

# Manchester College aligns T-Levels to EYWCF

*How the GMCA Early Years Workforce Competency Framework has supported Manchester College's T-Level students' readiness for employment in early education and childcare*

The GM Early Years Workforce Competency Framework (EYWCF) aims to strengthen early years practice across the integrated workforce

The Manchester College aligned the new T-Level course to EYWCF to identify any gaps.

## Overview

Improving school readiness at age 5, continues to be a priority for Greater Manchester (GM) and recognises that the Early Years (EY) workforce is key to unlocking the potential of our children in GM. The GM School Readiness Programme has a priority to invest in the Early Years workforce and the development and rollout of the GM Early Years Workforce Competency Framework (EYWCF).

In September 2022, The Manchester College welcomed its first cohort of students onto the Level 3 T-Level in Education and Early Years course. On completion of the

qualification, students will hold a 'Full and Relevant' Early Years Qualification and Early Years Settings can count them at Level 3 in the employment ratios. To further enhance the learning offered on the T-Level, College tutors wanted to use the EYWCF to link their teaching and learning to identified gaps in the industry. Ensuring that students are ready for employment and confident in the knowledge and skills required to work in the Early Years sector.

## What did we do?

A detailed analysis was completed mapping the competency statements to the T Level elements to understand how they align and where there may be gaps or differences.

This mapping identified close alignment on the whole, but identified competencies that were not evident in the T Level elements including:

- Speech, Language and Communication competencies related to the GM agreed pathway and GM/ nationally produced resources and tools;
- Social, Emotional Development and Wellbeing, and Pre-birth and Early Days competencies that focus on knowledge and understanding of the importance of the first 1001 days (particularly brain development and attachment), trauma informed practice and an understanding of child development in the perinatal period.
- Engaging with Families competencies that focus on working with the most vulnerable families.
- The Tier 3 leadership competencies are not reflected in the T Level elements with the exception of references to reflective practice in Element 9.

*'The EYWCF is a digital tool which enables EY's practitioners at all levels of experience to carry out a self-evaluation of their confidence levels against a number of competency statements which include the skills, knowledge, abilities and characteristics required by the early years workforce.'*

## Impact

This has allowed us to strengthen links to industry requirements to ensure that our T Level students are ready for employment and confident in up-to-date practices.

XXX Manchester College Tutor

I feel more knowledgeable now about health and safety requirements, practising in the nursery training room and following the safe sleeping guidance"

Student

## Future plans

College Tutors plan to work on embedding the GM EYWCF competencies that are not currently in the T Level specification but an important aspect of practice, with a focus on the pre-birth period and early speech, language and communication skills. These will be introduced in the core year for all students and embedded in year two within the Early Years occupational specialism. Relevant GM resources and on-line learning modules will be used to support student's learning and development and embed the competencies within the T Level course. Other priorities for the college include:

- Being able to access the e-learning modules being developed with MMU
- Improving our understanding of how the GM EYWCF can support OFSTED registered Early Years Providers to meet EYFS requirements
- Using the leadership competences with the staff team