

KIRAN'S STORY

BREAKING DOWN BARRIERS THROUGH

Industry placements are a key part of the new T Level qualifications, designed with employers to give young people the knowledge and skills industry needs. Organisations of all sizes and sectors are working with education and training providers to run industry placements now in readiness for the roll out of T Levels from September 2020 onwards.

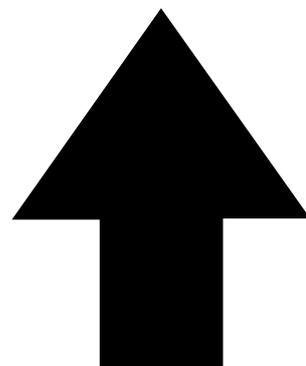


Kiran (pictured above), a business student from Walsall College, has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. She enjoyed her course but was nervous about moving into a working environment. Doing an industry placement has given her confidence in herself and helped her realise just how employable she really is.

Dale Stewart is a Project Manager at Walsall Housing Group (WHG), a housing association providing affordable homes in the Midlands. He sees industry placements as a win-win for both employers and students and worked with

Walsall College to arrange a number of industry placements, including one for Kiran.

"The students get a real experience that's all about developing their technical skills not making the tea. It helps them aspire to work for a company when they leave college with real knowledge of what that business is like. For us as an employer, fresh eyes are a real benefit and we can use the process to identify potential home-grown future staff."



Pamela Hines runs the Aids and Adaptations Service, a department at WHG that helps people get adaptations to their houses. She was very keen to mentor Kiran during her placement recognising her unique combination of business skills and personal experience.

"Kiran has been amazing - her enthusiasm and can-do attitude have helped me a lot. She has brought new ideas to established processes and is analysing our service, noticing things that don't work well and allowing me to improve my service in the long-run."

Kiran also benefitted hugely from the placement both by putting her business skills into practice and by gaining the confidence and reassurance that she can have a career in business.

"Learning about theory and practical skills has been useful but working with the company to overcome any difficulties associated with my disability has given me a sense of what the future could be. Industry placements help to make it possible for more people like me to find employment."

She also has a clearer vision of what she wants her future to be;

"It has changed me as a person, it really has. I was really scared about leaving college. I didn't know how it was going to work out or how I was going to get a job. Now I'm passionate and excited about my future. This has been massive for me."

Jaswant Sembhi who organises the placements at Walsall College explains why he matched Kiran with this employer.

"Walsall Housing Group has a real belief in developing young people. We felt it was a perfect role for Kiran, not just from the perspective of the work, but also in terms of the softer skills we knew she could develop there."

Pamela is also looking forward to having more industry placement students from Walsall College next year.

"We know these placements help students come out of their comfort zone and this allows them to develop. For us it's an opportunity to 'grow' talent in-house. There's a real long-term benefit here that I think businesses should do as much as they can to support."

For more about T Levels and industry placements visit [gov.uk/dfe/t-levels](https://www.gov.uk/dfe/t-levels)

