Boosting Skills Pathways

Report 2025/26

Greater Essex
CAREERS HUB

THE CAREERS & ENTERPRISE COMPANY

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CONCEPT

The Boosting Skills Pathway Project was developed to increase awareness, engagement and progression into technical education pathways, including T Levels, apprenticeships and careers within priority growth sectors across Greater Essex.

The project brought together schools, colleges, employers, local authorities and other stakeholders to create meaningful careers outreach and improve young people's understanding of future employment opportunities.

Target sectors included Green Energy, Construction, Engineering, Digital and Creative Industries.

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OBJECTIVES

The project's objectives were to:

1. Increase awareness and understanding of technical and vocational pathways *(amongst young people, employers and stakeholders)*
2. Improve progression into T Levels, apprenticeships and further technical education
3. Strengthen employer engagement with schools and colleges
4. Increase understanding of careers within key growth sectors

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ACTIVITY

A range of activities were delivered across the project, combining employer engagement, student-facing events, awareness campaigns and targeted marketing.

Student Engagement

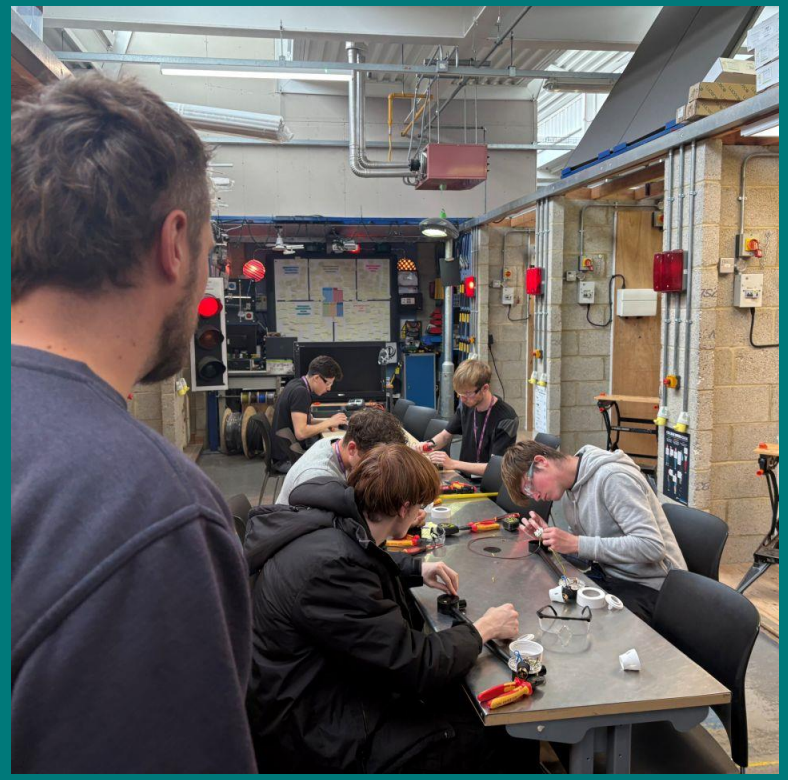
- Three T Level awareness events delivered directly within schools
- Classroom apprenticeship workshops, industry talks, in-college employer engagement events
- Apprenticeship assessment activities
- Participating students ranged from Year 8 to Year 13







School Awareness Events – Thomas Lord Audley, Basildon Lower Academy, Castleview School







South Essex College – Apprenticeship Assessment Sessions

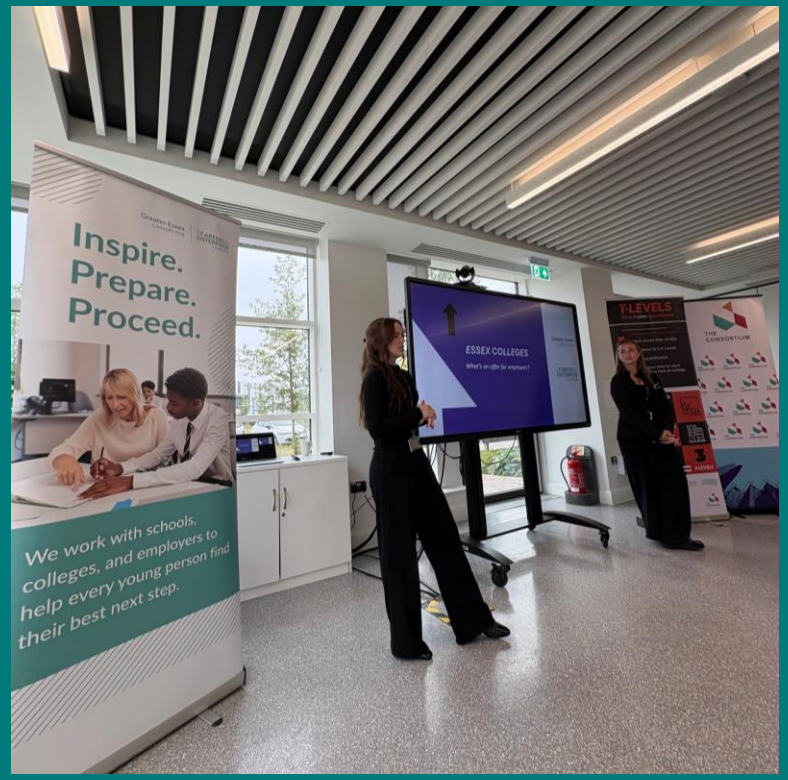
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ACTIVITY

Employer Engagement

- Two employer T Level awareness events
- Two apprenticeship assessment sessions
- Grand opening of South Essex College Group's Eco Trade Centre at Thurrock College
- Employer networking and engagement opportunities
- Participation from employers representing Construction, Engineering, Manufacturing, Healthcare, Finance, Digital and Professional Service sectors







Employer Events – Billericay and Braintree

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ACTIVITY

Marketing and Communications

- Social media campaigns across Instagram and LinkedIn
- Creation of promotional video content through employer and college filming days
- Promotion through the Greater Essex Careers Hub website
- Employer expression of interest campaigns to identify businesses willing to offer T Level placements

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Capturing Student/Employer Voice





Filming at Harlow College, South Essex College & with 5 employers across Essex



T Level students: Voices from Greater Essex



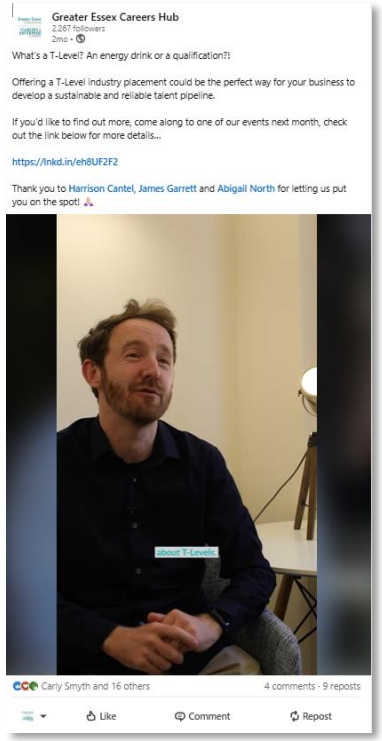
T Levels employers: Opening doors across Greater Essex



T Levels employers: Benefits of hosting a T Level student

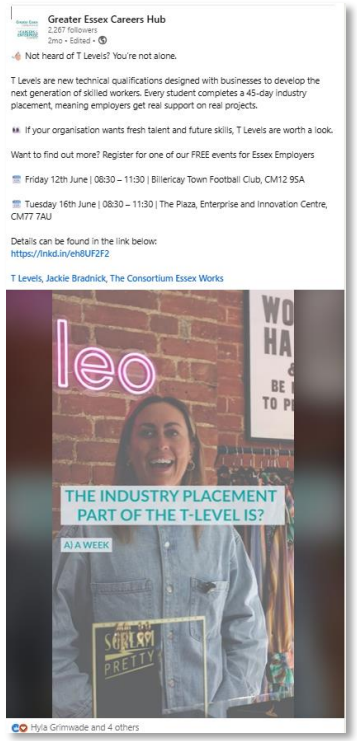
Marketing Campaign Timeline

The campaign ran across Linked IN and Instagram from 6th May – 9th June 2026.



What is a T Level? An energy drink or a qualification?!

6/5/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7457834134791602176



Not heard of a T Level, you're not alone.

11/5/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7459568078826254336



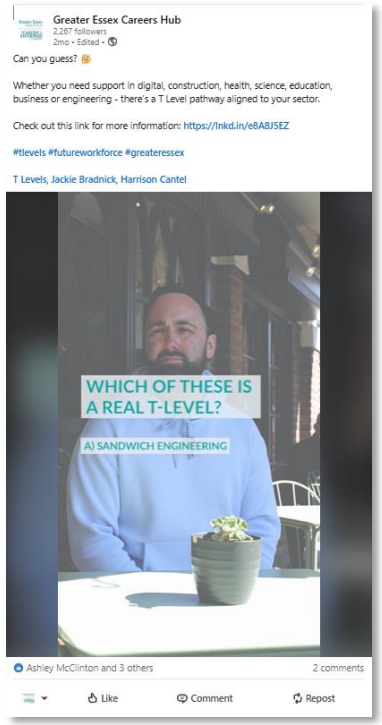
"Our team love students!"

13/5/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7460233633879146497



Essex businesses – imagine gaining new skills, extra capacity in your team… all for free.

18/5/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7462191823218798592

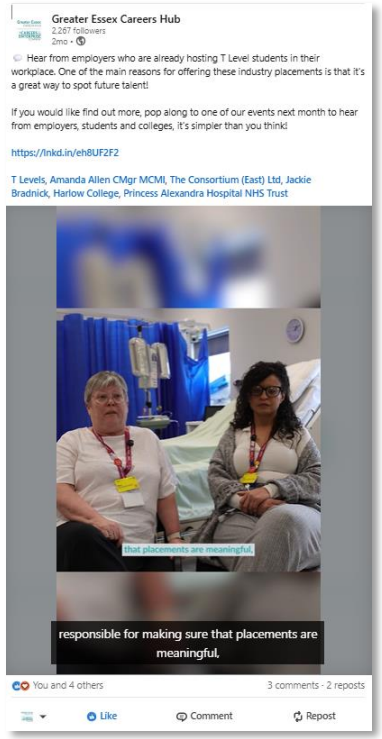


Can you guess?

19/5/2026
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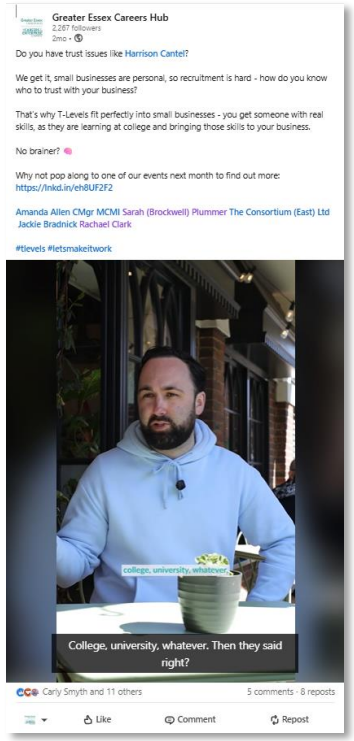
Marketing Campaign Timeline
Continued…

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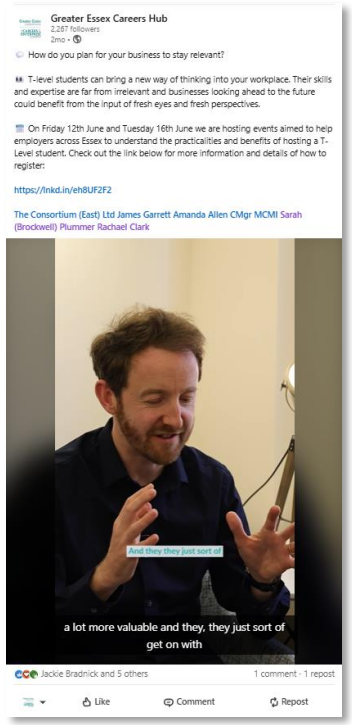
Hear from employers who are already hosting T Level students…

21/5/2026
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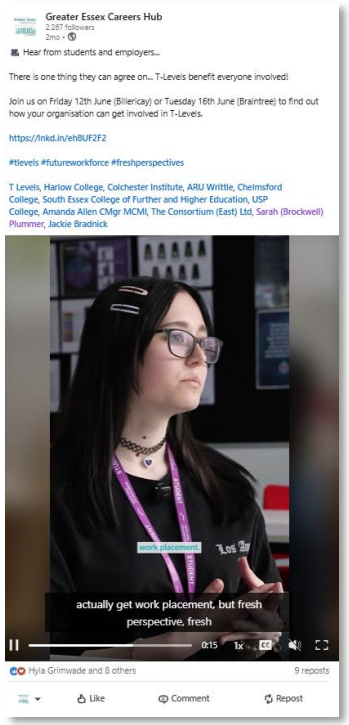
Do you have trust issues like Harrison?

27/5/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7465366052248461313



How do you plan for your business to stay relevant?

29/5/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7466043165184143360



Hear from students and employers…

6/6/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7467518230899691521



There is still time to sign up for our employer events…

9/6/2026
https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7470022666087784449

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IMPACT/REACH

Young People Reached

The project reached a total of **3,608** young people through a combination of school events and employer engagement activities.

Participation numbers included:

- **350** students participated in the **T Level awareness in school sessions**, where student knowledge of T Levels increased from an average of 1.27/5 before events to 4.83/5 after events
- **3,258** attended **employer engagement events** across the three South Essex College campuses
- **78** attended classroom **apprenticeship workshops**

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IMPACT/REACH

Growth in Applications

Alongside increased awareness and engagement, South Essex College recorded strong recruitment demand across priority growth sectors.

Green Energy Programmes 2025/26 Applications*:

- Inspection & Testing Level 3: **16**
- Electric / Hybrid Vehicle Charging Level 3: **9**
- Design & Installation of Air Source Heat Pumps: **5**
- Solar Installation: **10**

Construction & Engineering:

- Engineering: 380 (25/26); 337 (24/25); 11.32 (% increase)
- Marine Engineering: 32 (25/26); 25(24/25); 21.88 (% increase)
- All Construction: 935 (25/26); 781(24/25); 16.48 (% increase)

** This is a new programme, so no comparable data*

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IMPACT/REACH

Employers Reached

Participation numbers included:

- **52** businesses engaged directly with the project
- **24** businesses attended employer engagement sessions
- **26** employers expressed interest in hosting a T Level student following participation
- Employer understanding of T Levels increased from an average score of **2/5 to 5/5**

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IMPACT/REACH

Digital Reached

The marketing campaign (May/June 2026) significantly extended programme reach:

- **2,140% increase** in active users on the Greater Essex Careers Hub T Level webpage
- **1,205% increase** in Instagram reach (239 to 3,159 accounts reached)
- Instagram views increased from 418 to 5,931
- **85** direct website clicks generated through boosted social media content
- **4,843** LinkedIn post impressions achieved

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LEARNINGS

Several key themes emerged from programme delivery.

Early careers education matters

Younger students, particularly those in Year 8, demonstrated the highest levels of engagement. This suggests that introducing technical pathways earlier can positively influence future decision-making and career awareness.

School-based delivery is most effective

Schools preferred activities delivered on site. Delivering sessions directly within schools increased participation and reduced logistical barriers. Attempts to host engagement events at external venues achieved lower attendance.

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LEARNINGS

Student voice enhances employer engagement

Employers strongly valued hearing directly from learners about their experiences of technical education pathways. Student participation helped make discussions more authentic and increased employer understanding of T Levels.

Employers respond to business benefits

Engagement was strongest when discussions focused on workforce development, recruitment pipelines and future skills needs rather than solely educational objectives.

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LEARNINGS

Integrated delivery produces better results

The most successful activities combined:

- Face-to-face engagement
- Employer involvement
- Student voice
- Digital marketing
- Follow-up opportunities for participation

This combination delivered stronger outcomes than single activity interventions.

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FEEDBACK

Feedback from both students and employers was overwhelmingly positive.

Student Feedback

Students described the events as:

"It was very insightful and helped me majorly in seeing the future for T Levels.“

"Opened doors to new future opportunities.“

"It was well organised and engaging.“

"I normally find events boring but this was a really good one."

Students particularly valued:

- Interactive panel discussions
- Real-life employer perspectives
- Learning about future opportunities and pathways

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FEEDBACK

Employer Feedback

Employers reported substantially increased confidence and understanding of T Levels after attending awareness sessions. Many organisations subsequently expressed interest in supporting industry placements and engaging further with local education providers.

Partners from councils and other stakeholders also attended, using the learning to raise awareness of T Levels within their employer networks and encourage wider participation. This helped embed the project across existing partnerships, creating a more sustainable approach to ongoing employer engagement.

College Feedback

The project strengthened collaboration between careers teams, curriculum departments, industry placement teams, senior leaders and external stakeholders. Colleges reported increased opportunities for cross-departmental working and future collaboration around technical education and careers programmes.

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CONCLUSION

The project **successfully increased awareness** of technical education pathways, strengthened employer engagement, **expanded opportunities** for young people and contributed to an **increase in applications** across growth sector areas.

Through effective **collaboration** between employers, schools and colleges, the project has established a **strong foundation** for the continued development of skills pathways across Greater Essex.