

# T Levels – How can you help as an employer?

**T** Levels will be introduced in September 2020 as a vocational equivalent to A Levels and a post-GCSE option.

T Levels will combine classroom learning, practical theory and a three-month industrial placement with employers wishing to host a young person and give them that experience of the world of work.

T Levels will rely on employers being prepared to offer young people up to three months of industrial placement.

Whether your organisation can offer an industrial placement to one young person or an industrial placement programme for many young people, it can result in fantastic opportunities and benefits for both them and for you.

Employers often comment that recruits lack employability skills, this is a chance to play a part and ensure that we can help young people make the transition from education to work.



**alpha**



# Consider a step b

## Step 1 - Before you begin

Have a clear purpose of why your organisation is offering industrial placements. These might be value led in that you want to support young people into the world of work, but also:

- You wish to attract younger people into the organisation or sector;
- You might wish to attract fresh ideas and new thinking;
- You perceive it as an opportunity to 'talent spot' or 'try before you buy';
- You might consider it a way to improve recruitment and retention;
- You might wish to build stronger ties with local education providers;
- You may be considering apprenticeships and this is a first step.

It might well be a combination of all or some of these, but by considering these it will help to ensure that it is a strategic decision to frame your plans.

## Step 2 – Who needs to be involved?

Once the decision has been made to offer industrial placements, then it will be necessary to get the support and commitment of those who could be effected. Involve them in the planning to ensure that:

- Timing is appropriate – not at a time of peak workflow or holiday period;
- They have an opportunity to have input on what the placement could involve;
- Their motivation and commitment is agreed in advance.

## Step 3 - Planning

Consider how the industrial placements will be supported and supervised – who will be involved and do you need to think about cover or handovers between individuals?

Try to plan a detailed schedule or diary of activities. This will enable you to plan how you can present as wide an experience of the world of work as possible.

Who can be the mentor? This might be the person supervising the industrial placement or it might be an

individual who co-ordinates the activities as the young person moves from one area of the organisation to the next. Either way they will be the 'go to' person to ensure all runs smoothly.

## Step 4 – The activities

A good industrial placement will provide the person with opportunities to:

- Shadow employees whilst they are performing their duties;
- Assist in the performance of tasks and carry out supervised tasks;
- Discuss the performance of those tasks with employees – why, how often, what is the reason for, what training was required, etc;
- Experience a range of activities across the organisation if possible.

## Step 5 – Finding placement candidates

Colleges and Independent Training Providers offering T Levels will all be looking for industrial placements for their learners and so they will look to match learners with employers offering opportunities. The Solent Growth Hub will be able to help you find these.



# y step approach



## Step 6 – Induction and orientation

The industrial placement will need to begin with an induction. This might be a standard organisational induction or tailored to the industrial placement. A clear induction is key to a good placement.

The person should be made aware of dress code in their joining instructions, but expectations or policies with regard to use of mobile phones, appropriate use of the internet or any sector or organisation specific expectations need to be established. There should also be a health and safety induction and a tour of the building or site.

## Step 7 - Health & Safety

The Health and Safety of all employees is important and equally so for people on industrial placements. The Health and Safety Executive have made it easier for employers keen to offer work experience placements.

There are very few work activities a young person cannot do due to health and safety law. However, it's important to remember that as an employer, you have primary responsibility for health and safety and must be managing any significant risks, as well as:

- explaining the risks and how they are controlled when inducting any individual undertaking work experience, checking that they understand what they have been told and know how to raise health and safety concerns;

- relying on past or pooled experience when thinking about health and safety;
- keeping checks in proportion to the environment the young person will be working in.

For more information go to [www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placeprovide.htm](http://www.hse.gov.uk/youngpeople/workexperience/placeprovide.htm)

## Step 8 - At the end of the work experience

It would be good to conduct an informal 'end of industrial placement' exit interview. This could provide valuable two-way feedback on the experience:

- What they enjoyed and what they did not enjoy as much;
- What they felt went well & what could be improved;
- Was the organisation, sector what they expected?
- Are they interested in a career in the sector or with you?
- Any other observations they would like to make or questions they would like to ask.

This is a great opportunity to offer constructive feedback that will enable the placement candidates to grow and develop further from the experience. You may feel able to offer a reference, for example.

# It is easier than you may think

- 1** We have training organisations who are happy to help you to get set up.
- 2** Industrial placements should not be considered as a person “doing a job” but rather experiencing the workplace and having access to as many different opportunities within it as possible.
- 3** Please remember, there is no need for additional insurance as existing employers’ liability insurance will cover industrial placements (provided your insurer is a member of the Association of British Insurers).
- 4** There is no requirement for DBS checks if young people are 16 or over.
- 5** There is no requirement for additional risk assessments or Health & Safety checks over and above those currently required of employers.
- 6** There is no requirement to pay industrial placements and they do not fall under the National Minimum Wage legislation as long as they meet the definition of work experience being “someone who spends a limited time with an employer to learn directly about work and the working environment by watching and learning”.

For more information and support to take this forward please go to the Talent and Training pages on the Solent Growth Hub website:

<https://www.solentgrowthhub.co.uk/talent-and-training>

