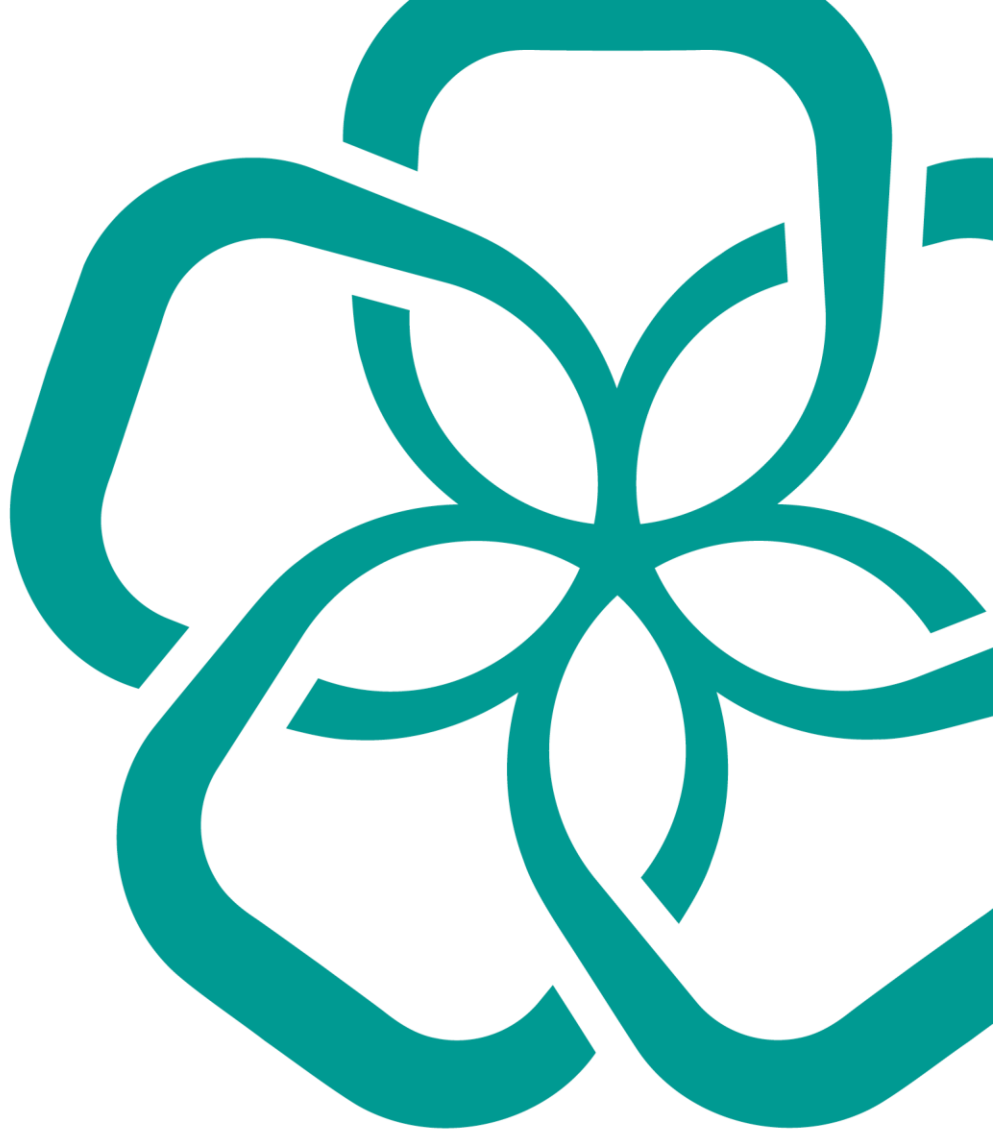




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West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Construction industry placements: guidance for providers and employers

For the 2026 to 2027 academic year (1 August 2026 to 31 July 2027).

This document sets out how construction industry placements must be designed, delivered and funded by providers who receive construction industry placement funding from the West Yorkshire Combined Authority.

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Introduction and purpose

This guidance explains how to design, deliver and fund industry placements for students studying construction qualifications at level 2 and level 3 in West Yorkshire. It is published by the West Yorkshire Combined Authority (the Combined Authority).

The Combined Authority receives funding for construction industry placements through its Integrated Settlement with the Department for Education. The Combined Authority is responsible for ensuring that delivery in West Yorkshire aligns with national guidance and represents value for public money.

This guidance applies to the 2026 to 2027 academic year and will be reviewed annually.

Who this guidance is for

This guidance is for:

- providers, including colleges, that deliver level 2 and level 3 construction qualifications to West Yorkshire students and hold a grant agreement with the Combined Authority for the delivery of construction industry placements
- employers who offer a construction industry placement through one of these providers

Providers must use this guidance, alongside their grant agreement, when planning and delivering placements.

Relationship to the Combined Authority's rules

This guidance must be read alongside:

- the Combined Authority's Performance Management Framework, which sets out how funded providers are performance managed and risk rated
- the provider's individual grant agreement, which states the funding allocation, minimum delivery expectations and any local conditions.

Eligibility

The following are not in scope for construction industry placement funding:

- apprenticeships
- national vocational qualifications

While industry placements are not mandatory within national qualification requirements, this programme reflects national guidance on strengthening employer engagement and improving student readiness for employment.

National eligibility parameters

A placement will only be eligible if it is incorporated into a level 2 or level 3 construction qualification within Sector Subject Area 5.2, Building and Construction. T Levels are eligible. The parameters for an eligible placement are:



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- a minimum placement duration of three weeks

- a qualification of a minimum of 360 guided learning hours
- a placement with an employer operating in and/or supporting the construction industry that is directly linked to the student's qualification and provides relevant on-site experience

Students are expected to demonstrate sufficient progress towards their learning goals, including developing the knowledge, skills and behaviours they need to become increasingly site-ready for safe and effective employment in real construction environments.

Students who study in West Yorkshire are eligible, regardless of their residing postcode. This ensures students travelling to study can participate.

Local flexibility

For 2026/27, the Combined Authority will retain the existing eligibility requirements, including a minimum placement duration of 15 days, 360 guided learning hours, and Level 2 and Level 3 student eligibility. No local flexibilities will be applied in the first year, ensuring placements remain within the parameters captured automatically through the Individualised Student Record (ILR). The approach will be reviewed for future years.

Core principles of a high-quality placement

The programme expects all students to receive a high-quality and equitable industry placement experience that is meaningful and supports their development and progression.

Industry placements must be a meaningful experience, as defined by Gatsby Benchmark 6, which gives students the opportunity to explore what it is like to work in that environment, what skills are valued in the workplace, how recruitment works, and what it takes to be successful. Every placement must meet the following criteria:

Provide the opportunity to carry out real work with an employer

The student must experience a real-life job, including travel to work, independence from their peers and working with new people. An exception applies where a student is in a Young Offender Institution, where the placement must take place in the institution's on-site facilities.

Apply and develop classroom skills and knowledge

The student must have clear learning goals agreed at the start of the placement. These goals must be relevant to their course and reviewed regularly throughout the placement, so that students progressively build practical skills, professional behaviours and confidence.

Take account of student readiness

The placement must take place at a suitable point in the course, when the student is sufficiently prepared for the workplace. Placements can be arranged as a block or on a day-release basis, depending on what best meets the needs of the student and employer.

The placement must help the student develop employability skills and occupational competencies within the relevant career route. Students must also hold their Construction Skills Certification Scheme industry placement Card, where relevant, and complete all necessary health and safety requirements before the placement begins.

Take place in a supportive environment

The student must receive an appropriate induction and any training they need to carry out tasks independently. Each student must be assigned a dedicated supervisor or mentor, from both the provider and the employer, who can provide guidance, support and regular feedback throughout the placement.

Be accessible for all students, including those with special educational needs and disabilities

The placement must be within a reasonable travel distance, agreed between the provider, employer and student. It must be structured to meet individual student needs and include provisions for reasonable adjustments. Providers and employers must ensure the student is in a safe working environment and check their wellbeing through regular meetings.



Design and delivery

Duration

A construction industry placement for level 2 and level 3 qualifications must **total 15 days (7 hours per day)**. T Level placements must meet the standard nine-week requirement set out in the T Level industry placement delivery guidance.

Placements may be delivered as a block or on a day-release basis, depending on what best supports the student and employer. If a student is undertaking an industry placement with multiple employers, then all employers involved in their industry placement must be reported.

Providers must ensure that placement hours are clearly defined, agreed in advance, and accurately recorded throughout the placement.

Completion

A placement is considered complete where the student has:

- completed the agreed placement hours or duration
- demonstrated sufficient progress against agreed learning goals
- undertaken the placement in a suitable external workplace
- had completion confirmed by both the provider and employer

Delivery models

Providers must work in partnership with employers to deliver placements that meet the core principles in this guidance. Students must spend their placement hours working face to face with an employer in a real workplace, developing skills relevant to their course.

Block placements

The student attends the workplace full-time for a continuous period, allowing the student to experience workplace culture fully and build stronger professional relationships.

Day release

The student attends the workplace regularly, for example one day a week, allowing students to apply knowledge in real time alongside their studies and to become familiar with the workplace over time.

Multi-employer or supply chain models

A placement can be shared across two or more employers to give students a broader experience, or to support small and medium-sized enterprises that cannot offer the full placement hours. Students must work towards a single set of learning goals across their placements. The placement agreement must include, and be signed by, every employer involved.

Roles and responsibilities

Providers have overall responsibility for organising and overseeing construction industry placements, and for making sure that employers understand and meet their responsibilities. The lists below set out the activities expected before, during and at the end of a placement.

Provider responsibilities

Before the placement

- source and match suitable placements to students, taking account of their needs, circumstances and career aspirations
- prepare students for the workplace and ensure they meet all relevant health, safety and industry requirements before the placement begins
- engage employers early, agree placement arrangements, learning goals and expected outcomes, and ensure all parties understand their responsibilities
- complete appropriate due diligence, including insurance, health and safety and safeguarding checks, and ensure required agreements and consents are in place
- identify and arrange any reasonable adjustments or additional support required to enable successful participation
- ensure internal quality assurance arrangements are in place

During the placement

- maintain regular contact with students and employers to monitor progress, attendance, wellbeing and overall placement quality
- provide appropriate support and guidance to students and employers, including arranging review meetings and facilitating any reasonable adjustments where required
- ensure students understand how to raise concerns and respond promptly to any safeguarding, welfare, conduct or performance issues
- monitor progress against agreed learning goals and keep appropriate records of reviews and outcomes
- ensure placement documentation, including attendance and progress records, is completed accurately and maintained throughout the placement
- support students to complete the agreed placement requirements, including managing any absences or disruption to delivery

At the end of the placement

- confirm whether the student has successfully completed the placement
- collect and retain all required placement evidence
- submit accurate and complete placement data through the Individualised Student Record (ILR) to support funding, reporting and high value courses premium eligibility

Employer responsibilities

Before the placement

- commit to providing a meaningful industry placement and agree the student's objectives, activities and expected outcomes with the provider

- comply with relevant health and safety, insurance and safeguarding requirements
- identify a named supervisor to support and oversee the student throughout the placement
- make reasonable adjustments, where required, to support students with additional needs
- ensure any required industry checks or site access requirements are completed before the placement begins

During the placement

- provide an appropriate induction and a safe, supportive working environment
- assign meaningful tasks that support the student's agreed objectives and development
- provide regular supervision, feedback and support throughout the placement
- participate in review meetings and communicate any concerns about attendance, behaviour or performance to the provider
- maintain and confirm appropriate placement records, including attendance where required
- support students to complete the agreed placement requirements wherever possible

At the end of the placement

- provide feedback on the student's performance and overall placement experience
- confirm whether the student has successfully completed the placement
- support progression into further training or employment opportunities where appropriate

Quality frameworks and the Careers Hub

The Combined Authority encourages providers to engage with the West Yorkshire Careers Hub and to embed the recognised quality frameworks into their placement delivery, including aligning with Gatsby Benchmark 6 and Equalex as stated below. The Combined Authority's careers team will support providers to embed and understand these frameworks.

Work experience must meet the [Gatsby Benchmark 6](#) definition of meaningful and be underpinned by clear learning objectives, with opportunity for adequate preparation and reflection in line with the [Equalex](#) framework.

In addition to this work experience must be delivered in the workplace wherever possible, be adapted to suit age and stage, aspirations and individual needs (including SEND) and be positioned as part of a broader, structured careers programme, embedded within a student's journey and aligned to curriculum intent.

It must be central to developing and evidencing technical and employability skills. These skills must align with current occupational standards and industry expectations. Employers will play an active role in shaping experiences to reflect real-world skill priorities.

It must be monitored through progress tracking, with clear mechanisms for feedback and review and be evidenced through completion outcomes, demonstrating what the student has achieved and learned.

Regional coordination

The Combined Authority may fund regional coordination activity to support employer engagement, awareness raising and the promotion of construction industry placements across West Yorkshire. Where a Construction Technical Excellence College operates within the region, it is expected to work collaboratively with providers to support a coordinated approach to employer engagement and placement delivery.

Quality assurance and evidence

Providers must retain evidence to support the delivery and completion of each placement. Completion criteria are set out in Section 4.

The Combined Authority may review placement delivery, including employer details, as part of its Performance Management Framework and will use a sample-based approach to assurance and compliance activity. Providers must retain this evidence within their existing student evidence systems and are not expected to maintain a separate filing system for construction industry placements. The evidence shall be available to the Combined Authority on request.

Assessing student progress

Student progress must be reviewed against agreed learning goals at a mid-point and final review. Annex D provides the framework for assessing technical skills and workplace behaviours. To successfully complete a placement, students must demonstrate at least a good standard of technical competence by the end of the placement.

A placement is considered complete where the student has:

- made satisfactory progress towards their learning goals
- completed the minimum placement requirement
- undertaken the placement in an appropriate workplace setting, unless an agreed alternative arrangement applies



Data and reporting

Providers must submit accurate industry placement data through the Individualised Student Record (ILR) using the relevant learning aim codes: ZWRKX004 for Construction industry placements and ZWRKX003 for T Level industry placements. Accurate data returns are required for funding, performance monitoring and eligibility for the High Value Courses Premium.

The Combined Authority will monitor delivery through existing ILR returns and provider performance reviews, and does not intend to introduce additional reporting requirements unless necessary.

Placement delivery will be reconciled at **R13**, with final positions confirmed at **R14**. Where agreed placement activity has not been delivered or evidenced, the Combined Authority may recover any underspend.

The Combined Authority will use provider delivery data to monitor progress against its Outcome Agreement, including placement completions, employer engagement and student progression outcomes. Providers may be asked to support the collection of additional information e.g. employer details, where required for Department for Education reporting.

Funding

Each provider will be allocated a funding amount and an associated placement target. A completed industry placement will attract funding of £727. Providers earn funding when they complete an eligible placement and must be evidenced through the Individualised Student Record (ILR).

Providers are expected to deliver their agreed placement targets and must not exceed agreed volumes without prior approval from the Combined Authority. Where delivery cannot be evidenced or agreed activity is not completed, the Combined Authority may recover funding in line with the provider funding agreement at a rate of £727 per industry placement.

Illustrative Example		
	Funding Allocation	Industry placements
Allocation Paid on Profile	£21,810	30
Actual IP Delivery	£16,721	23
Reconciliation Value	-£5,089	-7

Narrative:

Funding was allocated based on a profile of 30 industry placements (£21,810); however, only 23 placements (£16,721) were delivered. As a result, funding is reconciled to actual delivery, resulting in a clawback of £5,089 relating to the 7 undelivered placements.

What the funding can be used for

Provider funding

Providers may use construction industry placement funding to support the planning, delivery and monitoring of placements, including employer engagement, coordination, student support, staffing, systems and administration costs associated with delivery.

Funding may also be used to support the cost of CSCS cards where appropriate. For students receiving 16 to 19 High Value Courses Premium (HVCP) construction funding, CSCS card costs must be met through HVCP funding where possible.

Travel support

Providers must consider any support students may require accessing and completing their placement, including travel assistance and reasonable adjustments for students with SEND.

Placement funding and, where eligible, 16 to 19 discretionary bursary funding may be used to support student travel costs. Providers must refer to the national guidance on financial support for students when determining eligibility and appropriate use of funds.

Funding assurance

Funding must be used to deliver activity that is additional to existing provision, and providers must be able to demonstrate how funding has increased placement delivery or improved quality.

The Combined Authority may carry out sampling and assurance activity to verify delivery and expenditure and may contact providers and employers as part of this process.

Public funding compliance, clawback and audit

Providers must retain sufficient evidence to support all funded placement activity. Funding is earned on completion of eligible placements and is subject to performance management, audit and verification through ILR data returns. The Combined Authority does not operate a separate employer reimbursement process; providers are responsible for managing any employer-related costs within their allocated funding.

Funding recovery will apply in line with the arrangements set out above.

WYCA Funding

Grant Agreement

Your grant agreement will state the maximum amount of Combined Authority construction industry placements provision you can delivered between 1 August 2026 and 31 July 2027.

Your funding allocation can only be used to deliver construction industry placements.

You may be asked to provide funding claims during the year setting out your actual delivery to date and, where requested, provide a forecast for the remainder of the funding year.

Evidence

You must hold evidence to assure the Combined Authority that you are using the funding appropriately. Most evidence will occur naturally from your normal business processes. We retain the right to request performance management information and related evidence as part of the ongoing risk-based performance management process.

Fees and charging

You must not make compulsory charges relating to the direct costs of delivering a construction industry placement to students. Direct costs include any essential activities or materials without which the student could not complete and achieve their industry placement.

If a student needs a Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) check to participate in their industry placement (e.g, site-work in schools, nurseries, care homes), their employer is responsible for carrying out and paying for this check.

Who we will not fund

You must not claim funding for residents who do not meet the eligibility criteria set out in this document.

High value courses premium

The [16 to 19 High Value Courses Premium \(HVCP\)](#) for construction is separate to the Combined Authority's construction industry placement funding and is administered through national 16 to 19 funding arrangements.

To qualify for the full premium, students must:

- be enrolled on an eligible construction qualification
- complete an eligible construction industry placement
- complete the required health and safety qualification

Providers must ensure all relevant activity is accurately recorded through the Individualised Student Record (ILR), as eligibility for the premium is determined through national data returns. Failure to meet or evidence the requirements may result in funding being reduced or recovered.

Frequently Asked Questions

Can the hours a learner spends on an Industry Placement count towards their Study Programme hours (for example, as part of the 580 planned hours requirement)?

Yes. For learners undertaking a Study Programme, Industry Placement hours can count towards a learner's planned programme hours and may be included within the overall planned hours requirement (for example, the 580 hours threshold), where they form part of the learner's planned programme of study.

For ILR recording purposes:

- For T Level students, planned Industry Placement hours should continue to be recorded separately in the ILR, in line with existing T Level requirements.
- For students enrolled on a Study Programme, Industry Placements are treated as work experience activity and should be recorded as non-qualification planned hours within the learner's Study Programme.

Providers should ensure that all planned hours are recorded in accordance with ESFA funding and ILR guidance and that appropriate evidence is retained to support the planned delivery of the Industry Placement.

Is there a minimum duration requirement for Construction Industry Placements? Are placements measured in days, weeks, or hours? Can learners undertake placements as half-days throughout the year where a full day on site may not be appropriate?

Providers have flexibility in how Construction Industry Placements are delivered and may determine the most appropriate model based on the needs of the learner and the employer.

Placements can be delivered in a range of formats, including:

- Block placements over a defined period;
- Single days each week;
- Half-days spread across the academic year; or
- Other flexible delivery arrangements.

The key requirement is that the placement meets the overall Industry Placement criteria and delivers meaningful, structured employer engagement that supports the learner's development and progression within the construction sector.

We recognise that some learners may require additional support to successfully participate in a placement. Where a full day on site may not be appropriate, providers are encouraged to work with employers to agree a more flexible arrangement, such as half-day attendance, provided the placement remains purposeful and enables the learner to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

Providers should ensure that the placement model chosen is appropriate to the learner's individual circumstances and is agreed with the employer in advance.



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Supporting templates and annexes

The Department for Education has developed templates and forms to support the delivery of industry placements, which can be adapted for local use. The following are available to accompany this guidance:

- **Annex A - Employer due diligence checklist.** Completed by the provider with the employer before a placement, covering insurance, health and safety, accidents and first aid, fire and emergencies, the working environment, personal protective equipment and safeguarding.
- **Annex B - Construction industry placement agreement.** Signed by the provider, employer and student, setting out the terms of the placement. In multi-employer models, every employer signs.
- **Annex C - Student completion declaration form.** Signed by the provider and employer to confirm the student has met the placement completion criteria. Kept for audit purposes.
- **Annex D - Progress indicators.** Descriptors for behaviours and technical ability at mid-point and final review, used to assess whether the student has met the completion criteria.
- **Annex E – T Level employer declaration form.** Used by employers to claim reimbursement of essential costs. This reflects the national Employer Support Fund process and would need to be adapted to the Combined Authority's local reimbursement arrangements.

Contact

Queries about this guidance must be directed to the Combined Authority's Adult Skills team.





Find out more
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All information correct at time of writing