Engineering and Manufacturing industry placement resources

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Introduction

This short guide introduces the Engineering and Manufacturing industry placement resources on this page, explains why they were developed and gives an overview of how each resource can be used. The resources are designed to support colleges, schools, employers and students to develop and deliver meaningful, high-quality Engineering and Manufacturing T Level industry placements.

The collection includes resources developed through the Engineering and Manufacturing industry placement action group, alongside other materials to support different aspects of industry placement delivery. This guide provides an overview of the resources and their intended audiences, helping you identify which materials are most relevant to your role or context.

About the Engineering and Manufacturing action group

The Engineering and Manufacturing action group brought together T Level providers, employers and sector colleagues to explore how engineering and manufacturing industry placements can be made more meaningful, manageable and sustainable.

The group focused on the practical realities of engineering and manufacturing placements, including how employers understand the role of students, how students are prepared for structured, safety-critical and process-driven working environments, and how colleges and schools can work with employers to shape placements that reflect genuine engineering and manufacturing practice.

The resources hosted on this page that were produced from the digital industry placement action group are:

- Employer's guide to hosting an engineering and manufacturing industry placement
- Students: ready for your engineering and manufacturing industry placement
- Engineering and Manufacturing: Delivering strong industry placements

Action group participants

Employer engagement and/or curriculum staff from the following colleges and schools participated:

Aston University Engineering Academy (AUEA)
East Lancashire Learning Group
New College Durham
Newcastle and Stafford College Group
North Warwickshire and South Leicestershire College (NWSLC)
Sandwell College
South Essex College
The Manchester College

University College Birmingham (UCB)
Strode College (UCS College Group)

What the action group found

Across the action group discussions, several key messages emerged:

- Strong engineering and manufacturing placements need clear expectations, proportionate supervision, safety awareness and a shared understanding of what students can realistically contribute.
- Engineering and manufacturing placements often work best when they reflect real working environments, team activity, defined processes, quality standards, production or project phases and safe, supervised contribution, rather than artificial standalone tasks.
- Student readiness is critical. Students need to understand that engineering and manufacturing work can include routine tasks, observation, preparation, accuracy, safety, teamwork, feedback, communication and professionalism, not only visible technical activity.
- Employers are more likely to host again where placements feel worthwhile, supported and repeatable, and where feedback is used to improve future delivery.

What we produced

In response to these findings, three practical resources have been developed.

They do not represent an exhaustive set of possible support materials for engineering and manufacturing industry placements, but reflect the areas the action group identified as most useful and achievable for immediate development.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
Employers' guide to hosting an engineering and manufacturing industry placement	A practical employer-facing guide explaining: • what hosting an engineering and manufacturing industry placement involves • why employers choose to host • what students may be ready to do • how colleges and schools support the process.	Engineering and manufacturing employers considering or hosting a placement.	Use it before an employer commits to hosting, during early employer engagement conversations, or as a follow-up resource after an introductory meeting. It can help explain realistic student contribution, placement structure, safety, supervision, feedback and college or school support.
Students: Ready for your engineering and manufacturing industry placement	A student-facing preparation resource that helps students understand: • what it means to take responsibility for a placement • how engineering and manufacturing workplaces operate • what behaviours matter in the workplace.	Students preparing for an engineering and manufacturing industry placement.	Use it in placement preparation sessions, tutorials, one-to-one readiness conversations, placement induction and reflection activities. It includes practical preparation prompts and a before you start checklist covering expectations, independence, travel, working hours, safety requirements and who to contact if something goes wrong.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
Engineering and Manufacturing: Delivering strong industry placements	A shared ambition and quality lens for strong engineering and manufacturing industry placements. It sets out the key features of placements that are meaningful for students, manageable for employers and useful for colleges and schools. The resource is structured around five connected elements: 1. employer clarity 2. student readiness 3. real contribution 4. connection to learning 5. sustainability.	Employer engagement, placement and curriculum teams in colleges and schools.	Use it to support planning and feedback conversations with employers, align curriculum and employer engagement teams, review placement design and strengthen student preparation. The resource also includes a quick check tool to review whether a placement is emerging, developing or strong across the five key areas.

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