

Engaging with the implementation of T Levels

These new technical qualifications for 16-19 year olds are being introduced to help deliver a world-class education system and successful UK economy. In the early years a relatively small number of young people will be taking the new qualifications and Government will need to invest heavily across education at all levels and pathways if it is to achieve its overall aims.

T Levels are mapped against the existing Level 3 Apprenticeship Standards as they are to deliver the same outcomes. FM as a discipline currently falls under the Building Service Engineering pathway, however very little of the Level 3 Apprenticeship Standard has been included in the content for this qualification.

Because of their importance for the FM profession as a potential pipeline for new talent, we have been monitoring and engaging with the development of T Levels for some time. In February 2018 we submitted our thoughts and concerns to the Department for Education's consultation on the implementation of T Levels.

Indeed, the introduction of T Levels has not been without controversy. Many stakeholders believe that they are being implemented too quickly and without due care, especially given the general lack of awareness about what they are, what they could deliver and how employers could support their development. A report by the [Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development](#), published in October 2018, highlights that more needs to be done to increase employers' awareness and understanding of T Levels. Although generally supportive of the new technical qualifications, 60% of employers had not even heard of them, with awareness lowest in the private sector and 74% said they would not be able to offer the required 45-60 days' industry placements.

Industry is raising some of the same issues that surround apprenticeship placements, such as the additional administrative costs and loss of productivity due to time spent supervising students: this is especially challenging for SMEs. Several organisations, including the BBC, have stated that they are no longer willing to offer T Level work placements for this reason.

We will continue to work with the Department for Education to try to provide as much guidance as possible to overcome some of these difficulties and to ensure that we are clear about the capabilities and work-readiness of students who have completed Construction T Levels. Although they are largely college-based learning, these new qualifications do have the potential to provide a rich pool of talent through which to find new apprentices or indeed new colleagues.

In October 2018 the Institute for Apprenticeships ran a consultation on the new T Levels in On Site Construction and Building Services Engineering which will be rolled out from 2021. IWFM provided feedback on this consultation, focusing particularly on the lack of wider FM content. Whilst our engagement has ensured the inclusion of specific hard FM content, wider FM content mapped against the L3 Apprenticeship Standard remains excluded.

We will continue to engage with the development of this educational route and will provide regular updates on our work in this area.