Guide to the T Level Capital Fund (TLCF) Wave 5

November 2022

Contents

Table of figures

1 Overview

T Levels are technical study programmes that sit alongside apprenticeships within a reformed skills training system. The reforms are at the heart of a skills partnership between government, business, and education and training providers – a partnership that will create the skills revolution needed to meet the needs of the economy. We have put in place the T Level Capital Fund (TLCF) to help support providers to deliver T Levels as part of their curriculum.

The first three T Levels were successfully launched in September 2020, with the first cohort of students achieving a 92% pass rate. A further seven courses launched in September 2021, and six more T Level courses have started in September 2022.

In 2023 we will introduce a further six T Levels in Agriculture, Land Management and Production; Catering; Craft and Design; Hair, Beauty and Aesthetics; Media Broadcast and Production; and Legal Services. At this stage all providers with a 16 to 19 funding contract will be able to deliver T Levels. However, providers with an Ofsted rating of Inadequate or Requires Improvement, and those with no formal Ofsted rating can only offer some of the available routes from 2023.[1] All providers will be able to offer any of the 23 T Levels available from 2024. The Marketing T Level will be available for all providers to deliver from 2025.

We have committed significant capital funding to ensure the new T Levels are delivered successfully from the start. To date, we have awarded grants of nearly £200 million through the Buildings and Facilities Improvement Fund to providers delivering T Level courses between 2020 and 2023, and almost £100m more through the Specialist Equipment Allocation. This funding is ensuring young people have access to industry standard equipment and high-quality facilities to gain the skills and knowledge employer's demand.

T Levels Capital Wave 5 is intended to support providers delivering in September 2024 to purchase specialist equipment and to fund new builds or refurbishments. For this wave we have over £150 million capital funding available.

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[1] Providers with an Inadequate Ofsted rating can deliver: Construction; Digital; Education; Health and Science. Providers with a Requires Improvement rating or no formal Ofsted rating can deliver: Construction; Digital; Education; Health and Science; Legal, Finance and Accounting; Business and Administration; Engineering and Manufacturing.

1.1 About the T Level Capital Fund (TLCF)

The aim of the TLCF is to help eligible[2] further education providers develop world-class facilities for the delivery of T Levels. There are two elements to the fund:

➢ the Specialist Equipment Allocation (SEA), which will be awarded via a formula to providers delivering a T Level route for the first time in 2024/25. You **do not** need to apply for SEA and you will be notified of your allocation in early 2024. More information can be found here; and

➢ the Buildings and Facilities Improvement Grant (BFIG), which eligible providers can apply for through a bidding round.

This guide is primarily for eligible providers wishing to apply for a **BFIG** to support T Level delivery in 2024/25. We will also consider applications that include facilities for T Levels being delivered for the first time in 2025/26, if these are a small part of a larger project and the project as a whole will be completed by September 2024.

This grant is not available for independent training providers.

1.2 Important dates for BFIG bidding process

Milestones	Dates
Launch of funding round: Information for applicants released	22 November 2022
Deadline for all BFIG applicants to submit applications	12 noon on Friday 3 February 2023
Project assessments	February – May 2023
Notify applicants of outcomes	Summer 2023

Table 1: Important dates for BFIG

We must receive your BFIG application via the application portal at or before **12 noon on 3 February 2023.** We will not accept late applications. Please note that to be able to submit your application, you will need to have a registered account on the department's eTendering portal. We encourage you to register and access the application form and supporting templates as soon as possible. Please refer to section 4.1 on how to do this.

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[2] See section 3.1 Applying for BFIG

2 Specialist Equipment Allocation (SEA)

SEA is a one-off payment made to all providers who begin delivery of a T Level route(s) for the first time in September 2024. Your allocation will be based on a calculation of the T Level route(s) you are delivering and your projected student numbers.

You do not need to apply for SEA. If you submit a BFIG application, we ask that you complete the attached SEA template to tell us what your equipment needs will be in relation to your proposed BFIG project. We use this information to help inform our decision on the amount of SEA we award you and other providers – the figure you provide will not necessarily correspond to your final allocation.[3] The cost of the specialist equipment you will need **should not** be included in your overall BFIG costs. Failing to complete the 'specialist equipment' template will not preclude you receiving SEA funding or affect your chances of being successful in your BFIG application. The outcome of your BFIG application also does not affect your eligibility for SEA funding.

We expect to pay the allocation for Wave 5 in Spring 2024, though it is possible this timing may change. You can read more about the SEA [here](#).

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[3] We will use this information to help inform our decision on the amount of SEA we award.

3 Applying for a BFIG

You should apply for a BFIG if you require capital funding to improve facilities to support the delivery of T Levels. For example, if your buildings are in poor condition or you can demonstrate that existing facilities are not suitable for delivering T Level courses.

The BFIG gives you scope and flexibility to be innovative in your approach to enable you to deliver capital projects which will best support you to teach T Levels as part of your wider curriculum, as well as attract and retain students. This includes looking holistically at how your T Level capital project will add value and work alongside your existing estate and any other capital projects you plan on delivering. You may also be applying for other central government capital funding, for example, to improve the condition of your estate. If so, you should think about how this project will be delivered alongside the other projects if you are successful in your applications, especially if they are happening on the same site. You should also think about how you will achieve value for money, efficiency, and effective use of your estate across the various projects you intend to deliver. This should be included in your summary estate plan document (see section 4.3b).

The BFIG process will consider applications at a T Level route level, such as Construction or Digital, regardless of the number of T Levels you will be delivering within that route. You should think about the number of T Levels you will want to deliver in that route, even if you do not deliver all of them from the first year, as you will only be eligible for funding for each route once per institution.[4]

Please remember that the amount of capital funding you are asking for should be proportionate to the number of T Levels you are planning to introduce overall, not just from 2024/25, and the size of your anticipated student cohort in steady state.

We have set out below the maximum grant that is available for the different T Level routes for each institution. The maximum overall grant award to each institution is capped at £4 million per site. Where a single provider has multiple sites in different parts of the country, they can apply for projects on different sites with a combined grant value of more than £4 million. However, we will only approve combined grants above this value to a single institution if we are satisfied students could not reasonably travel between the different sites in scope and that the applicant will have the capacity to deliver all approved projects in the time available. We have also set a minimum project value of £250,000 per application. We will not assess projects of an overall value below this. The minimum threshold is per application and if your project covers multiple routes the minimum value is still £250,000.

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[4] Where a single institution is delivering the same T Level route across multiple sites, you may be able to receive funding for projects on multiple sites, subject to us being satisfied that students would not reasonably be able to access the facilities on other sites. See section 3.2.

T Level route	Minimum project value threshold	Maximum grant
Agriculture, environmental and animal care	£250,000	£1,150,000
Business and administration	£250,000	£650,000
Catering and hospitality	£250,000	£1,150,000
Creative and design	£250,000	£750,000
Construction	£250,000	£1,600,000
Digital	£250,000	£750,000
Education and childcare	£250,000	£600,000
Engineering and manufacturing	£250,000	£1,600,000
Hair and beauty	£250,000	£750,000
Health and science	£250,000	£750,000
Legal, finance, and accounting	£250,000	£650,000

Table 2: Project value and grant thresholds for each T Level route

3.1 Applying for BFIG

You are eligible to apply if you have registered to deliver T Levels in the 2024/25 academic year and are on this list of Providers selected to deliver T Levels that was updated in September 2022; **and**

- o You are a further education college, sixth form college, higher education institution, school, academy, or university technical college; **and**

- o You have not previously received a BFIG for delivery of the T Level route at the institution/campus you are applying for in this round.

The BFIG is not available for independent training providers.

We expect BFIG projects in this round to primarily support courses you have already told us you intend to deliver from the 2024/25 academic year. We will also consider applications that include some provision for other T Levels, including those you are not starting until 2025. These applications will only be accepted where 2024 provision makes up the substantial majority of the works, and where you will be able to deliver the entire project in time to support T Level starts in September 2024. You will also need to demonstrate that you have plans in place to recruit learners and employers across all T Levels supported by the project. If we do not think you have suitable plans in place, we will not approve the project.

3.1.1 Multi Academy Trusts (MAT)

Where an academy is part of a Multi Academy Trust (MAT), the MAT will need to apply on behalf of the academy. For each academy, you may submit one application per academy per route, or, alternatively, you can submit one application for a project that covers multiple routes (providing you have not previously received funding for those particular route/s).

3.1.2 College corporations

Where a college corporation has multiple campuses in its group as a result of mergers, the corporation (as the remaining legal entity) will need to apply. The former college entities cannot apply individually though we will fund applications for the same route on different sites if we agree that it is necessary to deliver that T Level on both sites. The corporation will need to confirm that the campus has not previously received a BFIG for the route/s.

3.2 Expectations for your BFIG project

This section sets out factors for you to consider when deciding how to structure your application for BFIG.

BFIG can be used to fund two categories of projects. You need to make it clear in your application which type of project you are proposing and ensure you have provided the relevant information to support your application.

1. **Estates improvement project** – this is a project that will improve the condition of your estate. This includes refurbishment and/or remodelling but will not increase your estate's gross internal floor area. You may still include elements of expansion in your

improvement project if you can show there is no increase in gross internal floor area (as a result of demolition or disposal[5] where you build the new space).

2. **Estates improvement project with expansion** – this is a project that will increase your gross internal floor area; this could be through addition of a mezzanine or an extension to existing space, as well as new buildings or acquisitions. You will need to show why you need the increase in space to accommodate T Level students. We will need to understand this in the context of your existing estate and student numbers. You must need the increase to address existing overcrowding issues; we will not support projects where your growth is the key goal. Projects with expansion must meet the same criteria as estates improvement projects and are also subject to an assessment of whether the additional space is needed. If we do not think that you have justified the need for additional space, we may decide not to fund the project.

In each round of BFIG applications, eligible providers can submit more than one application but only one of these can include an expansion.

Depending on how many T Level routes you plan to deliver, you may want to submit one application covering multiple routes or make one application per route. If you decide to submit separate individual projects, we will assess them independently of each other. There is no guarantee that if one project is successful the other one will be too. If you cannot deliver the project as a stand-alone project, then you should combine them into a single application, and we will assess on this basis.

If you are applying for two or more routes, you can combine the maximum grant allowances accordingly. We will treat this as one project and will assess it as such. Where you combine routes, we expect you to be able to demonstrate that the grant requested is proportionate to the actual scale of the works being undertaken to support each route and the number of students you expect to have for each route in steady state.

Providers with multiple campuses can apply for BFIG funding to support delivery of the same T Level route across different campuses, where it would not be reasonable for students to move between sites to access facilities. We expect providers with multiple campuses to take factors such as accessibility and location into consideration when applying for capital funding i.e. if you have multiple campuses within a reasonable travel distance, we expect you to decide which of these sites would be best placed to deliver the route/s you are applying for, rather than requesting capital funding for all sites.

Where you can justify the need for facilities on both campuses, we will apply the grant allowances separately for each campus, so you can apply for the maximum grant

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[5] Mothballing of existing accommodation or transferring existing space to another institution in the same corporation or trust group does not count as reducing floor area.

allowance for each route for each site. If we do not think you have justified the need to deliver facilities for the same route on more than one site, we may decide not to fund the project.

Your project(s) should be completed by September 2024, ready for all the T Levels you intend to deliver within the T Level route you have applied for. In exceptional circumstances we may consider applications for projects completing after September 2024. We would expect you to provide sound justification for later completion and set out in your application how you will accommodate students ahead of the project completing.

You may apply for part funding of a larger project which includes estate improvements beyond the T Level curriculum. In such cases, you should plan the work so that the T Level element is a distinct phase of the overall project and will be completed by September 2024, even if the overall project completes at a later date. Your application should only relate to the T Level element of the project. For example, your cost breakdown should be for the T Level facilities only. If you are including documents about the larger project (for example, design information or reports), you should make it clear in your application which elements are included in the T Level portion of the work so we can understand how this relates to planned T Level delivery and expected student numbers.

We expect capital investment to be for buildings that the applicant owns as a freehold acquisition or on a long-term lease (125+ years) at a peppercorn or nominal rent. It is highly unlikely that commercial leases will provide the security of tenure to satisfy the value for money requirements, therefore, where possible, freehold acquisitions or long leaseholds are considered more suitable. In exceptional circumstances we may consider alternative tenure arrangements, but only where there is strong justification that it is the best value for money option available to you. In such cases we will consider a range of factors, including overall life expectancy of the works, the scope and total value of the works, how confident we are that the premises will remain in educational use, and the amount of grant requested.

Where land outside your estate is required, DfE will need to be satisfied with the proposed terms of the land/premises and acquisition or lease and need to secure strong protections for its investment. If we are not satisfied about the tenure arrangements for the proposed site of the project, we will not approve your application.

You must develop your project to the point where the costs, benefits, and delivery risks are clear and realistic. This should be to at least Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) stage 2, or equivalent standard, with supporting cost and designs, including floor plans and elevations, as well as an outline specification of works and materials. You must be able to commit to a firm budget and delivery plan, with facilities ready for courses to start in September 2024. We may also make our grant offer conditional on us receiving further information from you about your project before contract award.

You may procure consultants and contractors to support you in preparing your application but must abide by relevant public procurement rules. Any costs you incur ahead of grant approval are entirely at your risk as we are unable to give any assurances that your project will be approved. You must be able to demonstrate these costs are essential to the delivery of the project and your project costs should not include any costs incurred before the launch of this bidding round on 22 November 2022 (see section 3.4).

3.3 Project eligibility requirements

To be eligible to receive BFIG funding, your project must be:

- delivering space to be used primarily for publicly funded T Level education provision for students between the ages of 16 and 19 years for the specific route or routes you have applied for;
- supporting delivery of a T Level route for which you have not already received BFIG funding at the same site;
- for refurbishment works and/or creation of new space, which aim to provide and/or improve a capital asset held by you in freehold, on a long lease (125+ years) or equivalent arrangements;
- planned for completion and occupation by September 2024; and
- delivered in compliance with all applicable statutory duties,[6] including relevant public procurement rules.

In addition, if you are applying for an expansion project, you must be able to demonstrate the need for the additional space to address existing overcrowding and accommodate T Level students.

3.4 Ineligible projects and costs

Projects or elements of projects that are not eligible for funding include the following, but this is not an exhaustive list:

- Estate improvement that is not demonstrably intended for the provision of T Level courses for 16-19 year-olds, for example large atria, accommodation for non-T Level

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[6] You have a duty to make reasonable adjustments in relation to disabled students (i.e., avoiding as far as possible by reasonable means the disadvantage which a disabled student experiences because of their disability.) As part of the application form, we will ask you about your plans to make T Level courses accessible to a wide range of learners, including those with special educational needs and disabilities.

activities, and commercial activities not related to government funded provision or where the estate is being let to tenants.

- Purchase of land and buildings, except in exceptional circumstances where there is a strong value for money justification.
- Estate improvement already being addressed through other local and central government grant funding. Examples could include but are not restricted to:
    o Condition Improvement Fund;
    o FE Capital Transformation Fund;
    o Post-16 Capacity Fund;
    o Institutes of Technology; and
    o Local Growth Fund.

You can apply for funding to complement other project proposals but cannot apply for funding for the same project that has already secured funding through another route.

You will need to provide a breakdown of project costs as part of your application. In costing your project, you should exclude ineligible costs such as, but not limited to, those listed below. Where your project costs include ineligible items, it may reduce the amount of grant you are able to claim:

- revenue funded items by example but not limited to removal, storage, software, laptops and other devices for staff or learners, annual software licences;
- temporary accommodation or refurbishment of spaces for interim teaching while your main project is completed;
- rent service charges;
- routine maintenance costs;
- internal staffing costs;
- recoverable VAT costs incurred (see section 3.6);
- supply of loose furniture and equipment
- costs, liabilities and/or expenditure incurred before 22 November 2022
- the specialist equipment you will need for your proposed BFIG project as you will receive equipment funding separately through SEA (see section 2).

If an application is successful, we will monitor spend on the project during delivery including regular reviews to ensure ineligible costs are not being included in claims for grant funding or as part of the match funding contribution.

3.5 Match funding

Match funding means your contribution to the funded project, plus any contribution from third party sources. This can include any land or buildings which have been acquired for the project or donated, where you can evidence the value of this asset with an open market valuation. Other funding from central government cannot be used as match funding. This includes (but is not limited to) grant funding from the Further Education

Capital Transformation Fund, Institutes of Technology programme and the Post-16 Capacity Fund. Match funding contributions from the Towns Fund are allowed. Please refer to section 5.3 for more details on match funding contributions.

3.6 VAT

You should obtain appropriate advice on your VAT liability as this will depend on the type of provider you are and the nature of the project works. If you are not liable for VAT, you should exclude VAT from your project costs. If you are liable to pay VAT and you are unable to recover this in part or in full, then you should ensure that the project costs presented include this. If you are successful in your application and have included VAT in your project costs, we may ask for supporting evidence to confirm your VAT status before confirming the grant award.

3.7 Use of Technical Advisers

You may use technical advisers or representatives to help you prepare your application and to deliver the works, but they cannot apply or communicate on your behalf. We must deal with the responsible official at your institution.

Any technical adviser fees you include in your application must be appropriate to the type and scale of the project and should deliver value for money. We expect you to challenge technical advisers on fees where appropriate. We normally expect these to be between 5% and 10% of the total project value, however, for larger projects, the technical complexity of the works may justify higher fees. You must justify these costs in your application.

If you use a technical adviser, they may also be working with other applicants. It is your responsibility to make sure that any evidence you submit applies to your institution. You are responsible for the accuracy, completeness and relevance of the information submitted.

3.8 After you apply

Once we have received your application, we will consider your project against the eligibility requirements stated in Section 3.3. If your project does not meet all stated requirements in that section, we will not be able to approve your application.

We will then assess each application as described in Section 5. Our assessors will evaluate your project considering the information contained within your application. They will award your application a score based on the evidence provided.

Assessment criteria	Weighting
Education / Skills	50%
Estates	35%
Financial	15%
Total	100%

Table 3: Assessment criteria and weighting

You will find further explanations about the requirements for the criteria, including the templates and supporting information you are required to submit, and what we are looking for in Section 5.

We aim to notify all applicants of the outcome of their bid in summer 2023. In some circumstances, we may not be able to fully approve your project based on the information in your application. If so, the notification letter with the outcome of your bid will set out the additional information we will need to see from you before we can reach a final decision on your application.

If our decisions are going to be significantly delayed, we will inform applicants as soon as possible.

If your application is successful, you will need to agree to our terms and conditions of funding. This will include appropriate use of funds, completing your project in line with the scope and timeline provided in the application, providing regular updates to us on progress with delivery and abiding by restrictions on the future use of facilities. If we are not satisfied you are complying with the terms of grant, we may withdraw or reduce your grant offer at a later stage. We will provide further guidance to successful applicants once projects are approved.

4 How to apply for a BFIG

You must submit your application, including all supporting documentation, no later than **12 noon on Friday 3 February 2023** via a web-based portal. We recommend you access the portal and submit your application as early as possible to avoid any delay that could lead to missing the submission deadline. We will not accept applications received after the deadline.

4.1 How to apply

Applicants will be required to submit their application via the DfE's eTendering Portal. You will need to create an account on Jaggaer using this link: DfE eTendering Portal (Jaggaer) before you will be able to access the application form. If you already have

registered on this system previously you do not need to set up a new account. Please note that the Jaggaer platform works best on the Microsoft Edge browser.

We strongly encourage you to log on to Jaggaer and access the relevant Invitation To Tender (ITT), which contains the application form, as early as possible to ensure you have sufficient time to complete the application and provide the necessary information.

Once you have set up your account, you should log in and click on 'ITTs open to all suppliers' in the lefthand menu. This will bring up a list of open ITTs. The T Levels Capital Fund application form is listed as **'ITT 1838 - T Level Wave 5 – 1st Application'**. You will need to click on this and then click the 'express interest' button to access the full application pack and register your intent to apply for funding.

Please ensure you provide a response to all application questions and complete all relevant elements of the application in full so that we understand your project. You will also need to upload supporting evidence and templates at the points indicated in the application form. All the templates required to support your application will be available for download from the portal and Annex 1 provides a checklist to help ensure you have included all the required evidence. Where we have provided a template in the application portal for you to complete and upload, please use the existing file name and add your institution's UKPRN. **You must not change the format or do anything that could corrupt the templates or the data you have provided, as this may mean we are unable to assess your application in full.** Please be aware that for a single file attachment the maximum size is 50MB and for compressed folder attachments the maximum size is 300MB.

If you want to submit multiple applications, you will need to register your interest in one or more of the additional T Level Wave 5 ITTs. These will be listed as 'ITT 1839 – T Level Wave 5 – 2nd Application through to 'ITT1841 – T Level Wave 5 – 4th Application'. For example, if your organisation wishes to apply for three separate applications, you will need to submit one application within the 1st, 2nd and 3rd ITTs. You can use the same account details for multiple applications but will need to submit a separate completed application form and set of supporting documentation for each project. Please refer to section 3.2 for more details on how to structure your projects if applying for funding to support multiple T Level routes.

4.2 Questions about the guidance or application process

You can ask questions or seek clarifications about the application process via the portal. We will publish responses to questions on the portal for applicants to view at regular intervals. We will be unable to provide any individual project-related advice due to the competitive nature of the applications.

We will run live and pre-recorded webinars for applicants during the application window. Further information about these events will be publicised via the fortnightly T Level

Newsletter and on the [T Levels support for schools and colleges](#) website, which is the main source for information on T Levels. If you have not done so already, please set up alerts on the site to ensure you receive the fortnightly newsletter.

If you have any queries about registering on the application portal, please email them to TLevelsW5.CAPITAL@education.gov.uk including your provider name and UKPRN in the subject line: "Query TLCF 2024 - [Provider name] [UKPRN]". You can find your UKPRN via [UK Register of Learning Providers (ukrlp.co.uk)](#) and entering your details in the search fields

4.3 What to include in your application

You are required to complete all relevant elements of the application in full. You must adhere to the word limits stated on the application form and provide full answers for each question. You should provide focused responses, supported by robust, quantifiable, and achievable information.

The application form will need to be submitted by a responsible official at the applicant institution. Contractors or advisors cannot submit applications on your behalf. Please ensure you have attached all relevant templates and supporting evidence before you submit your application. A checklist for this is included in Annex 1. All applicants must include:

a) **Strategic Educational Delivery (see section 5.1.1) –** you must complete this template for all courses that will be associated with the project and explain why you need the facilities to deliver the courses. The information required on the template includes:
- how the capital project fits with the planned T Level delivery;
- how the project is informed by and will impact on the local area;
- how the proposed T Levels fit with other areas of the curriculum;
- how you are planning to grow the T Level offer over time; and
- how you have prepared to ensure industry placements are available for all learners.

b) **Summary estate plans and an up-to-date estate strategy (see section 5.2.1) –** the summary estate plan document should not be longer than 6 sides of A4 and should explain how the project fits with your medium to long-term estate plans. The summary should include, as a minimum, details of:
- the strategic vision for the estate;
- how the curriculum plan will develop over the next 5 years;
- what has been considered in the strategic review to identify need;
- the strategic options considered;
- how the strategic options have been evaluated;
- the recommended solutions; and

- environmental sustainability issues considered in the development of plans.

This should be supported by providing an up-to-date estate strategy. If you have, or intend to, apply for other central government capital funding, we encourage you to use the same estate strategy where possible. This is to help demonstrate that you have considered how the T Levels capital project will integrate into your current and future plans for your estate.

c) **Costed strategic options analysis (see section 5.2.1) –** you should complete this analysis for all projects. You need to consider and provide high-level costings for at least three options (your preferred option and at least two alternatives). It should be proportionate to the scale of the project submitted and show that you have given consideration to appropriate alternative options for meeting the needs identified in your estate strategy or development plans. You must ensure your project is the best option for delivering value for money and meeting your stakeholders' needs and the alternatives you consider must be appropriate. If you intend to buy land or acquire / create new space you should show consideration of alternative sites or buildings and if you are proposing an expansion project, you **must show you have considered options for refurbishing or remodelling existing space**.

d) **Design information (see section 5.2.2) –** as a minimum, all projects must include existing and proposed floor plans and elevations (to the equivalent of at least RIBA Stage 2), a full and clear description of works to be undertaken, and any delivery risks. We expect the design information you provide to be proportionate to the scale and value of the project and we reserve the right to request additional information to help us assess your application where required. Projects of a total estimated project cost that is over £500,000 (excluding VAT) should be supported by a feasibility study (see Annex 2), including, summary design information, consideration of planning issues, site/building constraints, floor plans clearly identifying use, building materials/ specification, type of construction, and service requirements.

e) **Estates project summary (see section 5.2.1) –** all applicants must complete this template showing the proposed impact on your estate's internal floor area and condition following delivery of your proposed project. If your project will improve existing condition C/D space to A/B space as described in section 5.2.1 and Annex 3, you must also provide evidence of the current condition of the space, produced independently by a third party.

f) **A Project Execution Plan (see section 5.2.2) –** you should provide a plan to describe the project execution methodology, including your approach to:
  - project management and control;
  - procurement of professional and contractor services, with a schedule of the anticipated professional services roles required to complete the project;
  - risk management, including health and safety;

- governance to include an organogram setting out roles, responsibilities and reporting lines (from the governing body to the appointed suppliers) for delivering the capital project; and
- evidence of governing body approval for your project application.

g) **Planned project expenditure profile template (see section 5.2.2)** – you should complete this for the period from start of the project to the planned completion date. You must complete this form in line with our financial years, April to March. Your expenditure profile should align with your project programme.

h) **A detailed Gantt chart/ project programme (see section 5.2.2)** – you should include all key activities, milestones, and interdependencies.

i) **Capital project risk management plan (see section 5.2.2)** – all applicants must complete this template, you must provide your risk and impact analysis for the project and how you will mitigate and manage risks.

j) **Building cost breakdown analysis (see section 5.3.1) –** we have included a template that asks you to provide an analysis for each set of building works, all applicants must complete this form, so we can assess the costs of all projects consistently. You need to demonstrate the project represents value for money, including justifying any abnormal elements. If you cannot show why costs are necessary, your application will be unsuccessful.

k) **Contractor quotations and/or cost estimates (see section 5.3.1) –** you should take appropriate professional advice on costs and provide evidence to demonstrate the project costs are realistic to support your cost breakdown analysis. This should include contractor quotations, tenders and/or advice from an independent cost consultant, provided in the last six months. Contractor tenders must follow the relevant regulations and show the calculation workings for the estimate.

Depending on the nature of your project, you may also need to include details of:

l) **A space needs justification for expansion projects only (see section 5.2.4)** — you must complete the relevant templates for your institution type if your project will result in an increased floor area (for example, a mezzanine, extension, or new building). We expect that projects should make effective use of the existing estate so if you are proposing a project that will result in an increased floor area you will need to justify this. For expansion projects, this means you must complete and submit the relevant space needs templates (see section 5.2.4).

m) **Planning and other statutory consents (see section 5.2.2) –** you should confirm whether or not planning consent is required for your project. Where applicable, a copy of the planning consent should be provided if obtained, or otherwise evidence that you have taken professional advice on planning issues. You should also ascertain whether any other statutory consents are required, for example Secretary of State approvals for development on school playing fields.

n) **Heads of terms agreement for acquisition and supporting open market valuations (see section 5.2.2) –** you should provide these if your project includes building or land acquisitions you want us to help fund. You must provide independent valuations which are less than 12 months old and align to the project costs. The valuations must be certified open market valuations. You will also need to include these if you intend to use these investments as match for the funding contribution.

If any required information is missing, this will affect the scores we are able to award your application and may mean we are unable to approve it.

We will only assess applications and information you submit if this is in the required format, as this ensures we are assessing applications on a fair and consistent basis. We may check this against information we already hold. We cannot guarantee that we will consider or assess any information you provide beyond that listed.

All supporting evidence must be submitted along with your completed application by the deadline of 12 noon on Friday 3 February 2023. We will not be able to accept late applications or additional information after this date.

5 How we will assess your application

The project assessment criteria are set out within this section. Each application will be reviewed to ensure it meets the eligibility criteria for BFIG (see section 3.3) and then scored according to how well it meets each of the criteria.

In addition, a number of assessment criteria are essential to the success of the capital project. The criteria that are categorised as 'critical' are:

- Strategic fit with T Levels Capital Fund aims: you need to demonstrate how the capital project will directly support the delivery of T Level courses.
- Demand for T Level Student Places: you need to provide evidenced justification of the projected student numbers taking up T Level student places in 2027/28.
- Project design: you must demonstrate the project design and outline specification have been developed to the equivalent level of RIBA Stage 2 and can feasibly deliver the outcomes intended.
- Capital project value for money and cost certainty: your project should have a clear scope and your elemental costs must appear reasonable, with appropriate justification provided for any 'abnormal' or high costs.

We will only fund projects that meet the minimum requirements for these criteria. If you have not demonstrated how you have met those minimum requirements, your application will be <u>unsuccessful</u>.

In addition, if you are applying for an expansion, you must be able to justify the need for the additional space requested in your application. If you have not done this, we will not be able to approve your application (see section 5.2.4) for how this will be assessed).

If the total grant request for all applications exceeds the available budget, successful applications will be determined according to the assessed total ranked score for each application. Our intention is to fund eligible projects that can demonstrate the strongest need for additional funding to support the improvement of their estate for the benefit of T Level students, but only where the proposed project demonstrates how it will directly support the delivery of T Level courses, and is appropriately planned, deliverable, presents good value for money, and is proportionate to the forecast number of students.

5.1 Educational/Skills Assessment Criteria

5.1.1 Direct benefits to T Level students

This section of the application will ask you to explain:

- how your proposed project will support the delivery of T Level provision;
- how your plans for T Levels fit with your current curriculum offer and the wider local offer;
- expected T Level student numbers; and
- work you have undertaken to engage with local employers in relation to T Levels, especially to ensure every student will have access to an industry placement.

You will need to explain why the scope of your project is relevant to the T Levels you will be providing from 2024. This should include describing the facilities that will be delivered through the project for each course you have included in your application. If we cannot clearly see a link between the project and the T Level provision, we will not approve your application.

We also want to understand your long-term plans in relation to T Level delivery in the context of local skills needs and the current curriculum offer. Our terms of grant require you to use the premises funded through BFIG for supporting the T Level curriculum for 20 years, so this part of the application will allow you to set out how these facilities fit into both your immediate and longer-term plans for T Level delivery.

You should provide student number projections supported by analysis of the number of full-time students you expect to be taking each T Level route in the first year (2024/25) and the following three years. To identify these students, you should use 2022/23 actual numbers on programme as your starting point for planning your 2024/25 baseline. This would include:

- full-time students: those with total planned hours recorded as above 540 if aged 16 or 17 and 450 hours for an 18 year old;
- students that have met the qualifying start period for their study programme;
- students aged 16, 17 and 18;
- students aged 19 to 24 with an education, health and care plan; and
- students enrolled in the 2020/21 academic year on a level 3 programme, with a vocational core aim, which is within the sector subject areas (SSAs) relevant to the T Levels (see Annex 4) you will be delivering in 2023/24.

Students who are 19 years old at the beginning of their 2-year programme (and who do not have an education, health and care plan) are not included.

If you have already started delivering any of the T Levels relevant to your project, then you should include actual delivery in 2022 as part of your baseline assumptions.

The relevant qualifications you should include when considering enrolments are:

- level 3 technical or vocational qualifications (not AGQs or A levels);
- at least 540 guided learning hours (GLH) for 16-17 or 450 GLH for 18+;
- within the subject sector areas (SSAs) for the T Levels included in your application (see Annex 4); and
- categorised as an Occupational Qualification, Other General Qualification, QCF Qualification or a Vocationally- Related Qualification.

Information on the occupations covered by each T Level and the course content can be found in the [progression profiles](#) and [core content](#) for each T Level.

Student numbers should be provided on a route basis for each route applied for. We expect that the number of 16-19 year-olds learners taking T Levels will grow over time. For the purposes of this bid you should assume you will reach steady state for T Level delivery in the 4th year (2027/28) and give us your annual projections up to then. Our assessment will be based on your estimated T Level students in learning in 4th year.

You will need to provide a robust justification case for your proposed 2024 starts, which should include an explanation of how T Levels fit within your curriculum and the wider local learning offer, how you will attract students to T Levels and how you will ensure that all students are able to access a high-quality industry placement. You may allow for reasonable growth in your student number projections to the 4th year but will need to justify this. This should take into account any local demographic growth and any structural changes within your organisation or mergers.

Your project may provide indirect benefits to your greater student population. If this is the case, please tell us about this in your application.

The following table shows the questions that are asked about your reasons for developing this project against the background of students, study programme and local fit. In each case there are some tips for developing a high-quality response which will help to guide you.

1. How will the capital project have a direct impact on the provision of the curriculum? Please explain how the project will contribute to the delivery of each T Level course in your application:
A high-quality response should:
• briefly summarise the project location(s) and space(s) planned and why this is required (for example space constraints, poor condition buildings)   • describe how the space will be used to support the delivery of T Levels, including any information on teaching, equipment, and technology   • supply information for each of the Routes the application relates to
2. Tell us on which campus(es) you will deliver the T Levels relevant to this bid, how this will fit with locally identified needs and student access. For multi-campus projects, please explain the context and strategy, and why separate provision is

needed on each site:
A high-quality response should: • explain why the provision is required on the relevant campus – and where you are planning the same provision on other campuses, explain why this is necessary, including information on distance, travel to learn etc. • provide information on local employment demand that might justify the need for new or growing provision • demonstrate how the planned T Level offer fits with local economic priorities in your area such as LEP or other strategies • explain why you think students will come to you for this provision
3. Please supply a list of the vocational qualifications you are currently offering in academic year 2022/23 in areas related to your bid, the guided learning hours for each and how many students are currently recruited to these, broken down by year 1 and year 2 students/learners.
A high-quality response should: • provide the name, level and guided learning hours for each relevant qualification • make a clear link between existing level 3 qualifications and the transition to T Levels or plans for delivery alongside to explain the planned student numbers you have supplied • where you are providing information on level 2 or other qualifications, explain how these are relevant to the T Level, for example in building the pipeline of students for the following year • where you are offering an existing qualification across multiple sites, make clear the numbers of students who are learning currently on the campus relating to the T Level capital application
4. Will T Levels directly replace qualifications in 2023/24 or run alongside? Please explain your plans (e.g., What will be replaced and when and/or how will T Levels address the needs of students?)
A high-quality response should: • mention the current relevant offer and which parts of that will be immediately replaced by T Levels or where there will be a gradual transition. • describe the trajectory for developing, embedding and growing T Levels provision • describe how that trajectory fits with withdrawal of existing qualifications, including specifics. • describe how you expect the change in your offer to impact on students' choices and behaviour and why – quantify student demand and back up with any destination surveys, if available • do this for each T Level you are planning as part of your application, and this should link to and substantiate the trajectory of numbers quoted in your application • where you are already delivering a particular T Level and quote numbers, ensure these do reflect actuals/plans already agreed with DfE

5. Where you are planning to offer T Levels in new subject areas (i.e., you do not currently offer large vocational qualifications in any of the areas now) or have plans to grow your T Level provision, please explain:

- how this would fit with existing provision available to students from your institution and other providers in the area

- where you feel that demographic growth will have an impact on take-up (provide specifics on any impact/numbers).

- your plans to market this offer to students (internally/externally)

A high-quality response should:

- provide a rationale for why you expect students to take T Levels if you have not offered similar large programmes in this area previously. So, for example, where you currently offer mixed A level/BTEC programmes, explain why you expect students to take the T Level option instead

- demonstrate that you have considered the wider local offer and any competitors offering similar relevant provision

- explain the trajectory of growth with a clear rationale for where those T Level students will come from - internally or externally, who they are and how you will target your marketing to attract them – linking this to your student number plans

- where you are relying on demographic growth, provide specifics about additional student numbers expected for this cohort (and your local share of that growth)

6. Tell us what you are doing to ensure that you will be able to offer every student on T Levels related to this project an industry placement as your student numbers increase.

A high-quality response should:

- demonstrate a clear understanding of the need for large (315 hour+) high quality T Level industry placements (as opposed to work experience)

- describe any work done to date or planned to build the capacity, capability, and infrastructure to source, develop and manage industry placements, including describing employer relationships, internal staffing and processes in place for monitoring, etc.

- provide specific information about numbers of large industry placements current available or being developed – especially in areas related to the T Levels in your application – as this will demonstrate that capacity and capability to do this is in place

- link this information to your planned student numbers trajectory for each of the T Levels (rather than routes as placement types can differ) included in your application to provide clear assurance that you will be able to offer every student a suitable placement

Sub-criteria	Scoring
Strategic Fit with T Levels Capital Fund Aims	Marks will be based on whether or not the scope of the proposed project is clearly linked to delivery of T Level courses included in the application. **High Score:** Project will be justified through an explanation of what is driving the need for the facilities and T Level provision, and the longer-term strategy for meeting that need.
Demand for T Level Student Places	Marks will be based on the student numbers proposed and the strength of the justification case made on student numbers that demonstrates plans are deliverable, reflecting realistic levels of growth. **High Score:** Student numbers appropriate to the demographic and proven pipeline with full justification and links to evidence.
Local Deprivation	We will award additional marks to providers supporting a higher proportion of students from a disadvantaged background. This will be based on departmental data and established disadvantage factors used in revenue funding. **High Score:** Provider supports a higher proportion of disadvantaged students.
Employer Engagement	Marks will be based on the evidence provided about work with employers to give confidence that the provider can secure sufficient placements for students **High Score:** Planning has been made for ensuring every learner will have access to a work placement at an appropriate location.

Table 4: Direct benefits to T Level students scoring

5.2 Estates Assessment

5.2.1 Strategic estate planning

Your project should contribute to achieving your strategic objectives for your estate and be the right solution for addressing the estate need for delivering T Levels. In explaining how your proposal addresses your areas of need, you should take into account the project that you propose to undertake, the specific T Level route(s) you plan to deliver and the type of provider that you are.

To support the case for your project, you should provide an up-to-date estate strategy (including an executive summary) for the institution or campus where your project will be located. The estate strategy should fully support your curriculum / business plans and clearly identify the need for the project as presented. If you do not have an estate strategy, you should provide up-to-date estate development plans, which set out the business case need for the project and clearly demonstrate how the project aligns to your estate objectives.

Schools and trusts may want to refer to [Good Estate Management for Schools](#) for advice, standards, and tools. This includes guidance on developing an estates strategy and asset management plan, and a self-assessment to identify estate management priorities. Colleges may want to refer to the [Further education estates planning guidance](#) and [Further education sustainable estates guidance](#)

All providers should submit a **costed strategic options analysis**. This should show you have considered alternative options for meeting the needs identified in your estate strategy or development plans. If you are proposing an expansion project, you must show you have considered alternatives such as refurbishing or remodelling existing space as at least one of your options. You should include a summary of your reasons for selecting your preferred option, with reference to ensuring value for money, and should base your analysis on professional advice. Your options analysis should include the total cost of each option and clearly explain the reasons why your proposed project is the best way to meet the needs of your stakeholders.

All applicants should consider the feasibility of their proposals and provide evidence of this. You must submit a feasibility study (see Annex 2) for your proposed project if the total estimated project cost over £500,000 (excluding VAT) or if it is below that but the project includes expansion or demolition works. This should consider value for money and your ability to deliver your project.

In some cases, your T Level project will also be **addressing condition issues** within your estate. If you can demonstrate your project will deliver significant improvements to the condition of your estate, your application will attract higher marks. This is not an essential criterion and may not be relevant in the context of your estate.

If you are addressing condition issues through your T Level project, you should include independent condition surveys to evidence the condition issues in your estate. Your survey should provide an assessment of the physical condition of the building and identify the building's deficiencies and maintenance issues. It should focus on the areas that will be addressed by the project and provide a clear understanding of the current condition of the building both internally and externally. This should include a detailed assessment of the consequence of any delay or failure to undertake the proposed work.

Surveys should contain specific condition grading and prioritisation ratings i.e. condition grade A to D (from 'as new' through to 'inoperable' condition) and priority rating 1 to 4 (from 'immediate action required' through to 'work required in 5+ years'). Definitions of building condition grading can be found at Annex 3. If your survey uses different gradings, you must ensure the condition grading and prioritisation rating are clearly explained so our assessor can understand the information.

Your evidence should include:

- the qualification of the surveyor
- clearly show the gross internal floor area (GIFA) and condition category, including an analysis of the areas that are specifically being used for T Level delivery
- current and projected GIFA and condition of estate (improvement from condition C/D to A/B) after project, including the improvement to areas used for T Level delivery

You can also supplement your surveys with other evidence of condition such as Condition Data Collection (CDC) information; clear, sufficiently detailed, and relevant photographs; letters about compliance from appropriately qualified professionals relevant to the specific issue e.g. from fire officers or electrical engineers; or Ofsted or other reports on the impact of facilities on teaching and learning.

You do not have to address condition as part of your T Level project and it may not be relevant if your estate is already in good condition. If you do not submit evidence relating to the condition of the estate, we will assume your project is not addressing any condition issues and you will not receive any marks for this section.

Criteria	Scoring
Estate Need	You should make a clear case as to why the project is needed to support T Levels in the context of your estate and how the project aligns to your existing estate strategy/estate development plan. **High Score:** A case has been made as to why the project is needed to provide T Level(s) facilities within the provider's estate and how the project aligns to the provider's existing

Criteria	Scoring
	estate strategy/estate development plan and information contained in the provider's estate strategy/estate development plan fully supports this case.
Options analysis	This should have a costed options analysis with benefits narrative to support choice of the preferred solution. Where appropriate, this should be supported by a feasibility study. **High Score:** The project has a costed options appraisal, considering a preferred option and two alternatives, with benefits that support the solution, and this is supported by a feasibility study if the total estimated project cost is over £500,000 (excluding VAT) or includes expansion or demolition works.
Improving estate condition	Projects will be evaluated on the basis of the amount of space in condition categories C/D that is improved to condition categories A/B space (see Annex 3 for definitions). **High Score:** The application demonstrates that the project will improve the condition of a significant amount (e.g. 1,000m^2 or at least 10% of estate's poor condition) of space in condition categories C/D to condition categories A/B and this is supported by evidence.

Table 5: Strategic estate planning scoring

5.2.2 Demonstration of project planning and deliverability

Our assessors must be able to see that you have developed your project to a standard that is appropriate and will be deliverable within the time frame proposed, taking account of potential risks. Applications that do not meet these criteria are unlikely to be approved.

Your evidence should include (subject to the size and scale of the project):

- RIBA stage 2 report and, if not already included in the report, existing and proposed floor plans, elevations (if appropriate) and an outline design specification;
- Project Execution Plan to include but not limited to:
    - o the approach to project control, risk, procurement and health & safety
    - o master planning for the project including milestones chart or a detailed programme plan or Gantt chart;

- o planned expenditure profile completed in DfE financial years, April to March;
  - o project governance arrangements, for example an organogram setting out how the project team reports into your senior leadership team
  - o the project delivery team, including naming the Principal Designer and any professional appointments you intend to make to deliver the project; these should be proportionate to the level of fees included in the cost breakdown
- a comprehensive risk management plan with mitigations;
- confirmation of compliance with the relevant DfE Output Specification 2021[7] (technical standards): colleges should refer to FE Output Specification 2021 (FE-OS) and schools should refer to Schools Output Specification 2021 (S21);
- copy of planning approval/pre-planning advice or any other relevant planning evidence;
- evidence of agreed heads of terms on any land or property acquisitions/ disposals
- **or** all of the above covered in a feasibility study

We expect to see greater levels of detail for large, high value projects. You must submit a feasibility study for your proposed project if the total estimated project cost is over £500,000 or if it is below that but the project includes expansion or demolition works. There is further information on conducting a feasibility study at Annex 2.

It is your responsibility to consult your local planning authority to check if you need planning permission before you apply for the fund. Your application should show if you need planning permission and if you have consent from the local planning authority. If you need to get permission, you must show the time scale for obtaining consent and consideration of any risks associated in your planning documentation.

It is your responsibility to secure any necessary approvals to proceed with your project works. Approval of your BFIG application should not be taken as approval of changes that require separate DfE approval. For example, you may need extra approvals from us if you are an academy with a project that involves increasing your student numbers and/or the purchase, lease, or sale of land or buildings. Please read this guidance: Submit a school land transaction proposal which contains the forms and associated property information notes. Where you need to seek additional approvals, you should factor this into your programme plan.

You must include a comprehensive **risk management plan** for the delivery of your capital project. Your assessment must identify key risks, likelihood and impact of risks,

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[7] The output specifications for both schools and colleges area made up of three parts: the General Conditions (Part A), the Generic Design Brief (Part B) and institution-specific brief (Part C).

and mitigation to manage risks. It should consider operational risks to continuity of teaching, capital project risks, risk to forecast student numbers and risk to funding. You should show that you have considering the likelihood and impact of different risks and are planning appropriate mitigations for them. We have provided a template for recording these in the application portal.

Sub-criteria	Scoring
Project design	The application will need to demonstrate that the project design and outline specification have been developed to the equivalent level of RIBA Stage 2 and can feasibly deliver the outcomes intended, as per RIBA Stage 2 design report and feasibility study provided where relevant. If your project proposal has not reached this stage, your application will not be successful. **High Score:** The application fully demonstrates that the project design and outline specification have been developed to the level of RIBA Stage 2, is proportionate to the forecast student numbers and can feasibly deliver the intended outcomes, as per RIBA Stage 2 design report and feasibility study, provided where relevant.
Project execution plan	The application will set out clearly how you plan to deliver your project with the time and budget available. This should include a programme plan, monthly financial profile, procurement approach and the governance and resources you have in place for the project, including any professional appointments. **High Score:** The application provides a realistic project execution plan which includes key management aspects and clearly demonstrates that the project is deliverable with suitable contingency and structure as appropriate to the size of the project.

Table 6: Project planning and deliverability scoring

5.2.3 Sustainability

Projects awarded BFIG funding will support the government's targets on sustainability and net zero carbon emissions. Applicants should consider environmental sustainability and carbon reduction issues and develop projects that are in line with the government's net zero carbon emissions by 2050 target, as set out in the Climate Change Act 2008.

To align with the DfE output specification, applicants should consider environmental sustainability, carbon reduction and adaption measures to develop solutions for projects that are in line with the Government's targets and objectives. Your estate strategy or plan should reflect the actions you need to take to support net zero carbon in 2050 and your application should demonstrate how the capital project contributes to this strategy. For example, this should be referenced in your summary estate strategy or RIBA Stage 2 design information. In addition, you must provide evidence on how the capital project aligns to the sustainability standards within the relevant OS. Where you have not been able to do this, you should state this clearly in your application and explain how and why you have had to take a different approach.

You should refer to the relevant output specification for your provider type:

- Schools and academies should refer to Schools Output Specification 2021 (S21); and
- Colleges should refer to FE Output Specification 2021 (FE-OS)

Applicants may also be eligible for the Public Sector Decarbonisation Scheme (PSDS) that has replaced the Salix Energy Efficiency Loan Scheme. If you have applied for this, you should include this information in your application form.

Sub-criteria	Scoring
The capital project complies with the relevant 2021 output specification	Applications will be awarded marks for demonstrating how the capital project aligns to sustainability standards within the relevant 2021 output specification. **High Score:** The application fully demonstrates how the project aligns to sustainability design standards within the relevant output specification documents for the capital project being proposed by the provider type.

Table 7: Sustainability scoring

5.2.4 Space Needs Assessment for Expansion Projects

If you are applying for an expansion project, we will also assess your project to ensure you can justify the need for increased floor area. This applies if you are increasing your gross internal floor area (GIFA), for example by adding a mezzanine or extension to an existing building, as well as if you are acquiring or creating new buildings. We expect you to make optimum use of existing accommodation and avoid building new space to deliver T Levels where possible. Your project will need to pass the space needs assessment to be successful.

If your project will result in an increased floor area, you must provide a space needs justification, and demonstrate the need to expand your estate to accommodate T Level students to address existing overcrowding. We will not support projects where growth is the key goal. The need for the additional space must also be clearly evidenced within the estates strategy submitted, and you should have considered alternatives, such as remodelling or refurbishment as part of your options analysis. We will not approve applications that do not have a strong justification case for additional space.

If you have secured funding for other capital projects that will increase your GIFA, you should reflect this in your space needs justification. You should also tell us in your application of any other funding applications that will increase your GIFA, but you should only include this space in your space needs template if you have already secured grant funding for the project.

The templates required to be completed will depend on the type of institution applying. Please refer to the relevant section below. All templates are available within the application portal and include instructions to support completion.

If you are a **further education college, sixth form college (including sixth form colleges that have been designated as academies) or university** you are required to complete and submit the following templates:

- Estates Utilisation Template (EUT): this is intended to identify where you may have surplus capacity within your overall estate and enables you to justify and explain the extent that the project will address under-utilisation within the college.

- Guided Learning Hours (GLH) template: this allows you to evidence and justify the current and planned guided learning hours you have used to assess your need for space.

You must use the output from the GLH template and pre and post project campus areas to complete the GLH Analysis section of the EUT to demonstrate whether post project estate utilisation is within the upper guideline, which is 14.5 m2 per Planned Average Attendance (PAA) for FE Colleges and 13.0 m2 per PAA for Sixth Form Colleges. Where the GLH analysis shows that the post-project capacity will be above these guideline standards, applicants must explain why this under-utilisation cannot be improved within

the scope of the project by completing the workplace analysis and justification case sections and providing additional evidence of the need for expansion, for example, by submitting a schedule of accommodation (see below). It should also be evidenced as part of business planning in the estate strategy.

If you are a **maintained or academy school with a sixth form including free schools, University Technical College, Studio School or a Maths School** you are required to complete and submit the following templates:

- **Learner Numbers Template**: Template available within the application portal. Please use this to demonstrate current and planned learner numbers including T-Levels students.

- **Net Capacity Assessment (NCA) Templates**: Template available within the application portal. The NCA should cover the whole institution at the time of application, based on the existing buildings and include any approved projects that will be in use by 2027. It should not include any new or remodelling work proposed within the project applied for. It should use the projected 27/28 learner numbers.

A separate version of the NCA, as above but also including any new or remodelling work proposed within the project applied for, should also be submitted.

To assist with completing the template, please refer to the supporting [NCA Guidance](#) document. You must submit both a completed learner numbers template and two completed NCAs to justify the need to expand your estate to accommodate additional 16-19 learners as a result of T Levels only. You should use the NCAs to demonstrate how your current and post-project capacity relates to your planned pupil numbers. If either your current or post project capacity is more than required for planned pupil numbers, you must explain why utilisation cannot be improved within the scope of the project and provide additional evidence of the need for expansion.

You should also ensure that the overall net internal area of the school is within the Building Bulletin 103 guidelines. If the area is not within the BB103 guideline we expect you to have considered an alternative project that could achieve or get closer to the guideline area and to provide an acceptable justification as to why it is not feasible to deliver an alternative more space efficient solution. This justification should be provided under the relevant question within the options analysis section on the application portal.

In addition, **all providers** should consider including the following to support your case:

- a Schedule of Accommodation (SoA) providing a list of the space needed to accommodate the T Levels curriculum. SoA templates are available for both schools and colleges from this link: [schedule of accommodation tools for schools and colleges](#)
- Ofsted or other independent reports on impact of the current shortage of space on teaching and learning;

- independent evidence of overcrowding, such as a curriculum analysis of all teaching showing what T Levels would replace and how this impacts on the total number and type of teaching spaces;
- an explanation or evidence of exceptional circumstances relating to capacity constraints, including photographs; and
- letter of support from your local education authority that additional space is necessary to maintain adherence to relevant standards.

We reserve the right to visit providers to inspect the estate where additional space is requested and you may be required to submit additional evidence, including a completed SoA where we think this is needed.

5.3 Financial Assessment

5.3.1 Demonstration of appropriate costs in all projects

We expect all successful projects to demonstrate value for money and provide evidence of cost certainty. Project costs should be within an appropriate cost range for the type of works proposed.

Your evidence, where appropriate, should include:

- cost plan (breakdown of costs) appropriate to the design, size, and scale of the project, including completing the elemental cost breakdown template provided in the application portal;
- reports/advice from professional cost consultants;
- copies of quotes/estimates aligning to project specification;
- where available a summary of any tender exercise;
- details of procurement route;
- market testing to demonstrate additional/abnormal costs, where appropriate;
- copies of open market valuations reports on acquisitions and for disposal if receipts will form part of your project match funding contribution; and
- details of specialist equipment and loose furniture and equipment required for delivering the T Level (though these should not form part of your overall project costs – see section 3.4 for details of other ineligible costs).

Your cost plan should be realistic about the level of professional fees, allowances, and contingency. This should be appropriate to the scale and type of the project, and the level of work already undertaken to establish price certainty. For example, we normally expect fees between 5% and 10% of the total project value, however, for larger projects, the technical complexity of the works may justify higher fees. You must justify these costs in

your application. Your application is unlikely to be successful where the level of costs are above expectations with no clear justification, such as unconsidered abnormals, excessive professional fees, and/or excessive risk allowances.

If your application is successful, we will award a grant based on a percentage of project costs included in your application. Our grant contribution will be capped and so any increases in costs will need to be funded as part of your contribution to the project.

Sub-criteria	Scoring
Capital project value for money and cost certainty	Your project should have a clear scope with costs. Your elemental costs must appear reasonable and be supported by evidence of market testing and professional advice. Where there are 'abnormal' or higher costs you must justify them. **High Score:** The application demonstrates that the project has clear scope and costs, with either no abnormal costs or strong and coherent justification of 'abnormal' or higher costs, and cost reports (produced by an independent professional cost consultant) / estimates / tenders / quotations are thorough and well evidenced.

Table 8: Demonstration of appropriate costs scoring

5.3.2 Match Funding Assessment

In previous rounds of BFIG, we asked providers to make a match funding contribution for 50% of the project costs or apply for a waiver, which was subject to an affordability assessment. To align our approach with other programmes, we are removing the requirement for an affordability assessment in Wave 5.

We are still asking providers to contribute 50% of project costs where they can afford to do so and encourage all applicants to consider what level of contribution they can make towards project costs. Points will be awarded on the basis of the amount of match funding being contributed. The maximum points you could receive for this aspect of your application is 5%.

Match funding is the contribution the provider will make to the costs of the project, which will include contributions from third party sources. By submitting your BFIG application you are declaring that your proposed match funding contribution towards the project is affordable. In thinking about what level of contribution you want to make you should consider how you will manage your cash flow through the delivery of the project,

reflecting forecast expenditure on the project, anticipated grant funding, other funding sources and your wider financial context.

Eligible sources of match funding

Can include:

- the applicant's own reserves

- corporate or other donations

- commercial loans

- land or buildings which have been acquired for the project or donated, as long as the value of this asset is supported by an open market valuation

- locally managed grant funding, including Towns Fund and funding available through Greater London Authority (GLA), mayoral combined authorities (MCAs) and Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEPs) and local authorities.

Ineligible sources of match funding

Central government capital funding from other sources cannot be used as match funding. This includes, but is not limited to:

- Post 16 Capacity Fund

- Further Education Capital Transformation Fund,

- Institutes of Technology programme

- Condition Improvement Fund (CIF) funding

- Capital funding from other central government departments

- Levelling Up fund

- School Rebuilding Programme

- Free Schools capital funding

- Priority School Building Programme

- Strategic Development Fund

- Higher Technical Education Provider Growth Fund

Please check your application and confirm that the total grant requested from the Department and any match funding contribution is equal to the total eligible project costs.

5.3.3 Cost per Student Assessment

The student number information you have been asked to provide in section 5.1.1 will be used calculate the capital project cost (£) per T Level student to demonstrate a measure of good value.

Sub-criteria	Sub-criteria
Capital project cost per student	The capital project cost (£) per T Level student included in the provider's T Level student recruitment plan is good value. We will calculate this based on the numbers you intend to recruit by steady state and the total cost of the capital project. **High Score:** The calculated cost per T Level student by 27/28 is in the bottom quartile for all TLCF Wave 5 projects.

Table 9: Cost per student scoring

6 The outcome of your bid

If we approve your project, you will receive a letter from us confirming this and setting out the terms of grant. We will ask you to accept the terms by signing and returning a copy of the grant offer letter by a given date. Please note that funding is only confirmed once we have received a signed copy of your grant offer. You must not issue communications regarding the success of your application until you receive confirmation from us that you can do this.

We will also issue guidance with the offer letter on how we will work with you as you deliver your capital project. This will include expectations around providing progress updates to us, supporting site visits for monitoring and assurance processes, how we will manage payments to you and what to do if the circumstances of your project change. We will expect you to deliver the project as set out in your application form, unless exceptional circumstances arise that mean it is no longer possible to do so. This includes proceeding with work on the project in line with the timeline you have set out in your application and not making changes to the scope or location of works without our agreement in advance. We reserve the right to withdraw our offer of funding if we are concerned that you are no longer able to complete the capital project we have approved.

Our terms of grant will require you to use the premises funded primarily for supporting the T Level curriculum for 20 years. If you decide to withdraw from T Level delivery during that time, or if we find you are not primarily using the funded facilities for T Level delivery, we reserve a right to recover any capital grant we have paid to you. We also reserve the right to recover funds from you in the event that your project costs (including VAT savings) are lower than we approved, or there is evidence you have not used them for the agreed purposes.

If your bid is unsuccessful, we will write to you at the same time as we inform successful providers. We aim to do this in summer 2023 and will notify applicants as soon as possible if this is likely to be delayed.

7 Acceptance of Applications

Payment of grants is discretionary and the department is under no legal obligation to accept any application or to pay any grant in response to any application whether or not the applicant meets the relevant criteria and whether or not funds are available.

Neither the invitation to apply for funding, nor any communications with you or your representative or agent, nor any other communication in respect of the process, will be deemed to create any legally enforceable agreement, expectation, promise or representation (express or implied) that the department will accept any application or make any payments. The department reserves the right not to award grant funding for some or all of the available funding for which applications are invited.

The department reserves the right to amend, add to or withdraw all or any part of the invitation to apply at any time during the application process and prior to the relevant deadline for receipt of applications, for whatever reason.

8 Complaints process

If applicants are not content with the way in which their bid application has been handled by the Department for Education or the process for applying for BFIG, then applicants should use the Department for Education's complaint process.

Annex 1: Supporting Information and Templates Check List

This annex provides a checklist for you to use in ensuring you have included all relevant supporting evidence in your application for BFIG.

Where we have provided a number of templates for you to complete. these will be available within the application portal and we have listed the template files name below. **Please do not re-name files other than to add your 8 digit United Kingdom Provider Reference Number as a suffix in place of the acronym UKPRN followed by –1 for your first application. If you intend to submit additional applications for funding, the suite of files for each application should be sequentially numbered. I.E. the files for your second applications should end in –2 and your third application in -3**.

For example; If your UKPRN was 99999999, the SKILLS Strategic Educational Delivery UKPRN template for your first application would become:

- SKILLS_Strategic_Educational_Delivery_99999999-1.

The template for your second application should be named:

- SKILLS_Strategic_Educational_Delivery_99999999-2.

You can search for your UKPRN via the following link: https://www.ukrlp.co.uk

Check list	
ALL	**Strategic Educational Delivery** (TEMPLATE NAME: SKILLS_Strategic_Educational_Delivery_UKPRN) **Estates summary table, costed options analysis and project funding breakdown** (TEMPLATE NAME: ESTATES_Project_Summary_UKPRN) **Planned project expenditure profile** (TEMPLATE NAME: ESTATES_Expenditure_Profile_UKPRN) **Financial and project risk management plan** (TEMPLATE NAME: ESTATES_Risk_Management_Plan_UKPRN) **Building cost breakdown analysis** (TEMPLATE NAME: ESTATES_Cost_Breakdown_UKPRN) **Specialist Equipment Allocation** (TEMPLATE NAME: SKILLS_SEA_Schedule_UKPRN

	Your application will need to include the following supporting information: • Summary estate plans and an up-to-date estate strategy • Design information (to the equivalent of at least RIBA Stage 2) • Planning and other statutory consents if required • A Project Execution Plan to include detailed Gantt chart / project plan, delivery team, governance arrangements and confirmation of Governing Body approval. • Contractor quotations and cost estimates
If relevant, you will need to include:	• Evidence of current condition of space produced independently by a third party if you are delivering condition improvements through your proposed project • Heads of terms agreement for acquisition and supporting open market valuations (where required) • Borrowings - evidence of what stage of discussions you are at with securing finance. • Evidence of any other financial support secured for the project
If applying for an INCREASE in floor space	**A space needs justification for expansion projects:** **For Further Education Colleges, Sixth Form Colleges and Universities:** **Estates Utilisation Template (EUT)** (TEMPLATE NAME: SPACE_Capital_Fund_EUT_UKPRN) **Guided Learning Hours** (TEMPLATE NAME: SPACE_Guided_Learning_Hours_UKPRN) **For Academies / Multi-Academy Trusts / University Technical Colleges / Studio Schools/ and Schools:** TEMPLATE NAME: SPACE_Learner_Numbers_UKPRN TEMPLATE NAME: (SPACE_Net_Capacity_Assessment_UKPRN) **For all Providers:** Additional information to justify need for additional space if EUT analysis shows post-project capacity will be outside sector space guidelines. Refer to section 5.2.4.

Annex 2: Options Analysis Feasibility Study

A feasibility study looks at the viability of the proposed project with an emphasis on identifying potential problems and attempts to answer one main question: will the project work?

The feasibility study should include an evaluation and analysis of the proposed project against realistic alternative options. This should be based on a detailed proposed scope of works and extensive investigation of the current site and property. It should confirm that all aspects of the project have been effectively considered and that the selected option will provide the best chance of successful project delivery and value for money.

The aim of the feasibility study is to objectively and rationally identify the strengths and weaknesses of the proposed construction scheme. You should provide information on opportunities, issues, and threats that could be present which could either support your project or create problems. You also need to confirm the resources required to deliver the project on time and on budget. The feasibility study for the project on the proposed site should include, but not be limited to:

- independent condition survey/consultant report or detailed survey (with floor plans) and specialist reports (e.g. structural) appropriate to size and scale of project and estimated costs.
- clear, sufficiently detailed, and relevant photographs.
- letters of compliance e.g. from fire officers or electrical engineers (where appropriate).
- detailed scope of works to illustrate how the elements identified above will be addressed.
- details of the professional Project Management team and their experience of delivering capital projects (you can include their CV if you wish to do so)
- a detailed project and resource plan.
- what is the design solution and why will it work.
- options appraisal demonstrating that the proposed project (preferred option) delivers the best value estates solution.
- benefits/constraints of the project.
- a comprehensive risk assessment with mitigations.
- further consideration to address significant risks that could impact on project costs and programme in particular, e.g. ground conditions, asbestos, planning/highway conditions, acquisition/disposals, third party funding.
- estate strategy/master planning for the site and a business plan (where applicable)
- project context for wider site (where the T Levels capital project is part of a larger capital project that includes non-T Levels elements)
- pre-planning advice or any planning evidence (where applicable).
- how this project is affordable and able to demonstrate value for money.

- a robust cost plan that is appropriate to the size and scale of the project.
- a procurement strategy demonstrating value for money.
- appropriate cost advice and, where available, a minimum of 3 quotes and/or a tender report that is consistent with the project specification.
- a cash flow forecast.
- market testing to demonstrate additional/abnormal costs (where appropriate)
- evidence of how costs will be managed and driven down.
- letters of funding commitment from other sources (if applicable).

Annex 3: Building Condition Grading Definitions

		Building Condition Grading Definitions
A - As new	GIFA of space typically built within the last 5 years or may have undergone a major refurbishment within this period.	Maintained / serviced to ensure fabric and building services replicate conditions at installation. No structural, building envelope, building services or statutory compliance issues apparent. No impacts upon operation of the building.
B - Sound	GIFA of space operationally safe and exhibiting only minor deterioration.	Maintenance will have been carried out and only minor deterioration to internal / external finishes. Few structural, building envelope, building services or statutory compliance issues apparent. Likely to have only minor impacts upon the operation of the building.
C - Operational	GIFA of space for which major repair or replacement needed in the short to medium term (within 3-5 years).	Requiring replacement of building elements or services elements in the short to medium term. Several structural, building envelope, building services or statutory compliance issues apparent, or one particularly significant issue apparent. Often including identified problems with building envelope (windows / roof etc.), building services (boilers, chillers etc.). Likely to have major impacts upon the operation of the building, but still allow it to be operable.
D - Inoperable	GIFA of space at serious risk of major failure or breakdown.	Building is inoperable, or likely to become inoperable, due to statutory compliance issues or condition representing a health and safety risk or breach. May be structural, building envelope, or building services problems coupled with compliance issues. The conditions are expected to curtail operations within the building. Exclude very minor items which can be rectified easily.

Annex 4: T Level Route equivalent qualifications – relevant sector subject areas

T Level Route	Section Subject Area (SSA)
Digital	6.1 ICT practitioners 9.3 Media and communication
Construction	5.2 Building and Construction
Education and Childcare	1.5 Child development and well-being
Health and Science	1.1 Medicine and Dentistry 1.2 Nursing and subjects and vocations allied to medicine 1.3 Health and Social Care 2.1 Science
Engineering and Manufacturing	4.1 Engineering 4.2 Manufacturing technologies
Business and Administration	15.2 Administration 15.3 Business management
Legal, Finance, and Accounting	15.1 Accounting and finance 15.5 Law and legal services
Agriculture, environmental and animal care	3.1 Agriculture 3.2 Horticulture and forestry 3.3 Animal care and veterinary science 3.4 Environmental conservation
Creative and design	9.2 Crafts, creative arts and design 9.4 Publishing and information services
Hair and beauty	7.3 Service enterprises
Catering and hospitality	7.4 Hospitality and catering

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