Building Services Engineering industry placement resources

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Introduction

This short guide introduces the Building Services Engineering 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 building services engineering T Level industry placements.

The collection includes resources developed through the Building Services Engineering 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 Building Services Engineering action group

The Building Services Engineering action group brought together T Level providers, employers and sector colleagues to explore how industry placements can be made more meaningful, manageable and sustainable across electrical, electrotechnical, plumbing, heating and other building services pathways.

The group focused on the practical realities of a sector shaped by safety-critical work, changing sites, mobile teams, customer settings and varied occupational specialisms. It considered how providers can build student readiness over time, how employers can offer safe and worthwhile contribution, and how flexible placement models can be designed around real work and employer capacity.

Action group participants

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

Blackpool & the Fylde College
Brooklands Technical College
Burton & South Derbyshire College
City College Norwich
Dudley College of Technology
EAL
Herefordshire, Ludlow and North Shropshire College
Middlesbrough College
Milton Keynes College Group
MIT Skills
North Devon College
Shooters Hill Sixth Form College

The Sheffield College
West Nottinghamshire College
Wigan & Leigh College
Yeovil College
City of Wolverhampton College
Leicester College

What the action group found

Across the action group discussions, several key messages emerged:

- Clear expectations matter from the start. Students and families need to understand the mandatory placement commitment, its usually unpaid nature, the practical realities of BSE work and the independence and professional behaviours required.
- Readiness should be built across the learner journey through curriculum, tutorial, pastoral, employer engagement and placement activity, rather than left to a single session immediately before placement.
- A meaningful placement does not require complex technical work. Students can learn and contribute by safely observing, preparing, supporting, recording and discussing real activity within agreed boundaries and supervision.
- Employer concerns about safety, under-18s, supervision, mobile work and customer settings need to be explored honestly. Flexible, clearly planned models can make placements realistic and manageable where a standard arrangement does not fit.

What we produced

In response to these findings, two connected toolkits, comprising 13 separate resources, have been developed.

The employer confidence and placement design toolkit supports the journey from initial employer interest to a safe, realistic placement plan. The placement readiness toolkit supports expectation-setting, preparation and reflection across the learner journey. The resources are modular and should be selected for the audience and need, rather than issued as one complete pack.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
BSE employer confidence and placement design toolkit: provider guidance	Internal guidance explaining how the employer-confidence toolkit works, how its four components fit together, when each should be used and shared, and how provider teams can connect employer engagement with curriculum-informed placement design.	Employer engagement staff, industry placement teams, curriculum leaders, BSE tutors and provider managers.	Use it before introducing the toolkit to employers, when agreeing responsibilities across provider teams, or when planning a consistent employer journey from initial interest through formalisation, review and repeat delivery.
Could an industry placement work in your business?	A concise employer-facing guide showing electrical, electrotechnical, plumbing, heating and other building services employers how a T Level placement can provide value without requiring complex technical work or constant supervision.	Building services employers considering an industry placement; introduced by employer engagement or placement staff.	Use it during an initial employer conversation or as a follow-up resource. It explains the placement, suitable early contribution, manageable supervision, provider support and possible links to future recruitment.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
Common placement concerns: practical responses for building services employer conversations	A provider conversation aid for exploring genuine concerns about under-18s, safety, supervision, mobile work, customer settings, student readiness and suitable activity.	Employer engagement and industry placement staff in colleges and schools.	Use it before or during early employer conversations and planning meetings. The prompts help staff understand what sits behind a concern, respond respectfully and decide whether a safe, realistic model can be developed or whether not to proceed.
Ways an industry placement could work	A jointly used resource presenting flexible placement models for a sector shaped by changing sites, customer demand, projects, call-outs and supply chains. Options include regular, block, phased, project-linked, multi-site, holiday and bounded project-supported approaches.	Building services employers and provider teams exploring placement options together.	Use it where standard day release or a single-employer model may not fit. Compare and combine models, then confirm that the preferred arrangement meets current placement requirements and local safeguarding, insurance, health and safety and quality processes.
Planning an industry placement	A collaborative planning tool that turns employer interest into a clear proposal covering work patterns, suitable learning activity, exclusions, locations, travel, supervision, contacts, learning goals, support and next steps.	Building services employers and provider teams once a possible placement has been identified.	Complete it jointly before formal provider agreements, risk assessments and approvals. Use it alongside the student-contribution resource to shape a specific placement that is safe, realistic and valuable.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
Building Services Engineering placement readiness toolkit: provider guidance	Internal guidance explaining the purpose, audience, timing and limits of each of the seven placement-readiness tools, together with suggested responsibilities for curriculum, tutorial, pastoral, employer engagement, placement and quality teams.	College and school teams coordinating BSE curriculum, student support, employer engagement and industry placements.	Use it to select the right readiness resource for each audience, coordinate messages across the learner journey and make sure the toolkit complements rather than duplicates formal placement records and local procedures.
Is a Building Services Engineering T Level right for you?	An expectation-setting resource explaining the mandatory and usually unpaid industry placement, the range of BSE specialisms and workplace environments, and the practical commitment and behaviours the course requires.	Prospective students and their parents or carers.	Use it at open evenings, interviews, enrolment or induction so students understand the placement before committing and can consider travel, working patterns, safety, independence and the realities of the sector.
Students: getting ready for your building services engineering industry placement	A student preparation resource covering first-day practicalities, workplace expectations, likely early activity, named contacts, what to do if problems arise, a quick readiness check and a student/parent or carer declaration.	Students already on programme who are approaching placement, with supporting use by provider staff and families.	Use it during pre-placement preparation, matching and final readiness activity. Complete the practical details and declaration before the first day, and use the prompts to confirm that the student knows how to work safely, communicate and seek support.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
Building placement readiness into the BSE curriculum	An internal planning tool for mapping where independence, confidence, safety and professional behaviours are introduced, practised, reinforced and reviewed across the programme.	Curriculum, tutorial, pastoral, employer engagement and industry placement teams.	Use it in curriculum planning, team meetings, placement-preparation reviews and quality improvement activity to identify gaps, agree responsibilities and embed readiness through repeated teaching, practice and reflection.
Building services engineering placement readiness check	A structured student self-assessment and discussion record covering practical preparation, professional behaviour, safety, communication, independence and support needs.	BSE students and the tutors, placement coordinators or other provider staff supporting them.	Use it for readiness reviews, pre-placement checks or when concerns are identified. The student completes the check first; staff then use the notes and discussion sections to agree support, actions and follow-up.
Supporting your young person to get ready for a building services engineering placement	A family briefing explaining the placement commitment, its usually unpaid status, practical preparation, workplace expectations and how to support a young person without taking over responsibility.	Parents, carers and other people supporting a BSE student.	Use it during enrolment, induction and pre-placement communication. It can prompt early conversations about travel, clothing, PPE, equipment, routines, independence and when the student should contact their college or school for help.

Resource	What this resource is	Primary audience	How it can be used
Building services engineering placements: what contribution will a student be ready for	A planning resource showing how students can contribute meaningfully through safe observation, preparation, support, recording and discussion without being expected to carry out complex or unsupervised technical work.	Employer engagement staff and building services employers planning placement activity.	Use it to support early employer conversations and placement planning. Discuss the activity examples, technical awareness, safety boundaries and progression prompts rather than sending the resource cold without context.
Making sense of your building services engineering placement	A BSE-specific reflection sheet helping students notice workplace practice, safety, responsibility, teamwork and communication; link experience back to their T Level; and consider future progression.	Students on or returning from placement, supported by tutors and placement staff.	Use it during placement, in review conversations, tutorials, classroom follow-up or careers discussions. It complements the formal logbook, timesheets and review records rather than replacing them.

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