

# BUILDING THE WORKFORCE OF THE FUTURE

A toolkit for employers that shows you  
how to boost your business by offering  
experience of the workplace



# Why this is critical

Are you an employer in Leicester and Leicestershire?

- Do you need to grow your workforce?
- Want to ensure that young people with the qualifications you need know about your company?
- Concerned about future recruitment?

This guide has all the information you need to offer employer encounters, work experience, and work placements, and shows you how these activities can benefit you in the long term. Read on to find out more...



## Recent research shows that:

# 28%

of all Leicester and Leicestershire employers had experienced recruitment difficulties and of these, 23% had skills shortage vacancies

(Source: Leicester and Leicestershire Business Survey 2017)

# More than 79%

of businesses expect to increase the number of higher-skilled roles over the coming years.

However, 66% fear that there will be a lack of sufficiently-skilled people to fill vacancies.

(Source: 2018 CBI /Pearson Education and Skills Annual Report)

Our workforce is growing. Forecast jobs growth equates to an annual requirement of

# 27,600

jobs up to 2023

(Source: Skills for the Future 2018-2030. Figures includes both new jobs and replacement demand)

Employers are concerned that perceptions of their industry are outdated and don't reflect the pace of technological change.

For example, a PWC survey found that future job seekers still don't see transportation and logistics as a desirable industry. To stand out, companies must proactively manage their company brand.

(Source: PWC Transportation and Logistics 2030, Volume 5: Winning the Talent Race)

Employers in Leicester and Leicestershire perceive that young people's weakest attributes are:



**Communication/  
conversational skills**



**Problem-solving  
skills and resilience**



**Prior experience of  
the world of work**

(Source: Skills for the Future 2018-2030)



Two-thirds of respondents (65%) want to play a greater role in supporting schools and colleges.

(Source: 2018 CBI /Pearson Education and Skills Annual Report)





Find out more  
on page 10

## Case study

### Thermo Fisher Scientific

Thermo Fisher Scientific regularly send volunteers to help teach interview technique. These sessions are managed by Leicestershire Cares and involve business volunteers carrying out one-to-one interviews with year 10 and 11 students, to help them improve their confidence and interview skills.

They view it as an **important source of professional development** for their staff. As Emily Quinton, European Events and Communications Manager, explains:

*"Not only is interview technique extremely beneficial to students, but there are also significant benefits to the interviewer. Businesses can build interview technique sessions into their staff individual development plans as it is an opportunity to practice interview skills with multiple candidates, improve communications and build self-confidence.*

*"In particular, interview technique provides experience for non-managerial staff positioning themselves for the next step in their career to expand their skillset. It's rewarding, fun and supports both professional and personal development."*



## I want to... build brand value and reputation

Looking for an opportunity to raise awareness of your business or industry sector?

Engage with young people and adults to encourage them to think about future career opportunities.

Step outside the workplace and find out how half a day's input can have a big impact by taking part in:

- Careers Speed Networking events
- Mock interviews or assessment centres
- Careers talks
- CV workshops
- Enterprise competitions linked to your sector.

These are just some examples, but you may already have innovative ideas about ways you would like to get involved.



124 employers took part in the annual LLEP Careers Speed Networking Event at Leicester Racecourse in 2019, representing 23 industry sectors.



They had the opportunity to talk to 240 students from 20 schools about their job and what it involves.



100% of employers felt the event was beneficial to them and 95% of students felt more confident about their career options.

## I want to... attract future employees



To find out more  
about these activities,  
please see page 10

Showcase your business to future applicants by opening your doors to both students and teaching staff. Dispel the myths around your sector and show the benefits of working in your industry to attract future employees. You can also ensure that teaching staff understand your industry by offering them business insight sessions.

Invite students, adults and teaching staff into your business and influence their wider career knowledge and choices, and form long-lasting relationships with education providers.

Schools, colleges, universities and other providers can be a great source of help and support for businesses – **you won't have to do this on your own**. Some ideas for collaborative activities include:

- 'Open Doors' events showcasing your business
- Work shadowing
- Setting a workplace challenge, e.g. increasing hits on your website
- Offering business insights for teaching staff
- Work experience placements - short tasters of the world of work.



### Case study Access Generation

Access Generation CIC is a Leicester-based social enterprise that encourages businesses to employ inexperienced young people. Its founders wanted to practice what they preach by taking on two interns via the De Montfort University Champions scheme.

Chris Tarry, founder of Access Generation said:

*"This is a risk-free way for a business to 'try before you buy' and meet potential future employees.*

*The interns gave us a fresh perspective on young people's approach to and view of the job application processes, by conducting a focus group and survey with university students, among many other really useful tasks. As a micro-organisation we were able to take on two interns; if we can do it so can you."*

### Case study KD Trading

KD Trading specialises in retail cosmetics and they used the DMU-funded Graduate Champions scheme to support their recruitment needs.

Media and Communications graduate Gabriele Povilaityte impressed the team during her internship at KD Trading with her ideas and approach to the extent that she was subsequently taken on permanently as their Social Media Co-ordinator.

*"Taking on a graduate through the funded internship scheme helped us to identify the fresh talent we needed with minimal risk. Gabrielle's impact on the business was such that we offered her a permanent job at the end of her internship. Gabrielle is now an integral part of the management team and her contribution has been invaluable to our company."* - Kunal Dattani, MD KD Trading Ltd

## I want to... access the right skills for my business



Find out more about  
T Levels on page 7

Work in partnership with a college or university to provide industry placements and internships. Skill and labour shortages mean that this is your opportunity to build the capacity of your business and grow the skills you need. It may also provide the means to create a cost effective recruitment pipeline. Schools, colleges, universities and other providers can be a key partner in ensuring your business is geared up for future skills and labour demands.

A placement or internship will provide you with additional capacity in the short term, and can often be part of a talent recruitment strategy.

Options you could consider are:

- T Level industry placements (at least 315 hours/45 days)
- Flexible undergraduate placements as part of the course of study
- Internships of varying lengths focusing on specific business related projects at graduate or post-graduate level

### Case study

#### LikeMind Media

Paul Ince, MD of LikeMind Media *"I was at a time in my business where I needed a little bit of assistance but didn't have the need for a permanent employee. I asked Loughborough University about student placements as a way to achieve my objective. I met a local student and was keen to take her on. It was the best decision!"*

*"The university supported me with part funding from Santander, reducing the financial impact on the business while gaining all the benefits from the employee. I have since gone on to take another placement student and then a permanent graduate employee. I was helped every step of the way in the process. The customer service element, whereby the university wants to help businesses move forward, I found so inspiring. There is a natural talent pool on campus. With the right relationships in place, it's easy to see where the next set of team members could come from!"*



### Case study

#### Meet & Engage

Meet & Engage, a local award-winning candidate experience technology for employers, utilised the University of Leicester internship scheme. Ali Hackett, Director of Meet & Engage, says:

*"In a way we could effectively 'try before you buy'. As a small business, it's incredibly helpful being able to offer internship opportunities and knowing that just down the road we have a great University, which is a great source of talent. For us as a business, it enabled us to understand more about the candidate before we offered them a permanent role, whilst benefiting hugely from their experience. It gave us a new pair of eyes and a fresh perspective – particularly important for a marketing and client services role. The University of Leicester provided some great guidance around how to create the right job description and advert and were really helpful throughout the entire recruitment process."*

## I want to... give something back to the community

Many businesses would like more opportunities to forge better links with the community and meet their corporate social responsibilities.

There are a range of activities you can become involved with which support disadvantaged individuals, but may also provide you with the ideal employee.

### Sector-based work academies

Sector-based work academies offer a guaranteed interview to unemployed candidates following completion of a course related to the industry sector in which they are interested in working, e.g. health and social care, logistics or hospitality. The employer has the opportunity to input to the course and use the programme as part of their recruitment strategy.

### Supported internships

Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at a place of business. They enable young people aged 16-24 with a statement of special educational needs (SEN), or an education, health and care plan to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace.

### Work trials

A work trial is a short period in work you can offer to a jobseeker on benefits. It's a way for you both to see if the job is a good fit.



Find out more  
about these options  
on page 10

## Case study

### The WIRE Project

The WIRE Project, run by Leicestershire Cares, supports ex-offenders back into work through one-to-one support, employability workshops, and mentored work placements. On average, two-thirds of WIRE participants successfully find full-time paid employment or training. Paul joined the WIRE Project after being out of work for over 12 months; he had an interest in engineering, having studied this subject at university a while ago. However, his criminal conviction and lack of experience was proving to be a barrier to work. Through the WIRE Project, Paul successfully completed two work placements, one with Terex Corporation, and another with Barratt Homes. He then accessed a work trial and interview with Leicester City Council and was successful for a full-time position in their grounds maintenance team.

*"The WIRE project has given me a great opportunity to explore new job avenues and gain experience across different avenues. It has also opened my eyes to how many people and companies can support ex-offenders into positive outcomes. Just because I have a conviction it doesn't mean it's the end of my work career. Everyone working with the WIRE project has been so helpful... the staff are really supportive."*

Paul Nokes, WIRE Participant.





## What are T Levels?

T Levels are new level 3 technical qualifications, designed in partnership with employers. Lasting for two years, they sit alongside traditional A-levels and apprenticeships and provide an alternative route into employment or higher study for 16-18 year olds. Some sectors are already trialling T Levels and others will be phased in from 2020 onwards.

A key part of T Level qualifications is an industry placement of at least 315 hours or approximately 45 days. The placements will give students the opportunity to develop their skills, knowledge and behaviour in a real working environment, helping to prepare them for further study or paid work.

In the coming years, you will begin to see T Levels appearing on CVs and job applications for roles within your business. Even if you are unable to offer a placement now, you can have confidence in recruiting those achieving T Level qualifications, who will be highly skilled and ready to work.

## Case study

### East Midlands Ambulance Service

Leicester College regularly approach employers to take on students for industry placements. The East Midlands Ambulance Service (EMAS) took on two level 2 Motor Vehicle Maintenance Repair students, mentoring and supervising them through their placement.

Oliver's supervisor was pleased with the help the department has received from the students, and said:

*"I think an industry placement is good way to bring young people into industry, it helps them to see the real life world of work, what's expected from a job role here with the East Midlands Ambulance Service, gives us an additional pair of hands and fills that gap from the classroom to the working environment."*

**T-LEVELS**  
THE NEXT LEVEL QUALIFICATION

## What's the difference between a T Level and an apprenticeship?

### During a T Level

**80%**

of time will be spent  
in the classroom

**20%**

of time will be spent  
on placement

### During an apprenticeship

**80%**

of time will be  
spent on-the-job

**20%**

of time will be spent  
in the classroom

## What subjects are covered by T Levels?

T Levels will be available in a wide range of occupationally-relevant areas including:

- Accountancy
- Agriculture, land management and production
- Animal care and management
- Building services engineering
- Catering
- Craft and design
- Cultural heritage and visitor attractions
- Design and development
- Design, surveying and planning
- Digital production, design and development
- Digital business services
- Digital support and services
- Education
- Financial
- Hair, beauty and aesthetics
- Health
- Healthcare science
- Human resources
- Legal
- Maintenance, installation and repair
- Management and administration
- Manufacturing, processing and control
- Media, broadcast and production
- Onsite construction
- Science

T Levels give employers the chance to ensure that young people are developing the skills that industry needs, find out more: [gov.uk/guidance/industry-placements](https://gov.uk/guidance/industry-placements)

# There is a really strong potential pipeline of skills for employers across the region!

In Leicester and Leicestershire we are fortunate in having an excellent supply of talented young people and adults from:



89

Secondary schools



6

Further education colleges



3

Universities



Many organisations want to work with, and support employers around experience of the workplace for young people or adults, such as:

## Schools

For schools, the best person to ask for is usually the Careers Leader. As well as the LLEP website, individual Careers Leaders' contact details are usually on each school's website.

## Other placement providers

There are also other locally-based specialist not-for-profit organisations (for example LEBEC and Leicestershire Cares) that provide a service to schools in Leicester and Leicestershire. Support provided includes arranging activities such as work experience placements and mock interviews, and liaising with employers on the school's behalf.

## Colleges

There are six further education colleges in Leicester and Leicestershire that will be offering T Levels in the future. They are currently trialling industry placements with their students.

## Universities

We are fortunate to have three world-class universities in Leicester and Leicestershire offering a range of effective engagement opportunities for employers. These range from supporting specific student and graduate recruitment needs through to helping to enhance brand awareness through activities and projects.

## Other training providers

Independent training providers and the DWP have an interest in finding placements for disadvantaged groups such as ex-offenders and those with disabilities. They may also deliver traineeships and sector-based work academies.

## Apprenticeship training providers

[findapprenticeshiptraining.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk](https://findapprenticeshiptraining.apprenticeships.education.gov.uk)

## Next steps

If you already have contact with an education institution, that is a good place to start as they can often point you in the right direction, even if they are not able to provide the solution themselves.

The LLEP website contains a list of contact points for many of the organisations above.



For contact details go to  
[llep.org.uk](https://llep.org.uk)





## Case study

### Morningside Pharmaceuticals

Morningside Pharmaceuticals (which manufactures and supplies medicines) sponsors the Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership's annual Careers Speed Networking event. The event, one of the largest in the UK, sees around 300 students from 20 schools network with up to 150 employers. The students learn more about a wide range of careers, roles and employers across Leicester and Leicestershire that could be available to them.

Dr Nik Kotecha OBE, Chief Executive at Morningside Pharmaceuticals, said:

*"The speed networking is an invaluable learning experience for the 300 students who attend. It is also a great opportunity for employers, like Morningside Pharmaceuticals, to connect with their future workforce! The students learn about the great career opportunities available across the many sectors represented."*

## Useful guidance

Making work experience work: top tips for employers, CIPD  
[cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/routes-work/work-experience-guide](http://cipd.co.uk/knowledge/fundamentals/people/routes-work/work-experience-guide)

## Other useful organisations

Business Gateway Growth Hub  
[bizgateway.org.uk](http://bizgateway.org.uk)

Enterprise Adviser Network  
[leap.org.uk/projects-and-programmes](http://leap.org.uk/projects-and-programmes)

Access Generation  
[accessgeneration.co.uk](http://accessgeneration.co.uk)

Leicester Employment Hub  
[leicesteremploymenthub.co.uk](http://leicesteremploymenthub.co.uk)

Health and Safety Executive  
[hse.gov.uk](http://hse.gov.uk)

ACAS  
[acas.org.uk](http://acas.org.uk)

Fair Train  
[fairtrain.org](http://fairtrain.org)



# Deciding which activity best meets your business need

| What is it?  | Who to go to   | How does it work   |
|--|--|--|
| <b>I want to... build brand awareness and reputation</b>   |  |  |
| Mock interviews/mock assessment centres<br>CV workshops<br>Careers Speed Networking event<br>Careers fairs<br>STEM* clubs<br>Careers talks and presentations | Schools<br>Further education and sixth form colleges<br>Universities<br>Other providers                            | A business takes part in an event, usually half a day or less, where they interact with a group of students to give advice on careers from their own industry perspective.   |
| <b>I want to... attract future employees</b>   |  |  |
| 'Open doors' events<br>Work shadowing<br>Setting a workplace challenge   | Schools<br>Further education and sixth form colleges<br>Universities<br>Other providers                            | Businesses invite students in to their organisation to experience the working environment. This might involve work shadowing existing employees or asking students to help you with a typical workplace challenge. This type of activity would typically be around ½ day – 1 day.  |
| Business insights for teaching staff   | Schools<br>Further education and sixth form colleges<br>Universities   | Businesses can also invite teaching or careers staff to visit the workplace to get an understanding of the different job roles in the company.   |
| <b>I want to... access the right skills for my business</b>  |  |  |
| 1-2 week work experience placements  | Schools<br>Further education and sixth form colleges<br>Universities<br>Other providers                            | Work experience is typically a short taster of the world of work, lasting between 1-2 weeks. This can be a block placement or flexible, e.g. one or two days a week over a few months.   |
| T Level industry placement<br>(at least 315 hours/45 days)   | Further education and sixth form colleges<br>T Levels also being offered by some schools and independent providers | Each T Level student must complete a minimum of at least 315 hours/45 days industry placement as part of the qualification. This can be undertaken as a block, or as individual days.  |
| Internships (short term or longer term)  | Universities   | Internships may be funded or part-funded by universities. This is normally done through a university's employability team who will support with recruitment and administration.  |
| Undergraduate work placements  | Universities   | An undergraduate placement is typically fixed term employment which can be any length up to a year. The placement normally relates directly to the degree subject which is being studied.<br><br>Employers normally pay the student wages on this scheme, but it is worth checking with the university if they have any funding to help. |
| <b>I want to... give back to the community</b>   |  |  |
| Sector-based work academies  | Further education colleges<br>Independent providers<br>Job Centre Plus<br>Leicester Employment Hub                 | Sector-based work academies offer a guaranteed interview to unemployed candidates following completion of a course related to the industry sector in which they are interested in working, e.g. health and social care, hospitality.   |
| Supported internships  | Colleges<br>Special schools<br>Independent providers   | Supported internships are a structured study programme based primarily at an employer. Supported internships are unpaid, and last for a minimum of six months. Young people and employers are supported by an expert job coach.  |
| Work trials  | Job Centre Plus/independent providers  | A work trial is a short period in work you can offer to a jobseeker on benefits or to specific disadvantaged groups, e.g. ex-offenders. If successful, the work trial leads to employment.   |
| Traineeships   | Further education colleges<br>Independent providers  | Designed for people aged 16 to 24 who don't yet have the appropriate skills or experience required for employment.<br><br>A traineeship has three core elements:<br>1. A work experience placement with an employer (100 hours)<br>2. Work preparation training,<br>3. English and maths support, if required                            |

\* STEM stands for science, technology, engineering and maths; all key subjects and skills needed across industries.

\*\* Any cost on these schemes is normally just employer time, but remember, through any of the schemes, fresh eyes in your workplace can give you new ideas to save you money!

| What's in it for the business  | What's in it for the individual  | Any costs?*   |
|--|--|---|
| An opportunity to raise awareness of your business or industry sector with young people and adults, and encourage them to think about future career opportunities.<br>Some activities, such as mock interviews, can highlight potential future employees to you.       | Finding out more about different jobs from the people who actually do them. Developing key skills needed to be able to secure employment and understand employers' expectations.                             | No  |
| The opportunity to showcase your business to future applicants. Dispel the myths around your sector and show the benefits of working in your industry to attract future employees.<br>Take advantage of new ideas and fresh eyes to help to solve a workplace problem. | Gain a real-life understanding of what it is like to work in different jobs and businesses. This could make all the difference to future career choices.<br>Develop problem solving skills.                  | No  |
| Increased understanding of job roles and industry can help teaching staff raise awareness in the classroom of the skills, opportunities and careers.   | Teachers can inspire young people with first-hand experience of what happens in business helping young people make informed career choices.  | No  |
| The chance to form a relationship with an education provider, to generate interest from participants in your sector. This could lead to a longer-term relationship and recruitment opportunities.  | The individual gets to experience different workplace environments. They develop a deeper understanding of what employers are looking for and to develop their own employability skills (e.g. timekeeping).  | No  |
| An opportunity to build capacity of your business and grow the skills you need. It may also be a cost-effective recruitment pipeline for entry-level jobs.   | Students have the opportunity to apply their learning in a real workplace environment, ensuring that they are developing the skills that employers are looking for.  | No  |
| A business can access free support to work on specific business-related projects which they want to undertake but don't have capacity.   | An internship gives the student in-depth personal practical experience, an opportunity to develop their CV and to develop additional skills.   | Possibly, check what scheme the university has, some can help with funding. |
| A placement can add value to the business with subject matter technical expertise or specialist knowledge.   | A placement forms part of a young person's degree and supports their qualification. A young person gains insight into working in their chosen field and gets a very practical introduction to the workplace. | Possibly, check what scheme the university has, some can help with funding. |
| Employers can input to the course, which can often include mandatory training elements for your industry. Sector-based work academies can be used as part of your recruitment strategy to widen your pool of applicants.   | Participants build confidence and acquire skills and knowledge which is specific to a particular industry or job role, enhancing their employment prospects.   | No  |
| The extended work placement can act as an extended working interview - giving you an increased chance of getting the right person to fill your vacancies and bringing new skills to your workforce.  | They enable young people aged 16-24 with learning difficulties to achieve sustainable paid employment by equipping them with the skills they need for work, through learning in the workplace.               | No  |
| A work trial enables you to have confidence in the ability of the person undertaking it, and for both individual and employer to see if it is a good fit.  | Individuals have the opportunity to demonstrate their employability and get a taster of the workplace, enhancing their chances of longer term employment.  | No  |
| You will be helping young people achieve transferable skills and core attributes, and as a result, establish a pool of high-quality future recruits across a range of different sectors.   | Traineeships are an ideal opportunity for young people, aged 16 to 24, who are motivated to get a job but lack the skills and experience that employers are looking for.                                     | No  |

Leicester and Leicestershire Enterprise Partnership Limited would like to thank partners who contributed to the creation and content of this guide.

ACCESS  
GENERATION

lep growth hub  
business gateway  
supporting business growth

BMC  
Brookby Melton College

THE CAREERS &  
ENTERPRISE  
COMPANY

DE MONTFORT  
UNIVERSITY  
LEICESTER

Leicestershire Cares  
Together we Can

LEBC  
Leicestershire Education Business Company

Leicester  
EMPLOYMENT  
Hub

European Union  
European  
Social Fund

Leicester  
College

Loughborough  
COLLEGE est. 1959

Loughborough  
University

NWSLC  
NORTH WEST LEICESTER & SOUTH LEICESTERSHIRE COLLEGE

Stephenson College  
for Health and Education Training

UNIVERSITY OF  
LEICESTER



creating economic prosperity  
lep  
Leicester & Leicestershire  
Enterprise Partnership



Education & Skills  
Funding Agency