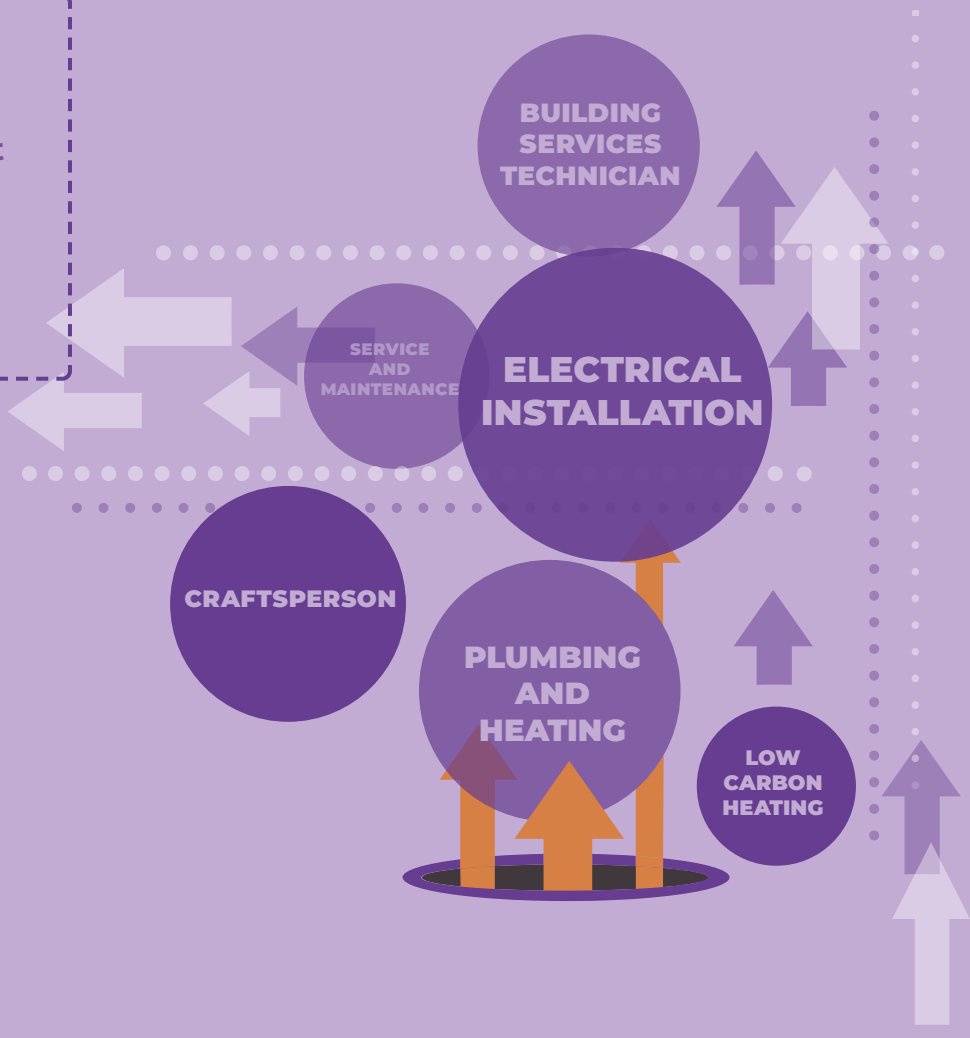
T-LEVELS
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

BUILDING SERVICES ENGINEERING PLACEMENTS:

what contribution will a student be ready to make?

College, school and employer planning

A student does not need complex technical work to have a meaningful placement. The strongest starting point is often to identify what they can safely observe, help prepare, support, record or discuss.



A STRONG PLACEMENT DOES NOT NEED TO BE COMPLICATED

You do not need to create a perfect placement or find complex technical work for a T Level student to make the experience valuable. In Building Services Engineering (BSE), students can learn a great deal by observing real work, supporting simple tasks, helping with preparation, recording information and understanding how teams work safely.

Students are not expected to arrive fully trained. What matters is that the placement is safe, realistic, clearly explained and supported by good communication between the student, the workplace contact and the college or school.

A good starting point is to ask: What could a student safely observe, help prepare, support, record or discuss?

WHAT STUDENTS MAY BE READY TO DO

The exact activities will depend on the student, the timing of the placement, the occupational specialism and the type of work you do. Most students will be at an early stage of learning. They may be ready to contribute in three main ways.

1. OBSERVE HOW WORK HAPPENS

Observation helps students understand how real work is organised, how decisions are made and why safety matters. They may observe installation, maintenance, testing, fault-finding, team briefings, preparation of tools or materials, use of drawings or specifications, safety procedures and communication with customers, clients or other trades.

2. SUPPORT SIMPLE TASKS UNDER SUPERVISION

Students may support practical activity where it is safe and appropriate. This could include preparing tools, materials or equipment, checking stock, keeping areas tidy and safe, supporting simple supervised preparation tasks, assisting with basic checks, or helping prepare for handover or follow-up activity.

3. RECORD, CHECK AND COMMUNICATE INFORMATION

Students can often make a useful contribution through information, records and communication. They may note readings or observations, complete basic checklists, take supervised photos for records, compare information with drawings or manufacturer guidance, help prepare handover notes, or summarise what they have learned.

EXAMPLES OF SUITABLE ACTIVITY

The examples below are not a fixed list. They are intended to help shape a conversation about what may be possible in your workplace.

AREA OF WORK	WHAT A STUDENT MIGHT OBSERVE OR SUPPORT
Site or job preparation	Preparing tools, checking materials, reviewing job instructions, understanding site expectations.
Installation activity	Observing or supporting supervised preparation, layout, fixing, routing, labelling or tidying tasks where safe and appropriate.
Maintenance activity	Observing checks, helping prepare equipment, recording observations or supporting basic supervised tasks.
Testing and commissioning	Observing readings, noting results, comparing information with expected values and reporting anything unusual.
Fault finding	Observing how faults are investigated, helping gather information or recording symptoms for qualified staff.
Documentation and handover	Helping organise checklists, photos, notes, diagrams, test records or simple user information.
Customer or team communication	Observing how staff explain work, answer questions or work with other trades and colleagues.

TECHNICAL AWARENESS STUDENTS MAY BRING

Students will not all be at the same stage. Their technical awareness will depend on their course, occupational specialism and when the placement takes place.

Before placement, students may have developed an awareness of:

- Building Services Engineering systems and terminology
- health and safety expectations
- tools, materials and equipment
- drawings, measurements, specifications or job instructions
- basic installation, maintenance or testing principles
- sustainability and energy efficiency
- communication and teamwork in construction or building services environments

This does not mean they are ready to work independently. It means they may have a foundation that can be built on through observation, support and structured feedback.

WHAT STUDENTS SHOULD NOT BE EXPECTED TO DO

SAFETY AND BOUNDARIES

Students should not carry out high-risk tasks, use tools or equipment without instruction, take responsibility for live work beyond their readiness, replace an employee or apprentice, work without appropriate supervision, or do anything they have not been shown, asked or are allowed to do.

Some low-risk tasks may become more independent once the student has been shown what to do and the employer is confident that they understand the expectations. This should always be agreed, supervised proportionately and appropriate to the student, setting and task.

If you are unsure whether an activity is appropriate, speak to the college or school before including it in the placement.

PLANNING SUITABLE ACTIVITIES

You do not need to plan every moment of the placement in detail. However, it helps to identify a few areas where the student can safely observe, support or contribute. Use the prompts below to shape the conversation with the college or school.

AREA OF WORK	COULD THE STUDENT OBSERVE THIS?	COULD THEY SUPPORT THIS SAFELY?	COULD THEY RECORD, CHECK OR PREPARE SOMETHING?
Site or job preparation			
Installation, maintenance or repair			
Testing, checks or commissioning			
Fault finding or problem solving			
Documentation, handover or customer communication			
Team meetings, briefings or planning			

HOW YOU CAN HELP THE PLACEMENT WORK WELL

A small amount of clarity at the start can make a big difference. Examples:

- confirm start times, location and reporting arrangements
- explain clothing, PPE or workwear requirements
- identify a named workplace contact, mentor or supervisor
- explain what the student is likely to observe or support first
- agree how the student should ask questions or raise concerns
- give clear instructions and check understanding
- offer simple feedback during the placement
- keep communication open with the college or school
- tell the college or school early if there are concerns

Students do not need constant attention, but they do need clear boundaries, safe tasks and someone they can go to if they are unsure. The relationship with the workplace contact, mentor or supervisor is often one of the most important parts of helping the placement work well.

IF THERE ARE CONCERNS

If there are concerns about behaviour, attendance, safety or readiness, raise them early with the college or school contact. This might include repeated lateness or absence, not following instructions, unsafe behaviour, inappropriate phone use, lack of engagement, or uncertainty about what the student should or should not do.

Most issues are easier to resolve when they are raised early.

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