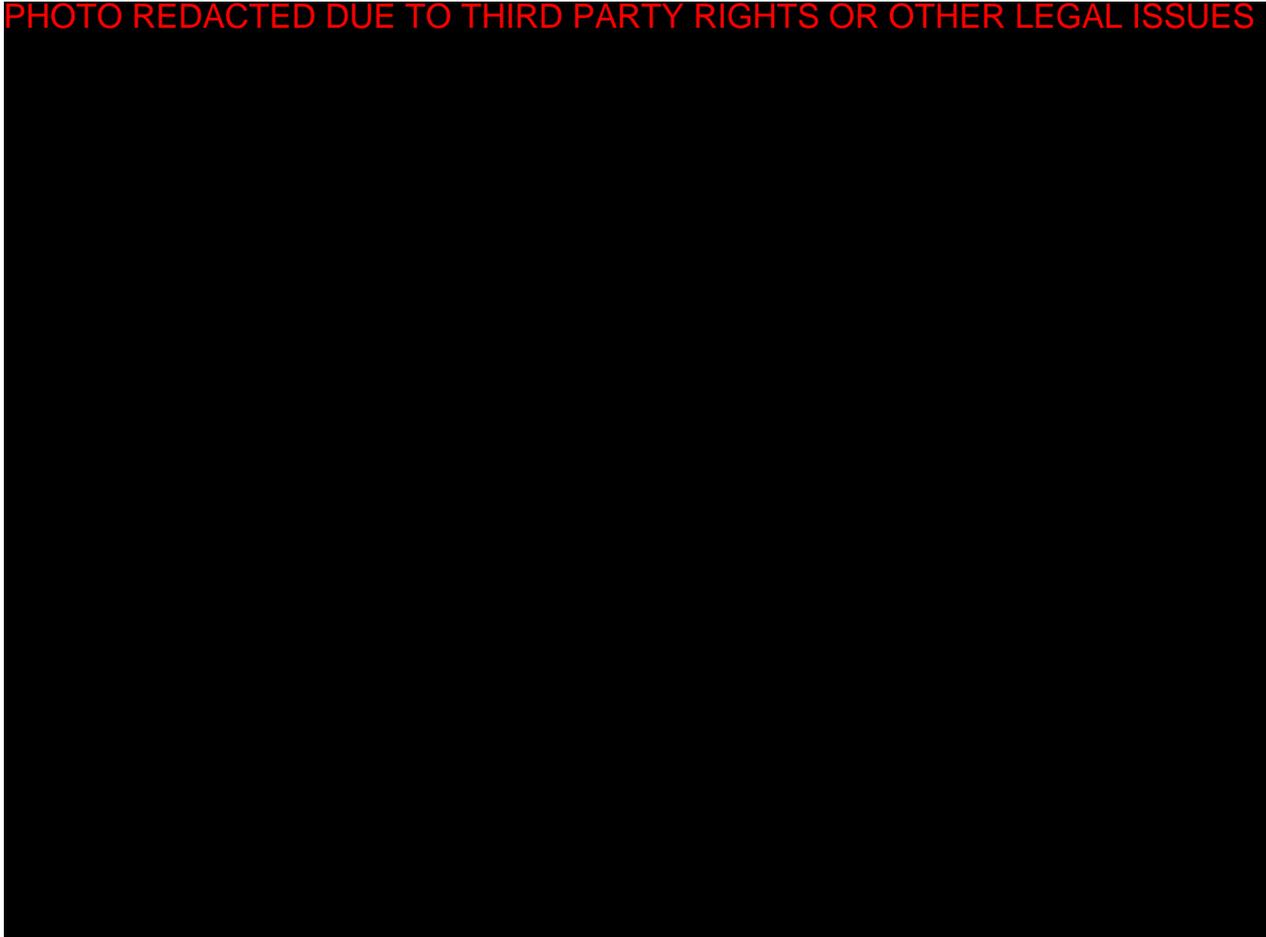


14–19:

extending opportunities, raising standards

Summary

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department for

education and skills

creating opportunity, releasing potential, achieving excellence

This document is a summary of the proposals set out in the Green Paper 14-19: *extending opportunities, raising standards*. We would welcome your views on the Green Paper. Responses should reach the Department by 31 May 2002. If you would like to find out more about the proposals and respond to the consultation, this summary, the full document and the consultation response form are available at the Department for Education and Skills website: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19greenpaper. Further details may be found at the end of this booklet.



Introduction

THE CHALLENGES

More people need to be better educated than ever before. To improve economic competitiveness and promote social justice we need to develop the skills and talents of young people across the full range of abilities. Young people need to continue their education and training past 16, and must be challenged to reach their full potential. That is as true for those who face significant barriers to learning as it is for natural high-flyers.

Rapid changes in knowledge and skills are often required for particular jobs or to develop successful careers. So everybody needs to be motivated to engage in lifelong learning. At least half our young adults should at some stage continue to degree level if our economy is to have enough people with higher-level skills.

It is not only a matter of raising levels of achievement and skill, though the need to raise performance is pressing. It is also about the development of the whole person. Young people must be prepared for an adult life in which they are involved as active, responsible citizens.

Wasted potential brings high personal, social and economic costs. For young people themselves the price of disengagement from learning now is often serious problems and persistent failure for the rest of their lives. Low motivation, truancy, behaviour problems and exclusion damage our communities and burden our economy.

Today young people may be more independent and free-thinking than were their parents and grandparents. They demand more from their education and training and are quicker to reject what they do not like and what does not meet their immediate needs. At the same time, they can find the world and their lives more complex and more confusing.

Between 14 and 19, young people are striving to develop their personal and social identities: they are assertive yet lacking self-confidence and vulnerable in their inexperience. They need and deserve good quality education and training. They also need support and guidance to help them to take best advantage of the opportunities available.

The pace of economic change has not been matched by the pace of change in our education system. During the last sixty years successive attempts have been made to improve vocational education, raise its status and ensure the skills necessary to close the skills gap with other countries. These changes enjoyed limited or no more than short-term success. We need now to rectify the traditional neglect of vocational education as a route to success. In particular we must continue to break down the divide between education and training.

In these circumstances we have to design a truly coherent education system that runs from the early years to adulthood. Sixteen has been a traditional cut-off point in education. We need to transform it from a

point at which young people divide into those who stay on and those who leave into a point where every young person is committed to continuing to learn.

This document sets out proposals for a new 14–19 phase of learning which meets these challenges and gives young people the opportunities which will enable them and the nation to thrive in the 21st century.

THE VISION

Our aim is that the 14–19 phase of education and training in England should:

- meet the needs and aspirations of all young people, including those who face obstacles to their progress in learning, and those who have the potential to reach the very highest levels of achievement;
- raise the levels of achievement of all young people, reduce the gap in achievement between various socio-economic and ethnic groups and increase participation in post-16 education and training, including higher education;

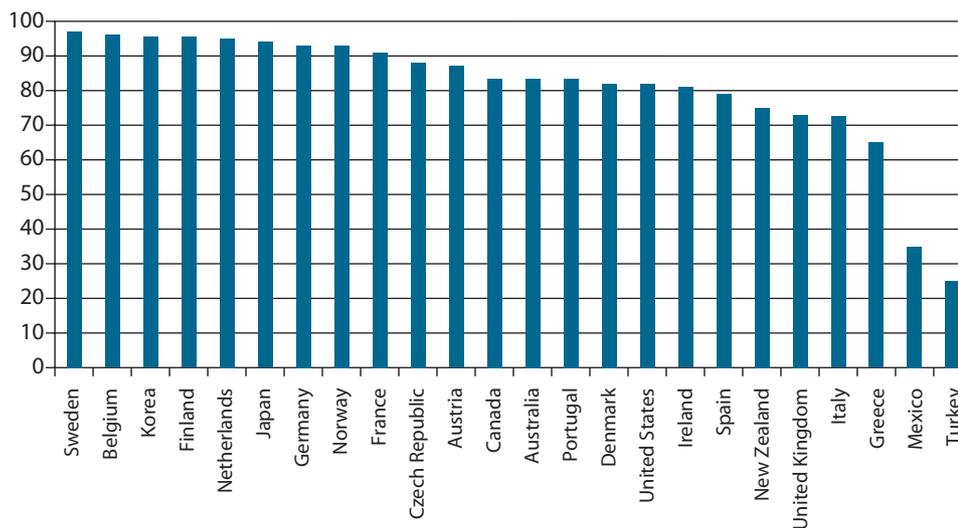
- broaden the skills acquired by all young people to improve their employability, bridge the skills gap identified by employers and overcome social exclusion;
- be delivered through flexible, integrated and innovative networks of providers committed to achieving ambitious new goals for all young people in the 14–19 phase of their lives and their education.

This is ambitious but essential to the Government’s overall mission of building a modern Britain based on economic success and social justice.

SOME KEY FACTS

- A recent report¹ found that, overall, the proportions of the workforce holding Level 2² and Level 3³ qualifications in the

Proportion of the population aged 17 enrolled in education, full-time or part-time, 1999



¹ Campbell et al, *Skills in England 2001: research report*: Department for Education and Skills

² five or more GCSEs at A*–C, an intermediate GNVQ, NVQ Level 2 or other equivalent qualification

³ two or more GCE A Levels, an advanced GNVQ, NVQ Level 3 or other equivalent qualification

UK are below those in France and Germany. Although the gap between the UK and the best of the rest of the world is narrowing in terms of the achievement of Level 2 qualifications, the majority of these gains are made by rising attainment at GCSE.

- A recent OECD report showed the UK performance to be significantly above the OECD average in equipping young people with the skills for adult life. But the study also showed that there was too big a gap between the high and the lower attainers, and that socio-economic background remained a barrier to educational success.
- At present, less than 20% of young people under 21 from the lower socio-economic groups go to university compared with over 70% from the highest.

GETTING THERE

Our proposals:

- a more flexible curriculum, more responsive to students' individual needs;
- world class technical and vocational education, which offers a positive choice and high standards, and is not a second-class fallback;
- a new Matriculation Diploma for all young people to aspire to at age 19;
- reliable information and strong pastoral support from schools as well as from their parents or carers. Impartial advice and guidance must be available;
- a 14–19 phase that is more responsive to those with special educational needs; to those from a range of ethnic backgrounds; to those from low income families; to those in danger of social exclusion; and to those for whom high achievement comes naturally;
- much closer collaboration between schools, colleges and training providers, building on the best of what has already been developed;
- flexible access and delivery through Information and Communications Technology (ICT) and e-learning.

The proposals in this document will be of interest to a wide range of audiences, especially:

- young people themselves and their parents;
- schools, colleges and training providers;
- those who provide support to young people and those who stand behind the providers, such as LEAs and local and national Learning and Skills Councils;
- higher education establishments and employers, including small and medium-sized businesses, and the bodies who represent them.

Our proposals include ways to ensure that all those with an interest can help shape and take forward the 14–19 agenda.

A significant level of investment will be needed to widen the choices for 14–19 year olds. We are already making some additional resources available to begin the necessary changes. We will increase the level of investment in future years to sustain further

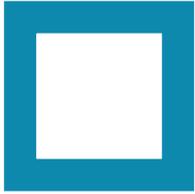
development, as resources permit.

Announcements about future funding will be made in the summer.

THE OUTCOMES OF THE 14–19 PHASE

Our aims in developing the coherent 14–19 phase in England will be to achieve:

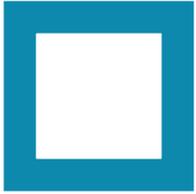
- higher levels of participation and standards of attainment by age 19;
- a commitment to lifelong learning by all young people;
- increased employability for all young people, whether before or after higher education;
- more rounded, more motivated and more responsible citizens and workers, able to contribute to a productive economy;
- a reduction in the number of those truanting and those dropping out of education and training post-16;
- a greatly improved 14–19 system of education and training, of which we can be proud.



The shape of the 14-19 phase

We propose that the 14–19 phase of learning should be marked by a clear beginning, middle and end:

- the new phase should begin with a review of progress between the pupil, his or her parents or carers and teachers. In the case of young people at risk of disengaging from learning or those who are underachieving, the Connexions Service will be involved where it can add value to the work of schools;
- this review should help students to begin to identify longer-term goals and aspirations. It would inform the selection of options for study in the initial period after age 14. The start of the new phase might be marked by the preparation of a plan setting out goals and how they will be pursued;
- the core of the phase contains the subject learning leading to qualifications; other learning undertaken for personal development, for example in citizenship; and wider activities, often outside the school or college environment;
- the end of the phase would be marked by a new overarching award – the Matriculation Diploma – which would recognise the achievements that had been made in all forms of study and in wider activity beyond the curriculum;
- GCSEs and equivalent qualifications will continue to have an important role but should over time evolve to become a progress check around the midpoint of the phase.



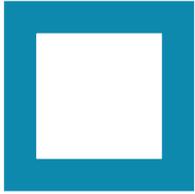
Making the right choices at age 14

Support for young people towards the end of Key Stage 3 will be a crucial element of the 14–19 framework: the wider range of options from age 14 and the focus on outcomes at 19 rather than 16 mean that choices made towards the end of Key Stage 3 will assume a greater significance. However, choices made then should not constrain young people to particular routes if later it becomes clear that it is in their best interests to change.

We want to help schools build on existing good practice in preparing and motivating young people for entry to the 14–19 phase and helping them to manage their subsequent learning with an eye to their eventual careers. This will include guidance on good practice in careers education and guidance throughout Key Stage 3.

We propose that:

- young people should receive the support and guidance necessary to enable them to manage their learning; to choose suitable options from age 14; and to identify the learning and development they need to gain the Matriculation Diploma;
- the review of progress and identification of learning goals towards the end of Key Stage 3 might result in an individual learning plan. Young people with statements of special educational needs will continue to have transition plans;
- the advice and guidance available from Key Stage 3 raises aspirations for young people to achieve to the highest levels of their capability. Support, particularly through Excellence Challenge, will encourage young people from disadvantaged backgrounds and others who have not previously aspired to higher education to aim high.



The 14–19 curriculum

Up to age 19 all young people should be entitled to experience breadth and balance in their learning. But they should also be able to follow a curriculum tailored to their individual needs and aspirations.

The 14–19 phase as a whole should give young people a range of high-quality general, mixed and vocational options. It must offer clear progression routes into further learning and employment, including higher education. The curriculum must challenge the most able and it must also be accessible to young people, such as those with special educational needs, who may face obstacles to learning and progress.

The new generation of Modern Apprenticeships will form an important part of a 14–19 vocational pathway. We will be working with the Learning and Skills Council to ensure that Modern Apprenticeships meet the highest standards, and to encourage take-up.

A NEW, FLEXIBLE 14–16 CURRICULUM

The purpose of the National Curriculum is to ensure a broad and balanced programme for all young people. We remain committed to this principle. However, the current structure of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 can sometimes be a barrier to student motivation and progression. In particular, the large number of compulsory subjects leaves too little flexibility for other subjects and types of study such as work-related or vocational learning.

The current content and nature of the curriculum at Key Stage 4 also encourages the perception that 14–16 learning is the final stage of schooling, ending in GCSEs, at the end of the period of compulsory education. We believe it needs to be seen

as the beginning of a more coherent phase that will continue through to age 19, leading to employment, higher education and setting the stage for continued lifelong learning.

The phase as a whole should give young people access to a range of general, mixed and vocational options with clear progression routes.

We propose that:

- subjects should be mandatory at Key Stage 4 only if they provide an essential basis for progression in learning or for personal development;
- on that basis, mathematics, English, science and ICT would be compulsory, alongside citizenship, religious education, careers education, sex and health education, physical education and work-related learning;
- there should be a new statutory entitlement for all young people to access a subject within each of modern foreign languages, design and technology, the arts and the humanities during Key Stage 4;

- in the light of the additional flexibility within the 14–16 curriculum, we will end the existing unsatisfactory arrangements for schools to disapply some requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 4 for individual pupils. Current arrangements which allow disapplication specifically for young people with statements of special educational needs will be retained.

DEVELOPING THE VOCATIONAL OPTIONS FOR 14-16 YEAR-OLDS

Many young people will continue as now with predominantly general programmes. But over time we would expect others to extend the work-related element of their programme – beyond the minimum core we are suggesting for all – to pursue genuinely mixed programmes of study. Work-related learning has too often been seen as an inferior alternative to general study and appropriate only for less able pupils.

High-quality and well-respected courses and qualifications should become attractive to the full spectrum of ability including many young people who aspire to entry to higher

education. In all cases we want to ensure a broad-based education, in which choices made at 14 are not so narrow as to restrict the ability to change direction at age 16 or beyond.

We propose:

- more vocational qualifications and new hybrid qualifications that combine traditional general subjects with their vocational applications. These will be high-quality, rigorous additions to the current range of national qualifications. There will be clear vocational pathways into higher education;
- to make no distinction in title between existing GCSEs and those in vocational subjects. All GCSEs will be identified only by their subject title.

THE 16–19 YEARS IN A MORE COHERENT PHASE

We are still in the initial implementation stage of the Qualifying for Success reforms (Curriculum 2000). The first students will complete their full advanced level programmes next summer. Despite the

acknowledged difficulties last summer, we are confident that the reforms are now working well. Many more young people are undertaking larger and more varied programmes of learning than before.

The first students will be sitting the Advanced Extension Award (AEA) in summer 2002. It was introduced to stretch the most able advanced level students by requiring greater depth of understanding than A Level. It will ensure that the most able students in this country are tested against standards comparable with the most demanding to be found in other countries.

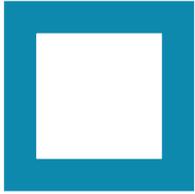
We are conscious, however, of the need to keep the 16–19 arrangements under review as they bed in.

We propose:

- to introduce more demanding questions into the A2 papers, including vocational subjects. These would allow high achievers to achieve an A grade ‘with distinction’ by demonstrating their deeper knowledge, skill and understanding. The AEA would no

longer be needed, leading to a simpler, leaner A Level structure;

- that 16–19 year olds should be entitled to continue studying mathematics, English – or the equivalent Key Skills – and ICT until they have reached at least Level 2;
- to consider dropping the separate labelling of general and vocational A Levels, once the structure of vocational A Levels is fully aligned with the AS/A2 model;
- that all young people should be encouraged to engage in active citizenship, work-related learning and wider activities such as art, music and sport.



Recognising achievement – a new award

The current structure of national qualifications has served the country well in many ways, and provides respected benchmarks for educational achievement in a wide range of subjects and types of learning. However, at present, attainment at 19 is recognised in terms only of individual qualifications. A consequence is that many young people are content to pursue a relatively narrow programme of study. This means that activities and achievement beyond formal qualifications are undervalued and that old and unwarranted prejudices between academic and vocational learning are sustained.

We propose a new overarching award called ‘the Matriculation Diploma’ which all young people aged 14–19 would aspire to achieve. We wish to consult upon the precise form of the award and test it in practice. Its purpose would be to:

- raise standards of achievement at age 19 by motivating more young people to stay in learning and providing something for them to aim for;
- widen the horizons of young people beyond the individual qualifications they might take;
- point the way towards greater coherence within the programmes young people pursue;

- promote parity of esteem between vocational and academic programmes of study;
- encourage the development of the ‘whole person’;
- convey valuable information to employers and higher education.

We propose that:

- the new award would be based around existing national qualifications and programmes such as GCSEs, A Levels and Modern Apprenticeships;

- it would comprise:
 - a common strand of literacy, numeracy and ICT to Level 2 standard (equivalent to GCSE grade C or better);
 - main qualifications and programmes such as A Levels, Modern Apprenticeships and GCSEs at different levels;
 - and, potentially, participation in activities in each of: active citizenship, wider interests and work-based learning.

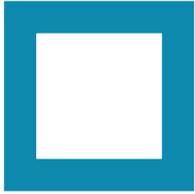
- in order to ensure that all young people are challenged, it would be awarded at three levels, depending upon the level of the main qualifications achieved by age 19:
 - an Intermediate award for young people whose main qualifications are achieved at Level 2¹;
 - an Advanced award for those who reach Level 3²;
 - a Higher award, based on broader and more advanced achievement than the Advanced award.

- a record of progress would be awarded to those who remained in learning until age 19 but did not reach the threshold for the Intermediate award. The Diploma would continue to be available after age 19 because some young people, such as some of those with learning difficulties, may need more time to secure the achievements necessary for a Diploma;

- an alternative might be to provide all young people with a simple Certificate at age 19 consolidating all their achievements, including formal recognition for participation in wider activities, and undifferentiated by level.

¹ five or more GCSEs at A*–C, an intermediate GNVQ, NVQ Level 2 or other equivalent qualification

² two or more GCE A Levels, an advanced GNVQ, NVQ Level 3 or other equivalent qualification



Pace and progression of learning

Young people should be able to develop at a pace consistent with their abilities, whether faster or slower. A variety of good practice consistent with this principle is already evident within existing provision, but it needs to be both wider in scope and more widespread in practice. We will build on current best practice to create a more flexible system able to ensure that pupils are properly stretched to their potential and can make the best use of the 14–19 phase.

We propose to encourage opportunities for young people to move at different paces by:

- more flexibility to capitalise on accelerated learning in Key Stage 3 and take GCSE examinations early; or by-pass GCSE examinations in some subjects and begin AS programmes early;
- promoting effective collaboration between institutions, and use of IT and interactive learning to ensure that young people have access to appropriate teaching and facilities;
- ensuring that the Academy for Gifted and Talented Youth contributes effectively to the achievement of very able young people across the country;
- providing further guidance and support materials where this will be helpful and developing ‘when ready’ tests which can be taken online;
- encouraging schools to ensure that, where it would help the young person concerned, the option is available of moving more slowly in some or all subjects, for instance by taking GCSEs after age 16.



Advice, guidance and support for young people

The greater range of options that we propose should be available from age 14 and the emphasis we are placing on planning throughout the phase towards achievement at age 19, imply the need for additional advice, guidance and support for young people. They receive this from a range of individuals and agencies.

Parents will continue to play a crucial role in inspiring their children. They should be involved in the development of their children's individual learning plans, towards the end of Key Stage 3. Schools or colleges are also clearly a key source of support. Connexions Service Personal Advisers will provide impartial advice and guidance and help some young people gain access to personal development opportunities and the wider services and support they may need.

Vulnerable and disadvantaged young people often need particularly effective support, including from specialist agencies.

We propose:

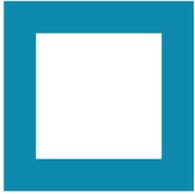
- development of a national, non-statutory, specification for careers education and guidance, which will ensure that all young people are equipped to understand the options open to them;
- that the implications of the 14–19 reforms for the role of Connexions Service Personal Advisers, could include:
 - working with young people at risk of disengaging from learning or under-achieving and with their parents and teachers towards the end of Key Stage 3 to prepare individual learning plans;
 - monitoring and reviewing those plans with young people during the 14–19 phase, especially to prepare for the

choice of post-16 learning, and confirming that the requirements of the Matriculation Diploma have been met;

- brokering flexible learning programmes in complex cases for young people who will take a mixed academic/vocational or wholly vocational route;
- supporting young people as they move between schools and college/employer-based placements; overseeing the off-site learning for those at risk of dropping out or under-achieving; and being a source of support over issues that arise from young people learning outside school;
- encouraging young people to take advantage of a range of informal learning and personal development opportunities in the wider community.

Financial support will be available to 16–19 year olds to encourage staying on in learning:

- Educational Maintenance Allowances are available in a third of the country, targeted on the basis of parental income to help overcome financial barriers to participation in learning;
- Connexions Card, available nationally from September 2002 to all young people, giving them access to a range of discounts on study-related costs (e.g. books and travel); rewarding attendance and application through incentives and further discounts (e.g. on leisure facilities);
- Access Funds, which will continue to provide a short term safety net for young people with *ad hoc* needs.



Drivers and support for change

Our vision is of high-quality, flexible provision across the 14–19 range. The main agents for change are the young people themselves and their teachers and parents, all of whom want higher achievement. Targets, including those set by LEAs and the local LSCs, performance tables, quality assurance and inspection and the various measures aimed at school and college improvement all support the drive for higher standards of attainment.

Targets and performance measures are closely linked. We are proposing some improvements to the way in which school and college performance is measured to ensure that the measures properly reflect the 14–19 reforms proposed in this Green Paper. We are determined to remove any possible barriers that might deter institutions from offering young people a range of pathways.

We propose to:

- extend the scope of the main school performance tables so that they recognise a wider range of high quality vocational qualifications on a scale equivalent to GCSEs and GNVQs;
- recognise accelerated progress by including in the main school performance tables AS Levels taken by students before they reach 16;
- consider how the school performance tables might take account of GCSEs or equivalent qualifications taken after age 16;
- introduce new performance indicators into the 16–18 school and college performance tables to reflect the

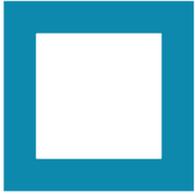
percentage of students who achieve Level 2¹ and Level 3² by age 18;

- extend the existing age range for area inspections from 16–19 to 14–19, and adopt a more flexible approach to the definition of ‘area’, so that such inspections may cover, for instance, more than one LEA where that reflects the pattern of local provision;

- ask Her Majesty’s Chief Inspector of Schools and the Chief Inspector of the Adult Learning Inspectorate to ensure that all inspection reports comment on the quality and range of provision currently available and the impact of any existing collaboration between providers;
- continue to work with LEAs, the LSC, the inspectorates and others to provide support to schools and colleges to drive up quality.

¹ five or more GCSEs at A*–C, an intermediate GNVQ, NVQ Level 2 or other equivalent qualification

² two or more GCE A Levels, an advanced GNVQ, NVQ Level 3 or other equivalent qualification



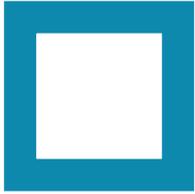
Implementation

The reforms set out in this document are far-reaching. It is essential that teachers, schools, colleges, parents, young people and other partners have the necessary time and support to adjust to make the most of the new framework.

It is also important that the proposals are implemented on a timetable that avoids clashes with other reforms such as the Key Stage 3 strategy and planned changes to qualifications. Changes to the curriculum, qualifications, regulations and guidance will be subject to further consultation.

We propose:

- that 14–19 reforms should be carefully phased in over several years and, subject to resources, culminate in full roll out from 2005/06;
- to support pathfinder projects from 2002/03 to develop and test various models of local collaborative arrangements and in various settings, including a range of social circumstances. These pathfinders would also test other aspects of the proposals, including the Matriculation Diploma;
- to consider the funding arrangements for young people who follow programmes of study involving more than one school, college or training provider;
- to encourage collaboration between schools, colleges and other providers; and to ensure that schools and colleges designated as Beacon schools and colleges, specialist schools and Centres of Vocational Excellence all play their full part in local collaborative arrangements and in developing and spreading good practice;
- to take account in our implementation arrangements of the resource implications of the new 14–19 framework, including additional costs and teacher workload.



Next steps

The proposals in this Green Paper will be of interest to a wide range of stakeholders/partners and audiences. We want all of those with an interest not only to become familiar with the proposals in this document, but also to participate in helping to shape and take forward the action necessary to make a reality of 14–19 coherence.

We propose to:

- run a series of workshops – one in each local LSC area – between March and May, in close cooperation with the LSC, the Local Government Association, LEAs and Government Offices. These workshops will enable those participating to develop their views on the proposals and consider how they can be taken forward locally;
- offer an online 14–19 information and discussion area for teachers and other professionals on the TeacherNet website: www.teachernet.gov.uk/14to19greenpaper;
- organise workshops for Connexions Partnerships and the voluntary and statutory youth service to consider how the sector can support schools and colleges in delivering our proposals;
- publish a young people’s version of the Green Paper; and organise consultation events for a wide cross-section of young people, including dedicated workshops;
- ask the UK Youth Parliament and the British Youth Council to develop focus groups of young people on particular aspects of the 14–19 policy;
- involve parents, including through the Parents’ website (www.dfes.gov.uk/parents) and *Parents + Schools* magazine;
- use existing networks and the proposed workshops to engage with employers’ organisations and employers themselves, including small and medium-sized businesses.

Additional copies of this summary and the response form may be obtained free of charge from:

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quoting reference DfES 0154/2002 for the summary and DfES 0153/2002 for the response form.

Copies of the Green Paper summary will also be available in the most commonly used minority ethnic languages and in audio (ref: DfES/0185/2002) and Braille (ref: DfES/0184/2002) versions.

A summary prepared especially for young people will also be available (ref: DfES/0173/2002).

Comments and responses may be e-mailed to: 14-19.greenpaper@dfes.gsi.gov.uk

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