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ISSUES

14-19 Implementation Plan: Executive Summary

Executive Summary

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- 1 Our aim is a system of 14-19 education matching the best anywhere; a system where all young people have opportunities to learn in ways which motivate and stretch them and through hard work qualify themselves for success in life; one where educational opportunity and chances in life do not depend on accident of birth, but are uniformly available to all young people.
- 2 In our White Paper, *14-19 Education and Skills*, we set out our policy proposals for introducing the qualifications and curriculum changes that would be necessary to create that system. Since then, our Green Paper, *Youth Matters*, and our White Paper, *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All*, have set out how services for young people and the schools system will be reformed to achieve the same ends; and our White Paper, *Getting on in Business, Getting on at Work*, has set out plans for continuing skills development for adults.
- 3 In this document we set out in detail how we will implement *14-19 Education and Skills* and how, in doing so, we will create a system capable of offering a new set of curriculum and qualifications opportunities, truly built around the needs and aspirations of each young person.

We will put in place a new national entitlement...

- 4** The centrepiece of our programme of reform is the creation of a new national curriculum and qualifications entitlement. Every young person will be expected to master the basics. Every young person will receive a sufficiently broad education to be able to progress further in learning and into employment. But there will be a choice of routes for achieving this – young people from the age of 14 onwards will be able to choose between pursuing general qualifications, including a new ‘General Diploma’, to be awarded to those young people achieving the equivalent of 5 A*-C grade GCSEs including English and maths, and new, employer-designed ‘specialised Diplomas’ – which will develop young people’s knowledge, understanding and skills through a mixture of general and applied education.
- 5** There will be 14 sets of specialised Diplomas, at three levels up to advanced level, covering the occupational sectors of the economy. Though the design of the qualifications is employer-led, they are not intended as a direct preparation for an occupation – they require young people to develop good basic skills, develop the broader skills employers want and are a basis to make further progress in learning. They will often contain GCSEs and A levels within them. Young people succeeding at level 2 (the equivalent of five A*-C GCSEs) will be fully prepared to go on to level 3 Diploma courses, A levels or an Apprenticeship. Those succeeding at level 3 will likewise be prepared for higher education or for occupationally-specific training.
- 6** The first five Diplomas will be available in 2008, the next five the year after and the final four in 2010. Following a three year programme of evaluation, the national entitlement will be introduced in 2013. By then, young people, wherever they are in England, will be able to take any one of the Diplomas.

...with mastery of the basics at its heart.

- 7 Whichever route young people are on, they will be expected to achieve the functional skills: the ability to use basic English, maths and ICT in a range of practical settings. New functional skills specialised Diplomas will be developed. These qualifications will be incorporated within the new specialised Diplomas and within GCSEs in English, maths and ICT – so that passing these functional skills qualifications will be a requirement for achieving a C or better in GCSE English, maths or ICT. Young people will therefore have to master the functional skills in order to achieve any of a General Diploma, a specialised Diploma or an Apprenticeship.

The functional skills qualifications will be piloted nationally from 2007, for introduction into specialised Diplomas as they are brought in from 2008, and into GCSEs in English, maths and ICT.

This will mean a major national programme of change

- 8 The changes to qualifications and curriculum we propose are not limited to the new specialised and General Diplomas and the introduction of the functional skills into GCSEs, central though these are. We are also committed to increasing the degree of stretch and challenge in A level, through the introduction of an extended project (which will also be a compulsory part of specialised Diplomas) and through the introduction of more stretching questions (which will be mirrored in the Diploma structure). And, so that more young people are well prepared for the choices ahead, we will free up the Key Stage 3 curriculum, so that schools have more scope to stretch young people and to help those who fell behind at primary school to catch up.
- 9 These curriculum and qualifications changes are very significant. Equally significant are the changes to the way that upper secondary and post-secondary education will be delivered in practice.

- 10** The entitlement that we propose could not be delivered by an individual school acting alone and nor could many colleges offer it in full. Therefore we must support every area to develop a system in which schools and colleges can offer more to young people through working together than they could on their own. Equally, we must ensure that the workforce is fully trained to implement the changes, and that every area has the facilities it needs to provide the full entitlement.
- 11** The purpose of this reform is to improve young people's life chances. Therefore, through all of this work, we make it our priority to drive up attainment and participation year on year. Our long term ambition is to transform participation – so that by 2015, 90% of 17 year olds are participating, compared to 75% now.
- 12** In this Implementation Plan, we therefore set out how we will deliver three key priorities:
- developing the qualifications and curriculum;
 - supporting every area to deliver; and
 - improving the system for today's young people.

Some of the key actions are summarised here. The full Implementation Plan sets out the details.

Developing the qualifications and curriculum

- 13** The first key task is to develop the functional skills qualifications. We will do so ahead of the timetable we have previously set out:
- Standards are being developed now.
 - There will be a full consultation on these standards from early 2006. It is critical that we ensure that the standards deliver what employers and others are seeking.
 - Qualifications will be trialed in 2006/7.

- A full national pilot will begin in 2007. The functional skills will then be available to incorporate into specialised Diplomas from September 2008.

14 Specialised Diplomas are being developed to the following timetable:

- Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), led by employers, have been set up to develop the content of the Diplomas.
- The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) has provided advice on the structure of the Diplomas – this will be the basis for the design of all Diplomas.
- DDPs are consulting widely and working with awarding bodies to specify content for the first five Diplomas by June 2006.
- DDPs will continue to work with awarding bodies as the qualifications are developed for accreditation by June 2007.
- Diplomas will be available to schools by September 2007, for them to prepare for first teaching in September 2008.

15 Additional challenge is being brought in to advanced level study – through a new extended project and through more challenging questions in A levels. QCA will be trialling the extended project, as well as the more challenging material from 2006, for first teaching from 2008.

16 GCSEs in English, maths and ICT are being altered to include the new functional skills content. Full, two year pilots begin in 2007, with national accreditation. The new English and ICT GCSEs will fully replace existing specifications by 2009, following evaluation of the pilot. Maths GCSE is being changed more significantly, following the report of Professor Adrian Smith's Inquiry into Post-14 Mathematics Education, *Making Mathematics Count* (the Smith Report), and new specifications will be fully in place the following year.

- 17** We are examining a new Apprenticeship qualification. We will ensure that progression between specialised Diplomas and Apprenticeships is straightforward.

Supporting every area to deliver

- 18** Offering every young person access to the entitlement will require profound changes throughout the system. But there can be no uniform, nationally-imposed model of delivery. There is great variability between areas, which will need to be reflected in very different ways of delivering the entitlement. There is a great deal to learn from the areas which have made the most progress so far, through 14-19 Pathfinders, the Increased Flexibility Programme, Area Inspections and other locally-led initiatives.
- 19** In order to deliver the entitlement nationally, therefore, our delivery model will need to involve:
- Only the minimum level of national prescription needed to secure delivery.
 - A large amount of local discretion.
 - A mechanism to enable all areas to learn from those which have done the most.
- 20** Nationally, we will:
- Seek, through the 2006 Education Bill, to put duties on the Local Authority (in relation to 14-16 year olds) and the LSC (in relation to 16-19 year olds) to ensure that there is sufficient provision in the local area.
 - Through the same Bill, seek to put a duty on schools to ensure that young people on their roll have access to all the Diplomas available locally.
 - Expect every area to establish a 14-19 partnership, led by the Local Authority and local LSC.

- Expect Local Authorities and local LSCs to draw up a prospectus during 2006, which will set out in full the courses available to young people in the area.

21 Locally:

- Schools, colleges and work-based learning providers will decide which courses they wish to offer and these will be set out in the prospectus produced during 2006. The courses offered to young people on the roll of other institutions are likely to be in areas of particular strength or specialism.
- 14-19 partnerships will decide how to deal with the key local delivery issues, including: governance arrangements; a common curriculum framework; transport; underpinning systems; data; complaints procedures and so on.

22 This will be underpinned by a mechanism for enabling everyone to learn from the areas which have made the most progress. This will include, from early 2006, a programme of learning visits, through which we will support people to examine and experience some of the most effective existing practice.

23 In support of this, we will make sure that professional development is available, so that changes to curriculum and qualifications can be introduced effectively. To support piloting of functional skills from 2007 and introduction of Diplomas in 2008:

- The Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) and the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) will lead work to design and develop teaching and learning materials for the first five Diploma lines during 2006/7, working alongside DDPs and awarding bodies as the qualifications are designed.
- QIA and the National Strategies will design and develop materials to support the teaching of functional skills during 2006/7.

- QIA and the SSAT will lead work during 2007/8 to support schools, colleges and training providers to deliver the first five Diploma lines from 2008.
- Similarly QIA and the National Strategies will provide support during 2007/8 on the teaching of functional skills.
- The Training and Development Agency for Schools (TDA) will lead work in some pilot areas to integrate work on initial teacher training and the development of support staff to deliver Diplomas.

24 We will also ensure that there is sufficient provision in place:

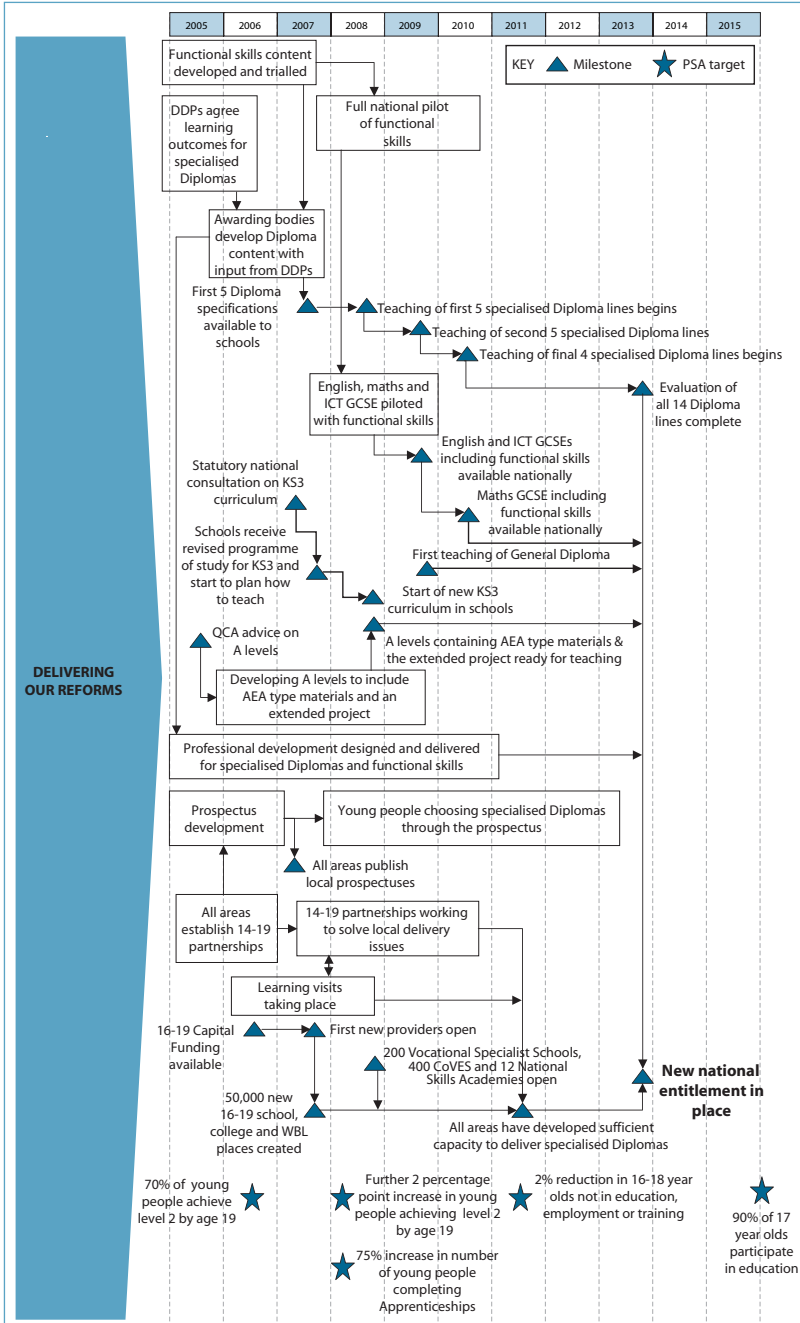
- LSC will publish guidance on the 16-19 capital fund in December 2005.
- LSC will hold 16-19 competitions from January 2006.
- By March 2006, 400 Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) will be established.
- The first 40 Vocational Specialist Schools will be in operation by Spring 2006.
- The LSC will make its first allocations of capital from the 16-19 capital pot from June 2006.
- In autumn 2006, the new National Skills Academies will begin to operate.
- In developing their visions for future waves of Building Schools for the Future, Local Authorities will need to demonstrate how they will enable the 14-19 entitlement to be delivered in the area.
- By September 2007, the first new providers of 16-19 provision entering the system through competitions will open.
- By September 2008, we will have created up to an additional 50,000 16-19 school, college and work-based learning places.

- By September 2008, 200 Vocational Specialist Schools and 12 National Skills Academies will be established.

Improving the system for today's young people

- 25** We aim to ensure that year on year there are improvements in participation and achievement. In particular:
- More young people will achieve level 2 and level 3 qualifications by the age of 19. At least 70% of young people will achieve Level 2 by 2006, and at least 72% by 2008.
 - More young people will complete Apprenticeships – at least 75% more by 2007/8.
 - More young people will participate post-16 – at least 90% of 17 year olds by 2015, compared to 75% now – and fewer will be outside education, employment and training, with a reduction of at least 2 percentage points from 10% now to 8% by 2010.
- 26** In each of these areas, we are working closely with a range of key partners in order to achieve improvement. A range of national-level organisations will be key to delivery, including those responsible for this plan, as will Local Authorities and local LSCs. Most important of all will be the schools, colleges and work-based learning providers who deliver every day for our young people. We make it our mission to listen to and learn from them and put our efforts into making it more likely that they will succeed with young people.

27 Our Implementation Plan is summarised below:



The main document is also available from the address below quoting ref no 2037-2005. Copies of this publication can also be obtained from:

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