

Session Title:	Getting to grips with T Levels
Speaker(s):	Catherine Sezen
Chair:	Jonathan Atkinson
Reporter:	Amanda Kenningley

Speaker/Institution Bio/Information:	Catherine Sezen is a senior policy manager at the Association of Colleges.
Overview/Aim of session:	To understand the rationale behind T levels and to receive an overview of them including a student perspective, assessment, grading and progression.
Workshop Content	Catherine gave a comprehensive presentation on T Levels, including looking back at the 2020 and 2021 delivery and looking forward to T Levels for delivery in 2022 and 2023. The presentation gave the rationale for T Levels, along with details on assessment, grading and progression.
Case Studies/Examples:	A student perspective video of T Levels is embedded in Catherine's presentation. It gives a variety of students from Derby College giving their opinions of the T Levels and how they have helped them with the variety involved and what they want to go onto afterwards.
Scenarios/Roundtable discussions:	N/A
Questions and Answers:	

Summary/Key takeaways:

- It was felt that the academic path was well understood but the vocational path was much less understood
- In 2016 after the referendum a skills plan overview came out but not a great deal of attention was paid to it due to Brexit. Lord Sainsbury worked with other to look at technical education and found a compelling case for change and recommended comprehensive reform
- Unlike BTECS, there will only be one T Level and one awarding body, which makes simplifies the system for students and employers
- All T Levels are 2 years, and there are no certificates/extended diplomas etc. like BTECS
- T Levels have UCAS points attached to them and a range of roles are available afterwards
- All T Levels require a minimum of 45 days in industry placement
- T Levels will be rolled out gradually. There were 3 T Levels in 2020 in approx. 44 organisations in England. They are only being delivered in England out of the 4 nations
- There will be an additional 7 T levels this year and more will be rolled out over the next 2 years
- The majority of courses will have core content in the first year with the second year being the time when students decide which occupational specialisms to take. There is a lot of assessment throughout the course
- Grades break down core and occupational specialisms and are presented in a table (shown in Catherine's presentation), this should help admission teams when making decisions
- If students leave the course early or do not pass a T Level overall, they will be issued with a statement of achievement
- **T Levels one year on have shown:**
 - *Really good retention*
 - *Students like T Levels*
 - *Staff are enjoying them (extra resource and something different)*
 - *Employers are working with students on projects*
- **Challenges include:**
 - *Most colleges require Grade 4 at English & Maths GCSE before starting*
 - *Placements were particularly hard to achieve particularly during the WFH orders*
 - *It is anticipated that 100,000 students will take T Levels, this poses a problem with the number of placements*

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Is funding sufficient for progression?</i> • There is stumbling block for those universities that don't accept UCAS points • It would be useful to have conversations in your institution to find out plans • If a university already accepts BTECS etc. will it be similar for T Levels? • There is currently a discussion taking place with DfE and HELOA will provide national updates to members • So far only 47 HEIs have said how they will accept T Levels • There needs to be an inclusive offer that meets the needs of students and routes such as performing arts and sport, where there is currently no T Level are currently being discussed • It is the responsibility of each provider to find employers for placement. Help is available from AOC on how to engage with employers, but there is still a lot of work to be done • There is a potential risk if students are unable to complete their placement and this needs to be constantly monitored. There has been a lot of flexibility during the pandemic, however the vast majority of this year's students achieved their placement hours
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