

T-LEVELS

THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

**T LEVEL INDUSTRY
PLACEMENTS**

**EMPLOYER
GUIDE**



HM Government

Contents

ABOUT THIS GUIDE	3
INTRODUCTION TO T LEVEL INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS	3
Benefits to employers.....	3
SECTION 1: EMPLOYER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE PLACEMENT	4
Placement planning and student readiness.....	4
Student sign up, working hours and industry placement costs.....	6
Legal requirements.....	7
Summary of roles and responsibilities: pre-placement	8
SECTION 2: EMPLOYER ROLES AND REPONSIBILITIES DURING THE PLACEMENT	9
Induction and supervision of student.....	9
Student performance and progress	10
If something goes wrong	11
Summary of key roles and responsibilities: during placement.....	11
SECTION 3: EMPLOYER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITES AT THE END OF THE PLACEMENT	13
Student industry placement completion.....	13
Steps to take after the industry placement	13
Summary of key roles and responsibilities: post placement.....	14
MYTH BUSTER	15
USEFUL RESOURCES	17

T-LEVELS

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

This guide is for employers who are interested in hosting T Level industry placements. It is a condensed version of the [T Level Industry Placement Delivery guidance](#), which outlines the roles and responsibilities for employers and providers in delivering high quality industry placements.

INTRODUCTION TO T LEVEL INDUSTRY PLACEMENTS

What are T Levels?

T Levels are a new, 2-year Level 3 qualification for 16- to 19-year-olds. Designed with employers, each T Level is equivalent to 3 A levels and helps young people develop the knowledge, attitude and practical skills to progress into skilled employment, an apprenticeship or further study. For information, visit the [T Levels employer website](#).

Why is the industry placement important?

Every T Level student must complete an industry placement that lasts a minimum of 315 hours (approximately 45 days). This is to provide young people the invaluable opportunity to put their learning, knowledge and skills into practice in a real workplace environment. Industry placements also give employers a unique opportunity to develop new talent and help young people become work ready.

BENEFITS TO EMPLOYERS

- Attract motivated young people to your business, bringing in imaginative and new ideas
- Improve the recruitment pipeline for your business
- Address local and national skills gaps by helping young people develop the skills your industry needs
- Develop existing staff's mentoring and management skills
- Build a more diverse and creative workforce
- Play an important role in the local community
- Build partnerships with local training and education providers
- Save recruitment costs by providing the opportunity to see what the young person can offer, on a no obligation employment basis

“With the ongoing skills shortages in both the construction trades and professions, industry placements give us a chance to see and work with young people as a shortcut in the recruitment process. Having spent nearly three months working with us, they are already part of the team and understand the company and how we work.”

Bruce Boughton, People Development Manager, Lovell Partnerships

“T Levels have the potential to greatly improve technical education in the UK. With more focus being placed on ‘on the job’ experience through the industry placements, employers will be receiving students who are far better prepared, either to go straight into a role or to join a Higher or Degree Apprenticeship.”

Cian Short, Group Apprentice Manager, Bakkavor



SECTION 1: EMPLOYER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES BEFORE THE PLACEMENT

DfE is committed to making employers' experience of delivering industry placements as easy as possible. The key to a successful placement is in the preparation. We encourage employers to work in partnership with providers, from designing the structure of the placement to selecting the most suitable candidate for your business, to gain the most from the opportunity

This section and subsequent sections provide answers to the frequently asked questions about employer involvement in preparing for and delivering high-quality placements.

Placement planning and student readiness

Will planning for and hosting a placement involve a lot of effort?

As with any new starter, there will be some planning and paperwork, however providers will support you with the practical and administrative tasks to help make the process as streamlined as possible. This will include organising the student selection process, arranging the review meetings, guiding you through the relevant paperwork and advising on reasonable adjustments. Providers will look to you for your industry expertise when planning the structure and content of the placement to ensure you, and the student, gets the maximum value from the experience. Providers will also make sure that you are complying with the health and safety guidelines prior to, and during, the placement.

Will students be work-ready from day one?

Students will be suitably prepared for the workplace by undergoing appropriate work-preparation training as part of their course prior to starting their placements. All students will bring a good level of technical knowledge and skills they have learnt in the classroom, to apply in the workplace. For some students this will be their first experience of being in the workplace, so as a minimum, providers will make sure they have the right work ethic and a good understanding of the professional behaviours that employers expect in the workplace.

How much industry knowledge and skills will students have?

T Levels are more substantial than most technical qualifications, with longer teaching time and more occupationally focused skills and knowledge which have been set by employers as essential for employment. The aim of the industry placement is to help students to apply and develop the skills and knowledge that they have learnt in the classroom when they go out on their placement, which will help them to become 'work ready'.

T-LEVELS

What activities and tasks should a student do as part of their placement?

You will be expected to work with providers to plan the content of the placement, completing an Industry Placement Objectives Template. This is to determine the main objectives and key activities students will undertake during their placement. We have published sample objective templates for most T Level specialisms to help you and providers design high-quality placements and make sure students are given stretching tasks at the appropriate level, while ensuring the placement content reflects what you can offer. This is the point where you should discuss with the provider any specific minimum starting requirements and/or prior knowledge (e.g. health and safety checks, immunisations, knowledge of specific IT systems), so providers can cover these requirements as part of the students' placement preparation.

When do placements take place during the year and can I influence this?

You will need to agree with providers the most appropriate placement working pattern, whether this is a block of time, a series of day releases or a combination. You can refer to the [industry placement models guidance](#) for advice. The timing of placements should be planned at the right stage(s) of the students' T Level course. Most placements are likely to take place in the second year of their course, when students are familiar with the specialist content of their course and have the required technical skills to make a positive contribution in the workplace.

Is there a fixed model that the industry placement has to follow?

We recognise that 'one size doesn't fit all' so we have published a list of general and route-specific [models and approaches](#) for industry placements to ensure placements are accessible and meaningful for all students and ensure placements are deliverable across different industries. For example, students studying for a Construction or Engineering & Manufacturing T Level can start their placement in an employer's training centre or established skills hub for 105 hours and then complete the remainder of the placement hours in a live site environment. You can discuss the most appropriate approach with providers.

Can placements be undertaken with more than one employer?

Yes, a placement can be split across 2 employers, where this is considered necessary for 'breadth of content' and/or is beneficial for students. You can discuss this with providers. More information about 'sharing' a placement with another employer can be found [here](#).

Who needs to look after students during their placement?

You should identify an appropriate line manager and/or supervisor for the students, as well as additional support staff where appropriate. This should ideally be someone who has experience of training others within the specialist area. They must have the capacity to hold regular meetings with students to provide them with feedback, provide day-to-day supervision and attend the formal review meetings with the provider i.e. at the beginning, middle and end of the placement. We recommend you refer to the employer support package, useful for employers hosting a placement for the first time.

T-LEVELS

Student sign up, working hours and industry placement costs

What assurances do I have that a student will be reliable and motivated?

The industry placement component of the T Level is the unique selling point for students. Students understand the importance of using the placement to develop their skills and knowledge and show their potential to prospective employers, and as an important addition to their CV. T Level students must have demonstrated a firm commitment to completing their industry placement when enrolling on the course. In advance of the placement, students will have undertaken workplace preparation and have a clear understanding of the progress they must make towards their learning goals during their placement to complete it successfully, and therefore achieve their overall T Level.

Prior to the placement commencing, all students are expected to sign an [industry placement agreement](#), which acts as a formal agreement between students, the provider and employer and contains students' roles and responsibilities. It outlines the expected standards relating to technical skills and work-based behaviours that students must display in order to complete their placement. Employers and providers are also expected to sign the agreement to show their commitment to their respective roles and responsibilities.

Are there any restrictions to the working hours students can do on their placement?

Placements should be organised in line with the normal requirements of the industry, which may be outside the academic timetable. Placement hours must align with the [Working Time Regulations](#), particularly if students are undertaking a block placement, where they could be working the equivalent of full-time hours. Providers will plan placements to ensure students are not exceeding the maximum number of allowable daily hours and consider students' independent and classroom-based study time as well as their outside responsibilities. Students must:

- be limited to 8 hours of working time a day and 40 hours maximum per week
- not be permitted to work between 10pm and 6am, or employers can agree to change this to between 11pm and 7am
- have a 12-hour rest period between each working day
- have a 30-minute rest break if working for more than 4.5 hours
- have 2 days weekly rest

Do I have to pay students?

You are under no obligation to pay students but can choose to do so if they wish. This is because T Level industry placements are about providing students with high quality, meaningful training, not work. You can refer to [making payments to industry placement students](#).

Do I need to cover the costs of student expenses?

You can choose to contribute towards the cost of students' travel, lunch, and clothing/equipment. This is entirely up to you. Providers can also cover these costs to ensure students are not financially disadvantaged by undertaking their placements.

T-LEVELS

Will I be reimbursed for the costs associated with hosting a placement?

You should speak to the provider about the tangible costs you are likely to incur, such as software, hardware, PPE, specialist equipment that students will use on their placement, and also the cost of Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS), because a lot of these costs can be covered by the provider. There should only be a minimal initial outlay for employers hosting a placement and the small investment in time is worth the tangible benefits.

In addition, a temporary employer incentive fund is available for employers hosting T Level industry placements that start before 31 July 2022. Each industry placement delivered can attract a £1000 incentive payment. More details can be found [here](#).

Legal requirements

What are the health & safety guidelines for industry placements?

Providers and employers must work together to ensure student safety during the industry placement. As part of their pre-placement checks, providers need to satisfy themselves that employers have up-to-date policies and sufficient risk management arrangements in place to ensure a safe working environment for students. Providers should also carry out standard due diligence checks on employers, keeping the checks proportionate to the level of risk. As an employer, you should follow the guidelines on the [Health and Safety Executive website](#) and also the [legal compliance for industry placements](#) that covers DBS, insurance and health and safety requirements.

What are the rules around student safeguarding?

Students should be treated with the same degree of professionalism and duty of care as regular employees. Legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 apply, including not using language or behaviors which could be discriminatory. All employers are expected to:

- provide a safe and welcoming learning environment for all students
- have a zero-tolerance policy of bullying and harassment
- report all incidents to the provider
- be alert to the possibility of physical/emotional abuse among employees and students
- ensure that any agreed reasonable adjustments have been put in place

How can I protect my business from consequential losses if a student makes a mistake or is injured in the workplace?

By complying with the health and safety legislation and having up-to-date Employer's Liability and Public Liability insurance, you will be covered for any potential loss or liability caused by or to the student in relation to the placement. If you are in any doubt, contact your insurer. More information can be viewed on the [HSE webpages](#). As a precautionary measure, providers will advise you how to address safeguarding concerns that may arise during the placement and provide you with the student safeguarding contact.

T-LEVELS

What are the additional responsibilities regarding students with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND)?

Students may have SEND, which could range from dyslexia to a physical disability, to being on the autistic spectrum. Providers will invest time in their preparation and make sure they are ready and fully supported to enter the workplace. You will be informed of the specific needs of individual students and you should consider any reasonable adjustments before the placement begins and keep them under review during the placement. This guide helps you [support industry placements for students with SEND](#).

How should I deal with commercial confidentiality?

In some industries, students may be exposed to commercially sensitive or confidential information during their placement. If it is normal practice to put clauses in place to protect the business, then it is recommended that you follow the same principles for students, as you do with employees. You can draw up a confidentiality statement for students to sign. Although not legally binding, it could give you peace of mind and confirm to students how important confidentiality is to your business.

SUMMARY OF ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES: PRE-PLACEMENT

Employer responsibilities checklist	
1	Placement structure and learning goals: work collaboratively with providers to develop the students' industry placement objectives template. This will include a set of stretching learning goals, the agreed working pattern and key activities students will undertake on placement, and the required prior knowledge and skills
2	Health and safety compliance: comply with health and safety legislation and maintain up-to-date employer's liability and public liability insurance to cover students and any potential loss or liability caused by or to the students in relation to the placement
3	Industry placement agreement: adhere to the guidelines set out in this guide and make every effort to provide a meaningful placement experience for students
4	Student safety: ensure the appropriate safeguards are in place to ensure a safe working environment for students
5	Reasonable adjustments: consider the reasonable adjustments required by students with SEND and keep these under review during the placement
6	Line manager or task manager: identify an appropriate staff member to task manage or supervise students while on placement. This should ideally be someone who has experience in training others within the specialist area
7	Get to know your student: invite students to the business premises or give them a virtual tour and introduce them to the team to ease their transition into the workplace



SECTION 2: EMPLOYER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES DURING THE PLACEMENT

Employers have primary responsibility for the **health and safety** of students and employers and providers have a joint responsibility for the **wellbeing** of students during the placement. Employers can expect the provider to plan regular contact time with students to check their health, safety, welfare and progress whilst on placement.

During the placement, employers will have a named provider contact to support both the employer and the student and ensure the placement is meeting the expectations of both parties. Employers should seek the providers' advice or assistance to help resolve any issues quickly.

Induction and supervision of student

What should a students' induction involve?

By law, employers are responsible for ensuring a safe working environment for students, which includes conducting a full workplace induction on day one of the placement to cover all health and safety aspects of the workplace. An example induction checklist can be found [here](#). As part of the induction, you should outline the organisation's policies and procedures that students must adhere to whilst on the working premises, including any rules of a legal, commercially sensitive or confidential nature. Students can also undertake mandatory work-based training that other employees would usually complete to help with their induction into the organisation.

How much support and/or supervision will students need?

We expect that students will be able to add value to your business from day one with the occupation-specific knowledge and skills they will have gained during their T Level course and the work preparation activities completed pre-placement. Hear from other employers about their [positive experiences](#) of delivering industry placements.

Some students may have limited experience of the real-life pressures and responsibilities of being in a working environment. However, assigning a supportive line manager will help students develop their skills and build their work-based confidence. Adjusting the level of supervision will allow students to develop their technical skills independently, or with minimal support, such as allowing them to take ownership of live projects or routine tasks will help keep them engaged and motivated. You can refer to [helping students to learn](#) and [managing young people who are new to the workplace](#) for further advice.

Do students also need to have a workplace mentor?

In addition to assigning a line manager, it is recommended that you also assign students a workplace mentor. Having access to this type of informal working relationship can help students settle in more quickly and provide them with someone, akin to a peer, to communicate with, enhancing their overall experience in the workplace. Good practice

T-LEVELS

suggests that qualified individuals who were previously apprentices in the same organisation can make good candidates for this role. We would recommend that you access the [mentoring support package](#), which has been developed specifically for T Level industry placement mentors.

Student performance and progress

How should students track their progress on their placement?

Students are provided with an industry placement logbook to track their progress against their learning objectives throughout their placement. The recommended template can be found in the 'Useful Resources' section of this guide. You should provide opportunities for students to reflect on their progress and update their logbook on a regular basis.

How do I keep a record of students' placement hours?

Students logbooks contain timesheets that they must complete on a weekly basis. Students should share their logbooks with their line manager so that they can apply light-touch monitoring and check the hours recorded are a true reflection of the hours worked.

How do I measure student progress on their placement?

The [progress indicators](#) set out the expected standards relating to the technical skills and work-based behaviours that students should develop on the placement. These should be used by providers and employers to help inform their review of students' progress towards their learning goals throughout the placement. The progress indicators should also be used to highlight where students are performing well and identify areas for improvement.

How often should I review student performance on their placement?

Providers will conduct a minimum of 3 review meetings with students during their placement to check their welfare and monitor progress towards their learning goals. It is good practice for these meetings to be face-to-face, however, providers have the discretion to decide on the best format of the meetings. These should be constructive conversations and line managers should also be present and prepared to discuss how students are performing, based on their observations.

It is also good practice for line managers to provide students with constructive feedback throughout the placement, rather than waiting for formal review points. This can improve motivation, gives students the chance to act quickly to rectify mistakes and allows them to continuously develop whilst on the placement.

What should I do if students are underperforming and not making the expected progress?

Where students are not meeting the conditions set out in their industry placement agreement or where you have concerns about their progress, you should contact the provider, as early as possible to agree a course of action. Providers will be expected to take action to resolve any issues quickly and with full transparency, so students are clear about the necessary areas for improvement.

T-LEVELS

If something goes wrong

What happens if a student misbehaves or doesn't show up?

You should raise any concerns about students and their timekeeping or attendance with the provider, within the same day as any unauthorised absence. The provider should handle any issues regarding student behaviour, sensitively and in a timely manner.

What happens if students are sick?

Students will be advised by their tutor to inform their line manager as soon as possible if they are unable to attend their placement due to sickness. Up to 35 hours sickness over the duration of the placement can be included in their total placement hours (315 hours).

How do I manage a student who displays consistent poor behaviour?

In very rare circumstances where you have concerns about student behaviour or conduct in the workplace, you should contact the provider so that any issues can be addressed as soon as possible. The provider will manage these issues through their behaviour policy and any underlying issues addressed with students through further support/mentoring, to help students continue their placement. However, providers must support an employer's decision to withdraw their placement offer if the situation remains unsatisfactory.

What should I do if I can no longer offer a placement?

You should alert any issues/challenges regarding your ability to offer a placement, directly with the provider. This could be due to factors such as going into administration, or the workplace no longer being considered a safe place to work. If the situation is unresolvable, you have the right to withdraw your offer and the provider will need to find alternative arrangements for students to complete their placement.

Summary of key roles and responsibilities: during placement

Employer responsibilities checklist	
1	Student induction: ensure students are suitably inducted to the workplace
2	Set stretching tasks: ensure students are given stretching tasks and/or projects to support their development of technical and employability skills, relevant to their course content
3	Legal duties: ensure compliance with the legal duties in the Equality Act 2010
4	Student progress: hold regular meetings with students to review their progress and provide them with regular feedback to help improve their performance
5	Student review meetings: actively contribute to students' review meetings with the provider to review students progress towards their learning goals, highlight good performance and identify areas for improvement
6	Placement issues or concerns: raise any concerns with providers about students' attendance, behaviour, or performance on the placement

T-LEVELS

7	Student timesheets: check and sign off students' timesheets on a weekly basis to ensure the hours recorded are a true reflection of the hours worked
8	Student completion of logbook: ensure students have adequate time to reflect on their progress and update their logbook. You should verify that the documentation is an accurate representation of their progress / achievements
9	SEND student access needs: keep under review any reasonable adjustments required by students with SEND

SECTION 3: EMPLOYER ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES AT THE END OF THE PLACEMENT

Employers are expected to provide feedback to the providers on student progress and behaviour throughout their placements and at the end of the placement. This will help providers make an informed decision about whether the student has satisfactorily completed their industry placement, based on whether they have demonstrated sufficient progress towards their learning goals and met the minimum number of placement hours required.

It is important that employers provide students with an appraisal of their performance whilst on placement, to reflect students' achievements with them.

Student industry placement completion

How are students assessed as completing their placements?

In order to complete their placement, students must demonstrate sufficient progress towards their learning goals, (guided by the [progress indicators](#)); have worked directly to an external employer; and have been on placement for the minimum of 315 hours. Providers are ultimately responsible for deciding whether students have successfully completed their placements but they must take on board your feedback.

Is there an end of placement assessment that students have to complete?

No, there is not a compulsory assessment that students must complete at the end of the placement. However, you can request that students to do a task, such as a short presentation about their placement experience, as an opportunity for students to reflect on their placement and what they have learnt.

Steps to take after the industry placement

Will I need to sign any forms when students have completed the placement?

Once you and the provider have agreed students have successfully completed their industry placements, you will be asked to sign a completion declaration form to confirm that they agree students have met all the completion criteria.

Will I need to provide a reference for students?

You do not have to provide students with a reference, although you can if you like. However, you will be expected to provide an appraisal of students' performance, including how they have demonstrated progress towards their learning goals. The [employer appraisal template](#) can be used, or it can be adapted locally.

Can I offer students an apprenticeship/paid job?

Yes. However, it is very important that students complete their industry placement alongside all other T Level components and be awarded a T Level certificate for their

T-LEVELS

onward progression. So please allow students to finish their T Level before starting a paid position or an apprenticeship.

Can I provide feedback to the provider about their experience?

Yes, and we encourage this. Providers should actively seek feedback from you about your experience of the end-to-end process to help enhance their future placement provision. You can use the [end of placement review form](#) to provide feedback to providers.

Summary of key roles and responsibilities: post placement

Employer responsibilities checklist	
1	Final review meeting: contribute to the students' final review meeting and the provider's decision about completion based on student's overall performance against their learning goals
2	Sign-off placement completion: sign the industry placement completion declaration in the student logbooks to confirm students have met the completion criteria
3	Complete student appraisal: provide an appraisal of the students' performance on the placement
4	Offer of employment: if offering students paid positions, allow them to finish all their components of their T Level so that they are not disadvantaged in their long-term education
5	Employer feedback of provider: provide feedback to the provider about the overall experience

MYTH BUSTER

Industry placements contravene the modern slavery act

This is not true. The requirement for students to undertake industry placements as part of a T Level does not fall within the definitions of forced or compulsory labour. Whilst industry placements are an integral part of the T Level programme for students to receive full T Level certification, students have the freedom to withdraw at any time and will instead receive a statement of achievement for the T Level components they have achieved.

Employers can deliver industry placements virtually

T Levels must include genuine experience of the workplace to give students a high-quality placement experience and as such, the Department's position is that placements cannot take place virtually. However, up to a maximum of 35 hours of work taster activities can be counted towards students' placement hours, which can include virtual activities. Work taster activities must be delivered in conjunction with employers and their purpose is to help students gain a better understanding of the industry and prepare them for their placement. They can also be used to help employers assess a learner's suitability before committing to a placement. Work taster activities can include activities such as job-shadowing, site visits, traditional 'work experience', introductory meetings with employees, virtual tours of the workplace, completion of on-the-job mandatory training and induction to the workplace company policies.

I'm offering other programmes so I can't offer industry placements as well

Many employers offer a wide range of work based learning opportunities, including T Levels, apprenticeships and Traineeships. The recent introduction of the Kickstart programme is another offer for employers to consider. Each work-based learning programme serves different purposes and allows employers to offer opportunities that best fit their business needs, whilst offering individuals different progression routes to a successful career. For example, the Kickstart programme offers young people a 6-month work placement aimed at those on Universal Credit and at risk of long term unemployment, whereas, the industry placement forms an integral part of the T Level technical education programme, for students aiming to progress into the sector. Both can be delivered simultaneously.

To find out more about T Levels, or other work-based programmes, contact NAS on 08000 150 600 or email tlevel.placement@education.gov.uk.

T-LEVELS

T Level students can only progress into skilled employment

There are lots of progressions routes available to T Level graduates. The primary aim of a T Level is entry to skilled employment within a specific occupation or sector, however T Levels will also provide good preparation for degrees (with the same UCAS points as 3 A levels) and other higher education courses, including the newly launched Higher Technical Qualifications. Some T Level graduates may want to progress to an apprenticeship at level 4 or higher, building on the knowledge and skills they have gained during their T Level. For some occupational specialisms, T Level graduates may need additional specialist training before moving onto a Level 4 apprenticeship, that might be best delivered through a Level 3 apprenticeship or below. In these instances, learning gained through their T Level will be accounted for and may reduce the duration of the apprenticeship.

ROUTE-SPECIFIC ASSUMPTIONS

I am not a digital company, so I cannot offer digital placements

Digital placements can take place in any organisation that has a digital service, which almost every organisation has, whether it is their IT department, marketing where they manage websites, intranets and social media or even data warehousing and interrogation. The key is to think '**digital skills**' rather than 'digital company'. Non-digital companies will still give students the opportunity to put their skills into practice, gain valuable experience of the workplace and identify broader applications for their skills. They could even have the opportunity to use their cutting-edge knowledge and ideas to make a real and lasting difference.

I can't have students in clinical settings because they are under-18

There is no legal basis or liability insurance that prevents under 18s from being allowed in clinical healthcare settings. Instead, it is a local management decision to impose age restrictions. To minimise workplace risks, hospital departments and NHS healthcare providers are encouraged to conduct risk assessment and take sensible steps to reduce potential hazards and protect your students' safety and your existing workforce. Further information can be found in ['A Look at Placements in Healthcare during COVID-19'](#)

USEFUL RESOURCES

Topic	Resources
T Level Industry Placement Delivery Guide	<p>The T Level Industry Placement Delivery guidance outlines the roles and responsibilities for providers and employers in delivering high-quality placements in greater detail. Providers should direct employers to important information in the guidance.</p> <p>Templates included in the guidance that employers may find useful:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student industry placement agreement • Sample industry placement objective templates for all technical routes can be found here, listed alphabetically underneath Annex I • Student logbook template • Student progress indicators • Due Diligence checklist • Student completion declaration form
Employer support package	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The employer support package includes a range of support and resources to help employers deliver industry placements across all industries.
Guidance on management and mentoring of students on placement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Line manager guide • Helping students to learn • Managing young people who are new to the workplace • Effective mentoring for industry placement students • Online support for employers mentoring students on industry placements
Health and safety requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Getting insurance for your business • Health and Safety Executive guidance • Codes of Practice and technical guidance issued by the Equality and Human Rights Commission
Supporting students with SEND	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting industry placements with students with SEND • Disability Confident and CIPD guidance
Employer T Level website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More about T Levels • How it works that describes the very simple steps if you are at the beginning of your industry placement journey.

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