

T-Levels: Features and Benefits for Employers

Briefing paper on behalf of BCP Council and Dorset Council

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What are T Levels? A Quick Guide.

T Levels are a new type of qualification in the UK, designed to offer young people a technical alternative to A Levels, combining classroom learning with industry placements. T Levels are two-year courses for students aged 16 to 19, equivalent to three A Levels. They combine classroom learning with an industry placement of at least 315 hours (approximately 45 days) to give students practical experience and skills relevant to their chosen field. T Levels cover a range of subjects, including Digital, Construction, Education and Childcare, Health, and Science. They have been designed in collaboration with employers and industry experts to ensure that students develop the skills and knowledge needed for the workplace. T Levels aim to provide young people with high-quality technical education and training that prepares them for the workplace and meets the needs of employers. They offer a valuable alternative to traditional academic routes and help bridge the gap between education and employment.

Structure:

Each T Level includes a core component, specialist knowledge and skills, and an industry placement. The core component covers essential skills such as English, Maths, and Digital skills. The specialist knowledge and skills component focus on the specific subject area chosen by the student. The industry placement gives students hands-on experience in a real workplace, allowing them to apply what they have learned in the classroom.

Assessment:

T Levels are assessed through a combination of exams, practical assessments, and employer-set projects. The industry placement is also assessed, with students receiving feedback on their performance from their placement provider.

Progression:

After completing a T Level, students can progress into skilled employment, further education, or higher education, including university or higher apprenticeships. T Levels are designed to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and experience needed to pursue a successful career in their chosen field.

Availability:

T Levels were introduced in stages, with the first pathways launched in September 2020, however delivery across Dorset began at Ferndown Upper School in September 2022 with Bournemouth and Poole College and Weymouth College beginning to deliver T Levels from 2023 and 2024.

Further Information:

Gov.uk - T Levels: The official UK government website provides comprehensive information about T Levels, including an overview of the qualification, subject areas, and how to apply.

[Introduction of T Levels - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/introduction-of-t-levels)

UCAS: The Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) offers guidance on T Levels, including how they compare to other qualifications and their suitability for progression to higher education. Visit: [UCAS T Levels What Are T Levels? | Your Questions Answered | UCAS](https://www.ucas.com/t-levels)

Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education (IfATE): IfATE oversees the development and implementation of T Levels. Their website provides detailed information about each T Level pathway, including content, structure, and assessment. Visit: [IfATE T Levels](https://www.ifate.gov.uk/t-levels)

[T Levels / Institute for Apprenticeships and Technical Education](https://www.ifate.gov.uk/t-levels)

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Access to Emerging Talent: Employers gain access to a pool of motivated and skilled young individuals who are specifically trained in technical fields relevant to the employer's industry. This can help address skill shortages and ensure that the workforce is equipped with the latest knowledge and expertise.

Cost-effective Recruitment: T Level work placements provide employers with an opportunity to assess potential employees' skills, work ethic, and fit within the organisation without the commitment of a permanent hire. This can lead to more informed hiring decisions, reducing recruitment costs in the long run.

Tailored Training Opportunities: Employers can tailor the work placement experience to meet their specific needs and priorities. They can provide hands-on training, mentorship, and real-world experience in line with the skills required for their industry, ensuring that students are well-prepared for future employment.

Innovation and Fresh Perspectives: T Level students bring fresh perspectives, creativity, and innovative ideas to the workplace. Their exposure to the latest industry trends and technologies through their education can invigorate existing teams and contribute to problem-solving and innovation within the organisation.

Community Engagement and Corporate Social Responsibility: Hosting T Level work placements demonstrates a commitment to investing in the local community and supporting education and skills development initiatives. This can enhance the employer's reputation as a socially responsible organisation and strengthen relationships with educational institutions and community stakeholders.

Pipeline for Future Talent: T Level work placements serve as a pipeline for future talent. Employers have the opportunity to identify high-performing students during their placements and potentially offer them apprenticeships, further training opportunities, or even permanent employment upon graduation.

Enhanced Employer Branding: Actively participating in T Level work placements can enhance an employer's brand as an attractive place to work for young professionals. It showcases the organisation's commitment to supporting the next generation of talent and can help attract top candidates in the future.

Skills Development for Existing Employees: Mentoring T Level students during their work placements can also benefit existing employees by providing opportunities for leadership, mentorship, and skill development. It fosters a culture of learning and development within the organisation.

Myth Busting, work placements are not just for large enterprises: SMEs will become the backbone of T Level work placements. Schools, young people, and families can find it harder to approach SMEs, as they often do not know companies exist, or indeed, what they do. SMEs can be uneasy about offering placements, due to limited capacity across their organisation. However, placements in SMEs can be incredibly valuable for students. Placements can be much more focused to an individual and companies need. SMEs do not have to reinvent policies and procedures. Economic Development and Education teams within councils, Careers and Enterprise Council colleagues, colleges and schools can all support SMEs in developing placement opportunities.

Overall, T Level work placements offer employers a range of benefits, including access to talent, cost-effective recruitment, opportunities for innovation, and enhanced community engagement. **By actively participating in work placements, employers can play a crucial role in shaping the future workforce and driving economic growth in their industries.**