

# Employer briefing – Government roundtables on T Level Placements

## 1 Overview

The Department for Education is developing policy on T Levels, including the employer placements that will form a compulsory part of each student's learning.

In November 2018, they held a series of industry-specific roundtable events across the country with attendees including employers, representative bodies, colleges and training providers. They discussed challenges in the relevant industry with regard to facilitating industry placements, and sought insights from attendees on what meaningful placements could look like within each route.

They have noted that the following points are under consideration as a result of the events:

## 2 General Challenges

There were several general challenges that were mentioned across all industries consulted:

- Safeguarding issues related to students in the workplace
- Funding of costs incurred by students, providers/colleges, and employers
- Lack of workplace awareness on the part of students
- Practical support for employers, and clear links to the T Level learning programme
- Competition with apprenticeships and other work-related training opportunities already offered

## 3 Route-Specific Challenges: Engineering & Manufacturing

- **Placement Timing** – The need to co-ordinate college timetables with employers' business cycles, planned shutdowns, etc.
- **Size of Business / Capacity** – The sector is dominated by smaller companies for whom a placement would represent a significant proportion of effort.
- **Equipment** – Personal protective equipment in particular can be expensive (relative to the likely placement costs) and would not be optional.
- **Liabilities / Health & Safety/ Insurance** – With particular concerns for rules around under-18s being on regulated sites and/or on clients' premises while contracting.
- **Security Checks** – Clearance needs consideration on certain sites, and may not be easy for young people.
- **Location** – Isolated locations (e.g., nuclear licensed sites) would represent costs in travel or accommodation.

## 4 Overcoming Challenges

The Government has not decided how it will address the challenges above, but some approaches suggested by attendees at the roundtables included the following:

- **Employer-owned Training Facilities** – Including simulators where appropriate. This might form only part of the placement.

- **Multiple Employers** – The ability to split the placement over more than one employer. This would allow variety and potentially relieve pressure on a single employer – although of course it would imply more arrangement and administration.
- **Project Work** – The potential to have simulated projects that were realistic but did not affect employers' day-to-day business.
- **Additional Guidance, Funding and Support** - There was a general suggestion that there should be some funding available to offset costs inevitably incurred by employers.
- **Working Hours** – The flexibility to work outside normal college hours would help businesses and also allow students to understand the reality of work in the sector.
- **Student Exchanges** – Training providers might be able to make facilities available to students from elsewhere if their locations were more convenient.

## 5 Next Steps

DfE officers have since consulted further with other government departments, T Level Panel chairs and Route Panel members, with a view to informing the development of policy for placements. They will publish further guidance in 2019.