



**Gillian Keegan MP**

Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Apprenticeships and Skills

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## **Letter sent to 2020 and 2021 T Level Providers**

### **Delivery of T Levels**

I wanted to write to you to set out the latest developments on the T Level Programme.

#### 2020 and 2021 delivery of T Levels

Most importantly, I want to be clear that the Government remains fully committed to continuing with the delivery of both T Levels and the T Level Transition Programme in 2020 and 2021 as planned. I know that the Covid-19 outbreak has had a huge effect on your work and that we don't yet know what the full impact will be, but there are very strong reasons for us to continue.

In the past two weeks officials from the Department have contacted the majority of 2020 providers, and some have been in touch directly with me. While providers have rightly raised some issues with delivery, most wanted to continue to deliver the first T Levels this year. I know how hard you have all worked, both to help develop T Levels, and to get into a position to deliver them, and I do not want your hard work to be wasted.

The Government is also determined that students will not lose out on opportunities due to Covid-19 – hundreds have already been accepted onto courses and hundreds more will be accepted between now and September. We owe it to these young people to find ways to continue to deliver the courses that they have chosen and that will offer them great progression opportunities.

I also firmly believe that T Levels are absolutely vital for businesses and the economy of this country. We know that the current system does not produce enough young people with the skills, knowledge and experience that employers need. Now - more than ever - it will be vital to ensure that we provide a pipeline of skilled young people that will help our businesses and our economy to recover.

I do not underestimate the difficulties in carrying on with delivery in the current climate. Please do get in touch with your usual ESFA contact if you encounter specific issues or have questions, I have asked officials to report to me regularly on the issues that are being raised and what we can do to overcome them.

#### Approval of Qualification Specifications for 2020 T Levels

I am delighted to announce today that the qualification specifications for the first

three T Levels have been approved by the Institute and accredited by Ofqual. The three T Levels are: T Level in Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction, Digital Production, Design and Development, Education and Childcare.

I am confident that they are of a high standard, meet employer expectations and are manageable for providers. The content of these materials will not be new to you, as drafts have been shared with providers since January to help them prepare. I'd like to thank you for the role you have played in helping to test the materials as they were developed.

Both Pearson and NCFE will continue to support 2020 providers. Their 'Prepare to Teach' meetings will now be offered online and they will be in contact with you directly to ensure you can access this support

You can find further information on the Institute website:

<https://www.instituteforapprenticeships.org/about/news-events/first-t-level-technical-qualifications-tqs-approved/>

### Ongoing support available

I am determined to ensure that both 2020 and 2021 providers continue to receive the support that they need. Given the current challenges, we will reduce the information returns that we ask you to send us for the rest of the academic year to the minimum requirements. ESFA local teams should continue to be the first point of contact for any questions.

Over the last year, both 2020 and some 2021 T Level providers have already taken advantage of support and training from the T Level Professional Development offer delivered through the Education and Training Foundation. A range of these resources will remain available online; please do access the ETF website. We will reschedule and move online all the DfE events we were planning but have had to cancel due to Covid-19, including networking events for providers and events on curriculum design. Support on the technical qualifications will also be available from the specific awarding organisations as set out above.

We will also continue to provide communications support to providers and will be in touch shortly with guidance on the communications campaign for T Levels, including a review of channels and messaging, given the current situation.

### Industry Placements and the Capacity and Delivery Fund

I know that the unprecedented impact of Covid-19 has meant that it is currently extremely difficult for you to continue to organise and deliver industry placements through the Capacity and Delivery Fund (CDF), which was already one of the most challenging elements in delivering T Levels.

Given these exceptional and unprecedented circumstances, you will not be penalised for missing specific CDF targets this Academic Year. Funding will not be clawed back if you can demonstrate how the funding has and will continue to support your work on industry placement delivery. My officials will set out further details of what activities are expected to go ahead in due course.

This might also include offering placements once restrictions ease. We will ask for evidence of this through the usual autumn Capacity and Delivery Fund monitoring process in order to minimise reporting burdens, and we will still look to claw back funding should providers fail to demonstrate they have continued to support the delivery of industry placements. Providers must avoid the risk of double funding: we will seek to claw back funding should providers furlough staff involved in these activities.

The package of support for employers, which launched earlier this year, continues to provide guidance and webinars for employers on industry placements, for them to engage with at an appropriate time. This can be accessed [here](#). We will continue to monitor the regional and industry challenges caused by Covid-19 and will target our support to ensure that businesses are able to offer placements where possible. Industry placement delivery guidance will also be published later this year to support providers in the planning and implementation of high quality industry placements under T Levels.

I know that 2020 providers will be working hard to secure Industry Placements for the first T Levels in September. Experience with CDF placements has shown us that students must be work-ready before they undertake Industry Placements, so we would expect them in most cases to be weighted towards the latter part of the course. Providers therefore do have the flexibility to decide when in the two year course it is best for work placements to take place. Department for Education officials and the National Apprenticeships Service will continue to work with you on this to see what support can be provided to secure these work placements.

### T Levels capital funding

#### Wave 1 - 2020 delivery

For projects that are currently underway, due to be completed by September this year, I do understand that the current situation is causing significant pressures and may lead to project delays. We encourage you to keep in close contact with your named DfE lead about any potential delays. Where appropriate, we are considering the need for re-profiling payment schedules.

#### Wave 2 – 2021 delivery

I also understand that for many of you the current deadline to submit capital bids to support 2021 delivery of T levels of 30<sup>th</sup> April is not deliverable in the current circumstances; this deadline will therefore be moved back to 26<sup>th</sup> June. We will of course keep this under review as the situation develops and will communicate any further extensions to you as soon as possible.

I do appreciate all the hard work that all those involved are putting in to drive this programme forward – I know that these challenging times have made this all the more difficult, but as I have set out above I do think the prize is well worth the effort. I had hoped to get out to meet more of you and to hear first-hand about the work that you are doing, and I very much hope to do so as soon as the situation allows.

Please do stay in touch with the Department through your ESFA regional contacts, or through [RoutesReadiness.TE@education.gov.uk](mailto:RoutesReadiness.TE@education.gov.uk).

I am hugely excited about the potential that T Levels have to transform young people's lives. These qualifications, co-designed by industry leaders and providers, will ensure that young people really are ready to go into good jobs, or to meaningful further study or training. You are the pioneers driving this new programme forward, showing what can be done; thank you for all your efforts to continue to deliver.

I hope that you and all your staff stay safe and well.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gillian', with a large, stylized flourish above the name.

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