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CIRCULAR

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

**Curriculum 2000: Funding for
Full-time 16–19 Year Olds**

Cheylesmore House
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To

Principals of colleges
Chief education officers
Headteachers of schools with
sixth forms

Circular type

Information and consultation

Summary

Provides information on the
Council's proposed approach to
funding for full-time 16–19 year
olds and invites responses to
consultation questions

**Responses
requested by**

9 September 1999

Reference number: 99/33

Enquiries:
Regional directors
Website <http://www.fefc.ac.uk>

99/33

Curriculum 2000: Funding for Full-time 16–19 Year Olds

Introduction

1 This circular sets out the Council's proposed approach to the funding of programmes of study for full-time 16–19 year-old students. The approach is designed to enable colleges to implement the government's policy for new qualifications at advanced level (Curriculum 2000) and to fund an 'entitlement' for all full-time 16–19 year olds. The Council aims, through these proposals, to enable colleges to deliver broader, more flexible and more demanding programmes for full-time 16–19 year olds.

2 This circular also consults on the principles of the approach to be adopted and on related tariff issues. Responses are requested by 9 September 1999, but earlier responses would be welcome. The Council intends to inform the sector and other interested parties of the outcome of the consultation in December 1999.

Background

Stage 2 review group

3 The Council's stage 2 review of the funding methodology took account of the changes taking place to the post-16 qualifications structure. One of the key issues considered by the stage 2 review group concerned programmes for full-time students aged between 16 and 19. The report of the stage 2 review group (September 1998) noted that the changes in qualifications planned for 2000 created a range of opportunities for students aged between 16 and 19, but that the capacity of institutions to deliver these opportunities will vary, potentially leading to significant discrepancies in the curriculum available. The report also noted that 'a clear policy steer on a 16–19 curriculum "entitlement" could provide the basis for equitable funding'.

4 As part of the third meeting of the review group, the Council organised a seminar involving colleagues from colleges making significant provision for full-time students aged between 16 and 19, in particular to address issues related to the

tariff for GCE A levels and enrichment. The seminar group noted the increasing differential in the levels of funding for GCE A level students between colleges and school sixth forms. Information on numbers of 16–18 year olds in schools and colleges is at annex A.

5 The group agreed that a curriculum entitlement for students aged between 16 and 19 was important. There was broad agreement on an approach based on funding such a curriculum entitlement, which should consist of a core programme (for example, GCE A levels, GNVQs), key skills and enrichment activities. The group recommended that the current funding methodology should be adapted to reflect a 16–19 curriculum entitlement, rather than adopting a different approach to funding these students. They also concluded that additional funds for this group should not be provided at the expense of adult students.

6 A further consultation seminar in May of this year indicated continued strong support for this approach. Equally strongly, the group felt that such an approach should include all students aged between 16 and 19, not just those studying at advanced level.

Comprehensive Spending Review

16–19 year-old student numbers and funding

7 In his December 1998 letter to the Council, Roger Dawe, director general for further and higher education and youth training at the Department for Education and Employment (DfEE), detailed the outcome of the government's comprehensive spending review (CSR) for further education for 1999–2001. The extra funding available provides for an additional 700,000 students of all ages in further education in 2001–02 compared with 1997–98.

8 An increase in both the numbers of and funding specifically for 16–19 year olds is expected over the next three years. Full-time equivalent (FTE) student numbers for 16–19 year olds are expected to increase from 501,000 in 1998–99 to 529,000 in 2000–01. The funding will increase by £131 million from £1,455 million to £1,586 million over the same period.

9 In relation to the funding for each 16–19 year-old FTE, there is an increase of approximately 1.5% a year (that is, an assumption of 2.5% inflation

minus 1% efficiency). The Council has responded to the government's priority for 16–19 year olds by funding additional growth in 1999-2000. The Council has undertaken to repeat this for 2000-01.

Standards

10 The CSR outcomes represent substantial extra funding but also substantial expectations in terms of additional students and meeting key government objectives. The secretary of state has set out his priorities, which the CSR settlement is designed to secure. These were also set out in the December 1998 letter from Roger Dawe. The raising of standards is the key priority. The letter makes it clear that the CSR outcomes provide for the raising of standards and that 'rates of retention and achievement must be raised significantly, college by college, course by course and year by year'.

11 Of particular concern to the secretary of state is the variation in GCE A level performance and the high drop-out rate from GNVQ courses. The Council's approach to the use of the standards fund to support quality improvement is set out in Circular 99/24.

Qualifying for Success

12 Having acknowledged that standards are a priority, it is important to respond to the government white paper *Qualifying for Success* with the introduction from September 2000 of new advanced subsidiary (AS) and GCE A level syllabuses, a revised GNVQ and a new key skills qualification. In raising standards, the government also aims to encourage advanced level students to pursue broader and more demanding programmes of study within a framework which offers increased choice and flexibility.

13 Following the consultation on *Qualifying for Success*, the government's commitment to supporting the provision of a broader range of GCE A levels and upgraded vocational qualifications underpinned by key skills was outlined in a March 1999 letter from Rob Hull, director for qualifications and occupational standards, DfEE, to principals of colleges. A copy of this letter is on the DfEE website. The intention is to make post-16 study broader and more flexible, and to encourage young people to study more subjects over two years. The reforms are designed to make it easier to combine academic and vocational study and encourage young people to take a new qualification in key skills,

whatever their main programme. A summary of the main changes to qualifications for 16–19 year olds to be introduced from September 2000 was sent to schools and colleges in April 1998.

Funding curriculum 2000

14 The letter from Roger Dawe makes clear the expectation by the secretary of state that 'funding arrangements from 2000-01 should recognise and facilitate these reforms'. It is expected that the additional costs are met in part by improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of colleges, through such measures as larger class sizes and increased collaboration between providers. The DfEE is also looking to the Council to complement the improved efficiency and effectiveness of colleges by adjusting its funding methodology where appropriate. This is to ensure in particular that those colleges which offer full advanced level programmes along the lines envisaged by the government are funded on a basis which recognises the costs involved in making this provision, including the additional taught hours involved. A summary of the Council's funding methodology is at annex B. Proposals for funding the new curriculum through the funding methodology are at paragraphs 33 to 44 below. A presentation on these proposals will be on the Council's website (<http://www.fefc.ac.uk>) from September.

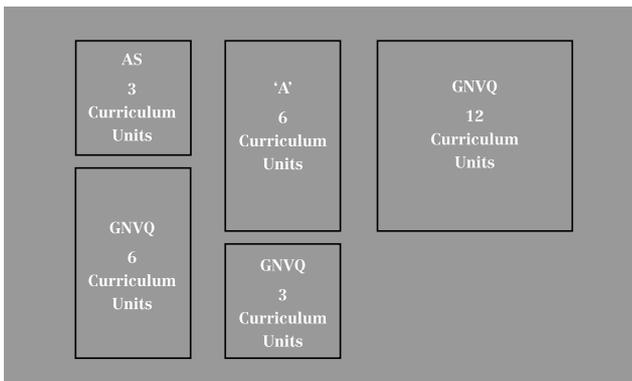
15 The government expects partnership between colleges and the Council in delivering its priorities for 16–19 year-old advanced level students. Colleges are trying to address the practicalities of implementing a broader and more flexible curriculum offering for 16–19 year olds, particularly those of timetabling and accommodation. The Council is aware that the curriculum changes may require capital works (for example, building alterations and development) and will be responding positively to colleges that can demonstrate this particular need.

Curriculum Structure

16 The proposed funding model for the new curriculum enables an increased range of options for students studying at advanced level. This model, illustrated in figure 1, has been developed through the introduction of a curriculum structure which uses blocks of three curriculum units. A GCE A level counts as six curriculum units and an AS level three, while GNVQs consist of blocks of either six or 12

curriculum units (though a three-unit GNVQ may also be introduced).

Figure 1. Curriculum 2000 qualifications structure



17 Full advanced GNVQs are regarded in curriculum terms as equivalent to two GCE A levels, but it is not proposed that their value in funding terms should be the same. The proposed approach to funding advanced GNVQs is explained in paragraph 39.

18 The implementation of curriculum 2000 will enable a student to combine academic and vocational programmes of study, for example by taking over two years, a full GNVQ, GCE A level, an AS level and the new key skills qualification. At present such a student may have limited opportunity to do anything other than either a full GNVQ or a GCE A level programme.

19 Curriculum 2000 also enables flexibility within the main academic or vocational qualifications. For example, the new GCE A level consists of an AS qualification (representing the first half of a GCE A level course of study) and an A2, (representing the second half). This would enable, for example, a student to take five AS levels in year 1, then in year 2 to take three A2s in order to convert to three GCE A levels. The student would also take the new key skills qualification over the two years. Such a student is likely at present to be following a narrower curriculum of three GCE A levels over two years.

20 Since not all students will be following the same programmes of study, the possible permutations are numerous. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is working on a guidance document which will contain examples of models of students' programmes together with timetables which colleges and schools may plan to

implement. This guidance is available on the QCA website and will be published in September.

Entitlement

21 A strong view emerged through the work of the stage 2 review group that enabling colleges to implement curriculum 2000 involves not only the funding for individual qualifications in a student's programme, but also the concept of an 'entitlement' for a full-time 16–19 year old. The key principles on which the proposed funding model should be based are such that entitlement should:

a. support the implementation of the new 16–19 qualifications;

b. involve more guided learning hours

It is not expected that there will be fewer guided learning hours, or that the students will be expected to achieve more from the same number of guided learning hours;

c. represent what a full-time student should be doing

It is recognised that students in post-16 education attend voluntarily. In addition, figures from the DfEE indicate that over 50% of full-time 16 and 17 year olds are in part-time employment. A key principle nevertheless should be that the new entitlement is a substantial programme and that full-time students should be undertaking a substantial programme;

d. cover all abilities and levels

Not all full-time 16–19 year-old students are undertaking advanced level programmes; although 319,000 are studying at advanced level, there are 153,000 studying at intermediate and foundation levels. Students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities need individual programmes designed to meet their needs, which may or may not involve the main qualifications for this age-group;

e. match individual student need

Not all advanced-level students will be undertaking a programme of five AS levels or four GCE A levels (currently 9% of A level students are undertaking four or more A levels); some will need more key skills development or additional tutorial and enrichment activities;

- f. be flexible, to enable it to be matched to individual student need rather than to a uniform programme for a uniform cohort;
- g. have incentives for colleges which are based on opportunities for progression to higher education and employment;
- h. consist of a package, which covers, in varying proportions:
 - a main specialist programme of (for example) GCE A levels, GNVQs, GCE A/AS levels, BTEC Diploma
 - key skills
 - tutorial and pastoral support
 - curriculum enrichment or broadening studies.

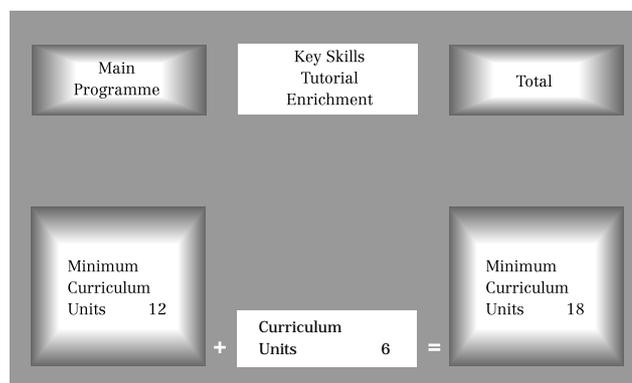
Features of Proposed Model

22 Applying these principles to the various combinations of qualifications available under curriculum 2000, it is possible to arrive at a curriculum entitlement model, specified in curriculum delivery units, to cover all full-time students between 16 and 19 years old.

Defining a minimum

23 The first feature of the proposed model is that it should cover the minimum for a student's main programme while also allowing for programmes of substantially more than the minimum. The proposed minimum, covering a total of 18 curriculum units, comprises a main programme of 12 curriculum units together with a package of support for the student's learning (consisting of key skills, a tutorial programme and enrichment) which equates to six curriculum units. This is illustrated in figure 2.

Figure 2. Full-time 16–19 student entitlement: Minimum



24 The proposed model of a minimum programme provides a definition of entitlement and should identify the threshold for a full-time student. A student undertaking fewer than the model's 18 curriculum units would be regarded as a part-time student. The threshold for a full-time student is likely to equate to an average of 15–16 guided learning hours a week. The Council's current threshold was based on a minimum definition of full time contained in the further education student record (FESR).

Examples of proposed model

25 Here are some examples of how the curriculum unit structure might apply to a variety of students' programmes:

- a. a minimum programme, comprising a student's main programme of 12 curriculum units of (two GCE A levels) plus the six curriculum units of key skills, tutorial and enrichment;
- b. a main programme of more than the minimum has 18 curriculum units (for example, an advanced GNVQ and a GCE A level), to which the key skills, tutorial and enrichment package has been added, thus totalling 24 curriculum units;
- c. substantial main programme of three GCE A levels and two AS levels (24 curriculum units), which with the key skills, tutorial and enrichment package added, totals 30 curriculum units;
- d. a more substantial programme, which includes five GCE A levels, and totals 36 curriculum units.

Key Skills, Tutorial and Enrichment

26 This key feature is a substantial element which can be added to the main programme of study. In the proposed model this equates to six curriculum units for a combination of key skills delivery, a tutorial programme and enrichment and broadening studies.

Key skills

27 It is not possible to identify the amount of time devoted to key skills, as the taught time involved is unknown and likely to vary greatly. The variation will depend not only on the type of main qualifications being studied, but also:

- the subject and any scope for signposting opportunities for learning and assessment within the main qualification
- other opportunities for development, such as work experience
- the student's need for input from teaching staff.

A reasonable starting assumption may be that students undertaking less extended programmes will benefit from a higher number of teaching hours for key skills.

Tutorial

28 The tutorial programme is a key component of this package. The tutorial provides the 'glue' to hold together the components of a complex and demanding curriculum and provides support for the student.

Enrichment

29 Enrichment is also important for full-time students and should be separately identified rather than assumed to be taking place and incorporated within the tariff for GCE A levels as at present.

30 The enhanced package could include many different types of enrichment activity. Some examples of enrichment activities for students are:

- career guidance
- wider key skills (improving own learning and performance, working with others and problem-solving)
- sports
- music, dance and drama

- modern foreign languages
- Young Enterprise and Duke of Edinburgh awards
- personal and social education
- health education
- work experience (if not part of the main study)
- use of learning resource centres.

The enrichment curriculum is also likely to be an appropriate way of addressing the government's aims for the development of citizenship activities, as indicated in the report of the working group chaired by Professor Bernard Crick, *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools* (September 1998).

31 This enhanced package of support should aim to develop students' ability to manage their own learning so that they become better self-supported learners and better able to cope with the demands of broader and more flexible main programmes of study.

32 Colleges will determine the appropriate use and relevant proportions for each student of the complete package of key skills, tutorial and enrichment. The Council will wish to rely more on inspection arrangements than detailed audit to satisfy itself that appropriate provision is being made with the funds allocated. The qualification requirement for this package would be that students are undertaking the new QCA-approved key skills qualification. It is not envisaged that 'extra' qualifications for key skills, tutorial and enrichment activities would be funded separately.

Funding Methodology and Curriculum 2000

33 As explained in paragraph 14, the DfEE expects the Council to adjust its funding methodology where appropriate to ensure that colleges which offer full-time advanced programmes are funded on a basis which enables them to deliver the additional taught hours involved. The funding methodology is described at annex B. The Council proposes to adjust its funding methodology by allocating additional funding units to basic on-programme activities for full-time students aged 16-19. On-programme activities are defined as 'all activities of learning and accreditation of achievement, including assessment, general and

specific student support services and enrichment activities'. The additional funding units will reflect the curriculum unit structure described in paragraphs 16 to 20 above and the additional funding needed by colleges to deliver the package of key skills, tutorial and enrichment described in paragraphs 26 to 32 above.

34 Some broad assumptions can be made about the on-programme units of funding generated by an entitlement to a main specialist programme, plus a package of key skills, tutorial and enrichment, taking the units of funding currently generated for GCE A levels and GNVQ programmes as a starting point. At present, one GCE A level generates over two years 56 on-programme units of funding. This, however, includes an element (assumed to be eight units) of funding, for enrichment, which in the entitlement model is added in separately. If that element is taken out, one GCE A level earns 48 units of funding.

35 The Council proposes that value of on-programme units given to the key skills, tutorial and enrichment element will represent the equivalent of one GCE A level, that is, 48 units of funding. These values can be applied to a programme which includes three GCE A levels, to give a comparison between units of funding for the existing three GCE A level programmes and for a programme of study under the proposed model. For a student currently undertaking a programme which includes three GCE A levels, there are 168 on-programme units of funding, 24 of which represent enrichment. Under the proposed model there would be 192 on-programme units, that is,

48 units for each of the three GCE A levels with the key skills, tutorial and enrichment elements added separately as 48 units of funding.

36 Table 1 shows the number of curriculum units and funding units for a sample of GCE A levels and AS levels over two-year programmes of study.

37 The Council proposes to limit the total number of on-programme units under the above model by applying a taper towards the top end of any very substantial programmes of study. It would apply to the main study element of a programme, not to the key skills, tutorial and enrichment element. In curriculum unit terms, this would take effect at 27 units. The effect would be to limit gradually the amount of extra funding which can be claimed by adding on additional curriculum units. This will be explained in more detail in the tariff guidance for 2000-01.

38 For simplicity, the proposed model has been constructed largely in terms of GCE A level qualifications. It applies equally to programmes with AS levels (which can each be assumed to have half the value of a GCE A level); to GNVQ programmes and to combinations of all three.

39 It is not proposed that the value of GNVQs in funding unit terms would be the same as two GCE A levels, even though, as explained in paragraph 17, their curriculum unit structure indicates a similar size. This is because the current tariff funds advanced GNVQs as equivalent to three A levels. There is no evidence from guided learning hour data that a reduction in funding units should be supported.

Table 1. Curriculum unit and funding unit values over two years for sample of GCE A level programmes

	<i>Main programme plus key skills, tutorial and enrichment</i>	
	<i>Curriculum units</i>	<i>On-programme funding units</i>
2 A levels	18	144
3 A levels	24	192
5 'AS' levels and 3 A2s	30	228
4 A levels	30	228
5 A levels	36	240

Intermediate and Foundation Levels

40 One of the key principles of entitlement proposed in paragraph 21 was that it should apply to full-time 16–19 year-old students on all programmes, at all levels. The focus for developing the funding model has been on advanced level qualifications, since these are a key priority for the government. The Council is working on similar models to apply to intermediate and foundation levels and will consult further on this.

41 One of the difficulties in developing a model to apply to intermediate and foundation levels is the variety of qualifications and programmes of study. In 1998-99 there were over 114,000 students studying on intermediate level (level 2) programmes and 31,000 on foundation level (level 1) programmes. This compares to over 318,000 at advanced level. Further information on the levels of study of full-time 16–18 year-old students and the types of qualifications studied by students at level 3 is at annex C.

42 In developing the model to apply to intermediate and foundation levels, the Council intends to base its proposals on the principles set out in paragraph 21 and to take account of:

- the need for progression to advanced level qualifications
- a proposed move to prior educational achievement widening participation factor for 2000-01
- the need to enhance levels of achievement in key skills
- the second report of the national skills taskforce, in particular the proposals for foundation apprenticeships
- work undertaken by the Further Education Development Agency (FEDA) on an overarching certificate.

FEDA has agreed to convene a practitioners' group to assist the Council in developing the model for intermediate and foundation levels.

Funding of Increased Teaching Hours

43 The proposed funding model will enable colleges to provide for the additional taught hours which the new curriculum is likely to demand.

Firstly, the upper limit to the size of a student's main programme of study will be higher than at present; AS levels and/or three-unit GNVQs, can be added, for example to give students more demanding programmes where appropriate. These additional elements will attract additional on-programme funding units. Secondly, substantial additional funding will be generated from the extra on-programme units under the basic model without extending the main programme of study. For example, with built-in assumptions regarding entry units, fee remission and achievement, the funding for a student taking three GCE A levels over two years at cost-weighting factor A with no additional qualifications would increase by 9% from £4,518 to £4,930. For a student undertaking four GCE A levels, funding would increase by 14% from £4,867 to £5,622.

Curriculum development

44 In order to assist colleges in planning for the introduction of curriculum 2000, up to £2 million has been earmarked for 1999-2000 from strand 3 of the standards fund for continuing professional development for teachers. Consideration will be given to the allocation of more substantial sums in 2000-01. The funding arrangements for this aspect of strand 3 of the standards fund will be communicated to colleges shortly.

Overall Costs of Implementing Curriculum 2000

45 Initial calculations indicate that the cost of implementation would be approximately £75 million in a full year. This assumes that:

- at least half the students currently undertaking three or four GCE A levels will undertake programmes under the proposed model
- some current additional qualifications such as CLAIT will be replaced by key skills
- some colleges will have maximised qualifications so that their current unit-per-FTE yield is close to the proposal; the majority of colleges have not, and so will gain in funding unit terms.

46 The estimated cost of implementing the proposed model for advanced level students in 2000-01 is around £20 million. The Council expects

to cover this cost through increased income from fees and the effects of other tariff measures. The issue of funding the full cost of curriculum 2000 in future years will be taken forward by the Council in discussion with the DfEE.

Consultation

47 Views are invited on the following issues:

- is the curriculum unit structure an appropriate basis for developing a funding model
- are there any other structures or methods which could be used to describe the volume of a student's programme
- are the principles of 'entitlement' identified in paragraph 21 appropriate
- are there any other principles that should be included
- is the proposed minimum threshold of 18 curriculum units the right level for determining a full-time student
- do the examples listed in paragraph 30 cover the main potential enrichment activities

- are there any other enrichment activities which should be included
- is the taper specified in paragraph 37 set at the right level (27 curriculum units)
- what issues are involved in applying the model developed for advanced level qualifications to intermediate and foundation level programmes
- how can programmes of study at intermediate and foundation level be quantified in terms of curriculum units? Are there any other ways of quantifying them
- what other considerations should the Council take into account in developing the model for intermediate and foundation level students?

48 Responses to consultation on the attached form at annex D to this circular should be returned to Kully Jones at the Council's Coventry office by 9 September 1999.



Numbers of Full-time Students Aged 16 to 18 in Schools and Colleges

Table 1. 16–18 year olds in full-time education, 1997-98

	<i>Nos (000s)</i>				<i>% Age</i>			
	16	17	18	Total	16	17	18	Total
Maintained schools	169	131	14	314	28.1	21.4	2.2	17.1
Independent schools	38	36	6	80	6.3	5.9	0.9	4.3
Further education	217	187	91	495	36.1	30.5	14.5	26.9
Higher education	0	2	123	126	0	0.4	19.7	6.8
Government-supported training	52	62	50	164	8.6	10.1	8	8.9
Employer-funded training	8	20	31	60	1.4	3.3	5	3.3
Total full-time	0	0	0	1,369	85.6	78.3	59.8	74.4
Other education and training*	31	41	59	131	5.1	6.7	9.5	7.1
Not in education and training	87	133	251	470	14.4	21.7	40.1	25.6
Population	601	614	624	1,839	100	100	100	100

Source: DfEE press notice June 1999 'Participation in education and training by 16-18 year olds'

*includes full-time education in independent institutions

Summary of the Funding Methodology

Background

1 Before the Council introduced its new methodology, funds were allocated on the basis used by LEAs when they were responsible for the institutions, namely the numbers of enrolments on courses each year. This approach did not take account of the extent to which students dropped out from their courses or failed to achieve their qualifications. *Unfinished Business*, a report of a joint study by the Audit Commission and the Office for Standards in Education (OFSTED), published in 1993, estimated that the cost of courses taken by students aged 16 to 18 in schools and colleges who did not achieve their intended qualification aims was around £500 million each year. A further difficulty was that part-time student enrolments were classified as block release, part-time day or part-time evening modes of attendance, and counted as proportions, with a variety of weightings used for funding and other purposes. In addition, the classifications used to define student modes of attendance did not adequately reflect the flexible ways in which institutions increasingly were delivering courses and wished to develop learning programmes in the future.

2 The Council's funding methodology was designed to address the shortcomings of previous approaches to funding. For example, in addition to student numbers, it also takes into account both the initial guidance and assessment received by students and institutions' effectiveness in supporting student learning and achievement.

Funding units

3 The education and training for which an institution receives funding from the Council is expressed in terms of a measure called the funding unit, rather than in full-time equivalent enrolments. Standard values of units are generated by an institution for the following elements of each student's learning programme.

Entry activities

4 Entry activities are defined as 'all activities leading to the enrolment of a student on a learning

programme'. The units may be claimed only for students with whom the institution has entered into a learning agreement, signed by both parties, setting out the student's primary learning goal, the support the institution has agreed to provide to help the student achieve it, and confirming that in reaching the agreement the student has had the benefit of adequate initial assessment and guidance.

On-programme activities

5 On-programme activities are defined as 'all activities of learning and accreditation of achievement, including assessment, general and specific student support services and enrichment activities'. Programmes are defined in terms of qualification aims (for example, national vocational qualifications (NVQs), general certificate of education (GCE) advanced level qualifications). The standard value of units available for each qualification has a component which reflects the length of the programme (the 'basic on-programme' units) and a component which reflects its relative cost (the 'cost-weighting factor'). For example, the cost of an engineering programme is greater than the cost of a business studies programme. The length of each programme is defined in terms of 'guided learning hours'. These are intended to represent the time during which an institution directly incurs expenditure in support of a student's programme. The on-programme units are accumulated term by term for each term wholly or partly completed by the student. If, for example, a student on a one-year programme dropped out during the second term, the institution would be able to claim on-programme units for only the first two terms of the year.

Achievement

6 A list of eligible qualifications and achievements for this element of funding is provided in Circular 99/01 *Tariff 1999-2000*. The list comprises, in the main, qualifications externally accredited by validating bodies such as the Business and Technology Education Council (BTEC), City and Guilds of London Institute (C&G) and the GCE examining boards. College certificates without external accreditation are eligible specifically to recognise the achievements of students with learning difficulties and, for the present, certain other specialised qualifications.

Tuition fee remission

7 Institutions and LEAs are free to set their own tuition fee policies, subject to the requirement of the secretary of state that fees may not be charged to students aged 16 to 18 in full-time education. For the purposes of the funding agreement, '18' means 'under 19 on 31 August of the calendar year in which the student commences a programme of study'. In addition, to promote access to further education by people on low incomes and to encourage basic education, units may be claimed by institutions that remit 100% of the tuition fee to certain groups of students. These students are those receiving unemployment benefit or means-tested state benefits and their unwaged dependants, and students taking a programme of adult basic education (ABE) or English for speakers of other languages (ESOL).

Childcare support

8 These units may be claimed for students who are either receiving, or who are unwaged dependants of persons receiving, unemployment benefit or means-tested state benefits, and students taking programmes of ABE or ESOL. The childcare support units may be claimed where an institution provides either crèche or playgroup facilities at no cost, or meets 100% of the cost incurred in securing the provision of childcare during the student's programme of study.

Additional support

9 This is defined as 'any activity which provides direct support for learning to individual students, which is over and above that which is normally provided in a standard learning programme which leads to their primary learning goal'. The additional support is required to help students gain access to, progress towards and successfully achieve their learning goals. The need for additional support may arise from a learning difficulty and/or disability or from literacy, numeracy or language support requirements.

Widening participation

10 A widening participation uplift may be claimed for any student who is recruited from an area with a postcode which is in a ward considered to be relatively more deprived. The Council uses an index based on the index of local deprivation produced by the Department of Environment, Transport and the

Regions (DETR) as a proxy measure for educational disadvantage. Students living in the 15% most deprived local authority wards attract additional funding. The average uplift factor is 6% and is applied to entry, on-programme and achievement units. In addition, a widening participation uplift factor of 9% may be claimed for people living in supported accommodation, irrespective of their postcode.

11 There is evidence that for some groups of people, participation and achievement in learning of all kinds is low and whilst some of these students will live in areas which qualify for the widening participation uplift, others will not. It is proposed that from 1999-2000, local provision from certain groups will qualify for a widening participation uplift of 6%. These groups are:

- the homeless
- those living in hostels and residential centres
- those with mental health problems
- travellers
- those in or who have recently left care
- those whose statutory education has been interrupted, for example, by pregnancy or parenthood
- asylum seekers
- refugees.

In addition, subject to consultation, students taking basic skills courses and students whose provision is part-funded by the European social fund (ESF) will be eligible for the widening participation uplift.

12 The Council will be consulting later in the year on a proposal to replace the current widening participation method for 16-19 year-old students with a system for determining eligibility based on previous educational achievement. This would be implemented from 2000-01.

Sum of units

13 The total number of units generated by each student varies according to the type of programme followed, the student's progress through the programme followed, their success at the end of it, and the degree of financial and other support made available by the institution. The total activity being supported by funding from the Council at an institution can then be expressed as the sum of units generated for each student. In the same way, the

funding agreement between the Council and each institution specifies the minimum number of funding units which the institution has agreed to generate in return for the funds allocated to it.

14 The standard values of units available for each element of a student's programme are set out in a tariff. The Council has established a tariff advisory committee (TAC) which is chaired by Steve Broomhead, chief executive of Warrington Unitary Authority. Membership of the TAC is made up of senior staff from colleges and other institutions funded by the Council. The TAC advises the chief executive of the Council on the elements of provision to be differentiated for funding purposes and on the value of units to be assigned to each element in the light of research and consultation with institutions.

Full-time 16–18 Year-old Students: Levels of Study and Qualification Type

Figure 1. Full-time 16–18 year-old students, by level

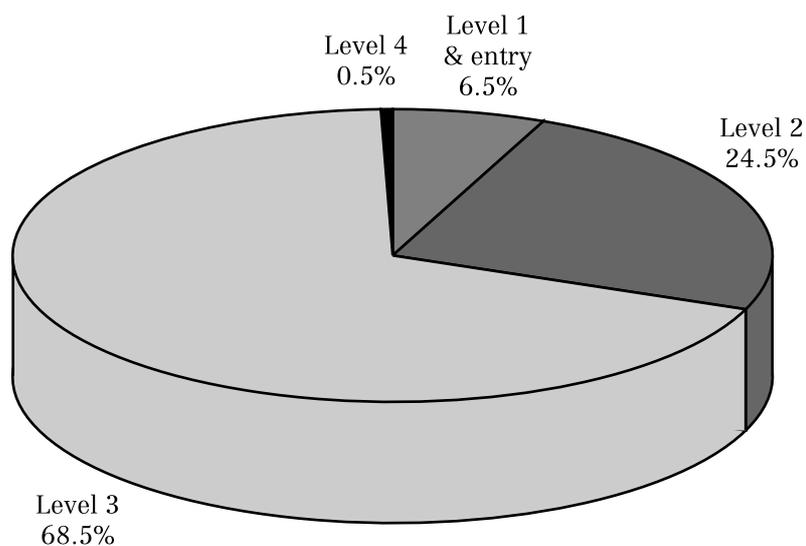
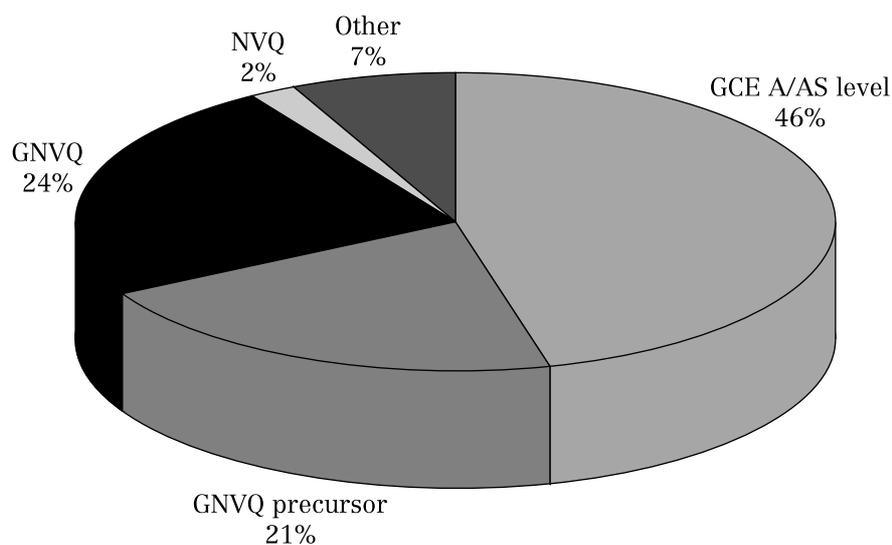


Figure 2. Full-time 16–18 year-old students at level 3, by qualification type



Consultation

(Reference Circular 99/33)

Please photocopy, complete and return this form to Kully Jones at the Council's Coventry office by 9 September 1999.

**THE
FURTHER
EDUCATION
FUNDING
COUNCIL**

Institution name

Institution type (please tick one): GFE college
tertiary college
sixth form college
other (please specify)

Cheylesmore House
Quinton Road
Coventry CV1 2WT

Telephone 01203 863000
Fax 01203 863100

Contact name (please print)

Signature of principal/head of institution

Telephone no.

Fax no.

Proposal

Curriculum Structure

(please tick)

Is the concept of curriculum units supported as an appropriate basis for developing a funding model (paragraph 16)? Yes No

Are there any other structures or methods which could be used? If 'yes', please provide details on a separate sheet. Yes No

'Entitlement'

Are the principles of entitlement identified in paragraph 21 appropriate? Yes No

Are there any other principles which should be included? If 'yes', please provide details on a separate sheet. Yes No

Features of proposed model

Is the concept supported of attaching a proposed minimum threshold for determining a full-time student (paragraph 23)? Yes No

Is the proposed minimum threshold of 18 curriculum units the right level? If 'no', please specify a more appropriate level. Yes No

Enrichment

Do the examples listed in paragraph 30 cover the main potential enrichment activities?

 Yes No

Are there any other enrichment activities which should be included? If 'yes', please provide details on a separate sheet.

 Yes No**Units of funding**

Is the concept supported of limiting the total number of of on-programme units under the model by applying for a taper?

 Yes No

Is the proposed taper specified in paragraph 37 set at the right level at 27 curriculum units? If 'no', please specify a more appropriate level.

 Yes No**Intermediate and foundation levels**

Is the concept of quantifying programmes of study at intermediate and foundation level in curriculum units appropriate? (paragraphs 40–42)

 Yes No

Are there any other ways of quantifying them? If 'yes', please provide details on a separate sheet.

 Yes No

Are there any other considerations involved in developing the model for intermediate and foundation level programmes? If 'yes', please provide details on a separate sheet.

 Yes No**Other comments**

(Continue on a separate sheet if necessary)

