

T-LEVELS
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

STUDENT GUIDE

***PREPARING FOR YOUR INDUSTRY
PLACEMENT***



HM Government

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Introduction

Congratulations on selecting to study a T Level! You're on the journey towards the most exciting part of the T Level, the industry placement.

This guide provides you with advice and signposts you to useful resources to help you prepare for your placement and make it a success.

Essential information about your industry placement

The industry placement is a compulsory part of your T Level, and you must complete it to get your T Level certificate. To complete your placement, you must:

1. make sufficient progress towards your learning goals, which will be developed by your tutor and the employer before you start your placement. Your progress will be reviewed at regular review meetings with your tutor and manager at the employer
2. spend at least 315 hours on your placement, or 750 hours for the Early Years Educator T Level. This could include up to 35 hours of work taster activities, such as job-shadowing and visits to different employers
3. work directly to 1 or 2 employers, in a real-life, working environment

Some employers may pay you a wage or cover your expenses, but this is up to them. If you are eligible for support for expenses, such as transport, you will continue to receive this. If you are not sure, ask your education provider.



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What you will gain from your industry placement

Your industry placement gives you a great opportunity to put your learning into practice and develop your technical skills and knowledge for the industry your placement is in. It will help you to progress once you have finished your T Level, whether that is directly into employment, an apprenticeship, or more education.

Your industry placement is also a really important addition to your CV. It will make a big difference to your future job opportunities as it will help you stand out against other job applicants.

Your industry placement will help you to:

- gain the experience of being in a workplace setting
- step out of your comfort zone and build confidence through interacting with professionals and meeting new people
- identify what sort of job you would like to do, and what sort of organisation you would like to work for
- build your network in the industry, connecting you with people who can give you advice and help you to find future jobs
- potentially secure a job or apprenticeship with the employer after you have completed your T Level

 **TOP TIP:** You might want to check out [student views on industry placements!](#)

Before your placement starts

You need to be prepared for your industry placement so that you can make the most out of the exciting opportunity.

Before you start your placement, your education provider will make sure:

- you've been taught the technical skills and knowledge you need for the industry
- you've been taught the employability skills you need
- you understand the professional behaviours and attitudes you need to show
- you know how to produce a good CV and prepare for an interview
- you have researched the organisation your placement will be with and understand the work it does, the products and/or services it provides, its culture and values, whether it has a local, national or international focus and its size and structure
- you understand what your role will be and the activities you will do
- you understand what to do if you have a problem or are anxious and have the confidence to ask questions if you are unsure about anything
- you are clear how your progress towards your learning goals will be measured



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Students with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities or anxiety

If you have a special educational need or disability, or anxiety, you should make sure your tutor knows. This is for any special need you have, and it doesn't matter whether you have an education, health, and care plan. For example, you might have a medical condition or find it difficult to travel by yourself. Your education provider will help you to prepare and plan for your placement, make sure you have the support you need and that the employer knows about your needs so that any adjustments can be made, if required.

Developing your employability skills

What are employability skills?

Your industry placement will allow you to develop your employability skills, which will help you to get a job and progress in your career. They are the skills that allow you to do well in the workplace and include skills, such as communication, teamwork, problem solving, using your initiative, time management, agility, creativity, and independence.




What employability skills do you have?

Your education provider will help you to explore what employability skills are and how to use them in the workplace. You may be surprised to learn you have many examples within your education, home life or hobbies where you demonstrate these skills regularly.

To help identify what employability skills you already have and which you need to develop before you start your placement, your education provider will probably ask you to do a self-assessment. They will then tailor employability skills training to meet your needs. This might include discussions with your education provider's career guidance

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service, job-shadowing, visits to different employers, talks from employers, volunteering, CV writing and interview skills workshops, and class projects or activities.

 **TOP TIP:** You might also want to do your own self-assessment to help you reflect on your skills and recognise areas where you might want to develop. A self-assessment tool you can use is on page 16.

Useful employability skills resources

- Barclay's [LifeSkills](#) has interactive tools, films and activities to help you identify your skills in the context of work. You just need to create an account and log in
- Accenture's [Skills to Succeed Academy](#) has interactive training modules to build your skills and confidence for the workplace. Just create an account and log in
- The [Skills Builder Framework](#), has an online tool to help you develop the essential skills you need for the workplace
- [Youth Employment's Skills and Careers Hub](#) has free resources, tools, training, and advice to help develop your employability skills
- The [Prince's Trust](#) has online tools and resources to develop your work skills
- [BBC Bitesize Careers](#) has articles and videos to help you develop your work skills including teamwork, organisation, communication, and initiative
- [Bright Knowledge](#) has useful articles and tips about how to enhance your employability skills, such as motivation and time management
- [Success at School](#) has resources to help you develop your employability skills including critical thinking, networking, decision making, and presentation skills
- BT's [Skills For Tomorrow](#) offers advice and training to help you become work ready

Engaging with prospective employers

Industry placement search

If you need to find your own industry placement, your education provider will help you. They will show you how to research employers, set up email alerts, write a cover letter or email to employers to accompany your CV, and speak confidently to prospective employers on the phone.

Useful resource

- Association of Colleges' [self-sourcing placements guidance](#) provides helpful advice on how to find a placement

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Writing a CV and cover letter

You will probably need to provide a CV and cover letter to prospective employers, either when you are finding your industry placement or because it is part of an employer's recruitment process.

Your education provider will help you to write your CV and cover letter. Generally, a CV should be no more than 2 pages long and it should show you in the best possible light. Below are some useful online resources that you might also want to look at.

Examples of useful CV resources

- The [National Careers Service](#) has a guide on how to create a CV and cover letter
- Barclay's [LifeSkills](#) offers a free online tool to build your CV
- [Success at School](#) and [Get My First Job](#) provides links to free CV templates
- Accenture's [Skills to Succeed Academy](#), the [Youth Employment Skills and Careers Hub](#), [Prince's Trust](#), [BBC Bitesize Careers](#) and [Bright Knowledge](#) offer tips in writing CVs and cover letters

Preparing for an interview

You might also have to attend an interview before being offered your industry placement. Your education provider will help you to prepare for your interview. This section also gives you some interview tips and useful websites to look at to help you prepare.

Interview hints and tips

Identifying your skills, achievements and abilities and being able to articulate them will give you an edge during your interview. You can use this table to get you thinking.

Your experiences	Your abilities	Your achievements	Transferable skills
Personal qualities	Things you've learned	Your skills	Your work values
Your career aspirations	What you're good at	What you want to do in life	What you want to gain from the placement
What you like about their organisation and how it fits with your aspirations		What you can bring to the workplace and what you would like to learn	

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Here are also some useful tips to help you do the best in your interview:

- 1. Research the organisation in advance:** aim to discover as much as you can about the products or services they provide, its vision, values and culture, the organisation structure, the role you will be doing and read up on their recent news
- 2. Practise your responses:** read your responses out loud to your reflection/family member or friends. Practice makes perfect
- 3. Prepare questions to ask at the interview:** remember it is a conversation, so go armed with 2 or 3 questions that demonstrate you have researched the organisation and have a genuine interest in it, e.g., *What challenges does your team face on a day-to-day basis? What qualities are necessary for someone to do well in this role? What are the strategic challenges you are facing as a business?*
- 4. Have interviewers' contact details to hand:** it is important to remember names if you are entering a large workplace with a reception, and have their contact details to call if you are delayed
- 5. Dress appropriately for the industry:** if in doubt, check with your tutor or the employer but as a rule of thumb, dressing smartly will give a good instant impression and show you are serious about the role. If you are struggling financially, you can approach organisations [Smart Works](#) for women, and [Suited & Booted](#) for men, who can help
- 6. Arrive on time:** punctuality shows you are organised and reliable. Plan your journey ahead of time and aim to arrive 5-10 minutes early. Use [Google Maps to help with this](#)
- 7. Put your phone on silent** and make sure it is tucked away so you can focus on the interview questions
- 8. Give a good first impression:** start the interview with a confident manner, by keeping your head up, making eye contact, having a smile on your face, and offering a firm handshake (if appropriate)
- 9. Be enthusiastic, energetic and smile:** coming across as being passionate about the area and using open body language leaves a lasting impression
- 10. Be organised:** have a notebook and pen ready so you can take notes during your interview if you want to
- 11. Show enthusiasm and a willingness to learn**

After your interview and being told the outcome, remember to ask for feedback whether you have been successful or not. This will help you prepare for future interviews.

Examples of useful interview resources

- Association of College's [Student Handbook](#) provides example interview questions
- [National Careers Service](#) has helpful interview advice
- Barclay's [LifeSkills](#) has a tool that allows you to do a practice job interview online
- Accenture's [Skills to Succeed Academy](#), the [Youth Employment Skills and Careers Hub](#), [Prince's Trust](#), [BBC Bitesize and Careers](#) and [Bright Knowledge](#) offer interview tips and tricks



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Practical arrangements before you start your placement

You should plan for your first day of placement, to make sure you are organised and give a good first impression by making sure you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Know the days you need to attend your placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Know the start and finish times for each day and the break and lunch times
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have planned how you will travel to and from your placement, including finding out the train/bus/tram times, to make sure you arrive on time. Be prepared, as you might need to travel further to your placement than you normally do to your education provider
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have enough money with you to cover your bus fares, lunch etc
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have suitable clothes and any equipment you need, including a notebook and pen so you can take notes
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have the contact details for your employer, and know who to ask for when you arrive at your placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have the contact details for your tutor at the education provider, so you can keep in touch with them on your placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have 5 questions that you can ask your manager and colleagues on your first day to help start a conversation and to show interest in your colleagues. These could include: <i>What does your job involve? What do you enjoy about your job? How did you get into this industry? How would you describe the organisation's culture? What is the biggest priority or challenge you are working on now? How can I be a valuable team member? Do you have any advice to help me make the most out of my placement?</i>

During your placement

What is expected of you

During your placement, you are expected to:

- complete the organisation's induction programme and any important training
- apply the knowledge and skills that you have learned in the classroom
- work towards your learning goals and record your progress against them in your logbook
- attend regular meetings with your manager and tutor to discuss your progress
- display professional standards of behaviours and attitudes
- follow the organisation's policies and procedures
- complete the agreed number of placement hours, making sure you record your hours in a timesheet on a weekly basis

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Your education provider and employer will support you throughout your placement. You should let them know straight away if you are anxious or have any worries or concerns.

Your education provider will explain how to record your progress against your learning goals and how to prepare for your review meetings. They will also help you understand the behaviours and attitudes you need to display on your placement.

Behaviours and attitudes in the workplace

Employers will expect you to behave in a professional way on your placement. You should have a positive and enthusiastic attitude, want to learn and develop your skills, be happy to receive feedback, and want to make the most of the exciting opportunity.



TOP TIP: the table on page 15 sets out the professional behaviours and attitudes that you must demonstrate during your placement. If you cannot meet these your time with the organisation is likely to be short lived

You should have a notebook and pen so you can take notes, for example of the names of people you meet and the tasks you have been asked to do. This will help you to be organised. Also, don't be afraid to ask questions if you are unsure about the work you are doing, as it is important to speak up and ask for help if you are worried about anything or have any safety concerns.

Examples of useful resources

- The [work etiquette website](#) gives information on how to behave in the workplace
- This [video](#) on BBC Career Bitesize explains how to make a positive first impression in the workplace

Organisation policy and procedures

When you start your placement, your employer will put you on an induction programme. As part of this you will be told about the organisation's policies and procedures, which will explain what you can and can't do in the workplace. It is important you always follow them.

Organisations will have policies and procedures in areas including health and safety, dress code, acceptable behaviour, appropriate IT use, the use of your personal mobile phone, the use of social media, working hours, breaks and lunch practices, equal opportunities, equality and diversity, looking after the organisation's property, disciplinary procedures and confidential information handling.




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Health and safety policies

High risk working environments, such as car manufacturing sites, will have additional health and safety policies that you must follow to protect you and others from getting hurt. Some organisations will also require you to wear a uniform or personal protective equipment for health and safety reasons, e.g. on a construction site or in a health setting.

Organisations will also have a drugs and alcohol policy, which will prevent you from being under their influence in the workplace due to their negative impact on your performance and safety. If you are found to be using drugs and alcohol on your placement the employer will most likely remove you from their premises and stop your placement.

You should make sure that you know who to contact at your education provider if you have an accident whilst on your placement, or if any issues arise.

 **TOP TIP:** use the student induction checklist on page 19 to make sure the employer has told you about their policies and procedures. If you're worried you haven't been told all the information you think you should know, speak to your manager at the placement or speak to your tutor.



Dress code

Some industries and organisations will have dress codes that require you to dress in a certain way on your placement. For example, in an office environment you may have to wear smart clothes to promote a professional atmosphere. Workers who deal with the public often must wear a uniform to promote the organisation's brand or to provide easy recognition for customers. Other industries, such as agriculture or animal care, will require you to dress in clothes that are more suitable for physical activity. If you are worried about getting the appropriate clothes for your industry placement speak to your tutor.

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Importance of networking

Your industry placement gives you an excellent opportunity to network. Networking is about building relationships with the people you know, and the people that they know, to receive advice and support, to help others and to find out about job opportunities.

The most useful contacts on your placement will normally be the people you work with day to day, and especially your manager or supervisor. However, anyone you meet whilst on your placement could be a useful contact. Networking can feel intimidating at the start so if you feel nervous or shy, ask the person you're talking to something about themselves or ask for their advice on something. This takes the pressure off you and shows them that you're interested in them. To make the most out of your contacts whilst on your placement:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Introduce yourself to colleagues whose work you are particularly interested in, and see if you can work with them more closely during your placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Keep a record of the people you meet, including who they are, who they work for and how you met them
<input type="checkbox"/>	If you think it would be useful, ask people if they are happy for you to stay in touch after your placement. Professional networking sites, such as LinkedIn , makes this easier, so if you don't already have one, set up an account
<input type="checkbox"/>	Have a sensible email address that you can use for contacts and job applications

Professional networking websites

[LinkedIn](#) is an example of a professional networking site. It lets you create an online profile, like a CV, to highlight your skills and the things you've done. It also allows you to research companies, look for jobs and join groups where you can make.

Employers often use social media to find out about employees they want to recruit. Make sure you're creating the right sort of online presence that your prospective employer will be looking for. Be careful with the information and images you put online. Most social media is public, so if you would not be happy letting your manager or colleagues see it, think twice before adding it online.

Useful networking resources

There are online resources that you give you useful hints and tips for networking:

- [National Careers Service](#) has a helpful guide on networking
- The [LinkedIn website](#) has hints and tips on how to use it effectively
- Barclay's [LifeSkills](#), Accenture's [Skills to Succeed Academy](#), the [Prince's Trust](#) and [Bright Knowledge](#) offer online advice and tips on networking

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Troubleshooting issues with your placement

With the right preparation and attitude, your industry placement is likely to go very well. The following issues are unlikely to occur but if they do, here are some tips on how to troubleshoot issues that come up during your industry placement. In most cases you should talk to your tutor first before taking any action.

Issue	Action
The work you are doing is not what you had expected or hoped for	Speak with your tutor about what you are doing and how it is not meeting your expectations. Remember that almost any job involves aspects that we enjoy and others which we are less keen on, so a degree of flexibility is important! You are contributing to a real business in real time and business needs can change. Your tutor can help you review the situation and, if necessary, plan how to raise it with your manager by reference to your agreed learning objectives. If the problem persists, your tutor may contact your manager directly
You feel unable to do the work you are given	This may be due to assumptions by the employer about your skills/confidence levels to perform a task. Be honest. Your manager knows that you are learning, is likely to appreciate your honesty and will be happy to teach you the skills required. Also speak to your tutor
You have an issue with transport	Speak to your tutor for support and create a contingency plan for when your regular travel route is not available
You are unable to purchase workwear	If you are struggling to purchase the correct workwear, speak with your tutor as they should be able to support you in getting hold of appropriate work clothes
You are being asked to work longer hours than you expected	If your placement is asking you to exceed the hours agreed, talk to your tutor in the first instance about what is happening, and you can decide next steps together
You are experiencing wellbeing issues	If you are experiencing issues with your wellbeing, do not hesitate to speak to your tutor about it and you can decide the next steps to resolve this
You feel you are being treated unfairly by colleagues	Speak to your tutor about what is happening, and they will help you address things in the most suitable way

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At the end of your placement

Reflecting on what you have learnt

At the end of your placement, you should reflect on your progress and what you have achieved. You may be asked to give a short presentation about your placement to your employer and/or education provider. This won't be assessed but will be a good way for you to reflect and show what you have learnt. Your tutor will help you with your presentation skills.

Handing over work

You may need to handover the work you have done on your placement to the employer so that they can carry on with it when you have left. Your employer will tell you what you need to do to handover your work and who to hand it over to.

Things you must not forget to do

It's important to make sure you haven't forgotten anything that could help you get the most out of it. Make sure you:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Make a note of any work email addresses and/or work phone numbers for people you met during your placement that you want to keep in touch with, including your manager, or add them on a professional networking website, such as LinkedIn
<input type="checkbox"/>	Ask your manager if they would be willing to give you an employer reference in the future
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't leave any personal documents or files on the employer's IT equipment, such as your industry placement logbook and timesheets
<input type="checkbox"/>	Don't take any other files or documents from your placement without written permission from the organisation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Thank anyone that you feel has made your placement a positive experience
<input type="checkbox"/>	Write a thank you letter or email to your manager and set out what you have gained from your placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	Update your CV with the details of your placement, including what you achieved and the employability skills you have developed

If you forget anything, you might be able to get back in touch with the organisation to sort it out after you leave, but it's easier and gives a more professional opinion of you if you don't have to do this.

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Professional behaviours and attitudes overview

Professional behaviour and attitudes you need to demonstrate in the workplace

Display professionalism

- Are courteous and respectful to other staff and members of the public
- Have good attendance and time keeping
- Are calm under pressure
- Are reliable, and contact your manager immediately and directly if you are unable to attend work due to illness or another reason
- Are enthusiastic and interested in your work
- Do not get distracted by personal issues or your mobile phone whilst at work, and only use your phone during formally recognised breaks or in an emergency
- Always adhere to organisation policy and procedures, including around health and safety, equal opportunities, equality and diversity, appropriate IT use, disciplinary procedures, and acceptable behaviour
- Maintain confidentiality regarding any of the information you access whilst on your placement. This includes not gossiping and keeping confidential any personal information that work colleagues share with you
- Do not do anything which may bring you and/or the education provider into disrepute i.e. which would negatively affect the reputation of you or your education provider
- Dress appropriately for the employer's work environment

Produce results

- Complete your work to an agreed standard, with very few or no errors
- Are organised, plan your work effectively, prioritise tasks, work independently as needed and meet deadlines
- Always ask for support or clarity if you are unsure of what you need to do
- Want to learn and develop your skills
- Want to receive feedback and act on any feedback given

Work well as part of a team

- Build good relationships with your colleagues, understand what your role in the team is and show a positive attitude to working as part of a team
- Treat all colleagues with respect
- Listen effectively to different points of view and respond in a professional way
- Are a supportive team member, proactively offering help and support to the team

Communicate appropriately

- Use a polite and professional tone and language when communicating with colleagues and customers
- Produce clear, well written work which uses the right tone for the audience, and has very few or no mistakes
- Share your thoughts and present your ideas clearly
- Follow instructions and listen carefully to what you need to do
- Use positive and open body language, including maintaining eye contact, to show that you are approachable and ready to listen
- Are confident to check your understanding of tasks you've been asked to do, and ask for clarification as needed

Take responsibility for your actions

- Are open to feedback and act on feedback given
- Are honest if you make a mistake and seek to learn from them, so it doesn't happen again

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Student self-assessment tool

How confident do you feel with regards to each of these statements?

	Not confident at all	Not very confident	Neutral	Confident	Very confident
I know how to write a good CV and cover letter					
I can speak clearly to employers about my skills and experiences at an interview					
I know how to research the organisation that my industry placement will be with					
I have the employability skills that I need for my industry placement (e.g. teamwork, communication and problem solving)					
I have the technical skills and knowledge that I need for my industry placement					
I understand the professional behaviours and attitudes that employers will expect me to display on my industry placement (e.g. time keeping, dress code, adhering to health and safety rules)					
I understand that the industry placement will be a valuable addition to my CV					
I understand how I will benefit from completing my industry placement					

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To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree / disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
I am good at communicating my thoughts and ideas in a way that is easy for others to understand					
I am confident in my writing skills					
I listen well to other people					
I respond positively and can adapt when things aren't going to plan					
I am confident at working in a team					
I respect the different views and opinions of others					
I am good at being on time					
I am good at organising the things I have to do					
I am motivated and eager to learn in a workplace setting					
I am always keen to improve and like to receive feedback on my performance					
I can often think of creative solutions to problems					
I am confident in making decisions					
I am confident in asking questions if I am unsure					

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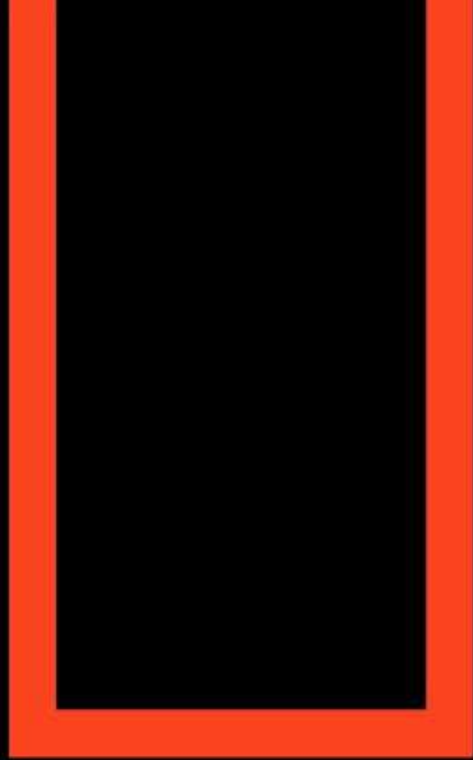
Create a self-development action plan about how you will develop your skills and knowledge

What are the skills or knowledge you want to improve?	How are you going to do this and what support do you need?	When will you do it?	Record your progress when completed

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Industry placement induction checklist

<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been given an overview of the organisation and the work it does, including the products / services it provides, the industry it is in, its size and structure and whether it has a national or international focus
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told about my itinerary for my placement, and what my role will be, including which departments I will be working in, and the type of work I will be observing, learning about, and doing
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand the days I need to attend my placement, the start and finish times for each day and I know when I can take my lunch and breaks times
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told about, and understand, the organisation's policies and procedures including dress code, health and safety, and drug and alcohol use
<input type="checkbox"/>	It has been explained to me who my immediate manager for my industry placement will be and who to speak to if there is a problem
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been shown the location of the restaurant, toilet facilities and prayer rooms
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told if there are areas which are restricted to me or where I must always remain with my manager/an employee, due to security or safety reasons (where applicable)
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told how to access the organisation's IT systems, and I understand the organisation's policy about using IT equipment, including the use of social media in the workplace, and when and where I am allowed to use my mobile phone
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been briefed on potential hazards/safety issues, if any, that I could be exposed to during the industry placement and I have had the chance to ask questions where this is not clear
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told about safe working practices to adhere to while on my placement
<input type="checkbox"/>	I understand that I am not permitted to operate any machinery without the permission of my manager, and without first receiving the appropriate training
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have had the importance of safety equipment explained to me, such as PPE, where it is kept, which areas it must be used in and why
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told I must report any injury/accident to my manager or a first aider immediately
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told what I should do in the event of a fire, and how I will know if a fire alarm has been raised
<input type="checkbox"/>	I have been told the emergency procedure and where the assembly points/emergency exits are, and I know that I should not run during an evacuation. I understand that I should speak to my manager if I am unclear which emergency exit to use on the site, in case of an emergency



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Industry placements are a core part of the T Level courses.
Visit www.tlevels.gov.uk.

