together with the Learning and Work Institute and Popcorn Media) to develop and introduce the support. It has produced a range of guidance and materials for employers and an ongoing series of webinars and workshops and on-demand support. The contract has been extended to January 2021. For more information, please go to the [website](#).

National Apprenticeship Service (NAS)

NAS has played a key role over the past year in continuing to raise awareness of T Levels with employers and to provide advice and access to employer facing materials to help them understand how they can get involved and – crucially - the benefits of offering placements. They have engaged with over 16,000 employers, including the 1,200 largest Apprenticeship levy paying employers, through direct engagement.

NAS has used existing engagement channels built up through their work on apprenticeships, they have worked with the T Level Ambassadors, intermediaries and key figureheads within business, training providers and national broker services (such as FSB, CBI and local brokerages in the 38 Local Enterprise Partnership areas) to promote T Levels. They have also worked with large public sector organisations to develop engagement strategies, including delivering workshops for NHS Trusts and through Local Government Authorities.

They also provide a matching service to help provide the link between providers seeking placements and employers who would like to host a T Level student, and successfully matched nearly 6,000 providers and employers in the 2019/20 financial year. Work continues to enhance and streamline the matching service for both providers and employers.

NAS have used their National Contact Centre to support employers of all sizes, geography and sector with industry placements queries, enabling analysis of the national picture of employer's responses, barriers and objections, as well as providing enhanced support where required.

Allowing More Flexible Approaches

One of the main lessons we learnt from the early evidence gathered through the Industry Placements pilots was that ‘no one size fits all’, and that different models and approaches need to be adopted to make placements work successfully across different industries and circumstances. To address this, in May 2019, we published an Industry Placement Policy Statement which announced further models and approaches for delivery of placements to help ensure they are meaningful and reflective of differing industry needs and practices, as well as accessible for students across different locations and with different backgrounds and circumstances. In July 2020, as part of the Industry Placement delivery guidance, we also published additional industry-specific models and approaches which can be adopted for industry placement delivery. A full list of all allowable models and approaches can be found [here](#).

Clearer Guidance and Advice

Industry Placements Delivery Guidance

In July 2020, we published the [Industry Placements Delivery Guidance](#) to help providers and employers deliver high-quality placements. It sets out their key roles and responsibilities at each stage of the placement. The guidance and accompanying materials are also relevant to providers delivering T Level style placements, through the Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF), and the guidance should be adhered to where appropriate.

The guidance includes key information and templates to help ensure that placements are delivered to a consistently high standard across the country. Highlights include:

- advice on how to set learning goals to ensure that students are given occupationally relevant and stretching activities and tasks on their placement, and examples of best practice industry placement objective templates for most T Level specialisms
- additional allowable route-specific models and approaches for industry placement delivery which can be adopted as necessary to ensure placements are accessible and deliverable across all T Level provision, and guidelines on the parameters in which they can be used
- a set of progress indicators to help providers and employers identify whether students are making sufficient progress towards their learning goals and have met the behaviour and technical skills criteria for completing their placement
- information about industry placement completion exceptions and the criteria for when special consideration can be applied to ensure that students are not unfairly disadvantaged if they are unable to complete the industry placement hours due to factors beyond their control
- advice for when providers can apply their discretion to allow students an additional 2 years to complete their industry placement, when the students have been unable to complete their placement within the 2-year T Level programme

To accompany the guidance, we also published [The Student Guide](#), which is a reference document that providers can give to their students to complement their own student preparation material. It provides students with advice and signposts them to additional online resources that can help them to prepare for the workplace.

We are also developing an employer guide. It is a shorter version of the main delivery guidance, specifically aimed at employers which we will publish in due course.

Improving Access to Industry Placements for All

The evidence indicates that travelling to and from a placement can be a barrier for some young people when completing their industry placement. There are three main groups that these young people fall into – those living in remote locations, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) and those facing other cultural barriers to travel. We have considered the evidence and spoken to providers, LEPs and local authorities to identify good and innovative practice which we will promote in due course so that others can adopt or adapt these processes to suit their own circumstances. We are also considering other ways in which we can provide further support in this area.

Evaluation of Support for T Level Industry Placements

The Institute of Employment Studies (IES) carried out an [evaluation](#) of the industry placement support that has been put in place for both post-16 providers and employers with the planning and implementation of industry placements. This has enabled us to establish how well our interventions are working and whether there are any gaps in the support that need to be filled. It also provided us with an understanding of the key challenges of implementing placements within different contexts and the efficacy of the support provided. It has helped us shape the package of support we published in July 2020.

Industry Placements Across Government

The Civil Service itself is a major organisation that can play a significant role in offering Industry Placements. We are continuing to work with government departments, including Crown Representatives at Cabinet Office, to explore how we can support their agencies, departmental public bodies and suppliers to deliver industry placements. In DfE, for example, we have embedded requirements for industry placements within the department's Construction Frameworks and are looking to adopt a similar approach with our digital suppliers.

We are also working with Civil Service Human Resources (CSHR) to develop a centralised process to coordinate placements across the Civil Service in a number of areas including digital, business and administration, finance and human resources. The placements will provide students with the opportunity to undertake meaningful work experience in a location across the country whilst providing an important opportunity for government departments to

build a pipeline of new talent and attract enthusiastic, skilled young people to the Civil Service.

Industry Placements Across the Public Sector

The public sector represents a significant portion of the employer base in this country and it is important therefore to maximise the industry placement opportunities it can offer. We are working closely with public sector organisations to support them to offer placements at scale. For example, we have worked closely with the Local Government Association (LGA) which is helping to raise awareness and support councils to provide industry placements across England. They see T Levels as being essential in attracting young people into local skilled employment in a post-Covid-19 world. The LGA plan to deliver an online campaign, including webinars to councils, as well as developing partnerships between councils and local providers to support councils to deliver high-quality industry placements.

The National Apprenticeship Service (NAS) is building awareness and understanding of T Levels and industry placements with NHS Trusts. This ongoing targeted engagement work includes workshops, webinars and resources delivered in partnership with key stakeholders such as NHS Employers, The Gatsby Foundation and Health Education England.

NAS continually engages with the public sector through the Employer Support Package. Webinars, workshops and intensive support are available to organisations, in addition to the evolving toolkit of online guidance materials and planning resources. Public sector organisations, such as the Emergency Services, have also been consulted on T Levels and industry placements through a series of Sector Growth Workshops. NAS is exploring further opportunities to engage with the wider public sector in 2021.

The Effects of Covid-19 on Industry Placements

We are committed to enabling all T level students to spend time in the workplace on an industry placement. We have structured the roll-out of T Levels so that the first cohort is relatively small, and the majority of these students will not undertake their placements until the 2021 to 2022 academic year (AY). As such, we are confident that T Level students will be able to do their placement in an external workplace setting.

Due to the impact of Covid-19, we have introduced some temporary flexibilities to the requirement for T Level students who started on the Early Years Educator Occupational Specialism from September 2020. This is because the recommended placement hours are much larger at 750 hours, compared to the other T Levels. The changes to the requirements - as set out below - are temporary and only apply to those students starting their T Level in the 2020 to 2021 AY.

Providers must continue to plan to deliver the early years placements of 750 hours over the 2-year delivery period and do their best to achieve these hours. This is to give students the best opportunity to develop the necessary technical knowledge, skills and behaviours, and be assessed for their T Level qualification in real work environments. Providers will continue

to be funded at the current rate for placements, as funding will be allocated on the basis that placements are planned for 750 hours.

In situations where providers are unable to secure placements of 750 hours, they must still ensure students have met all of the learning outcomes of the T Level qualification (and so the Early Years Educator Criteria) to achieve their full T level certificate. Providers must:

- plan placements of 750 hours over the 2-year TQ delivery period
- ensure students complete a minimum of 415 placement hours, of which 100 must be guided learning hours on placement to reflect the time needed for students to develop the skills and knowledge required, and for formative assessment to take place to demonstrate success
- ensure students are able to demonstrate competence against all of the learning outcomes of the T Level qualification (and so the Early Years Educator Criteria)
- ensure students are assessed using appropriate methods for practical competence
- identify other relevant and useful activities and learning the students can do/ be provided with if they are unable to complete 750 placement hours which will support their development of the relevant technical knowledge, skills and behaviours.

We recognise, however, that Covid-19 may make the delivery of placements delivered in the 2020 to 2021 AY through the CDF challenging due to the number of placements that need to be delivered. We will continue to monitor the challenges and the impacts they are having to establish whether we need to put in place further support or flexibilities.

Additional Support with T Level Delivery

T Level Professional Development

Increasing the quality of teaching and leadership are two of the biggest factors in improving outcomes for learners, therefore ensuring there are enough highly skilled teachers able to teach T Levels will be crucial to success.

Since May 2019 the Education and Training Foundation (ETF) has been delivering a professional development offer – T Level Professional Development (TLPD), which has been helping staff, including teachers, trainers, managers and leaders, prepare for the change and successfully deliver T Levels from 2020.

The TLPD offer for the 2020 to 2021 academic year is aimed primarily at those providers and their staff, who will start the delivery of T Levels in 2021, though there are aspects of the TLPD offer which are available more widely – for example the online elements and access to the breadth of networks on offer. The core elements of the TLPD offer are:

- **Training Needs Analysis:** The Organisational Training Needs Analysis (TNA) is available for providers to better understand the professional development needs of their staff to deliver T Levels. An individual TNA is available for all relevant staff to identify the TLPD support they require. Non-2021 providers are able to access the organisational and individual TNA tools.
- **Understanding T Levels:** This is a wide-reaching engagement programme, underpinned by comprehensive professional development. It will enable every member of staff within a provider to fully understand T Levels and confidently play their part in their successful introduction.
- **Professional Development for Leaders:** This programme will support all staff in leadership roles to inspire and lead the change process in good time before their organisations first teach T Levels.
- **T Level Role and Route Specific Training:** This programme provides personalised Continuing Professional Development (CPD) journeys created from a range of pedagogical and subject specific courses structured to meet the needs of individual teachers and trainers.
- **Industry Insights:** Industry Insights will provide staff with the opportunity to undertake workplace shadowing and placement opportunities and attend industry workshops to raise awareness of current industry practices. Remission is available to enable participation.
- **Networks & TRIPs:** Regional and local networks will enable those involved in delivering T Levels, and those considering delivery in the future, to interact and exchange ideas and resources. This includes T Level Resource Improvement Projects (TRIPs), where providers can work together to collaborate on projects.

Further information on the core elements of the TLPD offer and how to access the training is available at: <https://www.et-foundation.co.uk/supporting/professional-development/technical-education/t-levels/>

Communications and Marketing

Communications, marketing and engagement are a critical part of the implementation plan for T Levels. We launched a comprehensive marketing campaign in October 2019, designed to raise awareness of T Levels among young people, parents, teachers, and employers, enabling them to understand what T Levels are and where they fit among other choices after GCSEs. The campaign also aims to stimulate demand for T Levels and encourage take-up, with activity aligned to rollout of the available courses. The campaign includes both national and local communications, with targeted activity in those areas where providers are offering T Levels. So far, communications activity, delivered in partnerships with T Level providers, has included:

- TV on demand advertising, outdoor posters in provider areas, and digital channels, supported by PR, social media content, digital marketing and a new website.
- Local awareness raising and recruitment by providers using campaign toolkits and branded marketing materials.
- Employer engagement by the ESFA to promote industry placements.
- A schools engagement strategy to raise awareness among teachers and careers advisers, including webinars and resources.

As we move into the recruitment period for 2021, and with the support of a larger cohort of providers, we will build on this activity to generate greater desire to take T Levels and to build interest amongst employers to offer industry placements and hire T Level graduates in the future.

More widely, work is continuing to consider how we can support young people to make informed choices after GCSEs and how T Levels are positioned alongside apprenticeships, the T Level Transition Programme, A Levels and other options (resources can be found [here](#)). We have been working closely with the Careers and Enterprise Company, Career Development Institute and Amazing Apprenticeships to help us raise awareness of T Levels with schools. We have developed a series of resources for careers advisers and teachers to help them better understand T Levels when advising students.

We will also work with our stakeholders to ensure they understand wider policies that impact on T Levels, including the review of qualifications at level 3 and below, and at the higher technical level (level 4 and 5) – in addition to the review of post-18 education and funding. These wider policies will have an impact on understanding and demand for T Levels and will influence the perceptions of technical education as a whole.

T Levels Service

We are developing a range of digital services to support stakeholders in the delivery of T Levels.

Our [T Levels campaign site](https://tlevels.gov.uk) (tlevels.gov.uk) launched in 2019 supports the Department's marketing campaign, providing student and employer-focused information and guidance, a tool for students to search for providers offering T Levels, and links to the National Careers Service. We continue to develop the site to respond to user needs, and support ongoing communications.

Our 'Manage T Level results' service will aggregate data from both awarding organisations and providers to enable the issuing of T Level results, statements of attainment and certificates to students. Following launch of the service in April 2020, awarding organisations can register and manage students enrolled on T Levels. The service is currently in development to enable awarding organisations to manage technical qualifications results data, and from Spring 2021, it will enable providers to report students' progress in the completion of industry placements. It is essential that providers and awarding organisations submit data through this service to ensure that students receive timely and accurate T Level certificates.

In July 2020 we launched the [Support with delivering T Levels](#) service, providing and signposting help, guidance and support materials for colleges, schools and other providers in preparing for and delivering T Levels. We have introduced a discussion forum feature to the service to enable sharing of best practice and advice between providers and we continue to develop the service to in time become the main place for providers to find advice and support for T Levels, no matter where they are on their T Level journey.

Wider Qualifications Review Programmes

Qualifications Review

The review of post-16 qualifications at level 3 and below aims to simplify the current qualifications landscape. We want all qualifications that continue to receive public funding to meet four key principles: being high quality; having a distinct purpose, being truly necessary and supporting progression to further education or skilled employment. The first-stage [consultation](#)⁵ focused on these principles, and set out the scope and broad process that the review will follow. It was launched on 19 March 2019 and closed on 10 June 2019.

It set out proposals for T Levels and A levels to become the qualifications of choice for post-16 students wishing to undertake a classroom-based programme of study. The consultation proposed that approval for funding is withdrawn for qualifications that overlap with A levels and T Levels and asked questions about the rationale for alternative qualifications to be offered alongside those qualifications.

The first-stage consultation also confirmed our intent to withdraw funding approval from older, pre-existing qualifications where newer versions have been redeveloped to meet the performance tables criteria, and where both versions are on offer simultaneously from 1 August 2020. The full list of 163 [pre-existing qualifications](#)⁶ from which funding approval is being withdrawn was published on 22 July 2019.

On 22 July 2019, we confirmed the implementation of a [moratorium](#) on new qualifications being approved to receive public funding. From 1 September 2020, we stopped considering new regulated qualifications for funding approval for students aged 16 and over (including 19 plus), unless they can be classified as exceptions as defined in the online guidance. The moratorium will last initially for a period of three years and will apply to all ESFA funded offers at age 16 and above. This will prevent new qualifications adding to the complexity within the system and will stabilise the offer for providers whilst the review continues.

On 13 February 2020, we announced how we will remove funding approval from qualifications with low and no publicly funded enrolments. On 7 December 2020, following the conclusion of the process to consider qualifications with **no** publicly funded enrolments, we published the list of qualifications that will have funding withdrawn from August 2021. The notification process for qualifications with **low** enrolments was suspended and was relaunched on 14 December as part of the second cycle of review, having originally been launched in February but suspended in light of the impact of Covid-19. The second cycle will include qualifications with both **low and no** enrolments that will be in scope to have funding withdrawn from August 2022.

The [second stage consultation](#) published on 23 October 2020, builds on the first stage

consultation. It sets out proposals for the qualifications we believe are needed alongside T Levels and A levels for 16 to 19 year olds and adults, and how to ensure they meet consistently high levels of quality that are needed to support all students to fulfil their potential. Ofqual and the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education will have a key role in ensuring and maintaining quality. We will ensure that employers are at the heart of this process by aligning the majority of qualifications to employer-led standards.

We are proposing to streamline the technical offer for 16 to 19 year olds alongside T Levels to ensure that as many young people as possible can benefit from the preparation T Levels will provide. And where there is no T Level in a particular occupational area, we propose there should be high quality alternatives that are well understood and valued by employers because they develop occupational competence. We also propose to fund technical qualifications for 16 to 19 year olds that could be studied alongside a T Level to build on and enhance skills for more specialist occupations.

For young people choosing academic qualifications, we want only those qualifications that give the best preparation to progress onto, and successfully complete, high quality HE courses. The evidence is clear that A levels offer excellent preparation for HE, and so we are proposing to remove funding from qualifications which overlap with an A level. However, we recognise that, in some subjects, other types of qualifications may be a better option. Therefore, we are proposing to approve for funding qualifications that can be taken instead of A levels and are intended to give access to specialist HE courses, such as those with high practical content at our world leading providers of arts education. Some young people will wish to study other qualifications alongside A levels. These should support progression to high quality HE courses and cover different content to A levels.

Adults will generally need greater flexibility than 16 to 19 year olds and will also tend to have greater prior experience, therefore we are proposing three key principles for level 3 technical qualifications for adults: modular delivery of content, to allow adults to study at a pace that suits them; recognition of prior learning and experience; and, assessing a student's competence at the end of a course, to give confidence that the student has the right level of competence. Our starting point for adults is a similar offer as for 16 to 19 year olds, but with some additional technical qualifications to meet their needs. T Levels should be available for adults alongside a range of other high quality technical qualifications that are backed by employers. These will be for adults who do not need the full content of a T Level programme.

Alongside these proposals for level 3 qualifications we published a [call for evidence](#) on post-16 level 2 and below study, which will allow us to understand how level 2 and below study can support progression to the reformed level 3 landscape. Getting level 2 and below right is key to making sure that students have clear lines of sight to level 3, apprenticeships, traineeships, and for some, directly into employment.

Higher Technical Education

We want T Level students to have first-rate choices open to them when they complete their programme. That includes good jobs and apprenticeships, but also high-quality classroom based higher technical education.

That is why from 8 July to 29 September 2019, the government held a consultation on how to improve and grow higher technical education in England. It set out a vision for higher technical education as a prestigious choice that delivers the skills employers need, encourages more students to continue studying after A levels or T levels and attracts workers of all ages looking to upskill and retrain.

The Government responded to the consultation in July 2020, with 96% of respondents supportive of governments' plans to introduce a national, employer-led scheme to approve level 4 and 5 qualifications.

As set out in our Government response, through our reforms, our aim is to establish a high-quality system of higher technical education where learners and employers can have confidence in high-quality courses that provide the skills they need to succeed, whether they are taught in a further education college, a university or by an independent training provider.

Our intention is for learners to have more information about higher technical education, a clearer sense of which courses offer what employers are looking for, and access to high-quality courses that lead to high-skilled jobs. For employers, we want them to have highly skilled workers, as well as playing a role in developing high-quality courses.

We have been working with the Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education to introduce a new national approval scheme that recognises and clearly signals which level 4-5 qualifications provide the knowledge, skills and behaviours employers want. This will provide a high-quality option for young people looking to progress from T Levels or apprenticeships, and for those looking to upskill or retrain. We also want providers offering high-quality Higher Technical Qualifications to have access to industry standard facilities and equipment, teachers with relevant industrial experience and pedagogical expertise, and close links to employers. At the heart of this are our Institutes of Technology, flagship providers in higher technical STEM skills, and our National Colleges, which are at the forefront of delivering nationally important skills.

We want to make higher technical education a more popular and prestigious choice and we will raise the profile and understanding of the best higher technical education courses through a government-backed brand, a communications campaign and improvements to information, advice and guidance. We will give adults looking to upskill and retrain, and young people deciding what to do post-18, the confidence and opportunity to choose high-

quality higher technical education.

We recognise that these reforms have only become more pressing as we reckon with the impacts of Covid-19 now and in the years to come. It has never been clearer that we need a skills system that can respond to economic shocks and provide high-quality training routes for those working in industry and across our digital, science, health and social care sectors. That is why it is essential that we meet our ambition for the first newly approved higher technical qualifications to be available from September 2022.

In the first year, the focus will be exclusively on digital qualifications, leading to jobs like network engineer, cyber-security technologist and software developer. This addresses important skills gaps and gives a clear line of sight for the first digital T Level students starting this September.

Reforming and growing higher technical education is a long-term endeavour. We want to see our great further education colleges expanding their higher technical provision, and for universities to end their preoccupation with bachelors' degrees and offer more Higher Technical Qualifications or apprenticeships, which are a more focused and better targeted route for students, employers and the economy.

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