ANALYSIS OF T LEVEL STUDENTS' DESTINATIONS:

FIRST COHORT

A report to the Gatsby Foundation

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RCU | INFORMED STRATEGIC DECISIONS

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SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

This report presents feedback of destinations for a sample of the first wave of T Level students, who completed their programme of study in 2022. This analysis was conducted by RCU on behalf of the Gatsby Foundation.

There were three T Levels available in the first wave:

- Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction
- Digital Production, Design and Development
- Education and Childcare

This report presents details on the various destinations that students from these courses progressed onto, including apprenticeships, higher education (both higher technical education and undergraduate study) and employment.

1.2   Methodology

This analysis uses the destinations data collected by a number of T Levels providers for students who completed one of the aforementioned T Level programmes at their institution.

RCU staff held discussions with a sample of T Level providers, which gave the research team insight into the type of destinations data that was collected and how this varied between providers. This feedback informed the development of a data collection instrument, which was built to minimise any additional provider workload. Using an Excel spreadsheet, destinations data was collected at an anonymised student level. The spreadsheet included data validation to assist providers in completing the tool and reduce any data collection inconsistencies.

RCU shared the draft data collection instrument with several providers who took part in the initial telephone discussions asking for their feedback. This resulted in a final version of the tool (see *Appendix 1*).

The data collection instrument, and accompanying instructions, were sent to all providers who had enrolled T Level students in the first wave. Each provider was given separate login details to a website that allowed them to securely submit their data.

The data was collected between February and May 2023, with 22 providers submitting a response. Following the closure of the collection window, RCU combined the results from the separate submissions and conducted a detailed data checking and validation process prior to the analysis stage.

The data checking included tasks such as ensuring consistency of answer for each question (e.g. names of universities, course titles etc) and checking for contradictory results, blanks and nil responses. The final section of the report describes some of the data challenges and recommendations for future data collections.

SECTION 2 – POPULATION AND SAMPLE COMPOSITION

A total of 1,029 students completed a T Level in the first wave. A breakdown of student numbers by technical route in shown in Table 1. A fifth of students gained results in Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction, a third came from Digital Production, Design and Development with the remaining 47% from Education and Childcare.

Table 1: Total students with results in 2021/22 (population)

T Level	Students	%
Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction	207	20%
Digital Production, Design and Development	340	33%
Education and Childcare	482	47%
Total	1,029	100%

(Source: Explore Educational Statistics - Provisional T Level results academic year 2021/22[1])

A total of 22 providers responded to the survey and provided destinations data on 531 students, over half of all students who achieved results in 2022 (52%). The profile of students included in the sample was broadly similar to the population of those gaining results (Table 2). 54% of students were included in the sample for the T Level in Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction, 52% for Digital Production, Design and Development and 50% for Education and Childcare.

Table 2: Total students included in survey responses (sample)

T Level	Students	% of Responses	% of Population
Design, Surveying and Planning for Construction	111	21%	54%
Digital Production, Design and Development	178	34%	52%
Education and Childcare	242	46%	50%
Total	531	100%	52%

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[1] Provisional T Level results, Academic year 2021/22 – Explore education statistics – GOV.UK (explore-education-statistics.service.gov.uk)

SECTION 3 – OVERVIEW OF STUDENT DESTINATIONS

Figure 1 summarises the destinations of students completing their T Level in the 2021/22 academic year. This includes results from all three T Levels within the scope of this analysis.

The destination with the largest proportion of students was higher education with 46%, followed by 27% of students who progressed into employment. In addition, 2% of students had a reported destination of both higher education and employment.

Just under 1 in 10 students progressed to an apprenticeship, and 4% to another destination. This included gap years, further education courses, and a small number looking for work or an apprenticeship. 12% of students within the sample did not have a known destination, which was due to the provider being unable to contact the student.

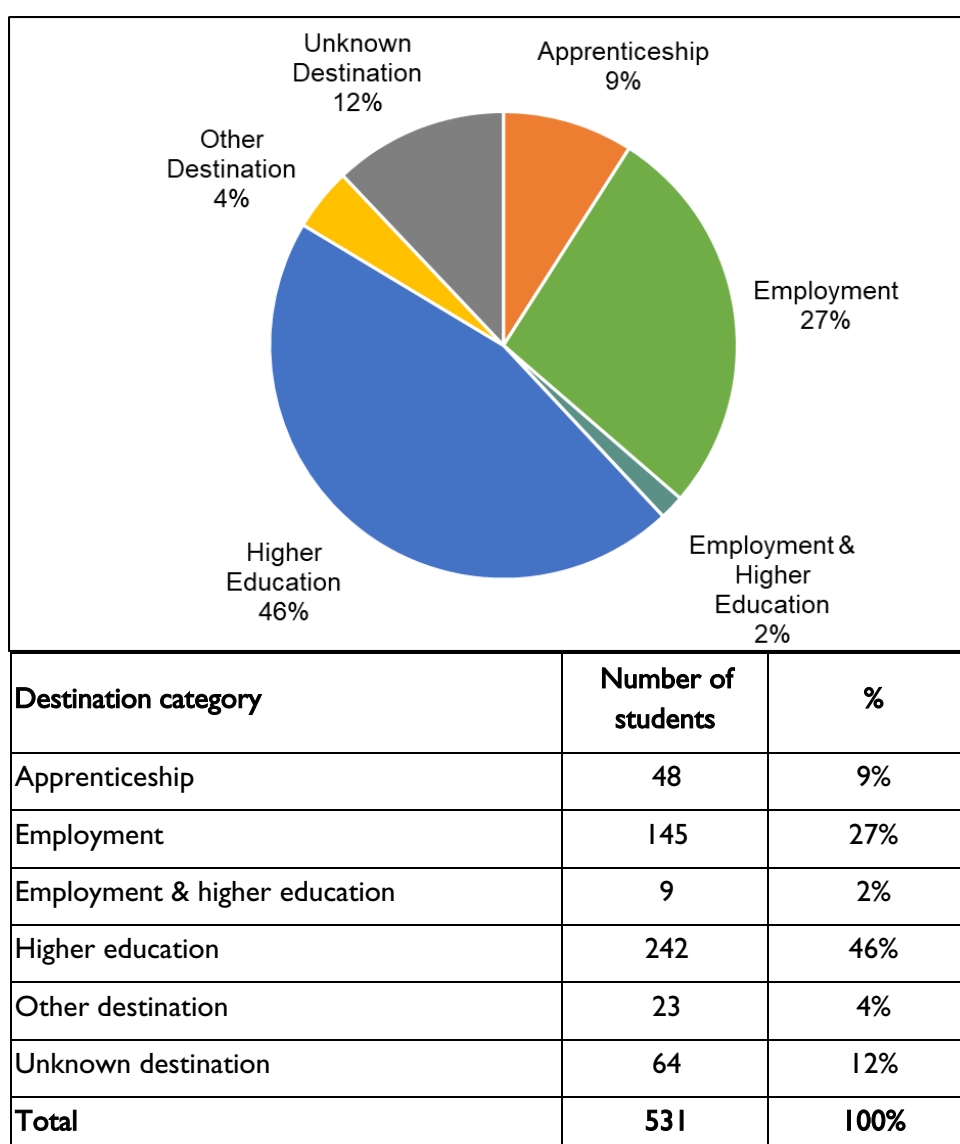| Destination category	Number of students	%
Apprenticeship	48	9%
Employment	145	27%
Employment & higher education	9	2%
Higher education	242	46%
Other destination	23	4%
Unknown destination	64	12%
Total	531	100%

Figure 1: T Level student destinations summary

Figure 2 shows the breakdown of destinations by individual T Level. The chart shows that a higher proportion of students on a Design, Surveying & Planning for Construction T Level progressed onto an apprenticeship, whilst no students reported this destination in Education and Childcare.

Over half of students completing a T Level in the Digital pathway progressed into higher education, with around a fifth of students gaining employment.

The main destinations for students completing a T Level in Education and Childcare were employment (40%) and higher education (45%).
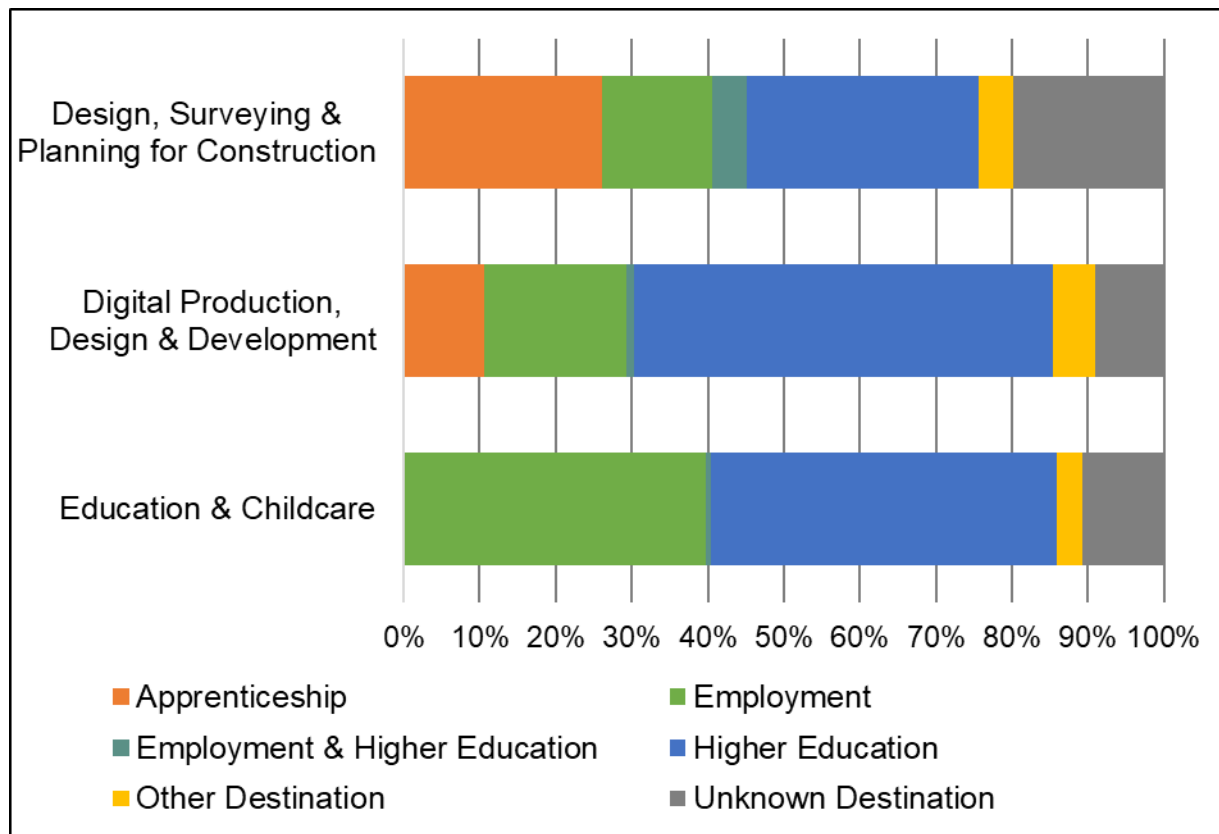

Figure 2: T Level student destinations by T Level

SECTION 4 – DESIGN, SURVEYING & PLANNING FOR CONSTRUCTION

4.1 Destinations summary

There were 111 students included in the data submission from 10 providers. The chart below shows the destinations of these students.

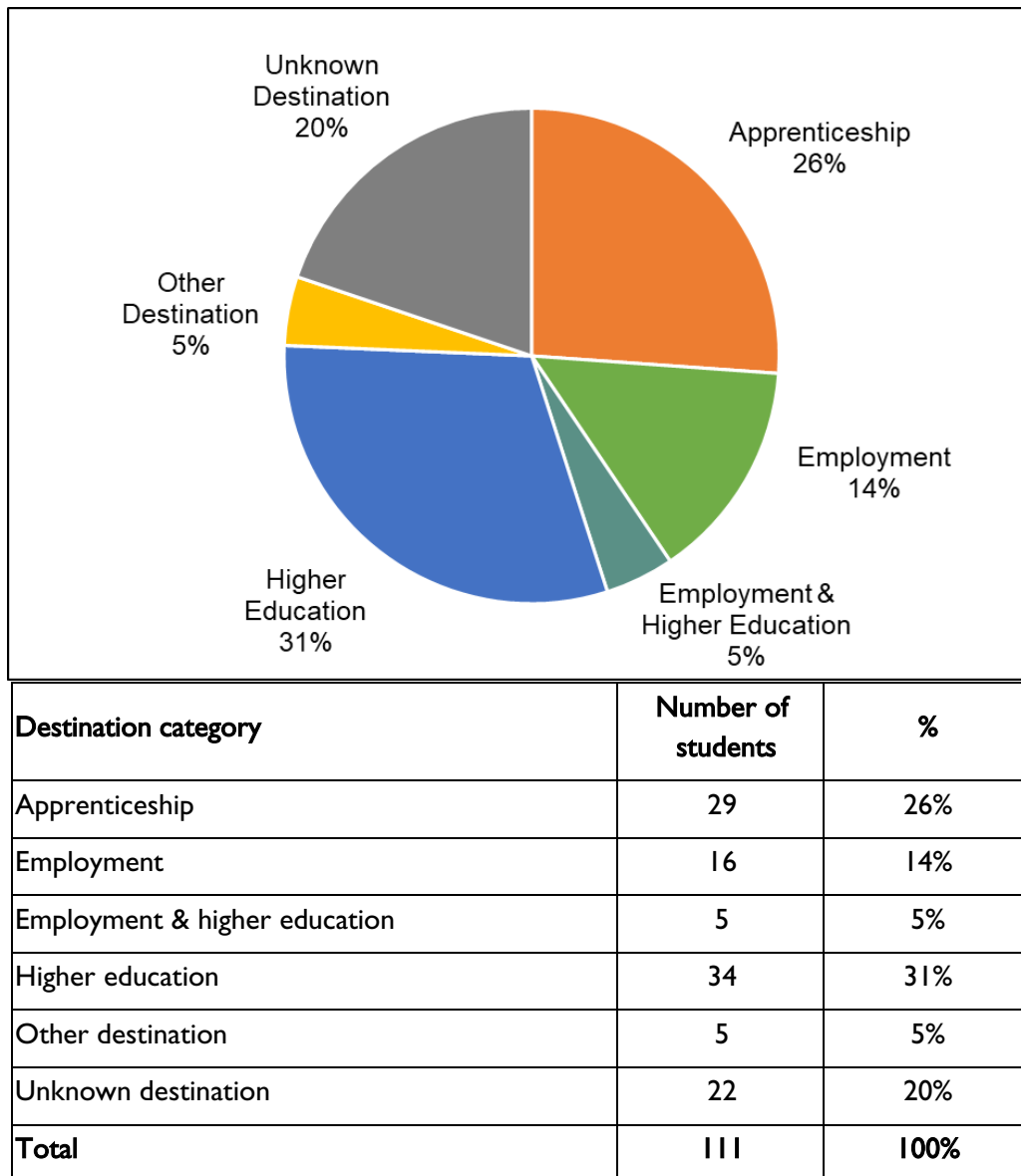| Destination category	Number of students	%
Apprenticeship	29	26%
Employment	16	14%
Employment & higher education	5	5%
Higher education	34	31%
Other destination	5	5%
Unknown destination	22	20%
Total	111	100%

Figure 3: T Level student destinations summary – Construction

4.2 Apprenticeship destinations

A total of 29 students who completed a T Level in Design, Surveying & Planning for Construction, progressed on to an apprenticeship (26%).

Of these, 19 students (66%) are known to have progressed into an apprenticeship related to their T Level, in areas such as Surveying, Site Management and Civil Engineering. Two students progressed to an unrelated apprenticeship, and information about the type of apprenticeship being taken was not available for 8 students.

Of the 13 students whose apprenticeship level is known, 12 progressed to a higher or degree apprenticeship, with one student progressing to an intermediate apprenticeship.

4.3 Employment destinations

A total of 21 students who completed a T Level in Design, Surveying & Planning for Construction progressed into employment.

The majority of these students were employed full time (18). The three students who were employed part-time were all also enrolled in higher education.

Thirteen of those students (62%) were employed in a job which was directly related to the completed T Level, in roles including CAD technicians, builders, trainee quantity surveyors and trainee project managers. Two students were employed in jobs which were not related, although one of these students was also on a construction-related higher education course. Information about the type of employment was unknown for six students.

The majority of students (10) were employed by an organisation whose main business was construction. Other organisations' main activity was project management (2), fibre optic engineering and defence.

4.4 Higher education destinations

Just under a third of students (31%) progressed into higher education. Of the 39 students with a higher education destination, five students were also employed (including the three mentioned above).

Those undertaking higher education included 25 students on a full-time degree course (64%) and one student enrolled on a part-time HNC (Higher National Certificate) alongside employment. There were 13 students whose course type was either 'other' or unknown.

The majority of students (77%) were studying a qualification related to their T Level, with the most popular subjects being Building Surveying, Architecture, Construction Project Management and Civil Engineering. Course information was unknown for nine students. No students reported studying a subject unrelated to their T Level.

The students attended a wide range of different higher education institutions (HEIs), with four students attending pre-1992 universities, and the majority attending a Post-1992 University (27).

SECTION 5 – DIGITAL PRODUCTION, DESIGN & DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Destinations summary

There were 178 students included in the data submission with a T Level in Digital Production, Design & Development from 19 providers. The chart below summarises the destinations of these students.

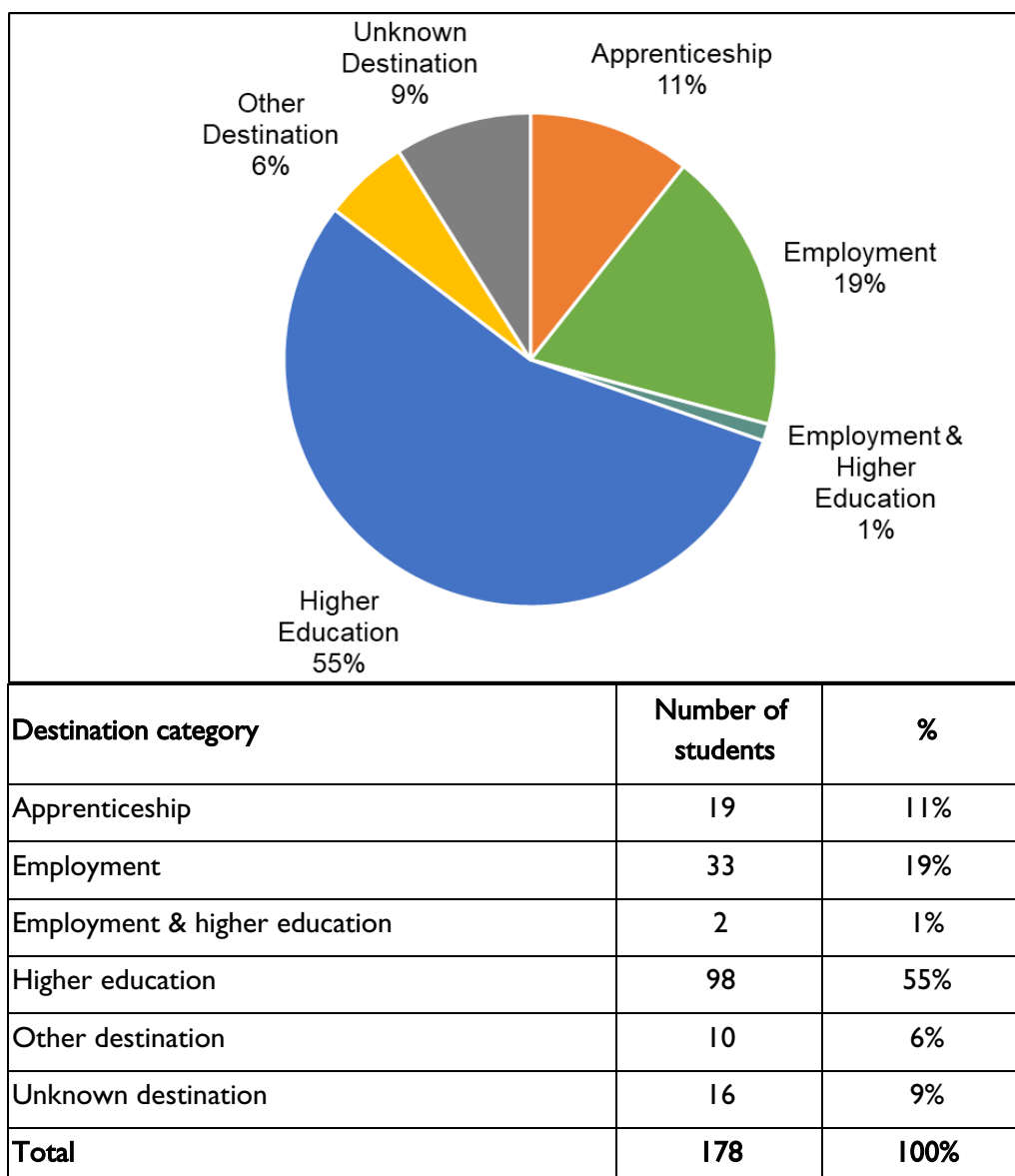| Destination category	Number of students	%
Apprenticeship	19	11%
Employment	33	19%
Employment & higher education	2	1%
Higher education	98	55%
Other destination	10	6%
Unknown destination	16	9%
Total	178	100%

Figure 4: T Level student destinations summary - Digital

5.2 Apprenticeship destinations

For those students who completed a T Level in Digital Production, Design & Development, 19 students progressed on to an apprenticeship.

The apprenticeship they progressed onto was related to the T Level subject area for 74% of students (14 students). Information about the type of apprenticeship being taken was not available for five students, with no students reporting progression to an apprenticeship unrelated to their T Level.

The most frequent apprenticeship was IT Technician. Others reported by providers included Digital and Technology Solutions, Software Developer and Cyber Security.

Of the 15 students whose apprenticeship level was known, eight (53%) progressed to either a higher apprenticeship or a degree apprenticeship, six (40%) to an advanced apprenticeship and one to an intermediate apprenticeship. This information was not supplied or was not known for four students.

5.3 Employment destinations

A total of 35 students who completed a T Level in Digital Production, Design & Development progressed into employment.

Of these, 23 students (66%) were employed in a job that was directly related to the completed T Level, such as software development, software engineering, and technical support. Nine students (26%) were employed in jobs not related to the T Level. This information was unknown for three students.

The students were employed by a range of different employers whose main activity was in the computing industry, such as software development and IT solutions, to local councils and the police.

The majority of students were employed full-time (22).

5.4 Higher education destinations

Over half of students (55%) progressed into higher education. Of the 100 students with a higher education destination, two students were also employed.

For 83 of these students (83%), the higher education course taken was related to the completed T Level, in subjects such as Computer Science (38 students), Games Development/Design (16) and Software Engineering (12). Five students progressed to a higher education course not related to the T Level (including degrees in Fashion & Business Management, Architectural Design & Tech, Engineering and Comics & Graphic Novels).

The majority of students (72%) were undertaking an undergraduate degree, six progressed to a foundation degree (including three studying part time), three to an HNC, five to other qualifications and for 14 students this information was unknown.

The students attended a wide range of different higher education institutions, for example, seven students attended a Russell Group university, 18 attended a pre-1992 university and 55 attended post-1992 universities. There were also 11 students progressing onto a further education college, and nine whose higher education type was either 'other' or unknown.

SECTION 6 – EDUCATION AND CHILDCARE

6.1 Destinations summary

There were 242 students included in the data submission with a T Level in Education and Childcare from 17 providers. The chart below shows the destinations of these students. There were no students progressing onto an apprenticeship after completing the T Level in Education and Childcare.
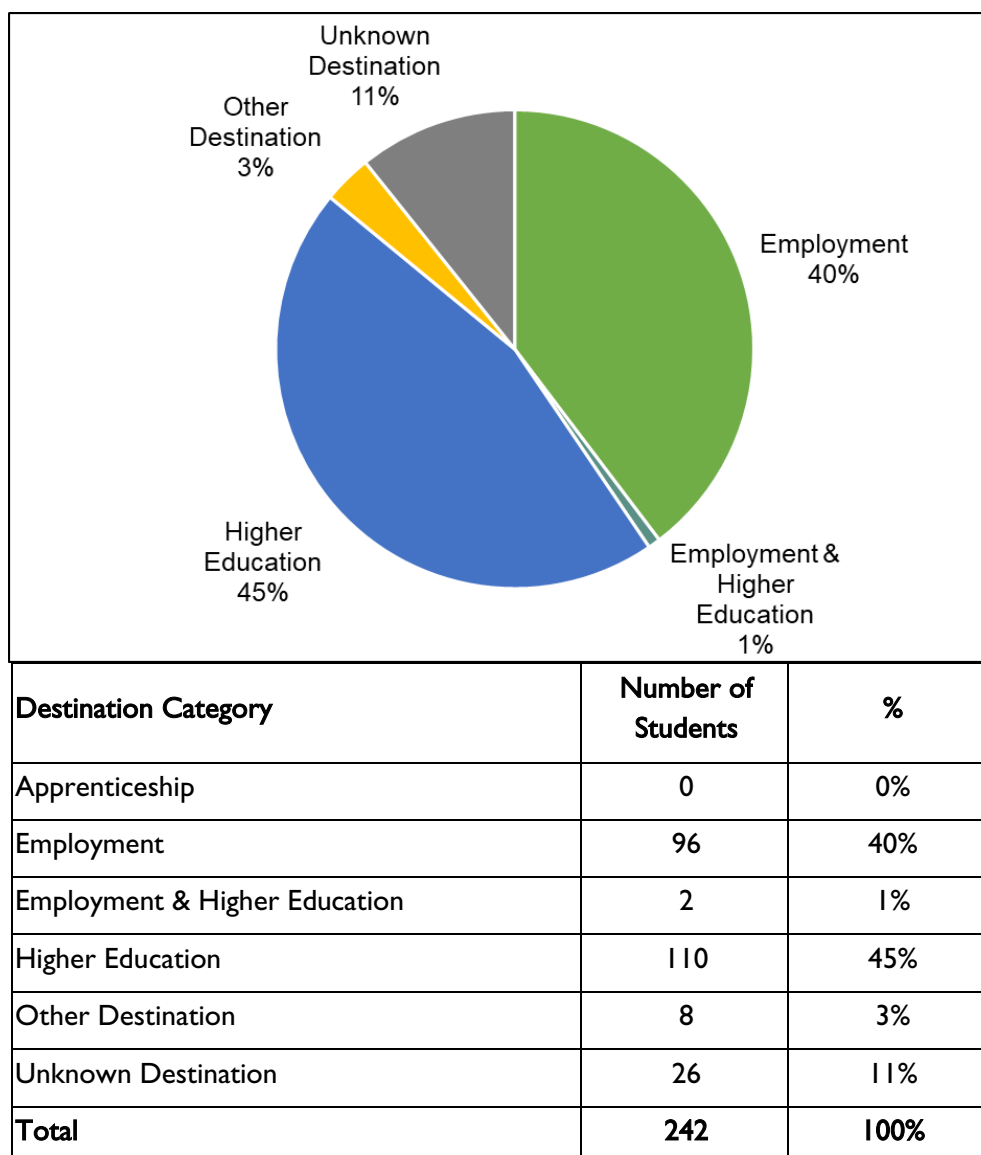

Destination Category	Number of Students	%
Apprenticeship	0	0%
Employment	96	40%
Employment & Higher Education	2	1%
Higher Education	110	45%
Other Destination	8	3%
Unknown Destination	26	11%
Total	242	100%

Figure 5: T Level student destinations summary - Education and childcare

6.2 Employment destinations

A total of 98 students who completed a T Level in Education and Childcare progressed into employment.

Of these, 87 (89%) were working full time and nine were working part-time, including one student balancing part-time study with part-time employment at a primary school. This information was unknown for two students.

The students were mainly employed by organisations in the childcare or educations sectors, including primary schools, nurseries and preschools. The majority (81 students - 84%) were employed in a job which was directly related to the T Level, in roles including teaching assistants, nursery practitioners and support workers. Ten students were employed in jobs not related to the T Level, including retain and customer service. This information was unknown for seven students.

6.3 Higher education destinations

Nearly half of students (45%) progressed into higher education, with two students who were also employed (including one at a primary school).

Of these 112 students, 86 (77%) were studying a course related to their completed T Level, with most popular courses in the areas of Primary Education/Teaching (43), Teaching/Learning Support (11) and Childhood Studies/Early Years (10).

Nineteen students (17%) progressed to other higher education courses in the areas of Social Work, Health and Social Care, Psychology, Midwifery and Criminology.

The vast majority of students were studying an undergraduate degree (75%), with a further 15 students (13%) on a foundation degree, four studying 'other' qualifications and nine for whom this information was unknown. 72% of students (81) were studying full-time courses, with two studying part-time (including the aforementioned student who was also employed at a primary school).

The students attended a wide range of different providers - six students attended a Russell Group university, four attended a pre-1992 university and 81 students attended a post-1992 university. There were also 16 students progressing into higher education at a further education college, and five either attending other provision or for whom the higher education destination type was unknown.

SECTION 7 – DATA CHALLENGES

Challenges for the data collection process included:

- The depth of detail in data collected was variable.

- A small number of students (seven) had a destination identified as both an apprenticeship and employment. It was assumed that these students should only be in the apprenticeship category.

- The titles given in some instances for apprenticeships were not specific, but were sector subject areas or the general subject of the standard. In some instances, this made it difficult to identify if the standard related to the T Level.

- There were several students where their destination was in multiple main categories (apprenticeship/employment/higher education). In some cases, it was obvious which was the primary destination, but a survey question to clarify this may have helped.

- There were students who did not have an apprenticeship, employment or higher education destination. In these instances, providers had the chance to enter some free text to give details. In any future data collection, a further question which gives options for other destinations could be added. The options could include (with follow-up free text entry if required):
    - Further education
    - Gap year
    - Looking for a job/apprenticeship
    - Other

- The students' employer name and their main activity was not always known.

- Information in the higher education section of the data collection tool was generally the most complete with the most detail. However, as the institution name was a free text entry, some responses only included the town of the institution, and in some cases this could have related to either a general further education college or a university.

- The 'Course Name' field was well completed but it did take a significant amount of time to go through each title to enable reporting. This was due to courses being entered which had the same or similar course title but had been entered slightly differently. To enable the analysis each course had to be checked and updated when required.

- Data collection of this type requires significant data cleansing. A possible option which may improve the quality of the data supplied, would be to include a data validation summary report within the tool. This would include the total number of responses and highlight the proportion with no results and unknown values to the respondent, to prompt an attempt to complete the questions further where possible.

Appendix 1 – Survey collection tool

The survey collection tool included two tabs. The first collected information about the institution and the individual submitting the response, and indicated which T Levels they had students completing in 2021/22.

The second tab in the tool allowed the provider to submit data at a student level and included the following fields:

- T Level subject taken by student
- Does the student have a positive destination?
- Apprenticeship destination
    - Does the student have an apprenticeship destination?
    - Name of apprenticeship (title of standard)
    - Level
    - Apprenticeship provider name
    - Employer name
    - Main activity of employer's business
    - Job title
- Employment destination
    - Does the student have an employment destination?
    - Employment status
    - Employer name
    - Main activity of employer's business
    - Job title
    - Related to the completed T Level?

- Higher education destination
    - Does the student have a higher education destination?
    - Institution name
    - Institution type
    - Course type
    - Course name
    - Mode of study
    - Does the course relate to the T Level?
- Other destinations/comments