14-19 Curriculum and Qualifications Reform

Final Report of the Working Group on 14-19 Reform

Annexes

October 2004

Contents

Annex A
Glossary

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Term	Meaning
Academic	Focusing on the acquisition of facts, information and abstract theoretical, rather than practical, knowledge.
Advanced Extension Awards (AEA)	An examination available in 17 areas for advanced level candidates who are particularly gifted and expected to attain a grade A. The AEA is graded as merit or distinction.
Assessment for learning	Assessment/judgements used to support teaching and learning, monitor learners' progress and illuminate their strengths and weaknesses. Also **formative assessment/ judgement**.
Common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA)	The knowledge, skills and attributes that all **young people** need for learning, employment and adult life. For example, personal awareness, problem solving, moral and ethical awareness. CKSA forms part of the **core**.
Complementary learning	Learning related to the focus of a learner's **main learning**, such as Latin for a learner with a modern foreign languages focus. It may contribute towards achievement of the **threshold** or be additional to it.
Component	The building blocks for the proposed diploma system. A discrete subject or **area of learning** with its own assessment arrangements, achievement in which gives credit towards the award of a **diploma**. Components will build on existing qualifications, such as **GCSEs** and A levels, GNVQs and other existing qualifications.
Contrasting learning	Learning not directly related to the focus of a learner's **main learning**, such as chemistry for a learner with a humanities focus. It may contribute towards achievement of the **threshold** or be additional to it.

Core (learning)	Skills, knowledge and experiences common to and required for the achievement of all **diplomas: functional literacy and communication, functional mathematics, functional ICT, extended project, CKSA, personal review, planning and guidance**, and an entitlement to **wider activities**.
Credit	Value ascribed to a **component** based on a measure of **notional learning time**. Nothing smaller than a **component** can provide credit towards a **diploma**.
Decoupling	Separation of AS and A2 within GCE A level into free-standing qualifications.
Diploma	Proposed qualification recognising achievement in a **programme** that meets **threshold** requirements for **core** and **main learning**.
End-user	Ultimate beneficiaries of the 14-19 education and training system, especially **HE** and employers.
Extended (core) component	**Component** which satisfies the **core** requirements in **functional literacy and communication, functional mathematics** or **functional ICT**, but which also includes broader or more theoretical and conceptual aspects of the relevant subject (i.e. English, mathematics or **ICT**).
Extended project	A significant autonomous piece of work completed by each learner as part of their **core learning**. Completing the extended project would require learners to develop and demonstrate a range of skills, like planning, research and problem solving. The final outcome would be dependent on the nature of the project selected by the learner. It might be a written report, but could also be a piece of artwork, a construction or a performance.
(Formal) external examinations	Examinations set or defined and marked and/or moderated by awarding bodies.
FE	Further education.
Formative assessment/ judgement	See **assessment for learning**.
Functional ICT	The ICT skills **young people** need to function as informed citizens and effective learners and in the workplace. A **component** of the **core**.
Functional literacy and communication	The literacy and communication skills **young people** need to function as informed citizens and effective learners and in the workplace. A **component** of the **core**.
Functional mathematics	The mathematical skills **young people** need to function as informed citizens and effective learners and in the workplace. A **component** of the **core**.
GCE	General Certificate of Education or A levels – an advanced level general qualification.

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GCSE	General Certificate of Secondary Education.
GNVQ	General National Vocational Qualifications – intermediate and foundation level qualifications covering broad vocational sectors, such as health and social care. In the process of being withdrawn.
HE	Higher education.
ICT	Information and communication technology.
In-course assessment	Work set and marked by teachers over the duration of the course that contributes to the award of a grade in a subject or **area of learning**. Also **professional judgement**.
Level	Demand or difficulty of a qualification, **programme** or **component**. See table of equivalences.
Lines (of learning)	Group together related subjects or **areas of learning**. **Programmes** and **diplomas** will be based on one of about 20 lines.
Main learning	Learning chosen by the learner which constitutes the bulk of each **diploma**. It should ensure achievement and progression within individual subjects and **areas of learning**.
Moderation	A process of checking a sample of assessed work for the consistency of marking and to arrive at a grade for work. Moderation is carried out by examiners other than those involved in the original marking.
Notional learning time	An approximate measure of the total amount of time required to complete a **component** or **programme**, which includes taught time and unsupervised learning.
Occupational	Learning geared to a particular occupation or career path.
Open (diploma or programme)	Offers learners relatively unregulated freedom to mix **components**, though they must still successfully complete the **core** to achieve a **diploma**.
Pathway	A progression route through the **diploma** framework.
Personal review, planning and guidance	Support for the young person to understand themselves as a learner and how the different parts of their programme relate to one another; and to identify their learning and career goals and how to achieve them.
Professional judgement	See **in-course assessment**.
Programme	Overarching term for a combination of **components** followed by a learner or group of learners. Programmes may differ in content, **volume**, **level** and length, but share the characteristic of bringing components together into a whole. Achievement in a **programme** should be recognised by the award of a **diploma**, providing that **threshold** requirements are met. A programme may be bigger than a diploma and additional achievement beyond the required threshold should be recorded on a **transcript**.

Specification	Approved document detailing the content of the subject or **area of learning** that must be learned, understood and demonstrated in order to achieve a qualification.
Summative assessment/ judgement	Assessment used to measure performance, usually at the end of a **unit**, **component** or **programme**.
Teacher	Usually used generically to denote those who deliver **programmes** to learners – includes lecturers and trainers, as well as those delivering in a school setting.
Teacher(-led) assessment	See **in-course assessment**.
Threshold	The minimum **level** and **volume** of achievement in **core** and **main learning** required for the award of a diploma.
Transcript	Document providing details of the **components** that constitute a learner's **programme** and achievement in them. This includes non-assessed activities like **CKSA** and **wider activities**, and achievement beyond the **threshold** required for award of a **diploma**.
Transition component	**Component** which enables young people who have already passed **functional literacy and communication**, **functional mathematics** or **functional ICT** to upgrade their achievement to provide the equivalent of an **extended component**.
Unit	Block of teaching and learning within a **component**. Units may be separately assessed, but do not on their own provide **credit** towards a **diploma**.
Unitary Awarding Bodies	Organisations that develop, assess and certificate achievement in **GCSE**, **GCE** and **VCE**.
VCE	Vocational Certificate of Education or vocational A levels. In September 2005, the qualification will be relaunched and will have the same AS and A2 structure as GCE A levels.
Vocational	Learning which develops the knowledge skills and attributes directly relevant to the workplace in general or a job in particular. It is usually practical or applied, rather than abstract or theoretical.
Volume	Amount of learning, often represented as **credits**.
Wider activities	Activities which take place outside the formal classroom or other learning environment, including community work, sports and arts, part-time work or work experience, and personal awards, such as Duke of Edinburgh.
Work-based learning	Learning which takes place predominantly on-the-job, rather than in structured learning settings.
Young people	14-19 year olds.

Level equivalences

Diploma level	National Qualifications Framework level	Existing national qualifications
Advanced	Level 3	Advanced Extension Award; GCE AS and A level; level 3 NVQ; equivalent qualifications
Intermediate	Level 2	GCSE at grades A*-C; intermediate GNVQ; level 2 NVQ; equivalent qualifications
Foundation	Level 1	GCSE at grades D-G; foundation GNVQ; level 1 NVQ; equivalent qualifications
Entry	Entry	Entry Level Certificates; other work below level 1

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Annex B
Consultation

1. The results of the consultation process provided valuable feedback on the proposals outlined in the Interim Report and helped considerably in shaping and developing the recommendations and policy in the Final Report. We are extremely grateful to all of those who responded.

2. A variety of consultation methods was used to give as many stakeholders and interested parties as possible the opportunity to comment on the proposals. Consultation activities included:

Formal written consultation

3. There were 338 responses to the written consultation. The responses covered various sectors which included multi-national corporations, trade unions, teaching associations, LEAs, work-based training providers, universities, schools and FE colleges, Sector Skills Councils, charitable organisations, professional and awarding bodies, parents and young people.

4. Respondents to the written consultation were asked to comment particularly on issues outlined in chapter 9 of the Interim Report which included:

• the content of the core;

• parameters and guidelines for the content and organisation of diploma programmes;

• component design parameters;

• the volume of teaching, learning and assessment;

• development of the entry level diploma; design specification for foundation, intermediate and advanced diplomas;

• variable pace and progression through the diploma framework;

• assessment;

• transcripts; and

• implementation and implications for the wider education and training system.

5. Mike Tomlinson and Ian Ferguson wrote to the FTSE 100 Chief Executives to seek a business perspective.

Stakeholder conferences

6. Working Group and sub-group members headed a number of consultation events which were aimed at key stakeholders from higher education, business and the special educational needs sector. These were held to gauge whether the proposals met the needs of their particular sector and to secure constructive feedback on a range of issues which include:

• personalised learning;

• grading of the diploma;

• greater integration of vocational qualifications, especially apprenticeships into the new system;

• careers and education guidance;

• open and specialised diplomas;

• collaboration between schools and FE colleges; and

• training needs for practitioners.

7. In recognition of the fact that teachers and lecturers would be the main deliverers of the new system and young people the beneficiaries, six regional events were held primarily aimed at seeking their views and those of the Connexions service.

Meetings and discussions with key partner organisations

8. We established an Associate Network of stakeholders to discuss and evaluate the priorities and key proposals as they emerged. Meetings were also held with a wide range of stakeholder organisations.

Focus group-based discussions with young people

9. The Young People's sub-group arranged (through the National Youth Agency) a number of focus groups to seek the views of young people on the Interim Report and to address any issues or concerns raised by them. We appreciate the value and importance of engaging young people in the consultation process and the results from the focus groups and regional events influenced the Final Report.

10. Comments that young people made included the desire to have more practical everyday life skills taught, which included communication and ICT (both core components). There was support for the extended project and demands for better careers and education guidance (CEG). Young people appreciated the opportunity to study a range of subjects within main learning, citing this as one of the best elements of the current system. There was strong support from young people for giving recognition within the diploma framework to their wider activities.

Active stakeholder involvement in the Group's work through a range of policy sub-groups

11. The Working Group created a number of sub-groups to ensure stakeholders had a direct influence on the Final Report. These included: employers; higher education; young people; special educational needs and equal opportunities. In recognition of the implementation difficulties surrounding wider activities and apprenticeships within the new system, sub-groups were established in these two areas.

Overview of responses

12. The majority of respondents broadly welcomed the proposals in the Interim Report to reform the current 14-19 education system and implement a more unified and coherent programme of learning. Respondents recognised the need for change and were generally supportive of the proposed diploma framework.

13. The four levels of the diploma and the interlocking design of the diploma were welcomed as they would encourage learners to progress, stretch the most able and reward achievement. There was also strong support for the credit-based system which would provide greater flexibility than the current system. The drive to raise the profile and status of vocational subjects was especially welcomed along with the expectation that apprenticeships would be integrated with the new system.

14. There was significant concern regarding the proposal to have 'open' and 'specialised' diplomas with many respondents believing that this would reinforce the academic and vocational divide. These concerns are addressed in chapter 2 of the report.

15. The inclusion of mathematical skills, communication skills and ICT as a choice of subjects within the core was well received, with respondents noting that the level of demand would increase as learners would have to achieve a minimum level in these components if the diploma was to be awarded. There was strong support for the extended project as it would develop skills that higher education in particular sought and avoid the repetition of coursework. Respondents noted that this element of the core would have to be effectively moderated to ensure that the wide variety of projects undertaken were comparable and it did not become too resource-intensive for teachers to manage, supervise and assess.

16. Delegates who attended the regional consultation events approved of the inclusion of wider activities within the core, acknowledging that it would motivate and engage learners in education whose strengths did not lie in academic subjects. However, concerns were raised, particularly in stakeholder meetings and in written consultation responses, that it would be inequitable to make wider activities compulsory as certain learners for socio-economic reasons would not be able to participate in a wider activity. This issue of equity was consistently raised by representatives in the special educational needs sector. These concerns are reflected in our proposals that wider activities should be an entitlement but not a requirement for award of the diploma.

17. A recurring issue that was raised by respondents was the need for personal review, planning and guidance so young people clearly understood the new system and the various pathways available to them, and could make well-informed choices about their future. Respondents cited that improving CEG so it was impartial was essential to making a reality of the learner being at the centre of the new system. Respondents voiced reservations on the possible lack of impartiality of teachers who could offer advice and present options that best met the needs of the institution, arguing that the Connexions service would be best placed to provide this service.

18. The majority of respondents were supportive of the proposals to reduce the burden of assessment as it would free up time for learners to study subjects in greater depth. The greater use of in-course assessment was welcomed though concerns were raised that it needed to be carefully managed so it did not have an adverse impact on teaching time. There was support for the development and implementation of e-assessment though there was recognition that this would be more applicable to some subjects than others. Ensuring all learners had access and understood the new technology would be paramount to avoid certain learners being disadvantaged.

19. The transcript was well received as a universally recognised record of achievement which would be beneficial to employers and higher education, though some respondents noted that it should not become too burdensome on teachers. From the written consultation, views were mixed on whether individual components or the overall diploma should be graded. At the consultation events, the general consensus was for the diploma to be graded overall with a differentiation of pass, merit and distinction to give the diploma added value as a stand-alone qualification over and above the component parts.

20. Practitioners were encouraged that the proposals sought greater collaboration between institutions, but raised a number of practical issues that would need to be addressed. Increasing collaboration between schools and colleges was viewed as incompatible with the retention of performance tables. In addition, concern was raised over the feasibility of retaining the current funding arrangements where allocations are made on a per learner basis to one institution. The perception that learners are 'owned' by an individual institution would need to be broken down and the differences in teachers' and lecturers' pay would also have to be resolved. There would also need to be a certain degree of co-ordination between school/college timetables and syllabuses which would require a significant degree of forward planning.

21. Employers were often extremely supportive of the diploma framework as a whole, believing that a whole-scale reform of the current 14-19 education system is necessary, with the proposed new system increasing the employability of a future workforce. There was support for the core, though the curriculum content of these components would need to be defined more clearly if widespread acceptance by employers was to be achieved. Employers were keen to promote better work-based learning within main learning which would help to raise the status of vocational courses. There was also widespread support for the integration of apprenticeships into the diploma framework over time. There was some concern to ensure that the wider reform of the qualifications framework did not detract from a focus on getting the basics of numeracy and literacy right.

22. Representatives from the higher education sector focused their comments mainly on the design and content of the advanced diploma and were broadly supportive of a single coherent phase of learning for 14-19 year olds. A significant majority emphasised the importance of getting the balance right between the core and main learning to ensure that learners would have sufficient depth of knowledge in their main learning components and as a result be better prepared for entry to HE. The interlocking diploma design and the transcript were well received. Respondents suggested that the transcript should contain full details of a learner's programmes and achievements, and more specifically the individual component scores in percentile format, which would assist HEIs in differentiating between learners. There was strong support for the extended project as it would avoid the repetition of coursework and develop skills that the current system has failed to do. Representatives from HE wanted reassurance that the most able learners who wished to progress into HE would be sufficiently stretched so their full potential was met. It was noted that if this was not the case then schools or FE colleges would examine the use of alternative qualifications which could potentially damage the esteem of the diploma framework. Complementary learning was welcomed to support breadth of learning so learners would acquire a continuum of knowledge and skills related to chosen subjects within main learning.

Annex C
Core components

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Functional mathematics

Content	Delivery	Assessment and recording of achievement
To be determined by QCA, actively seeking advice and views from experts and end-users.	Determined by the institution based on the options and opportunities provided by the way the curriculum is designed. We expect that curriculum designers would ensure flexibility for institutions by developing units for functional mathematics that can be delivered separately or embedded in main learning mathematics.	External. Could take the form of separate when-ready assessment, though different arrangements may be more appropriate where the core is embedded in main learning.
Must:		Pass demands in functional mathematics should be high, requiring each young person to have a good command of the range of knowledge and skills covered.
• meet the needs of end-users – particularly through the development of mathematical skills and the use of ICT;		
• prepare young people for adult life – this should include financial literacy alongside the application of mathematics in a variety of other real world contexts;		
• encourage the wider study of mathematics as a subject in main learning – by providing foundations in a range of mathematical concepts and techniques; and		
• encourage progression to level 3.		
This means developing a range of pathways, as set out in Adrian Smith's report, which offer learners a choice of:		
• a free-standing core for those not studying a wider general maths programme;		
• whole maths components, as proposed by Smith – which *must* guarantee reliable teaching and assessment of the core, to ensure a sound grasp of the core and avoid the need for separate delivery/assessment;		
• core-to-general maths transition components; and		
• specialised maths extensions.		

Functional literacy and communication

Content	Delivery	Assessment and recording of achievement
To be determined by QCA, actively seeking advice and views from experts and end-users. Must: • meet the needs of end users particularly, in terms of written and oral communication; • prepare young people for adult life – including critical reading of print and digital texts and critical analysis of oral communication; and • encourage appreciation of language in use, so that learners can be effective communicators in a range of contexts. The core should include: • speaking and listening, reading and writing; • focus on the skills needed to function effectively in society and employment; • understanding of how language varies according to purpose, context and medium; and • literacy skills, including reading for meaning and effect, accuracy in writing, fluency and cogency in speaking, and perceptive listening.	Determined by the institution.	Balance between in-course (speaking and listening) and external (reading and writing). Could take the form of when-ready assessment. Different arrangements may be necessary where embedded. Pass set at a high threshold, requiring good command of a range of knowledge and skills.

Functional ICT

Content	Delivery	Assessment and recording of achievement
To be determined by QCA, actively seeking the advice of experts and end-users. The ICT core must: • meet the needs of end-users; • support effective personal use of ICT to support further learning, employability and life skills, including e-learning and managing transactions; • ensure personal security and safe use of technology; • consider the ethical, social and economic impact of ICT on society; and • encourage further optional study of specialist ICT in main learning needed by ICT sector. The ICT core should ensure that all learners: **• Find information** Are able to identify information needs, locate and access appropriate resources – info-seeking strategies. Understand classification structures and use search techniques efficiently. Make judgements about appropriateness and efficacy of information, understanding validation and verification techniques. Understand issues of copyright, plagiarism and the implications of how data is collected and used in society. **• Use information** Develop ideas by reorganising, editing and combining information. Analyse, interpret and derive new information. Use/create ICT models to explore alternatives. **• Communicate information** Communicate effectively using ICT with an awareness of audience and common forms and conventions, including print and screen-based communications and presenting to a range of audiences. Note: *QCA and expert groups should also consider whether young people will have developed sufficient knowledge and skill in ICT by the end of KS3. If this is generally the case, then ICT as a core component at 14-19 may only be provided to bring learners who have not reached it to intermediate level.*	Determined by the institution.	Externally assessed. Opportunity to be taken when ready. Alternative arrangements where embedded in main learning. The pass set at a high threshold requiring coverage of key areas. Self-assessment might be feasible long term.

Extended project

Content	Delivery	Assessment and recording of achievement
Chosen by the learner, supported by a tutor. The tutor would require an awareness of: • institutional and other constraints – this would enable them to come to a view about whether or not the learner's proposal is feasible; and • whether a particular proposal is relevant and would add value to the learners' programme, by adding an appropriate contrast or complement to their main learning. Guidance should be issued to help learners and tutors.	Determined by institutions, but we expect that: • in many cases, completion of the extended project would be supported by an appropriate underpinning course, in theories of knowledge, for example. Achievement in such a course would provide credit towards award of the diploma; • institutions would provide group and individual tutorial support for learners, which would enable them to plan and complete the work effectively. The cross-programme nature of the extended project would require institutions to think carefully and innovatively about how individual extended projects are supervised. Some examples of how institutions are currently managing extended project-type activities are included in annex M.	Assessment of the extended project should support its role in helping learners to develop and demonstrate a range of investigative and critical/analytical skills. Project supervisors would conduct assessments, which would then be validated externally.

CKSA

Content	Delivery	Assessment and recording of achievement
QCA would develop guidance and exemplars to assist designers in building CKSA (described in chapter 3) into their curricula and assessment. This should be based on the best features of existing qualifications like the wider Key Skills, citizenship and critical thinking.	CKSA would be embedded in core and main learning. QCA should develop guidance and exemplars to help institutions and teachers develop common knowledge, skills and attributes across learners' programmes. Personal review, planning and guidance would provide the opportunity for learners to reflect on their learning and the common skills they have developed, including through wider activities and the extended project.	CKSA would not be assessed, but they would be built into teaching of 14-19 programmes in such a way that learners cannot achieve their diploma without developing them. CKSA would be attested and recorded on the transcript. This could take the form of a short statement by the tutor highlighting the key common knowledge, skills and attributes developed by the learner across the diploma programme.

Personal review, planning and guidance

Content	Delivery	Assessment and recording of achievement
There would be no specified content as personal review, planning and guidance is about offering personalised support to learners. However, guidance could usefully be drawn up to elaborate the role of personal review, planning and guidance and should offer case studies and exemplifications demonstrating good practice.	There would be a variety of delivery models at institutional level. This should be supported by central provision of: • workforce development to ensure that tutors (whether personal advisors, teachers/lecturers or support staff) are properly equipped to undertake the role; • guidance on the outcomes and successful delivery of personal review, planning and guidance, including case studies and exemplifications; and • impartial information about 14-19 pathways and destinations – including labour market information. The infrastructure needed to support effective guidance is further considered in chapter 15.	A box on the transcript would confirm learners' participation in personal review, planning and guidance. Institutions could define criteria for the successful completion of this component appropriate to their delivery model – participation in a certain number of tutorials, for example – to be reviewed as part of the inspection/validation process. All young people should maintain an individual learning plan, to be presented alongside the transcript on request.

Annex D
Programme and diploma design parameters

Components

1. Programmes and diplomas would consist of components, which:

- must have integrity in themselves – to allow flexibility, we have not specified a minimum size for components, but their volume and content must be sufficient to provide learners with a grounding in the subject or area learning, as existing qualifications do;

- must be transferable where they are relevant to different programmes – the ascription of credit to components will facilitate transferability; and

- could be broken down into units, which may be treated as distinct for teaching and learning, but not necessarily assessment purposes. Units would not, however, contribute to the award of a diploma in their own right.

Design principles

2. There are a number of principles that apply to the design of all 14-19 programmes and diplomas. These should ensure that:

- content is appropriate to the level of the diploma, sufficient to meet threshold requirements and provides learners with a good grounding in each component and the programme as a whole;

- the content of main learning is manageable in volume for the learner and the institution when it is placed alongside the core requirements;

- where practicable, gradient is built into programmes and components so that learners can access and experience success in less demanding material, before progressing to more demanding material. However, this may not be appropriate for all components;

- core requirements are fulfilled, and in particular:

  – learners are able to undertake an extended project chosen to reflect their interests and aspirations. It is likely that the extended project would relate to their main learning, especially where the learner is working towards a specialised diploma, but this would not be a requirement;

  – common knowledge, skills and attributes are integrated effectively and appropriately into the programme and assessment arrangements; and

  – all learners have access to high quality advice and guidance.

Design principles for specialised diplomas

3. The design processes for specialised diplomas should be driven by the clear objective of ensuring that every diploma is fit for purpose as a basis for progression into the relevant academic or vocational sector. Stakeholders must, therefore, be involved in the design process. The range of stakeholders involved in each of the broad diploma lines might vary according to the nature of the specialisation. Generally, we would expect the design of specialised diploma content to take particular account of the views of:

- employers, including relevant Sector Skills Councils, who should have a prominent voice in relation to sector-specialist diploma lines;

- HE providers;

- professional and statutory bodies; and

- schools, colleges, training providers and employers who will be delivering the diplomas.

4. Design principles for specialised diplomas should ensure that, in addition to the general requirements outlined above:

- specialist content within individual diplomas is appropriate to the area of specialisation;

- content provides clear signalling to end-users and sign-posting for learners about the knowledge, skills and experiences covered;

- where different lines share *specialised* content, components covering this content should have a common design wherever possible and should be portable between diplomas to support flexible progression routes;

- assessment styles are appropriate to the type of learning undertaken;

- whatever option is chosen, progression is available to advanced level within the diploma framework, and then into HE programmes related to the specialist area; and

- different types of learning are delivered and assessed in the most appropriate settings. For instance, theoretical knowledge and skills would normally be delivered in educational environments, while many experimental and vocational skills need to be developed and tested in a practical environment.

5. In addition, specialised diplomas in vocational areas should:

- offer clearly defined routes into related work-based training and employment, as well as HE;

- be informed by relevant National Occupational Standards;

- include a substantial period of properly structured and accredited work placement, and progression routes to relevant modern apprenticeship frameworks should be clearly established to enable a path to full occupational competence for young people entering the labour market; and

- through carefully managed local flexibility, provide opportunities for tailoring diplomas to local labour markets or other factors.
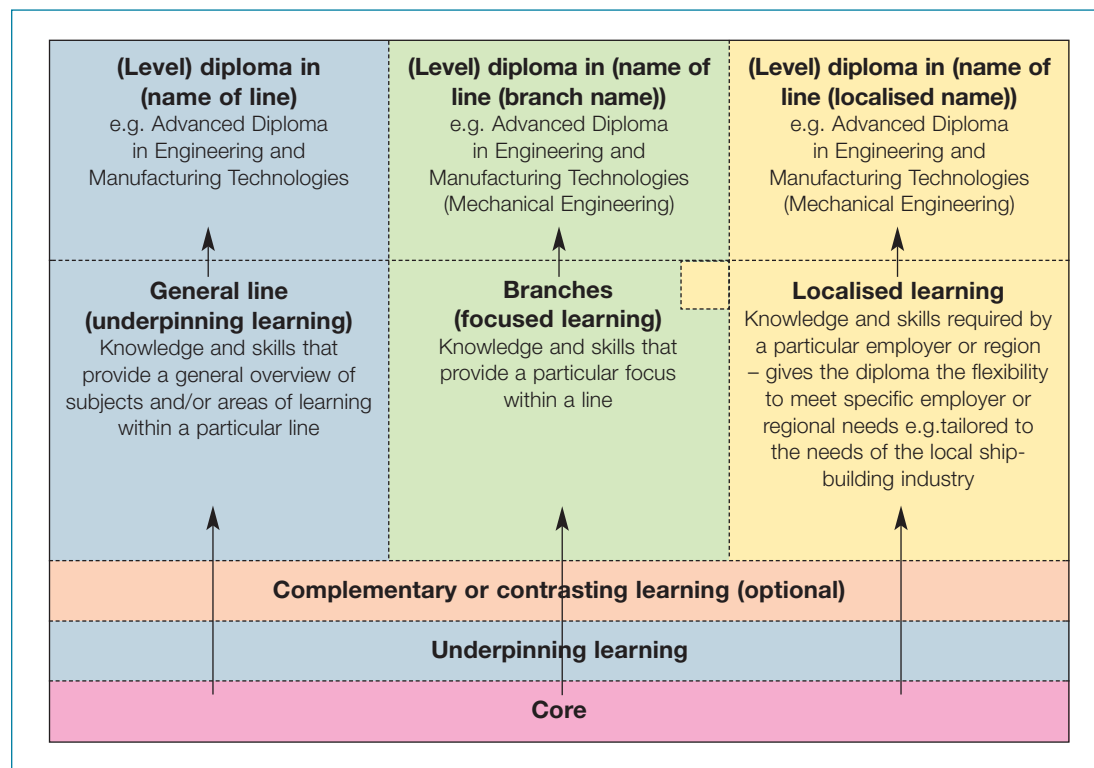
Main learning within specialised diplomas

6. 14-19 programmes would include components (or units within them) of three types and would be consistent with the models being developed for the adult credit framework. The three component types being proposed are underpinning learning; focused learning and localised learning:

- **Underpinning learning** is the knowledge and skills that provide a general overview of subjects and/or areas of learning within a particular line. It should have integrity in its own right (i.e. stand alone without the need for additional focused or localised options) and, therefore, may provide opportunities for transfer between different diploma lines. Underpinning learning is likely to form all or a substantial part of most 14-19 programmes, to provide a foundation for greater specialisation subsequently;

- **Focused learning** is the knowledge and skills that provide a particular focus within a line; and

- **Localised learning** is the knowledge and skills required by a particular employer, university or region, and is what gives the diploma the flexibility to meet not only these particular needs but the capacity to respond to new developments at a sub-national level.

7. Some units or components of each type of learning may be compulsory, but it is expected that additional units and components would be selected by learners from a menu of options. Learners should also be able to select **complementary or contrasting learning** options. Those responsible for designing each line should determine whether such learning can be accommodated within the diploma threshold or is additional to it.

8. The diagram shows the three types of learning and how they might be combined with the core and complementary or contrasting learning in diplomas of varying degrees of specialisation. The core and underpinning learning shared between these three diploma programmes and the portability of other relevant components in them will enable learners to move between diploma programmes if necessary, transferring relevant credit as they do so.

(Level) diploma in (name of line) e.g. Advanced Diploma in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies	(Level) diploma in (name of line (branch name)) e.g. Advanced Diploma in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (Mechanical Engineering)	(Level) diploma in (name of line (localised name)) e.g. Advanced Diploma in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (Mechanical Engineering)
General line (underpinning learning) Knowledge and skills that provide a general overview of subjects and/or areas of learning within a particular line	**Branches (focused learning)** Knowledge and skills that provide a particular focus within a line	**Localised learning** Knowledge and skills required by a particular employer or region – gives the diploma the flexibility to meet specific employer or regional needs e.g.tailored to the needs of the local ship-building industry
Complementary or contrasting learning (optional)		
Underpinning learning		
Core		

Exemplars: open and specialised diplomas

9. The following models have been developed to exemplify the design principles set out in this annex. The exemplars are based on existing qualifications and units, which could form the basis of components within the new system, providing they complied with the principles here and the quality assurance arrangements outlined in chapter 14.
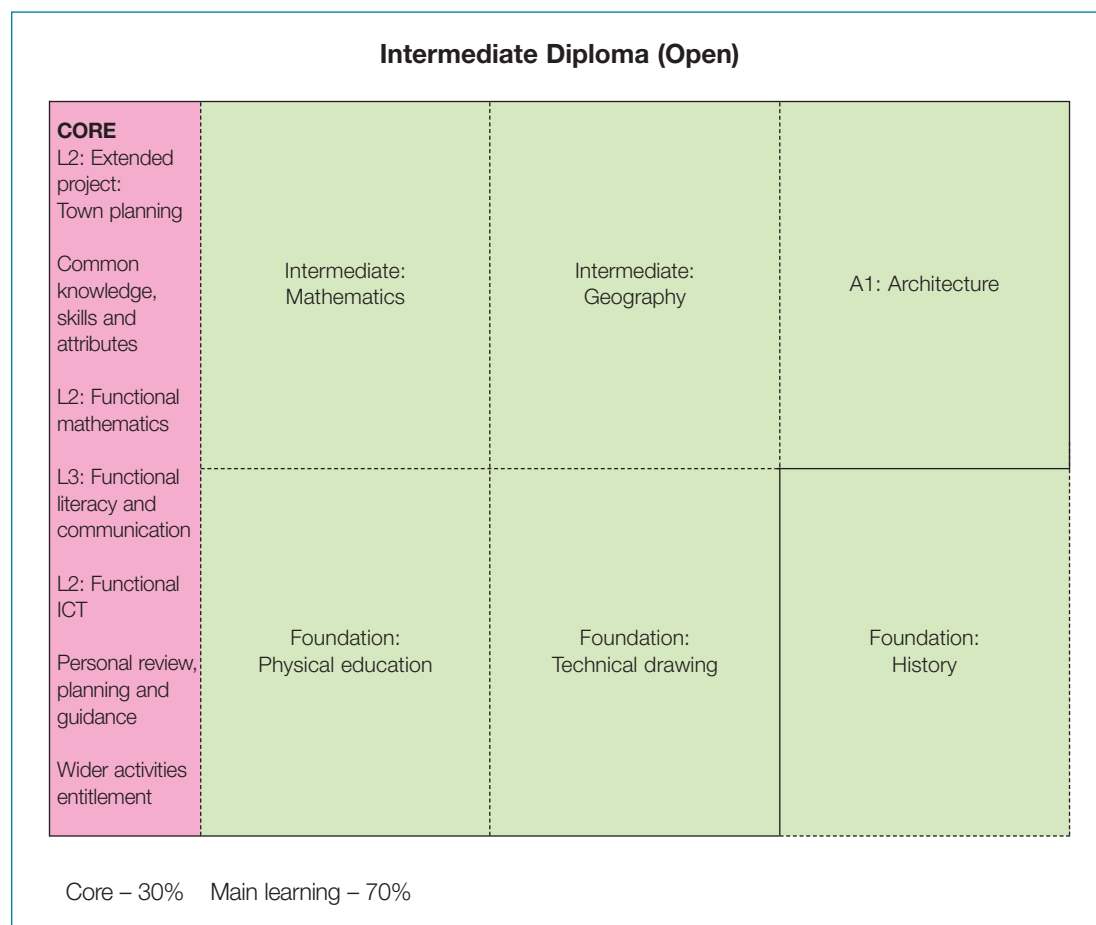
Open diplomas

Advanced Diploma (open)

CORE L3: Extended project: Production of a special edition of local paper Common knowledge, skills and attributes L2: Functional mathematics L3: Functional literacy and communication L2: Functional ICT Personal review, planning and guidance Wider activities entitlement		A2: French	A2: Applied business	BTEC National Diploma Unit: Page Layout and Design
				BTEC National Diploma Unit: Publishing media products
				BTEC National Diploma Unit: producing print media
	A1: Latin	A1: French	A1: Applied business	A1: Media studies

Core – 30%   Main learning – 70%

10. The learner in this model meets the threshold for main learning by mixing A1 components in Latin, French, media studies and applied business with A2 components in French and applied business. In addition, s/he takes three units derived from the BTEC National Diploma in Media (Publishing), which are approved for combining into an open diploma. This additional learning could contribute to the award of a merit or distinction for the diploma.

11. Delivery of the programme is shared between a school sixth form and a college. Work experience supports the business and media elements.
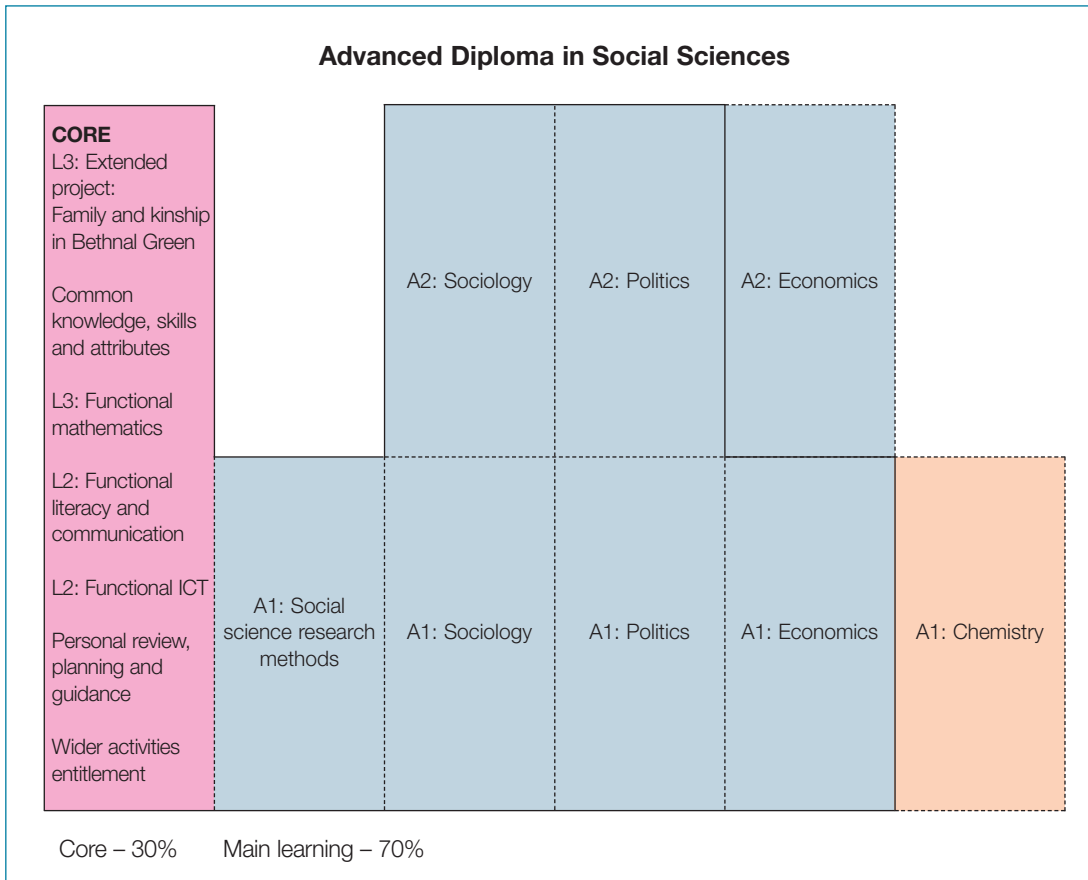
12. The extended project builds on the media component and units and associated work experience in main learning. The output is a special edition of the local newspaper. Beyond the core threshold, the learner also achieves advanced level in functional literacy and communication, which could contribute to the award of a merit or distinction for the diploma.

Intermediate Diploma (Open)		
CORE L2: Extended project: Town planning Common knowledge, skills and attributes L2: Functional mathematics L3: Functional literacy and communication L2: Functional ICT Personal review, planning and guidance Wider activities entitlement	Intermediate: Mathematics	Intermediate: Geography	A1: Architecture
	Foundation: Physical education	Foundation: Technical drawing	Foundation: History

Core – 30%   Main learning – 70%

13. This open programme has been selected by a learner with a particular interest in architecture and town planning. S/he exceeds the threshold in both volume and level terms, taking an additional (foundation) component in history and drawing down an A1 component in architecture. This could contribute to the award of a merit or distinction for the diploma.

14. The core is at the threshold level. The extended project builds on the learner's interest in town planning and in completing it the learner undertakes a work placement with the local council.

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Specialised diplomas and options

Advanced Diploma in Social Sciences

CORE
L3: Extended project: Family and kinship in Bethnal Green

Common knowledge, skills and attributes

L3: Functional mathematics

L2: Functional literacy and communication

L2: Functional ICT

Personal review, planning and guidance

Wider activities entitlement

A2: Sociology | A2: Politics | A2: Economics

A1: Social science research methods | A1: Sociology | A1: Politics | A1: Economics | A1: Chemistry

Core – 30%   Main learning – 70%

15. The learner in this model meets the threshold for an advanced diploma by completing A1 components in social science research methods, sociology, politics and economics, and A2 components in sociology and politics. In addition, s/he completes an A2 component in economics and a contrasting A1 component in chemistry. This could contribute to the award of a merit or distinction for the diploma.

16. The extended project relates to the learner's sociology components and builds on the skills developed in the social science research methods component. The learner exceeds the core requirements by attaining advanced level in functional mathematics, which might contribute to the award of a merit or distinction.

17. The whole programme could be delivered within a school or college.

Advanced Diploma in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies (Mechanical Engineering)

CORE			
CORE L3: Extended project: Production of a paint tin Common knowledge, skills and attributes L3: Functional mathematics L2: Functional literacy and communication L3: Functional ICT Personal review, planning and guidance Wider activities entitlement	Marketing systems and technology	Finishing Secondary Processes	Further mathematics
	Mathematics for technicians	CNC Machining	Mechanical principles
	Manufacturing	Plate and sheet-metal pattern development using CAD	Introduction to robot technology
	Science for technicians	Computer aided design	Programmable controllers
	Communication for technicians	Engineering design	Quality assurance and control
	Business systems for technicians	Engineering drawing	Health, safety and welfare

Core – 30%   Main learning – 70%

18.   This model is based on the existing BTEC National Diploma in Manufacturing Engineering (Mechanical), which comprises 18 units. In the diploma framework, these units could each become components if they adhered to component design principles, or they may be grouped together to form components. Their reformulation as components would also need to take account of:

• the level of demand of different components, and particularly the extent to which there is some overlap with the equivalent diploma at intermediate level, as well as a reasonable gradient within a two to three-year advanced programme;

• how the units/components should be sequenced within the programme, bearing in mind that underpinning components need not always precede more focused ones. Indeed, motivation might be enhanced through a focus on practical application *subsequently* being related to the theory; and

• integration into the programme of a period of work placement.

19.   Main learning in this model is more focused than in the social sciences example above and is reflected in the title of the diploma awarded. Main learning does not exceed the threshold, but the core is exceeded by attainment of advanced level in functional mathematics and ICT. The extended project builds on the knowledge and skills developed in main learning.

20.   The programme could be delivered in a college and workplace.

Foundation Diploma (Open)
(with specialist options in Food Preparation and Service)

CORE			
L1: Extended project: Investigation of local restaurants	Foundation: Working in food and drink preparation (occupational component)	Foundation: Introduction to food preparation	Intermediate: Introduction to menu planning
Common knowledge, skills and attributes			
L1: Functional mathematics			
L1: Functional literacy and communication	Foundation: Introduction to food service (occupational component)	Foundation: Introduction to drinks services	
L2: Functional ICT			
Personal review, planning and guidance			
Wider activities entitlement			

Core – 30%   Main learning – 70%

21. This programme provides a specially designed introduction within the open line to food preparation and service. The components themselves are all general, introductory components appropriate to the level of the diploma. They provide the foundation for a specialised diploma in food preparation and service at intermediate level.

22. Attainment in both main learning and the core meet, but do not exceed, the threshold for a foundation diploma. As in the other exemplars, the extended project builds on main learning. However, the learner might equally decide to do a project in an area that interests them that is not related to their main learning.

23. The programme could be delivered in a college and a workplace. Work placement or work-based learning would be integrated into the programme.

Annex E
A system of in-course assessment

This annex anticipates some of the questions that may arise from our proposals for assessing main learning components taken by 14-16 year olds that are of the GCSE-type. The system proposed is one of professional judgements by teaching staff, underpinned by externally set requirements and controls.

What would teachers do?

1. The regime would allow for teachers' formative judgements to be formalised into summative statements of achievement. As part of the normal process of teaching and learning teachers would make judgements of learners' attainment based on work done by the learners generally in the classroom and the workshop. These judgements would be shared with learners on an ongoing basis and with others, such as parents, at specific times. The process would be essentially one of continuously updating judgements on the levels of attainment reached by learners. There is nothing new about the process. It is at the heart of good teaching and learning and is therefore already followed in schools and colleges and forms the basis of assessment in many vocational courses.

What would be the experience of young people?

2. This process would form the basis of the judgements made about learners' attainment in main learning for the award of the diploma. Young people would be assessed on their performance in assignments, on projects, in tests and other subject-based activities that meet the requirement of the course. They would be able to improve on work submitted during the course and the teachers would make a final judgement about the young person's performance towards the end of the course, when all elements have been completed. It would encourage and motivate young people to high levels of achievement, asking them to work at a consistently high standard throughout their programmes. At the same time, the judgement about their ability would **not** rest largely on their performance in a limited assessment of their skills, knowledge and understanding, on a particular day. Young people who transfer from

one institution to another or who are excluded from school for whatever reason or who are learning on a part-time basis would have a record of their progress and achievement in the same way as other learners.

3.   Other arrangements would need to be made for young people educated outside of formal institutions, such as the home-educated. This might involve, for example, the use of external tests or independent assessors.

How will the system be quality assured?

4.   Teachers need to be able to exercise sound judgements, which would both enhance learning and be credible outside the institution. This should be achieved through the quality assurance process described in chapters 6 and 14.

5.   At the same time as wanting a robust quality assurance system, we must also ensure that moderation and validation processes minimise the demand on institutions. The detail of such processes would need to be worked through in detailed discussions with the QCA. But it might, for instance, take the form of **external tests**, of a variety of forms, to be taken in normal classroom time. The tests could be provided though electronic means. They could be scored by the awarding body or marked by teachers using mark schemes provided by the awarding bodies. They might be tests taken by every learner, providing them with both an opportunity to draw together the strands of their learning and a benchmark of their progress. The test results could be incorporated into the teacher's final overall judgement of each learner's attainment.[1] The tests might also enable teachers to have an ongoing awareness of their interpretation of and conformity to national standards. For example, teachers' judgements could be compared by the awarding body with the test outcomes and adjusted if they fell outside agreed tolerance limits. Support could then be targeted to institutions that need to improve assessment performance.

6.   Another approach might be **external moderation** of a sample of work (for example, in vocational components and subjects such as art and design) with adjustments where teacher judgements fell outside tolerance. As with the external tests some moderation might take place during the course for new or 'at risk' teachers.[2]

7.   The moderation system could be supported and augmented by **networks** of subject teachers where, for instance, standards-recognition forms part of ongoing professional development. Awarding bodies could contribute their expertise to such networks when required. Special educational needs regional partnerships could also play a role in this process, particularly for entry level diplomas.

8.   The awarding structure would need to make clear where responsibility lay for the standards of awards and for the award of grades to individual learners. Awards should not be made by teachers, but by external bodies accredited by the QCA to ensure consistency of awards. Appeals against component grades would therefore be made to the external body.

1 Tests could also be used on a sample of students as a means of monitoring the judgements made by teachers. Throughout the programme it would be possible for all students to have some exposure to external testing and therefore experience the benefits of this external benchmark.

2 The moderation system must be such as to make the minimum demands on school/college time while being sufficiently robust as to command public confidence. The external testing and moderation system would enable resources to be better directed at problem areas and therefore provide value for money.

9. Centres would need to be **approved**, and this is a particularly important feature for those offering entry and named vocational diplomas. They would need to demonstrate their capability in developing assessments that present the appropriate challenge, training assessors, making consistent judgements, and applying a robust internal quality assurance system effectively.

10. National standards would need to be monitored and maintained. We envisage a system that involves **national sampling**, where a regular cycle of collecting and comparing samples of learner work and judgements made by teachers operated.

A fit for purpose assessment regime

11. One of the main principles of the assessment regime for the diploma, is that it should be fit for purpose. The system of teacher judgement operating in a context of external controls would be **fit for purpose** on a number of counts, it would:

- provide for assessment at the point of learning in line with the diploma's emphasis on the importance of the learning process;

- enable young people to monitor their progress and strive for the highest levels of attainment, avoiding external and inhibiting labels of 'foundation level', for example;

- support teachers in their role as mentors and advisers, providing them with training in the interpretation of nationally determined assessment criteria and the recognition of standards through the use of externally produced exemplar materials and tests;

- provide a robust system of externally produced tests which would both be part of the professional judgement of attainment and a means of monitoring teachers' interpretation of standards;

- build on what is best in both current 'general' and 'vocational' programmes. A common approach across all programmes of study, with an increased emphasis on locating teachers and trainers within a community of experts in their subject or area, would do much to enhance the status of learning experiences in different contexts;

- make good use of the emerging e-technology which would be in full (and as yet unimagined) use by 2014;

- provide for a coherent system of inspection which would inform the external moderation process;

- simplify the system for learners, teachers and providers of assessment while providing robust information about attainment; and

- recognise the responsibility of awarding bodies for standards and the verification of grades, with appeals against grading continuing to be directed to the awarding bodies.

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12. It is important to remember that the new system of assessment would come into being some years hence in a context very different from the current assessment regimes. The following assumptions are made:

- **Assessment would be established as an essential tool for the teaching/learning process.** Assessment skills would be incorporated into initial teacher training and be a requirement of continuing professional development. An Institute of Assessment[3] would exist and all schools and colleges would have on their staff individuals with assessment expertise. These individuals would form part of the network within and outside schools and colleges, which would underpin the assessment system. They could also be the group from which external examiners and moderators would be drawn and appointed by awarding bodies. Their presence in a school or college would add to the confidence of awarding bodies in the judgements made in that institution, thus enabling resources to be targeted where external moderation was most needed.

- **The assessment system would be enhanced by the use of e-technology.** Externally produced tests would be readily available for use by teachers and trainers on an individual learner or group basis. They would be incorporated into the teaching/learning programmes and could be a requirement of the verification system.

- **A coherent inspection system would exist across schools and colleges** which would, as part of its remit, inspect the systems in schools/colleges for training and supporting teachers, data handling and storage and security. Information would need to be shared with awarding bodies in order that judgements could be made about the frequency of external monitoring and moderation as described above. The awarding bodies would remain responsible for the standards and reliability of judgements made by teachers.

- **A national database** would form the basis of the award of the diploma (whether by a single central body or by organisations contracted to provide the service). Each school/college would have access to the system to submit learner-achievement data (where appropriate),[4] check achievements to date (especially when an individual or group of learners change institution) and ensure consistency between the ongoing transcript of achievement and the data which contributes to the award of the diploma. Organisations approved to award the diploma would also have access in order to make the final award.

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3 As all teachers become versed in assessment the Institute might have a role to play in the ongoing professional development and revalidation of teachers' expertise.

4 The system might demand that all formalised assessments, which are moderated, are submitted to the database by awarding bodies rather than teachers. However, this could become bureaucratic and submission by teachers as and when students are ready for the award for the diploma might be more appropriate. If the latter, robust data management systems would be needed at each institution, the pros and cons of each approach would need to be thought through.

Annex F
A model for the entry diploma

Entry level as presently understood

1. Entry level qualifications are currently available at entry 1, entry 2 and entry 3. These levels correspond broadly to National Curriculum levels 1, 2 and 3 respectively. This means currently those learners who operate beneath this level are unrecognised in the National Qualifications Framework.

In 2000, QCA's statistics show that post-16 there are:

• 15,000 learners at entry level or below in post-16 units of special schools;

• 15,000 learners at entry level or below in specialist FE colleges; and

• 139,000 learners at entry level or below in general FE colleges.

2. The number of learners operating at entry level or below with work-based training providers is unknown, but some local figures exist which suggest the figure is relatively high. Taken together these figures suggest that between 4% and 6% of the 16-19 cohort operates below foundation level.

3. Precise figures are unavailable for pre-16 learners. However, 33,628 16 year olds – or 5.4% of the cohort – achieved no GCSEs or GNVQs in 2003. We can presume that a significant proportion of these were working at entry level or below.

An inclusive model for the entry diploma

4. The entry level diploma will be designed to encourage and recognise the achievement of all learners working below foundation level, regardless of their starting point.

5. Flexibility will be achieved through the setting of personalised learning goals, negotiated between the tutor/trainer and the learner and/or their advocate. There will normally be between four and eight goals. It is these goals which will give the diploma its unique personalised shape for each learner. The goals do not have to relate discretely to either core or main learning; each goal may well cover aspects of both. It is the completion of these goals that means the diploma has been achieved.

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6. The goals must:

• provide relevance and a suitable challenge to the learner;

• relate to the core and main learning; and

• be of sufficient quantity to allow the learner in meeting them to gain 180 credits.

Core learning will be the same as for diplomas at other levels, but will be personalised to meet the needs and goals of each learner. Core learning will contribute at least 80 credits to the diploma.

At Key Stage 4, for the 'initial' diploma, **main learning** will include the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum.[5] Further learning will be based around the individuals' needs, interests and aspirations.

7. Post-16, for the 'supplementary' diploma, main learning will be based on an entitlement for all candidates to have access to units in the following areas:

Preparing for employment

8. Units could include:

• work experience;

• health and safety;

• employability skills;

• vocational skills (as a context);

• employment law/rights and responsibilities; and

• interpersonal skills.

Preparing for independent adult living

9. Units could include:

• citizenship;

• household management;

• budgeting/financial management; and

• negotiation skills.

Developing study or learning skills

10. Units could include:

• sampling different areas of learning to plan route to foundation;

• study skills;

• transfer of knowledge;

• informed decision making;

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5 For some students, centres already have considerable power to modify the Key Stage 4 curriculum through both current flexibilities and through use of the statutory statement on inclusion in the National Curriculum handbook, *Inclusion: Providing effective learning opportunities for all pupils*.

- wider key skills;

- identifying learning styles; and

- self-confidence.

Preparing for supported living

Units could include:

- community awareness;

- leisure activities (identify and access);

- programmes linked to home;

- physical mobility including therapies;

- person-centred planning;

- taster placements in adult services;

- tasters in residential settings;

- personal care; and

- independent skills.

11. Main learning will contribute a maximum of 100 credits to the diploma.

12. It will be important to make the diploma manageable for centres developing individualised programmes for each entry level learner. We are therefore proposing that a number of 'off-the-shelf units' will be available from a central bank, held by one or more awarding bodies. Furthermore, as centres develop their own units, these will be added to the bank of centrally devised materials. Precedents for such a model exist, for example the Open College Network or AQA's Unit Award Scheme.

How will the foundation and entry level diplomas interlock?

13. Fifty per cent of the main learning for the diploma can be achieved at entry level.

14. Within the central unit bank, there will be units which are specifically devised to provide progression to main learning components of the foundation diploma. Credit obtained through the achievement of these units will count towards the achievement of the foundation diploma. The existing entry level certificates could be used as a starting point for developing such components. At least 20% of these must be drawn from the units in the study/learning skills area of entitlement.

Assessment

15. One hundred per cent of the assessment for the entry level diploma (i.e. for both the core and main learning) will be teacher assessment. Rigorous systems of internal and external moderation will ensure that the assessment is valid and reliable. Inter-centre moderation may also be adopted, along the lines of that currently operated by awarding bodies such as ASDAN.

Quality assurance

16. The majority of quality assurance for the entry level diploma will be front-loaded in that centres must meet strict criteria in order to be able to run the scheme. This approach is necessary because of the flexibility of goal-setting needed to meet the needs of such a wide cohort of learners. Models of 'up front' quality control already exist, for example in BTEC qualifications.

17. Criteria for approval will include:

- sufficient suitably-qualified staff;

- suitable equipment and teaching resources;

- ability to undertake inter-centre moderation;

- ability to devise tailormade units; and

- ability to work with other providers and agencies.

18. In addition, the awarding body or bodies will set up procedures for the sampling of units and the awarding of diplomas upon completion.

19. Such an approach will involve considerable staff development as many centres currently will not have appropriately experienced staff. Similarly many centres will be inadequately resourced in terms of equipment and facilities.

Annex G
The transcript

1. The transcript would record:

Learner information: name; date of birth; sex, and institutional reference number.

Qualification: name of qualification; level; date awarded; name of awarding institution; name of the institution responsible for delivering the programme; professional body accreditation; and statutory regulatory body recognition/approval.

Record of learning and achievement: name of programme; unit study code; unit study title; number (and level) of any credits awarded for each unit completed; date (year) in which credit awarded; mark or grade for each unit studied; and number of attempts to complete a unit (if more than one attempt has been made).

Other types of learning within the context of a programme: study abroad; work placement; work experience and wider activities.

Award: date of award; overall credits achieved; overall marks and grade; overall classification or performance indicator (e.g. distinction).

Authentication: date of issue; signature/seal/code; and telephone number for validating information.

Explanatory information: guidance on how to interpret the transcript; information on the grading scheme; overview of the National Qualification Awards Framework (to be agreed by national bodies); and overview of the UK HE system (to be agreed by national bodies).

Links: to a web-portal containing the learner's e-portfolio; and to the learner's institution's website. The opportunity to create further links to enhance the learner's transcript could be available.

Example transcript

An interactive version of the example below can be found at the Working Group
website www.14-19reform.gov.uk/transcript

Main Learning			
Subject/Sector	Mathematics		
Level	2	Grade	A
Credits	18	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	Physics		
Level	2	Grade	A
Credits	18	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	Chemistry		
Level	2	Grade	B
Credits	16	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	Biology		
Level	2	Grade	B
Credits	16	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	Computer Aided Design		
Level	2	Grade	C
Credits	14	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	French		
Level	2	Grade	C
Credits	14	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	Art		
Level	1	Grade	D
Credits	12	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	German		
Level	1	Grade	D
Credits	12	Awarded	30/06/2016
Subject/Sector	History		
Level	1	Grade	E
Credits	10	Awarded	30/06/2016
Total Credits at Level 2			94
Total Credits at Level 1			40

department for education and skills
Student Information Database

Joe Newman
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Part D: Learning and Achievement

Authentication Code	2016 1254 2282 5582
Period	From: 01/09/2014 To: 30/06/2017
Institution	Allgood School, Newtown Buckinghamshire
Award/ Programme	Advanced Programme Science and Mathematics

Core Learning

Subject/Sector	Computer Controlled Robot		
Level	3	Grade	Not Awarded
Credits	10	Awarded	N/A

Total Credits at Level 3	**10**

Main Learning

Subject/Sector	Computer Science		
Level	3	Grade	A
Credits	18	Awarded	30/06/2016

Subject/Sector	Chemistry		
Level	3	Grade	N/A
Credits	10	Awarded	N/A

Subject/Sector	Pure Mathematics		
Level	3	Grade	N/A
Credits	10	Awarded	N/A

Subject/Sector	French		
Level	2	Grade	C
Credits	14	Awarded	30/06/2016

Total Credits at Level 3	**38**
Total Credits at Level 2	**14**

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Annex H
Weaknesses in existing vocational pathways

1. Existing vocational provision has a number of weaknesses:

- **High drop-out rates** – Youth Cohort Study (YCS) data reveal that 14% of young people working towards a vocational qualification drop out by spring of the first post-compulsory year.[6] The real concern is the 9% of young people who are not in education, employment or training (the NEET group) and the 15% in employment without training.[7]

- **Lack of balance between vocational and general content** – compared to vocational qualifications in much of the rest of Europe, British vocational qualifications for 14-19 year olds tend either to be narrow and lack general educational content, or to offer only a diluted vocational experience. Some, but relatively few, of our qualifications have balanced these characteristics successfully.

- **Limited or unclear opportunities for progression** – many vocational qualifications have been developed to support progression within or towards employment and fail to provide a basis for progression into further learning or training. While this may be appropriate for adults, vocational programmes for young people should include sufficient transferable knowledge and skills to provide progression within education and/or training, as well as into employment sectors. However, care needs to be taken to avoid the opposite danger, where the content is so general and progression opportunities so diffuse, that how to progress is unclear to the learner.

- **Lack of employer involvement** – in the *Pathways to Parity* survey,[8] Ofsted found that in Denmark, the Netherlands and New South Wales, employers were much more directly involved in determining the content and assessment of vocational courses than in England. This helps to give the courses and associated qualifications currency and status. It also helps to ensure that vocational provision is more closely aligned to the needs of the economy than it is in England.

6 J. Payne, *Vocational Pathways at age 16-19*, DfES Research report RR501 (December 2003).

7 2001 figures based on an analysis of learning activity and the labour market of 16-18 year olds.

8 Ofsted, *Pathways to Parity: A survey of 14-19 vocational provision in Denmark, Netherlands and New South Wales* (January 2004).

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- **Inappropriate curriculum and assessment** – VCEs in particular have been criticised for their lack of vocational content and the limited use made of work experience.[9] Case study evidence gathered by QCA (between September 2000 and July 2001) revealed that VCEs were considered to be much more theoretical than advanced GNVQs, demanding a more academic style of teaching of subject content. This was exacerbated by burdensome and inappropriate assessment requirements.

- **Inadequate facilities** – particularly since the introduction of VCEs and GCSEs in vocational subjects, much vocational learning takes place in schools, which do not have the necessary accommodation and facilities to provide learners with an experience that mirrors the work environment.

- **Lack of teacher expertise** – lack of up-to-date and accurate knowledge among teaching staff is also a problem. Ofsted noted how in Denmark, the Netherlands and New South Wales, teachers of vocational courses are normally required to have industrial experience, which is regularly updated through placements. This helps to ensure that teaching is firmly embedded in current practice and that strong links are forged with employers, who sometimes undertake inward placements.

9 Ofsted, *Vocational A levels: the first two years* (March 2004).

Annex I
Integrating apprenticeships with the diploma framework

1. Apprenticeships represent a diverse and expanding feature of post-16 work-based provision. While most existing apprenticeship programmes would provide significant credit towards the minimum threshold requirements of a named intermediate or advanced diploma, some would meet those requirements in full and others would exceed them, providing additional credits at levels 3 and 4.

2. The following examples illustrate this diversity and the extent to which sector bodies believe their current frameworks align with the Working Group's recommendations. However, while there are published figures for the guided learning hours associated with Technical Certificates, where these are applicable, corresponding data for NVQs rely on sector bodies' own estimates or figures produced for SVQs.

Construction sector

3. Construction industry apprenticeships are designed to provide all the necessary skills, knowledge and initial experience required for a wide range of specific occupations. They are aimed at 16-19 year olds and will in future include those who have already successfully completed a Young Apprenticeship incorporating the GCSE in Construction and the Built Environment. Employers recruit the young people and then work in partnership with colleges and other training providers in delivering the training and assessment required.

4. At intermediate level, a high proportion of trainees will enter self-employment on completion of their apprenticeship and will continue without the need for further formal qualifications. A smaller percentage, around 25%, will be encouraged by their employer to progress to an Advanced Apprenticeship or to achieve NVQ level 3.

5. At present, apprentices must complete Key Skills in Communication and Application of Number at level 1. However, raising this to level 2 and adding IT and Working with Others in preparation for the new system will undoubtedly serve to benefit the sector and improve the future employability of the young people concerned. Apprentices currently complete a

Construction craft NVQ level 2 and an appropriate Technical Certificate, which together represent approximately 800 notional learning hours.

6. Advanced Apprenticeships are also aimed at 16-19 year olds and, on successful completion of their training, some will be encouraged by their employer to progress to an HNC, Foundation Degree or NVQ level 4, or into another level 3 technical or supervisory function. Advanced Apprentices currently complete a Construction craft NVQ level 3 together with a Technical Certificate, which together represent approximately 1,220 notional learning hours.

7. The Advanced level apprenticeships already include Key Skills in Communication and Application of Number at level 2. Adding IT will be of benefit to the sector and to the trainees and some employers may encourage progression to level 3. Although not mandatory, good practice already exists in the sector in the form of 'craft projects' that serve to integrate the Key Skill requirements within the vocational training. Designing and incorporating an extended project that builds on such good practice is not expected to present any major difficulties for either the intermediate or the advanced level apprenticeships.

8. Close employer involvement in planning the integration of Construction apprenticeships within the new 14-19 system will be essential, especially in important areas such as assessment, recording and grading.

Information Technology sector

9. A new IT Advanced Apprenticeship for IT Services and Development is already under development in consultation with employers, designed to reflect the increasing diversity of job roles within the sector. It must also ensure that apprentices with the necessary aptitude and motivation can progress to higher education, enabling them to achieve their full potential, and to meet the needs of IT. This is particularly important in a sector where a level 4 qualification is often an entry requirement.

10. The IT sector has traditionally placed great emphasis on product or platform-specific training and education, often referred to as 'Vendor Qualifications'.

11. Although these continue to be important, the value of more general employability skills and competencies has also been recognised. Awarding bodies are working in partnership with a number of vendors and have either linked Technical Certificate units to vendor units or have included vendor units within the Technical Certificate, therefore enabling them to be incorporated more easily within apprentice training programmes.

12. The design of the new flexible Advanced Apprenticeship is expected to align well with the proposed diploma model. Where necessary, functional mathematics and literacy and communication skills at intermediate level will be developed alongside the wider common skills, such as team working and problem solving, as an integral part of an apprentice's work-based learning. The other key component of the core, the extended project, is particularly well-suited to apprentice training and will be a welcome opportunity for IT trainees to undertake a demanding assignment of direct relevance to their employer for which they can receive full recognition towards their diploma.

13. The new IT framework recognises that a level 3 Advanced Apprentice will not necessarily operate at that level across all aspects of their work, but will often include some higher or lower-level activities. The ability to accommodate this within a future framework is seen as highly desirable.

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14. A number of Technical Certificates have been identified for use in this apprenticeship, ranging from 450 to 1,080 guided learning hours. At this stage, it is estimated that the total notional learning hours over a two to three–year programme, including the Technical Certificate, induction, NVQ and other components, is likely to be between 1,475 and around 2,400.

Land-based sector

15. The diverse nature of the land-based industries offers a wide variety of opportunities for work-based training. At intermediate level, the Apprenticeship in Animal Care is seen as a general entry route into the industry, leading to a variety of occupational routes from animal welfare charities, pet shops and grooming parlours to wildlife parks and zoos. Although designed to be suitable for 16-19 year olds with the necessary enthusiasm and commitment, there are no specific entry qualification requirements and many animal care organisations, particularly welfare charities, prefer to take on mature adults rather than school leavers. The apprenticeship is offered by numerous training providers, including colleges, with larger employers such as the RSPCA offering their own training programmes.

16. For those with the ability and motivation, there are opportunities for progression from level 2 to level 3, and on to management qualifications or higher education.

17. It is not currently included within the apprenticeship and employers report difficulties with the Key Skills tests, particularly Application of Number, as these are not work-related and many apprentices struggle to pass them. The Working Group's emphasis on developing these skills to the required level before entry to work-based training will be widely welcomed. Some providers already incorporate extended projects, usually linked to one or more units from the NVQ, which offer opportunities for developing and demonstrating Key Skills. However, external testing, unrelated to the work role, is currently regarded as a problem, with extra tuition being provided simply to train apprentices to pass the test.

18. Apprentices currently complete an NVQ level 2 in Animal Care, while at advanced level, the programme includes an NVQ level 3 in Animal Care plus a relevant level 3 Technical Certificate. The Advanced Apprenticeship is therefore likely to involve a total of at least 650 notional learning hours.

19. Other apprenticeships are designed to meet the needs of a specific occupation and, as in the case of farriery, provide the only route into that profession. Most of those who embark on the four year Advanced Apprenticeship in Farriery are aged 16-25 with at least four GCSEs at grades A*-C including English or Welsh, although occasionally older apprentices come through via the armed services. An affinity with horses is essential and apprentices are assigned from the start to 'approved training farriers', with the whole programme being controlled by the Farriery Training Service which monitors both the on-the-job training and the four colleges in the UK that provide courses for farriers on a block-release basis.

20. On completion, many will become self-employed and are encouraged to undertake further qualifications through the Worshipful Company of Farriers, progressing to become approved training farriers themselves.

21. Key Skills in Communication and Application of Number at level 2 are already a requirement within the framework with IT, as it relates to farriery, being taught as part of the college course alongside basic business skills.

22. Advanced Apprentices complete an NVQ level 3 in farriery plus the diploma of the Worshipful Company of Farriers, a total of at least 1,200 notional learning hours.

Sports sector

23. A new Advanced Apprenticeship was approved in March 2004, designed specially for young people with a realistic potential to achieve excellence in their sport and who are seeking to perform at the highest level as their main career goal.

24. The apprenticeship allows employers to manage the development of a young person's sporting abilities, while also meeting their broader educational needs. The programme includes level 3 NVQ in Achieving Excellence in Sport but caters for longer term development needs by providing opportunities for further learning or indeed career change. It provides, for the first time, a unique opportunity for young athletes to train over a two-year period on a structured programme that links the sporting workplace to the wider learning.

25. The design of the apprenticeship lends itself to the proposed diploma structure, requiring all six current Key Skills to be demonstrated, with some of the wider Key Skills, such as problem solving, being integrated within the overall programme. The Technical Certificate requirement includes a range of possible qualifications combining to a minimum of 780 guided learning hours, tailored to meet individual needs. The framework has been designed to support trainees' progression into full-time activity in their chosen sport, to related work roles in broader sporting environments, as well as to further and higher education, and indeed self-employment.

26. The total volume of the two-year programme is likely to be in excess of 1,600 notional learning hours.

Engineering sector

27. In engineering, although many of the larger companies have given colleges and other training providers the responsibility for managing their apprenticeship schemes, others continue to maintain in-house young people training departments, with their own professional staff and workshop facilities.

28. In one such company, the Advanced Apprenticeship is aimed mainly at 16-19 year olds and typically takes up to four years to complete. Some existing employees over 24 years of age also undertake a full National Framework programme to level 3.

29. Following induction, including Employment Rights and Responsibilities, trainees with GCSE grades A*–C will begin their Technical Certificate course, a BTEC National Certificate in Engineering, with opportunities for progression to the Foundation Degree in Manufacturing and Mechanical Engineering after two years. Those who enter the apprenticeship with appropriate A levels are enrolled immediately on the Foundation Degree, designed in collaboration with FE and HE partners and undertaken over three years by day release. Continued progression to an appropriate day-release Honours Degree is generally supported for those successfully completing the Foundation Degree.

30. Alongside their vocational education, trainees will also undertake a comprehensive programme of off-the-job training in machining, fitting, welding, fabrication, electrical and electronic skills, completing 10 to 14 units of the NVQ level 2 in Performing Engineering Operations. They will then move on to their NVQ level 3, with eight to 12 units carefully selected to match the particular skill requirements of the work for which they are being trained. The development of Key Skills level 2 in Communication, Application of Number and IT is supported during the off-the-job training, with trainees following technical programmes achieving Key Skills at level 3 during their work-based training attachments. Apprentices also complete the Key Skills units in Working with Others and Improving Own Learning and Performance. Project work already plays an important part, with project presentations and other activities contributing further to their Key Skills development.

31. In addition to the national requirements for engineering, modern work practices including team working, workplace efficiency (5S) and visual communication are introduced during off-the-job training and recorded against seven units from the level 2 NVQ in Business Improvements Techniques, for which all apprentices are registered.

32. The Advanced Apprenticeship also incorporates a structured programme of wider activities giving the trainee the opportunity to engage in Schools Liaison Activities, German Exchange programmes, Challenge Courses and Community Projects. The total notional learning hours for a typical programme following the BTEC National route, are estimated to be in excess of 3,900, not including the Foundation Degree.

Annex J
Interim changes to GCSE and GCE and VCE advanced level

1. Existing public qualifications need to be modified and adapted in order to fit into our diploma framework. We believe it is possible to preserve their strengths in terms of aspects of the content, but changes to standards and structure are necessary. The changes we set out below to GCE, VCE and GCSE must be embraced in the medium term, if they are to pave the way to quality provision within a diploma.

GCE

2. We propose a significant change to the GCE advanced level standard and some structural changes too. These will introduce greater stretch and challenge to the qualification overall and reduce the burden of assessment on learners.

3. Specifically, we propose that the range of achievement covered by the higher advanced level grades be extended by incorporating the level of demand associated with the AEA.

4. In addition, greater space for in-depth learning should be created within advanced programmes by:

- focusing assessment objectives clearly on the key aspects of the subject and ensuring they are less closely linked to each element of the specification to allow more in-depth learning and intellectual challenge;

- reducing the number of assessment units at AS/A2 from six to four; and

- shifting the balance of work assessed during the programme from externally set coursework tasks to the extended project and teacher-led assessment within individual components, especially at A1 level.

Reduction in the number of assessment units

5. The number of assessment units adds to the burden, (in all but a few GCE A levels and VCEs there are six units). However, the vast majority of learners welcome the unitised approach to these qualifications, and it accounts for some of the improvement in

performance. We believe that the burden on all parties can be lightened immediately by reducing the number of assessment units from six to four. This aligns with QCA proposals for developing the qualification.[10] It would not reduce the overall content of the A level, but would reduce the volume of assessment. This change could be made immediately and could be worked into the QCA programme of revision to the qualification planned for 2007.

Managing content

6. In some specification, the volume of learning at AS is considered to be high and therefore places pressure on teachers to teach to the test, in the early part of the course. In the medium term, the re-accreditation of qualifications should ensure that content at AS and A2 is manageable and lends itself to sufficient time for quality teaching and learning.

7. While the evidence base is limited, it is clear that the way in which assessment criteria are currently specified leads to little time for investigative or in-depth learning. Assessment objectives that allow for sampling of content, rather than coverage of every element of course content, will allow teachers and learners to cover some areas in greater depth. This will raise the intellectual challenge of programmes and improve skills.

Decoupling GCE AS and A2

8. Our terms of reference ask us to consider decoupling the AS and A2 qualifications, which was specifically recommended in the *Final Report of the Inquiry Into A level Standards* (November 2002).

9. The relationship between GCE AS and A2 is seen by some as responsible for creating a burden on learners. The aggregation of AS and A2 results to produce a single A level grade is a technical process that does not in itself add to the administration burden on awarding bodies or institutions. Nevertheless, decoupling of AS and A2, and reporting achievement in each separately, is a necessary step towards the diploma and free-standing A1 and A2 components. The timing for separating the assessment of AS and A2 is important to avoid the risk from making multiple simultaneous changes to the existing qualifications during the lead-in to the diploma framework. In our view, the revision of existing AS and A2 specifications to reduce the weight and prescription of assessment is the more urgent change.

10. Decoupling of AS and A2 is not straightforward. Each subject treats content differently over the two qualifications. In some specifications, the demand of the A2 part of the programme is focused on covering some of the same areas (knowledge and skills) but in greater depth, technical accuracy or wider application. In others, the specification demands additional areas of learning are covered. These differences in how the split between AS (to become A1 in the new diploma) and A2 is defined would need to be taken into account when decoupling the qualifications. We advise that A1 and A2 is decoupled, and that simultaneously the A2 is recalibrated to create new more demanding A2 components. This should form part of the redevelopment of components prior to their incorporation into the diploma.

10 Ken Boston, *Speech to Secondary Head Association and Association of Colleges Conference* (2 March 2004).

> ## Recommendation 36
>
> AS and A2 should be decoupled as A1 and A2 diploma components at the point of transition from free-standing A levels to the diploma system.

Enhancing differentiation

11. We envisage more demanding A2 components in the diploma that incorporate AEA type assessment, with performance reflected in the grading, to challenge the most able learners. This year, 22.4% of A level candidates achieved a grade A in a subject and higher education admission officers and employers say they are finding it increasingly difficult to distinguish between top-class candidates. The number of candidates taking the AEA (which is available in only 17 subjects), and which is an additional examination that provides stretch, totalled 7,246 this year. A more demanding A2, that incorporates the extended challenge of the AEA, but without an added exam, would provide access to top-class achievement to all A level candidates, but without the additional examinations burden. The grade scale should indicate this additional stretch.

12. Measures would need to be taken to ensure that changing the standard had no adverse impact on middle and lower grade bands.

13. The AS (A1) should retain its role in providing a stepping stone from intermediate to advanced attainment. The overall demand of the A1 should broadly remain at the current AS standard. There may be a need to review the demand in some specifications where problems have been identified.

> ## Timetable for GCE
>
> Revisions to A levels should be undertaken to provide a new A1 and A2. The A2 should be demanding, and include type of learning required by AEAs.
>
> By 2007:
>
> - reduce the number of assessment units in AS/A2 from six to normally four, reflecting some subject flexibility as is presently the case;
>
> - realign the content of AS and A2 in some subject specifications to address concerns about overcrowding content in the AS; and
>
> - move away from prescriptive coursework tasks to the extended project and teacher-led assessment.
>
> By 2014:
>
> - new components comprise reconfigured A levels (trialled in prior years). The new A1 and A2s operate as stand-alone components;
>
> - components include recalibrated A2s which are more demanding than the current A level by absorbing AEA type assessment of high order skills and deeper knowledge; and
>
> - extend the grading scale for A2 to reflect the change in standard and ensure that learners in the lower bands are not disenfranchised by the change to the standard.

14-19

VCE

14. The VCE changes we propose relate mainly to enhancing the vocational relevance of programmes and their assessment. The VCE will be relaunched next year as *new GCEs in vocational subjects*. Like current GCEs, it will have an AS and A2 structure.

Vocational relevance

15. The redevelopment programme took into account concerns about the vocational relevance of programmes and concerns about the appropriateness of the assessment. These concerns were further highlighted this year in the Ofsted report on the quality of teaching and learning on VCE programmes. It was critical of the construction of programmes and their lack of vocational relevance and said that assessment requirements exacerbated this problem. The fitness of centres to support vocational programmes needs to be reviewed to ensure that they have access to the expertise and quality control features to support such programmes.

Assessing vocational A levels

16. The possibility of in-course assessment taking a greater role at AS would consolidate the vocational nature of the programme. It is clear however, that as with GCEs, the qualification design requirements would also need to comprise the extended standard and grade scale proposed. The impact and appropriateness of this finer grading on advanced vocational programme should be evaluated. It should not be assumed that the number of assessment units required for assessing vocational A levels should be the same as for other A levels. This will need to be reviewed by QCA in its redevelopment programme. More vocationally relevant assessment should be a feature of the revised specifications, but we would welcome changes that required more assessment that took place in work-related settings.

Timetable for VCE

By 2010:

- The planned changes to VCE, which are to become new GCEs in the applied subjects need to be reviewed prior to further redevelopment. QCA should advise on how all GCE developments will align.

- Quality assurance arrangements must ensure that centres have access to the expertise and other resources and structures that effectively support the vocational relevance of the programme.

- The balance of in-course and external assessment of the qualification should be considered in their redevelopment.

- The impact of the change to the GCE standard at A2 on vocational programmes should be considered. The implications of finer grading for GCEs in vocational subjects should be considered further by QCA.

GCSE changes

17. The development of GCSE qualifications also covers changes to structure and assessment.

18. In particular, we propose the use of in-course assessment by teaching staff for GCSE. The basis for operating this type of assessment regime in the interim, outside a diploma framework will be worked through existing and planned pilots of the assessment. Coursework requirements should be reviewed to accommodate more flexible approaches akin to those anticipated for in-course assessment.

19. Plans to structure the qualification into units that have credit values attached, form part of QCA plans for redeveloping the qualifications. This will prepare the way for their inclusion within the diploma framework. However, we are concerned to ensure that in the medium term, the assessment of the qualification does not become burdensome as a result of unitisation.

20. The further development of the qualification should also report achievement at two levels, foundation and intermediate. It will be necessary to develop some specific provision at foundation level.

21. The construction of core mathematics, communication and ICT at foundation and intermediate levels as part of GCSE redevelopment will be critical to preparing for the diploma. Whether separately assessed or embedded, the learning will take place within the broader programme for the majority of learners. It will be critical to have enhanced GCSEs that pave the way to a successful core in these areas at the earliest stages.

22. All of these changes can be in place for first teaching in September 2008.

Timetable for GCSE

The redevelopment of the qualification for first teaching in 2008 should:

- report achievement at foundation and intermediate level;

- develop, through pilot programmes, approaches to in-course assessment and adopt in-course assessment in greater proportion;

- assign a credit value to the qualification, but ensure that their unitisation does not add excessively to the burden of assessment; and

- develop core learning and assessment opportunities for mathematics, communication, information and communication technology within the redevelopment of GCSE in maths, English and ICT.

By 2014:

- specific foundation level provision for the diploma should be developed where it is deemed necessary, including possibly more vocational options; and

- assessments of components should be within the in-course assessment framework, with external tests used as part of a range of information on which teachers make summative judgements.

Annex K
Collaboration in 14-19 pathfinders

1. Collaborative working was a particularly strong area of development in the Department's pathfinders. By September 2003, all pathfinders responding to the research survey had made at least 'as expected' progress on collaboration and 60% had made more progress than expected.

2. Twenty-five partnerships were awarded phase one pathfinder status in 2002/03. These were based all around the country in a range of different circumstances from inner city and urban to rural areas. The pathfinders varied in the size of geographical area covered and the number and types of institutions involved. These typically included 11-16 schools, 11-18 schools, further education colleges, sixth-form colleges and work-based training providers.

3. The development of a collaboration model is at an early stage, but key principles have been agreed:

- the development of provision should be informed by the identified needs and aspirations of the learner and the requirements of the local labour market;

- this needs to be driven by a robust process of monitoring, review and planning;

- district management needs to be underpinned by programmes of inter-agency professional development which support collaboration and break down institutional barriers;

- structures and processes need to ensure that the voice of young people, their parents/carers and 'face-to-face' workers can inform the planning and delivery of provision; and

- the districts will link strategically with the wider District Service Delivery Partnerships to ensure appropriate multi-agency working around the needs of the learner, engaging with Health, Social Services, Housing, Youth Offending Teams and others.

4. No national blueprint has been created for collaborative working in the development of 14-19 education and training. Pathfinders were expected to build on existing partnerships, effective collaborative working arrangements, and respond to local circumstances and needs.

Annex L
Implementation

1. This annex illustrates a broad approach to implementation. We have said that it would take at least 10 years to implement our reforms, with visible improvements leading to longer-term reform becoming evident in the first five years. The implementation sequence and timetable will depend crucially on choices made in the early stages of the implementation process. We have not sought to pre-empt these by devising detailed plans, but early development of a detailed implementation plan and timetable should be a top priority.

2. Implementation will involve taking forward multiple strands of work, and ensuring that they join up. We have identified some of the key strands under eight groupings:

- **Preliminary development work** – including agreeing the framework for specialised diploma lines, the identification of any primary legislation requirements, and implications for Northern Ireland and Wales. It may take up to two years for some elements of the programme of work to be fully scoped and agreement reached.

- **Curriculum and assessment development** – the first four years will need to focus on developing diploma design criteria, programmes and components. Thereafter, further refinement and new development work in assessment and quality assurance systems will need to continue until full roll out.

- **Data management and quality assurance** – data management needs can take a long time to establish and there are competing pressures in other policy areas for establishing information systems. The scope of the work needs to be determined early. In the short term, data needs could be met by stand-alone arrangements that build on existing systems.

- **Enhanced coherent programmes** – building on existing initiatives like the Increased Flexibility Programme and 14-19 pathfinders.

- **Whole diploma testing and evaluation** – arrangements will need to be put in place to protect the interests of learners involved in the pilot, and may include making components available as separate qualifications for the duration of the pilot.

- **Workforce development** and supporting arrangements will need to be attentive to the needs of all staff involved in delivering the reforms in institutions: tutors, support staff, training and community providers. Early work will need to scope the implications for inducting and training teaching and non-teaching

staff and other providers, and for continuing professional development.

- **Infrastructure** arrangements such as governance, funding, performance management and information, advice and guidance will need to be reviewed and may require legislative change to legislation. The extent to which existing arrangements can be adapted or need to be changed should be determined at an early stage.

Timetable

3.   The first five years will focus on the design of diploma framework, models, curriculum and assessment systems, and changes to infrastructure. This will prepare the ground for a pilot of the programmes, components and systems that together make up the diploma framework. After piloting and adjustments, the diploma will be introduced, possibly rolled out over a few years.

By 2008

4.   We anticipate there will be visible improvements to the existing system of qualifications and the diploma design and development process will be complete:

- All GCE and GCSEs will have been revised to:

  – introduce more in-course assessment in more GCSEs

  – reduce the number of assessment units in the majority of GCEs (and possibly VCEs) to four instead of six.

- Components in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication and ICT will be available as stand-alone qualifications.

- The framework and criteria for specialised diplomas will have been developed and, specialised diplomas will be under development leading to piloting. Existing vocational options will be significantly improved as a result of the ongoing re-accreditation process.

- More detailed information about qualification and unit grades and scores will be available to universities and employers.

- Criteria for the extended project will have been developed.

- The proposed Institute of Assessment will be in operation and beginning to establish proposals and standards for training assessors.

- There will be a single on-line registration system for qualification assessment, reducing administrative complexities.

- The data management needs of the new system will have been determined.

By 2014

5.   In the period of time leading up to implementation, curriculum, assessment and infrastructure arrangements will have been tested and trialled, and many features of the new system we propose will start to be clearly encouraged in preparation for full roll out:

- In-course assessment will become more frequent as a mode of assessment.

Inspection and quality assurance arrangements would accommodate this.

• Induction and training for the new system would include a focus on new assessment practice in initial teacher training. The Institute of Assessment exemplifies good practice and Chartered Assessors are in position in most institutions.

• Extensive trialling and testing of diploma programmes, components and supporting infrastructure will be near completion. Findings from ongoing evaluations will have influenced the next stages of development and assessed its impact on Key Stage 4 and different groups of learners, and its implications for Key Stage 3.

• Data management arrangements would have been developed and trialled via diploma pathfinders.

• Development of infrastructure, including governance, funding, performance management and information, advice and guidance completed.

• Communication strategy ensuring that stakeholders, young people and the public are prepared for the new system would be in place.

Making a difference to teaching and learning

6. There are several important milestones which will directly affect the way schools, colleges and training providers deliver 14-19 learning and the learning experience for young people during the implementation period. They include:

• 2007 – a single on-line qualification/examination registration system to be operational;

• 2007/08:

– first teaching of revised qualifications in preparation for diploma changes, including improved vocational components

– GCSEs contain more in-course assessment

– core components in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication and ICT available as stand-alone qualifications

– criteria for the extended project available for use

– new entry level components available;

• 2009 – restructured advanced components to include more demanding A2 and an extended grade scale and decoupled A1 and A2 available for piloting in preparation for the diploma;

• 2009/10 – full pilot commences;

• 2010 – the adult vocational framework of achievement is fully operational, with credit system in place; and the apprenticeship framework is aligned with the new diploma system;

• 2013 – new infrastructure arrangements in place; and

• 2014/15 – new diploma system starts – a two-year roll out culminating in the withdrawal of qualifications for 14-19 year olds and the introduction of the diploma.

Annex M
Case studies illustrating the new framework

1. The case studies in this annex offer some fictionalised examples of the way young people may move through the proposed 14-19 framework.

Case study: Greg

From age 14 to 16 Greg's learning programme comprised of eight main learning components, including mathematics and computer studies. The school had been refurbished as part of the 'Schools for the 21st Century' agenda and was well resourced. At age 15, Greg had already attained intermediate level components in mathematics and computer science. His programme at age 16 included advanced level components in pure mathematics and computer science. Greg continued to play golf on the weekends with his dad, and as a wider activity enrolled on the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme.

By the age of 16, he passed seven *main learning* components at intermediate level and by age 17 passed two main learning components at advanced level and had attained the Silver level in his wider activity.

14-19

Case study continued

Under the current system, Greg's progression in mathematics and computer science may not have been so rapid. Under the diploma framework, his successes at intermediate level, and at advanced level enabled him to achieve an advanced diploma with distinction, and he had the opportunity to progress at his own pace.

At age 18, Greg's advanced diploma with distinction and credit and grades he achieved in the constituent components provided him with a strong transcript. Greg had attained Gold level in his wider activity and had also worked successfully on his extended project – he created and ran a community project using old computers from local businesses to provide disadvantaged children with access to ICT. Greg liked working on the community project and helping children to learn with whom he would not normally have associated. It was partly though his extended project experience that Greg decided to become a teacher.

Greg had an enquiring mind and was keen to understand how you could relate mathematics to everyday life. He decided to study mathematics at university. After gaining his Masters degree, he attained a PGCE.

14-19

Case study: Karen

Karen was a popular girl, she was well liked by her teachers and class mates and worked well. By the age of 14, Karen enrolled on a Young Apprenticeship programme in Business Administration. The work experience provided her with real insight into the skills and attributes needed to succeed in the workplace. Karen had no clear career plans but maintained her interest in business administration through her programme which included Applied Business and Administration Technical Certificate at intermediate level. Her school advised her that she would be able to specialise in Business Administration when she was 16.

From age 14 to 16 Karen's main learning programme included English, mathematics and vocational components in Business Administration. Karen did not have a computer at home, but used the ICT skills aspect of her core programme to help develop her use of new technology. Through the core programme Karen also developed skills in working with people, communicating ideas, solving problems, and managing resources. Karen was also a member of the Girl Guides and identified this interest as a wider activity.

By the age of 16, she attained five intermediate level components (including English and mathematics) and two Technical Certificates at intermediate level and one foundation level component. She also attained intermediate level in her core programme, including ICT skills, for which she received additional support from the school. This enabled her to claim an intermediate diploma.

Under the current system, Karen would have attained four intermediate level qualifications (including English and mathematics), but her weakness in ICT and the use of technology might have held her back. Under the diploma framework, her intermediate core programme prepared her for study at the higher level. She was also more able to study independently, because of the skills which she acquired in her core programme at intermediate level.

Karen sought advice through the review, planning and guidance aspect of her diploma on what her options might be. Following this advice, Karen enrolled at a Further Education college to continue her studies working towards an advanced diploma in Business Administration and Law. From age 16 to 18, Karen was able to integrate elements from her programme into her extended project, which examined and reviewed the strategic objectives of the college and the business processes underpinning the objectives and the legal implications. Her project recommended re-engineering a number of business processes, some of which the college implemented.

At age 19, Karen attained her advanced diploma in Business Administration and Law and intends to go onto university to study Business Law.

Case study: Maxwell

Maxwell (Max) was a young man in his mid teens who over the years had had various brushes with the police and was well known to all the Community Support Teams in his area. Max drifted in and out of school, he liked the English teacher, so went to that lesson but tended to be disruptive to get attention. He had also been very aggressive to the other pupils and had physically assaulted a teacher. He had been excluded from school as a result of severe bullying and had drifted from placement to placement with very little success. Max's only aim in life was to get into the Army, but this had been dashed when he was excluded from the local college's diploma framework, which would have provided him with the necessary foundation to join the Army, midway through, due to his aggressive behaviour and violence.

Max had very little interest in school or studying. He knew he had to read and write for the Army and know some maths but in reality the only aspect of the diploma that he enjoyed was the wider activities component. Max came onto the E2E Duke of Edinburgh's Award Programme and initially presented a challenge due to his aggression. However, over the course of the 12 week programme this element of his behaviour settled and he became a lot more stable in his behaviour and a lot more mature in his outlook on life. By the end of the initial 12 week programme, Max accompanied the group on a long weekend to Cumbria and completed his Scuba-Diving Training – an accomplishment of which he is very proud and one which has led to a vastly improved sense of self-esteem.

Under the current system Max would have remained excluded. Frustrated and misunderstood, Max's attempts to re-engage through informal learning may not have become apparent.

Max now openly admits that his previous behaviour was wrong and regrets it deeply. So much so that he has openly apologised to another participant on the programme who at school was his main bullying "victim". Since taking part in the programme, Max has been re-admitted onto an intermediate programme to enable him to acquire the components required to achieve an intermediate diploma (Open). Not only is this an achievement, but he was voted best speaker on the course for his presentation of the diving trip and has now been accepted into the Army, the first phase of training for which he is due to start in the autumn.

14–19

Case study: Peter

Peter did well at school, he was well liked and enjoyed learning. Peter spent most evenings and weekends helping out in a local restaurant dishwashing and keeping the kitchen area tidy to make some pocket money. He did not know what he wanted to do after he left school.

From age 14 to 16 his learning programme comprised six main learning components, including mathematics and English. Working at the restaurant had given him an interest in food preparation and nutrition; and he had decided to take components in Practical Food Technology and Nutritional Science.

By the age of 16, he passed five *main learning* components at intermediate level (including maths) and one at foundation. The broad learning programme that Peter studied and the progress he made in communication enabled him to claim an intermediate diploma. Peter listed his part-time paid employment as a wider activity. He also prepared an extended project on school meals looking specifically at the nutritional value of the meals provided and how the meals could be improved and still stay within budget.

Under the current system, Peter's progression in education and training may not have encouraged his interest in food which related directly to his part-time paid employment. Under the diploma framework, his interests and assessment successes are recognised.

Peter decided to take a catering and nutrition course at the local Further Education college. Through the information, advice and guidance provided by his school through the personal review, planning and guidance element of the core, Peter knew exactly what he needed to achieve at college to enable him to move into the food industry. His extended project continued the work he had produced for his intermediate diploma and examined the impact of infant and childhood nutrition on health and obesity.

At age 19, Peter attained his advanced diploma but continued to work part-time at the restaurant where he was given some responsibility for planning menus and buying in the ingredients. He is keen to pursue a career in catering and is planning to study part-time for a Foundation Degree in Hospitality Management with the option of progressing to the third year of an Honours degree.

Case study: Jason

Jason struggled with written communication and showed a real dislike for English at school. He spent most evenings and weekends working on a nearby farm and in his spare time playing football with his friends. Jason was also a very able footballer and played for his year's school team. He did not know what he wanted to do after he left school, and had always assumed that he would work on one of the farms near the village.

From age 14 to 16 his learning programme comprised six main learning components, including one in mathematics and two in land management. The village school did not offer that provision, so Jason attended classes at the Further Education college in the town and used ICT for virtual lectures. His programme also included a core component in communication at foundation level.

By the age of 16, he passed two *main learning* components at intermediate level (including maths) and three at foundation. The broad learning programme that Jason studied and the progress he made in communication enabled him to claim a foundation diploma with credits towards an intermediate diploma. He continued to play football. He was captain of the school team and was also a striker in the local village league. His sporting activity and part-time farm work met the wider activities requirements of his diploma programme.

Under the current system, Jason's progression in education and training may have ended at 16. Under the diploma framework, his successes at intermediate level, including maths, were credits towards the next level of the diploma which he recognised as potential further success in education and training.

His interests became much more orientated towards agriculture. Jason's foundation diploma and credits provided him with the incentive to study for an intermediate diploma, the interlocking diploma framework provided him with a strong foundation and he recognised that he was already part way there. He enrolled at the Further Education college in the town and chose to specialise in land-based provision. He knew that he needed to gain the threshold minimum of intermediate level in communication skills to attain the intermediate diploma and received special coaching from the college. He worked successfully on his extended project – a three year business plan on agriculture and farm estates business – during the final year of his programme. He demonstrated a variety of Key Skills through this project. At age 19, he attained the minimum threshold in his core programme and sufficient passes in his main programme to gain the intermediate diploma in Land-Based Provision. Jason still plays football for the village team and also coaches an under 11 primary school team. He is currently working as a farm manager's assistant and is studying Land Management at agricultural college on a part-time basis.

14-19

Case study: Paul

Paul grew up in a small town with his father, a divorcee. At age 11, he was sent to an independent boarding school in the North East that taught pupils from 11 to 18. He was particularly gifted in music: he was a chorister and played both the piano and violin. He had always been academically bright and especially liked maths and ICT. From the time Paul joined the school, his teachers appreciated his musical talent and vocation, and at age 14 it was clear that he would be aiming for an advanced diploma. His teachers advised him to keep his options open. He was happy to do this but, as his passion was music, he wanted to specialise as soon as possible, with a view to becoming a professional musician.

From age 14 to 16 his main learning programme comprised six intermediate components including Choral studies and Orchestration. He was also able to skip intermediate level music and instead chose to follow an advanced component in music. Although he was an able mathematician, he never really developed an aptitude for science. He elected to pursue an intermediate component in scientific awareness. Outside of his school curriculum he attained Grade 8 in Piano and Grade 6 in Violin.

By age 16, Paul had attained six components at intermediate level (including English and maths) and one component at A1. He also successfully completed his core requirements at intermediate level and received an intermediate diploma with credit towards an advanced diploma in maths, English and the advanced music component. His extended project was to compose a piece for piano, which he performed at a recital during the summer term. Paul's attainment was recorded on his transcript. **Under the current system, Paul's progress would probably have been have been limited to intermediate level by this age, he would not have been stretched and his musical skills would have remained undeveloped.**

Paul stayed on at the school, and by age 17, he attained a total of six components at A1. He elected to continue four of those, and by age 18, he attained four components at A2 (Performing Arts, English Literature, Italian and French) while also studying components in music equivalent to the first year of an undergraduate degree. He successfully completed his extended project: a piece for four voices which he composed and arranged himself and performed with three of his friends. He was awarded a distinction in his advanced diploma in Arts and Languages at the school graduation ceremony. Paul plans to read music at university and then to become a professional musician.

At age 25, Paul has completed his Masters degree. He formed a band while at university, with three friends from his course. They were discovered by a large record company and are currently on tour in the Far East.

Case study: Ishmail

Ishmail grew up in a large city with his parents and four other siblings. At age 11, his parents enrolled him at a local comprehensive school with a sixth form. He was a quiet boy and spent a lot of his time in his bedroom on his computer. He did not like sports and preferred to play computer games.

By the age of 14 he was very proficient in the use of computer technology. From 14 to 18 his learning programme included vocational components in computer science and engineering. He particularly enjoyed maths, science and ICT, but he struggled with English, which was not his first language. His core programme addressed this issue with an emphasis on communication skills.

At age 16, Ishmail had attained six components at intermediate level, including maths, science, and engineering; and one component at advanced level in ICT. He had also attained one component in English at foundation level. However, his core programme had also allowed him to attain an intermediate level component in communication. This provided him with sufficient passes to claim the intermediate diploma. **Under the current system he would not have had his communication skills enhanced through a core programme, and would not have been able to study ICT to advanced level.**

Following the success of the diploma programme and his desire to have more experience designing and building machines, Ishmail decided to move into the field of engineering. At age 18, he completed the advanced diploma in Engineering, Technology and Manufacturing. For his extended project, he designed and built a computer-controlled robot. Although he had attained a merit in his advanced diploma and enjoyed the theory, he wanted more hands-on engineering experience, so he chose an Advanced Apprenticeship programme in Engineering, which he completed at age 22, having already gained the core (Key Skills) and Technical Certificate requirements as part of his advanced diploma programme.

At age 25, Ishmail has completed his Advanced Apprenticeship programme and is currently working as an engineer in a local business.

14-19

Case study: Sally

Sally described herself as an above average girl, although she never stood out for any reason. Sally told her tutor that she did not want a career, she wanted to get married, settle down and have children.

At age 14, her career aspirations had not changed. From the age of 14 to 16 her learning programme consisted of the National Curriculum. At school, she would drift from lesson to lesson and occasionally out of school. She rarely applied herself and thought school was boring. At age 15, she fell pregnant. She insisted that she would have the baby and gave birth two weeks before her exams. She had not been able to prepare for her exams properly and had missed a lot of schoolwork since becoming pregnant. At age 16, she left school without any qualifications.

The new diploma structure offers her a clear range of relevant post-16 options which would enable her to identify a suitable nationally-recognised programme if she chooses to re-enter learning at a later date. If she had passed any of the core components for a diploma, these would provide credit towards a subsequent diploma programme.

Sally became unemployed after leaving school. By age 18, she had decided to return to education and training and enrolled at a Further Education college. Her mother looked after Sally's daughter during the day. She felt that the health and social care would be a good preparation for childcare courses, such as CACHE Early Years Care and Education (NVQ levels 2 and 3). Although she recognised that this foundation diploma programme helped her to develop her teamwork and portfolio-building skills, she found after a few months that did not enjoy the specialist content, even though she had completed some components to a high standard. Because she had also always enjoyed cooking and preparing food for parties, she switched to a foundation diploma in Commercial Enterprise, specialising in catering, and was able to retain credit for her progress within the core during her previous programme. During this new programme she worked part-time for a local private catering company.

Case study: James

James did not like school. He was disruptive and bullied the other pupils with the threat of his older brother. He would often skip lessons and when challenged would became abusive. He was suspended on a number of occasions.

At age 14 he still felt disengaged with school. The only lessons he enjoyed were craft lessons; he enjoyed working with his hands and liked the craft subject teachers. He had very little interest in the other subjects that were offered in the National Curriculum. He was quite a skilled carpenter and he also enjoyed metal work. His work based training was with a local joinery firm. Much of the equipment was computerised and he found a new interest in working with computerised lathes. He also discovered an interest in technical drawing using computer-aided design. His skills developed in marquetry and he developed an appreciation for applied maths.

At age 16 James attained three components at intermediate and two at foundation level. He also achieved an intermediate level extended project and foundation level in the other aspects of his core programme. This success enabled him to claim a foundation diploma. His transcript emphasised the work-based training that he had undertaken.

Under the current system, James would have attained three intermediate qualifications (including maths) and two at foundation level. Under the diploma framework he identified how he could progress through the diploma system with limited academic study by concentrating on the key skills and ensuring that he had the threshold requirements for the diploma.

He enrolled at a local Further Education college on an intermediate diploma programme in Construction. He was advised that he would need to balance his curriculum with mathematical skills and communication in order to attain his intermediate diploma. He also worked part-time at a local joinery to gain further experience and learned how to use a computer-aided design system to plan out designs for architects.

At age 19, James attained his intermediate diploma in Construction and gained additional credit towards an advanced diploma in the same area. He is now employed as a joiner and is continuing to study part-time for his advanced diploma in Construction.

14-19

Case study: Razia

Razia was a quiet girl. Despite her quiet nature, her teachers had recognised that she was academically very able. By the age of 14, she had demonstrated an interest in science. She also enjoyed English but was not strong in maths. She had no definite career plans but knew that she wanted to go to university with her friends. Her school advised her that she would be able to specialise in science when she was 16; but that her weakness in maths might be an obstacle, and she needed to address a weakness in working collaboratively with her peers.

From age 14 to 16, Razia's main learning programme included English and vocational components in applied science. Her core programme developed mathematical skills as well as working with other people, communicating ideas, solving problems, managing resources, critical thinking and independent learning. She also worked towards an ASDAN Bronze/Silver award.

By the age of 16, she attained four intermediate components (including science and English) and three foundation components. She also attained intermediate level in her core programme, including mathematical skills, for which she received additional support from the school. This enabled her to claim an intermediate diploma.

Under the current system, Razia would have attained four intermediate level qualifications (including English and science), but her weakness in maths might have held her back. Under the diploma framework, her intermediate core programme prepared her for study at the higher level. She was also more able to tackle project work effectively and study independently, because of the skills which she acquired in her core programme at intermediate level.

Her interests had become much more orientated towards the sciences. She enrolled at a Further Education college to continue her studies working towards an advanced diploma. From age 16 to 18, She wanted to expand her knowledge in health-related subjects and her scientific awareness, so she studied advanced level components in biology, chemistry, statistics and health and social care for an advanced diploma. She also sought to convert her mathematical skills to more theoretical and conceptual mathematics at intermediate level to support her science studies. She was able to integrate these subjects in her extended project, which examined the views of a statistically valid sample of users of local ante-natal services. Her college worked in collaboration with the local hospital trust on health-related science issues. She attended lectures at the Further Education college and worked as a volunteer at the hospital trust. Her work at the hospital was recognised as a wider activity and this was listed on her diploma transcript.

At age 19, Razia attained three A2 and four A1 components and completed her extended project. She also passed an intermediate component in mathematics for scientists, and achieved a merit in her advanced diploma in sciences. Razia went onto university to study pharmacology.

Case study: Danielle

Danielle (Danni) was on a programme that should lead to an advanced diploma in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies. Danni had worked hard at school and had already achieved an intermediate diploma by the age of 16. She had also been a member of her local Open Award Centre for some time and had already completed her residential project as part of the wider activities component of her advanced diploma. Danni had already accumulated over 80 credits towards her advanced diploma, when she became involved with drugs and received a two-year prison sentence.

With the support of the staff at the residential project, and advice from an award contact outside, she set herself the target of using her time to complete as much of her advanced diploma as possible. Danni was granted a special licence which enabled her to leave prison once a week to undertake a peer education project for her service, speaking to other teenagers about the dangers of drug abuse. In the prison kitchens she worked hard for an NVQ in catering for her skill, and in the gym she kept fit with aerobics for her physical recreation.

Released after just a year and a half Danni strived to find her feet in the 'real world'. Using her credits towards her advanced diploma and her award involvement as a platform she was soon accepted at college, and after some persuading, successfully completed her expedition training and practices, and her final venture – an exploration – on an Open Gold Award. With just the last few months of her skill to complete, Danni signed up for a car maintenance course with the lads at college and successfully completed her award. Danni worked hard at college to complete the other elements of her programme including mathematical skills and ICT skills to advanced level. Danni achieved a merit in her advanced diploma in Engineering and Manufacturing Technologies.

Under the current system Danni's spell in prison would have severely disrupted her education. It would have been difficult for Danni to return to education to continue where she had left off. The credit that Danni had accumulated towards her qualifications would have been lost.

Danni's commitment to the diploma and the way in which her wider activities had been a positive influence on her has seen her in action as guest speaker on a number of occasions, and shortly after her release she stood before a roomful of prison officers and told them that the diploma had saved her life – a powerful advert. Danni is now half way through her first year at university where she is taking a degree in Engineering.

Annex N
Membership of the Working Group on 14-19 Reform and the sub-groups

I. Working Group on 14-19 Reform

Chair:
Mike Tomlinson

Members:

John Berkeley	Senior Fellow and Director, Apprenticeship Monitoring Unit, SEMTA/University of Warwick
Simon Culmer	Operations Director, Cisco Systems UK and Ireland
David Eastwood	Vice Chancellor, University of East Anglia
Carmel Flatley (up to June 2003)	Director of HR and Training, McDonald's Restaurants Ltd
Ian Ferguson (from July 2003)	Chairman, Data Connection Ltd
Helen Gilchrist	Principal, Bury College
Edward Gould	Master, Marlborough College
John Guy	Principal, Farnborough Sixth Form College
Carolyn Hayman	Chief Executive, the Foyer Federation until August 2004, presently Chief Executive, Peace Direct
Colin Hilton	Executive Director, Liverpool City Council
David Melville	Vice Chancellor, University of Kent
David Raffe	Professor of Sociology of Education, University of Edinburgh
Jennifer Slater	Principal, Northallerton College
Ken Spours	University of London Institute of Education
Kathleen Tattersall	Former Director General, Assessment and Qualifications Alliance

14-19

DfES Observers:

2003 – Janice Shiner, Director General for Lifelong learning, DfES

2004 – Rob Hull, Director for Qualifications and Young People, DfES

Secretary:
Matthew White

Secretariat team:
Suzanne Agha, Audrey Beckford, Nicholas Holmes, Ashni Jugurnauth, Nancy McLean, Lucy McKenzie, Yvonne Onyeka, Francesca Orpen, Rob Simpson, Kate Taylor

II sub-groups

Assessment sub-group

Chair:
John Guy

Members:

Alan Brown (From January 2004)	Warwick University
Delyth Chambers	University of Birmingham
Sara Coldicott	OCR
Mike Cresswell	AQA
Martin Cross	Edexcel
Andrew Grant	St Albans School
Celia Johnson	DfES
Sue Kirkham	Walton High School, Staffordshire
Kathleen Tattersall	ex-Assessment and Qualifications Alliance
Robert Taylor	QCA
Liz Whittome	QCA
Alison Wolf (Until January 2004)	Institute of Education

Secretary:
Yvonne Onyeka

Secretariat:
Ashni Jugurnauth

Coherent Programmes sub-group

Chair:
Jennifer Slater

Members:

Gary Forrest	QCA
Stuart Gardner	Learning Skills Council

Helen Gilchrist	
Edward Gould	
Carolyn Hayman	
Chris Humphries	City and Guilds
John Jones	DfES
Martin Lamb	Learning Skills Council
Fiona McMillan	Bridgwater College
Judith Norrington	Association of Colleges
David Sherlock	Adult Learning Inspectorate
Ken Spours	
Hilary Steedman	Senior Research Fellow, London School of Economics

Secretary:
Kate Taylor

Secretariat:
Francesca Orpen

Employers sub-group

Chair:
Brian Stevens

Members:

Nicky Bishop	Royal Bank of Scotland Group
Matthew Chiles	Business Development Unit, DfES
Ian Ferguson	Data Connection Ltd
Linda Graham	Marks and Spencer Plc
Caroline Hughes	ClickHere Ltd
Tim Hutchings	Hertfordshire Chamber of Commerce & Industry
Kalpana Joshi	Sector Skills Development Agency
Jim Moore	Broadmind Consultancy Ltd
Alice Teague	Federation of Small Businesses
Stewart Thompson	NHSU
Chris Rogan	North West Development Agency

Secretary:
Kate Taylor

Secretariat:
Nicholas Holmes

Higher Education sub-group

Chair:
David Eastwood

Members:

Patricia Ambrose	SCOP
Robert Burgess	University of Leicester
William Callaway	University of Hertfordshire
Kel Fidler	Northumbria University
Anthony McClaran	UCAS
David Melville	
Jane Minto	Oxford University
John Rushforth	HEFCE
Yvonne Salter Wright	University of Warwick
Ruth Thompson	DfES
Fiona Waye	Universities UK
Geoff Whitty	Institute of Education

Secretary:
Rob Simpson

Secretariat:
Suzanne Agha

SEN and Equal Opportunities sub-group

Chair:
Colin Hilton

Members:

Robert Berkeley (From February 2004)	The Runnymede Trust
John Brown	Diversity and Inclusion Consultant, QCA
Jeremy Crook	Black Training and Enterprise Group
Lesley Dee (Until May 2004)	Cambridge University
Jennie Espiner	Itchen College
Peter Gray	NASEN
Diana Leonard	Institute of Education
Liz Maudslay	Skill: National Bureau for Students with Disabilities
Gillian Reay	Ofsted
Ruth Perry	QCA
Nicola Rollock (Until February 2004)	The Runnymede Trust

Janet Ryland   Learning and Skills Council (National Office)

Christine Steadman   Ofsted

Secretary:
Yvonne Onyeka

Secretariat:
Ashni Jugurnauth and Audrey Beckford

Unified Qualifications Framework sub-group

Chair:
Mike Tomlinson

Members:
Simon Culmer

John Dunford   Secondary Heads Association

Ian Ferguson

John Jones

Ann Hodgson   Institute of Education

David Melville

Judith Norrington

David Raffe

Brian Stevens

Kathleen Tattersall

Secretary:
Rob Simpson

Secretariat:
Suzanne Agha

Young People Contact sub-group

Chair:
Carolyn Hayman

Members:
John Berkeley

Laura Brickwood   National Union of Students

Julia Carlin   The Princes Trust

Stuart Gardner   Learning and Skills Council

Carol Jackson   The National Youth Agency

Margaret Maden   Formerly of Keele University

John Ratcliff   Learning and Skills Council

Oli Watts   Educational Consulting

Secretary:
Ashni Jugurnauth

Wider Activities sub-group

Chair:

Mike Tomlinson

Members:

Norrine Betjemann	Education and Learning, Arts Council England
David Brockington	ASDAN
Jennie Butterworth	Fairbridge
Julia Carlin	
Peter Cross	Ministry of Defence
John Crossman	Contin You
Jessica Dabbs	Girlguiding UK
Stuart Gardner	
Bill Garland	Community Service Volunteers
Scott Hartley	Sport England
Carolyn Hayman	
Jane Haywood	DfES
Lura Hughes	Girlguiding UK
Rob Hull	
Carol Jackson	The National Youth Agency
John Jones	
Christine Kent	Raleigh International
Peter Loewenstein	The National Youth Agency
Michelle McKendry	Young Enterprise
Tom Overstone	Scout Association
Stephen Peck	Scout Association
Palle Pedersen	YWCA
Stephen Quashie	National Council
Yvonne Richards	UK Youth
Steve Sharp	The Duke of Edinburgh's Award
Roger White	ASDAN
Jo Williams	Mencap
Kevin Williams	YMCA
Randell Williams	English Outdoor Council
Richard Williams	Rathbone CI

Secretary:

Francesca Orpen

14-19

Apprenticeships sub-group

Chair:
John Berkeley

Members:

John Allbutt	DfES
Brandon Ashworth	Sector Skills Development Agency
Mary Curnock-Cook	QCA
Ian Ferguson	
John Landeryou	Adult Learning Inspectorate
Stephen Gardner	Learning and Skills Council
Keith Marshall	SummitSkills (Sector Skills Agency)
Graham Hoyle	Association of Learning Providers
Caroline Smith	TUC

Secretary:
Francesca Orpen

III. Technical sub-groups

Chair:
Kathleen Tattersall

Members:

Bob Adams	WJEC
Angus Alton	QCA
Jo-Anne Baird	AQA
George Barr	City and Guilds
Tamsin Barton	NAA
Mary Bennett	OCR
Amy Budd	QCA
Ian Crees	OCR
Elizabeth Gray	OCR
John Guy	
Karen Hughes	Edexcel
Tina Isaacs	QCA
Celia Johnson	
Tom Leney	QCA
Jean Marshall	OCR
Rachael Meech	QCA
Paul Newton	QCA

Paddy O'Hagan	QCA
Yvonne Onyeka	
Jeremy Pritchard	Edexcel
Jim Sinclair	Edexcel
Pauline Sparkes	NAA
Sandra Stalker	QCA
Jeremy Tafler	AQA
Martin Taylor	QCA
Robert Taylor	QCA
Kath Thomas	Edexcel
Liz Walters	QCA
Gillian Whitehouse	Edexcel

Secretary:
Yvonne Onyeka

Entry Level Expert Panel

Chairs:

Ruth Perry	QCA
John Brown	QCA

Members:

Roberta Fulford	St Hughes Secondary Special School
Richard Sharples	Education Relations Consultancy
Helen Sexton	Association of National Specialist Colleges
Shereen Benjamin	University of Birmingham
Christine McDermott	Birmingham Rathbone
Catherine Cole	Consultant

Secretary:
Yvonne Onyeka

Annex O
Terms of reference

1. The Working Group is invited to consider the three overlapping strategic directions for change identified in the Department's response to its consultation on the Green Paper, 14-19: extending opportunities, raising standards, and to make recommendations.

2. The Government is looking for progress over time towards:

• strengthened structure and content of full-time vocational programmes, and to offer greater coherence in learning programmes for all young people throughout their 14-19 education;

• assessment arrangements for 14-19 year olds that are appropriate to different types of course and styles of teaching and learning, with the overall amount of assessment manageable for learners and teachers alike; and

• a unified framework of qualifications that stretches the performance of learners, motivates progression, and recognises different levels of achievement.

3. In considering these three overlapping areas the Group should identify and propose action to resolve the range of issues affecting an effective 14-19 strategy that have not been already addressed by the agenda set out in the Government's response to its 14-19 Green Paper. The Group is asked specifically to consider the recommendations for the longer term identified by Mike Tomlinson in his second report into A level standards. The Group is also asked specifically to consider the following:

Coherent learning programmes:

4. To examine and, where appropriate, make recommendations on how:

• programmes, particularly predominantly vocational programmes, should be better structured to offer clear progress and achievement;

• such programmes can be more readily understood as part of a clear framework, progressing from Key Stage 4 to further options in skilled employment or higher education;

• such programmes might be developed to achieve broad public recognition and currency with employers and HE providers as a distinctive choice with respected outcomes;

- the qualifications goals in programmes can best provide an appropriate combination of general and specialist education;

- 14-19 programmes generally can help promote the acquisition of essential, practical skills for life, and how also they might encourage the development of analytical, problem solving and thinking skills and the confidence and ability to present and argue conclusions;

- the contribution of employers to the design and delivery of this framework could be strengthened; and

- additional breadth and complementary study should be included within the post-16 element of 14-19 programmes, particularly for the most able learners.

5.   Though this aspect of the Group's work should encompass all learning within the 14-19 phase, the priority is to address 16-19 programmes of study outside the A level route.

6.   The Group should focus on programmes from level 1 to level 3 and should reflect the needs of learners at all levels. The Group should include the contribution of the Key Skills qualifications, including the wider Key Skills. The Group will note that the structure and promotion of Modern Apprenticeships have been the subject of a recent major review under the chairmanship of Sir John Cassells and the reforms that are being taken forward by the Learning and Skills Council.

Assessment arrangements

7.   To examine and, where appropriate, make recommendations on how the nature and amount of assessment for 14-19 year olds should develop to ensure that arrangements:

- are fit for purpose and match the teaching and learning styles appropriate to both qualification and course of study;

- are manageable for learners, taking account of the amount of assessment during the 14-19 phase and during examination periods;

- ensure manageable administrative costs on schools, colleges, training providers and awarding bodies;

- motivate all learners, including support for those facing physical or social barriers to learning and slower learners so that perception of earlier failure is avoided;

- maintain sufficient independence and transparency to deliver consistent, reliable standards; and

- command the support of employers, higher education and the wider public, including young people.

This strand of work, which should focus on the principles underpinning effective assessment rather than looking at the detailed arrangements within individual qualifications, will include the assessment of all general qualifications which may be undertaken by young people from the start of Key Stage 4 to the age of 19. It should, however, consider Mike Tomlinson's recommendations for the decoupling of the AS and A2 to create two free-standing qualifications.

8.   It should take account of the assessment required at the end of Key Stage 3 to provide a basis for wider curriculum choice at 14.

9. The work of the Group on assessment should include GNVQs and A levels in vocational subjects but exclude NVQs, other occupational qualifications and the requirements of Modern Apprenticeships (but the work of the Group on coherent learning programmes must include NVQs and other occupational qualifications).

A unified framework of qualifications

10. To examine and, where appropriate, make recommendations for a unified framework of qualifications for the 14-19 phase of education that will:

- provide a challenge for all learners, including the most able;

- embrace the full range of programmes of study;

- raise standards of achievement at 19;

- provide a template for a broad and engaging educational experience;

- deliver consistent robust standards and be capable of rigorous, impartial assessment; and

- be capable of commanding a wide range of support among key stakeholders, in particular higher education and employers.

11. The Group should advise on the practical steps that would be necessary to implement such a model, on potential costs and on a process for implementation that would minimise the risk of adverse impact on young people's education or the management of the education system. In doing so, it should consider the merits and implications of decoupling the AS and A2 to create two free-standing qualifications as recommended by Mike Tomlinson, as a practical step towards the implementation of such a model.

12. The Group should include all education and training undertaken by young people in the 14-19 phase. The Group should consider how the achievement of a Modern Apprenticeship should be integrated within the awards structure.

Cross-cutting considerations

13. The Group should have regard to the following cross-cutting priorities:

- to increase post-16 participation and attainment, and to narrow the attainment gap;

- to enhance diversity and breadth of provision, local innovation and learner choice;

- to meet the needs of low achievers and those who face significant obstacles to learning;

- to reduce the significance of 16 as a potential break point and focus on outcomes at 19; and

- to reduce unnecessary burdens on the system, especially on teachers and learners.

14. The Group will be expected to:

• consult and take account of the views and requirements of key stakeholders including employers, higher education and young people themselves;

• take account of the ways in which these issues are managed in other countries;

• ensure that proposals take due account of the need for value for money and cost-effectiveness in the use of resources; and

• take into consideration the early emerging evidence from the 14-19 pathfinder projects.

15. The Group should issue an Interim Report on its findings within a year, with a view to finalising its work within 18 months. It will also be expected to provide interim reports on progress with aspects of its work at intervals to be agreed.

Annex P
Full list of recommendations

Recommendation 1:
balanced programmes

To provide all young people with a balance of generic and specialised learning, all 14-19 programmes should comprise:

- **Core learning**, designed to ensure that all young people develop a range of generic knowledge, skills and attributes necessary to progress and succeed, including progression over time to at least level 2 in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication, and functional ICT; and

- **Main learning**, designed to ensure achievement and progression within recognised academic and vocational disciplines which provide a basis for progression within the diploma framework and access to employment, work-based training and HE. Main learning defines the type of programme and may be chosen to reflect learners' strengths, interests and aspirations.

Recommendation 2:
programmes and diplomas

The existing system of qualifications taken by 14-19 year olds should be replaced by a system of diplomas, available at entry, foundation, intermediate and advanced levels.

Each diploma should be sub-divided into separately assessed components.

A diploma should be awarded for successful completion of a coherent programme meeting threshold requirements at a particular level. Achievements in the programme beyond the threshold should be recorded on a transcript of achievement (see chapter 7).

Young people should be able to enter the framework at age 14 at the level that best meets their capabilities and complete more than one diploma as they progress through the 14-19 phase.

Existing qualifications such as GCSEs, A levels, and NVQs should cease to be free-standing qualifications in their own right but should evolve to become components of the new diplomas.

Recommendation 3:
diploma lines and programme types

We propose that there should be up to 20 'lines of learning' within the diploma framework.

Diplomas within each line should be named – and sometimes sub-titled – according to the content of the main learning.

One line should be open, providing a relatively unconstrained choice of subjects and diploma components, similar to the mixed programmes of A levels or GCSEs or equivalent vocational qualifications that many young people currently undertake. Learners should be able to select from a wide choice of subjects and areas of learning, including traditional academic subjects and specially-designed components distilled from the content of specialised diploma lines. In this way, young people would be able to elect to take relatively short vocational options so that they could sample, and make a start on, the content of the more substantial vocational pathways represented in the specialist lines.

The other lines should cover a wide range of employment sectors and/or academic areas of study. These lines would not normally be available to pre-16 learners.

Recommendations for integrating the diploma framework and apprenticeships are set out in chapter 8 and exemplified in annex I.

Recommendation 4:
subject aggregations

Drawing upon subject aggregations used successfully here and abroad, QCA works with relevant subject and sector bodies, including subject associations, HE, Sector Skills Councils, employers, and providers to develop a framework and design criteria for up to 20 named lines which:

• include a line that recognises achievement in 'open' programmes, where learner choice is relatively unconstrained;

• cover a wide range of options, combining them where appropriate;

• ensure that programme content is relevant to the needs of learners aspiring to particular destinations and to the needs of individual academic and employment sectors;

• allow for the development of optional areas of further specialisation;

• are flexible and kept under review; and

• are transparent and readily understood by end-users.

Recommendation 5:
Key Stage 4

All 14-16 year olds should be required to follow the statutory National Curriculum at Key Stage 4 and other statutory curriculum requirements, such as RE, as they are now. Achievement in statutory KS4 subjects, such as science, which are not part of the core, should give credit towards main learning.

Recommendation 6:
the core

We propose that the core, common to all programmes and diplomas, should comprise:

• functional mathematics;

• functional literacy and communication;

• functional ICT;

• an extended project;

• common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA);

• personal review, planning and guidance; and

• an entitlement to wider activities.

Recommendation 7:
functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT

We recommend that QCA works with all stakeholders, including end-users and subject experts, to develop core components in functional mathematics, functional literacy and communication and functional ICT which:

• are based on an understanding, shared between stakeholders, about what constitute common requirements for informed citizens, effective learners and a wide range of workplaces;

• reflect the detailed criteria for these subjects in annex C and, in the case of functional mathematics, build upon the recommendations made by Professor Adrian Smith for reform of mathematics education;

• meet the needs of end-users; and

• are available at all levels within the diploma framework, from entry to advanced level.

These components should be available in advance of introduction of the diplomas to begin meeting the needs of employers for more thorough acquisition of the relevant skills.

Until the new components are in place, all young people should continue to be encouraged to undertake the available options, such as Key Skills, in these subjects as part of their 14-19 learning programmes.

Recommendation 8:
common knowledge, skills and attributes (CKSA)

Opportunities to develop CKSA should be integrated into all 14-19 programmes through carefully managed institutional teaching and learning strategies. They need not be separately assessed, but delivering them within all programmes would mean that learners cannot achieve their diploma without developing them.

Schools, colleges and training providers should be responsible for ensuring that learners develop the CKSA across the learning programmes which they offer. Specialised diplomas should be designed from the start to recognise the full range of CKSA.

The effectiveness and quality of delivery of CKSA within individual institutions should be monitored through external inspection and centre approval arrangements.

QCA should develop guidance and exemplars setting out how CKSA can be integrated into institutions' teaching, learning and assessment. Guidance and exemplar models for effective delivery should also be developed. This should include an examination of the role to be played by personal review, planning and guidance.

Building upon existing qualifications and assessment systems which already accredit some aspects of what we have labelled CKSA (such as the wider Key Skills), diploma components should be available for those who wish some formal accreditation of their attainment within the core and personal development.

Recommendation 9:
personal review, planning and guidance

All 14-19 programmes should include regular formal personal review, planning and guidance to enable learners to:

- review and draw together their progress and achievements, and identify the knowledge, skills and understanding they have gained from the full range of their learning;

- raise their personal awareness, understand their strengths and identify learning and development needs; and

- formulate and review medium- and long-term objectives and goals, based on sound, impartial advice and guidance about the options open to them.

Guidance and exemplar material should be made available to schools, colleges and training providers to support effective delivery and the recording of the outcomes of personal review, planning and guidance.

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Recommendation 10:
wider activities

Wider activities should not be a compulsory component of the core, but they should be an entitlement for all learners. Learners would be strongly encouraged to undertake one or more wider activities which could be detailed on their transcript if they so wished.

Recording and attestation models should be developed and piloted, involving a range of providers and drawing upon existing practice in this field.

Research should be undertaken to establish the extent of the current provision of wider activities and the strategies required to secure equity of access to provision of an agreed standard.

Options for further enhancing the status of wider activities within the diploma should be kept under review in the light of progress towards securing consistent access for all young people.

Recommendation 11:
main learning

Criteria and processes for the development of 14-19 learning programmes and components should be adopted by QCA following the design principles and recommendations set out in this report, as a basis for the design of diplomas and components by awarding bodies and relevant stakeholders.

Particular attention should be paid to:

• the need to ensure that the content of specialised diplomas is coherent and relevant to the area of specialisation. In many cases this would mean a single awarding body or consortium taking responsibility for the overall content and division into components of main learning within individual diplomas; and

• preserving within individual components the integrity of individual subjects and areas of learning and preventing these from becoming fragmented.

Recommendation 12:
vocational main learning

Vocational programmes giving access to a diploma should replace the existing range of vocational qualifications taken by young people.

These should be developed by awarding bodies, working closely with employer organisations, including SSCs, 14-19 providers and HE. They should build upon the best of existing qualifications and operate within design criteria specified by QCA, based on the design parameters set out in this report.

Most vocational lines should incorporate a substantial period of structured work placement, related to the area of specialisation and giving credit towards main learning.

Centre approval criteria should ensure that vocational learning is only delivered where there are appropriate facilities and teachers, tutors and instructors with relevant expertise.

Recommendation 13:
English, mathematics and ICT in main learning

We recommend that – alongside functional maths, literacy and communication and ICT – extended, transition and supplementary components should be available to ensure that these subjects can be pursued in breadth and depth as part of the main learning requirements of 14-19 programmes and diplomas.

Recommendation 14:
modern foreign and community languages

In developing the new 14-19 framework the Government should ensure a comprehensive and flexible modern foreign language offer, building upon the national languages strategy, and ensuring that the 'languages ladder' is integrated into the reformed system.

The existing entitlement to study a modern foreign language at Key Stage 4 should be extended to 16-19 year olds.

The diploma lines should include the option to specialise in modern foreign languages.

The design criteria and process for all named diploma lines should ensure that consideration is given to the inclusion of supplementary modern foreign languages learning as either an elective or a compulsory component.

Recommendation 15:
interlocking diplomas

All diplomas should contain learning not just at the level of the diploma but also at the level below.

Designers of specialised diplomas should be asked to ensure that there is some overlap between the intermediate and advanced versions of their diplomas (e.g. that advanced level diplomas contain some intermediate material), while also ensuring that the balance of the diploma conforms with the requirements for the relevant level.

Recommendation 16:
using a credit system

Each available diploma component should be assigned a credit value according to the volume of learning it contains, and each diploma should require successful achievement of a minimum number of credits. The way credit is established for 14-19 diplomas should be the same as that for qualifications within the adult framework.

Recommendation 17:
meeting the needs of different learners –
entry programmes and diplomas

Learners who cannot access full programmes at foundation level or above should have access to programmes based on personalised planning and targets and entry level components.

The entry diploma should incorporate all the principal features of the diplomas at other levels, including all the elements of core and main learning tailored to learners' needs. The balance between, and levels of achievement within, core and main learning should be allowed to vary according to the capabilities of the learner.

In-course assessment should predominate at this level, supported by training and exemplars to ensure consistent application of standards. Achievement of the diploma should be based on the attainment of individual learning goals.

Successful completion of a personalised programme below foundation level should be recognised through award of an entry diploma.

Entry diplomas should interlock with foundation level through target-setting processes which ensure that learners with the capability undertake components at entry, foundation or higher levels as part of their personalised programme.

Recommendation 18:
meeting the needs of different learners –
entry programmes and diplomas

Entry programmes and diplomas should provide and recognise a range of options relevant to learners' particular needs in employment, later learning and adult life. This should include to the opportunity to undertake components in:

• preparing for employment;

• preparing for independent adult living;

• developing study or learning skills; and

• preparing for supported living.

The broad design framework of entry components should be determined centrally, but schools and colleges should be able to develop their own components and programmes to meet the individual needs of their learners.

A central bank of 'off-the-shelf' components should be available to support entry diplomas.

Recommendation 19: meeting the needs of different learners – foundation and intermediate level

Components and programmes should be developed that recognise the particular needs of learners for whom foundation level would be a significant achievement. These must stand in their own right as effective preparation for employment and adult life for those who are not yet capable of progressing further in learning. Alongside specialised vocational and practical options, these might include components in life skills such as personal finance and food preparation.

Specialised options should be developed within open programmes at foundation and intermediate level, building upon initiatives such as the Increased Flexibility Programme and Young Apprenticeship to provide practical, coherent alternatives to GCSE at Key Stage 4 and to promote progression into relevant open and specialised diploma lines at the end of Key Stage 4.

Assessment at foundation and intermediate components should either:

- enable learners to demonstrate a range of achievement, spanning foundation and intermediate level; or, where this is not possible,
- allow and encourage rapid progression from foundation level to components at intermediate level.

Recommendation 20: in-course assessment

In open diplomas at entry, foundation and intermediate levels, in-course assessment within clear national standards should be the predominant mode of assessment.

Assessment should be based upon a mixture of: ongoing assessment; one-off, time-limited, internal and external written and practical tests and examinations; and project/portfolio work.

Teachers should be able to draw upon banks of tests to supplement the assessment tasks which they devise themselves.

The focus of external assessment and quality control should be on ensuring that: teacher-led judgements are exercised reliably and consistently, through mechanisms such as institutional inspections and validation, teacher training and development; sampling of learners' work; and the establishment of a network of Chartered Assessors who can act as a focus for quality-control within their institutions.

Sufficient resources are made available for: the training and development of teaching staff; the quality assurance system set out in paragraph 148; a national information system and ICT infrastructure that supports tracking of performance data; and performance measures and accountability systems that support this form of assessment.

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Recommendation 21:
assessing functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT

Assessment of functional mathematics, literacy and communication and ICT should:

- be externally set, marked and moderated and based on a mastery model;

- not create a large additional burden on learners, and where appropriate be subsumed within assessment of another relevant subject, such as English; and

- be available to be taken when a young person is ready be assessed in that area.

QCA would need to develop approaches to the assessment of these subjects.

Recommendation 22:
assessing the extended project

Assessment of the extended project should be in-course, carried out by teaching staff or suitably qualified people in other organisations, and should assess the quality of the processes as well as the final piece of work.

Assessment should take place in stages throughout the project, including an oral presentation or viva by the learner, and against level descriptions and nationally agreed guidance and criteria.

Recommendation 23:
advanced level assessment

Advanced level assessment should be a balance between assessment based on professional judgement (in-course) and formal external assessment which reflects both the nature of the learning being assessed and the levels of differentiation required within individual subjects, areas of learning and individual components.

In time, there should be a shift away from external and coursework assessment towards professional, teacher-led assessment, especially at A1, underpinned by the proposed quality assurance arrangements to maintain the dependability of teacher judgements.

The AS and A2 elements of existing A levels should each consist of two rather than three assessment units. In time, this arrangement should be reproduced in equivalent A1 and A2 diploma components.

The levels of teacher-led assessment currently associated with many vocational and occupational qualifications should be retained.

Recommendation 24:
component grading

Each main learning component should be graded appropriately and would use one of three scales:

– fail/pass;

– fail/pass/merit/distinction; or

– for some advanced components, fail/E/D/C/B/A/A+/A++.

These three scales should retain common grade boundaries to establish the equivalence of components graded in different ways.

Recommendation 25:
diploma grading

All successfully completed diplomas at foundation, intermediate and advanced level should be graded pass, merit or distinction.

Grades above pass should be awarded on the basis of a combination of breadth and depth of achievement.

Grading criteria should be fixed and transparent, so that any candidate who achieves the defined breadth and depth should receive the relevant grade. This means that patterns of achievement may vary over time.

QCA should advise on establishing grading criteria for each diploma line which represent increments of additional value above a threshold pass.

Entry diplomas should not be graded.

Recommendation 26:
the transcript

All learners should receive a transcript, detailing achievements within their 14-19 programmes to accompany the award of a diploma and to provide a record of their progress at key transition points, such as moving between institutions.

The transcript should be available electronically and be capable of acting as an on-line gateway to further more detailed information about the learner.

Recommendation 27:
integrating apprenticeships

All apprenticeships at levels 2 and 3 (equivalent to intermediate and advanced levels) should eventually incorporate the same components of core learning that are adopted for every other 14-19 programme at that level, but with sector bodies determining all other aspects of programme content to meet the employment requirements of their sector and satisfy the needs of the young people concerned.

Sector bodies should be encouraged to adopt the components of core learning by the early development and release of specifications and the provision of appropriate resources and support to assist their introduction.

Technical Certificates used in apprenticeship should, from the start, feature as options within relevant diploma lines.

Sectors with apprenticeships that already include some or all of the components of core learning and meet the minimum threshold size of an intermediate and/or advanced diploma award should be encouraged to align their frameworks with the diploma system, with appropriate incentives for them to do so.

Once the appropriate systems are in place, trainees should receive full credit for all their achievements during the apprenticeship programme and recognition by means of the transcript.

Recommendation 28:
bridging between diplomas and apprenticeships

Once the new diploma system is in place for all 14-19 year-olds:

- apprentices whose sector frameworks do not meet the threshold requirements for a diploma award should be guaranteed access to impartial advice and guidance on completion of the relevant diploma, if they wish to do so; and

- sector bodies with apprenticeship frameworks which do not meet the threshold requirements for a diploma award should design one or more 'bridging programmes' to enable those who wish to do so to complete a full diploma that is relevant to the employment needs of the sector and satisfies the aspirations and potential of the individual.

Recommendation 29: reducing the assessment burden

GCE A level specifications should be revised to reduce the number of units in an A level from six to four, and reduce the weight and prescription of the assessment criteria, as already proposed by QCA.

GCSE and GCE should have no specific requirement for coursework.

Research into the impact on attainment for specific groups of learners should be undertaken.

The NAA's work on modernisation should be extended to cover the vocational awarding bodies.

Moving swiftly to establish a single point of entry for registration of learners for qualifications would reduce considerably the assessment burden on centres.

Use of electronic learning and assessment in 14-19 provision should be extended.

Recommendation 30: Key Stage 3

5-14 education, and particularly KS3, should be reviewed to ensure that it prepares young people to make the most of opportunities post-14. Particular attention should be paid to lessons from the KS3 strategy and two-year KS3 pilot, particularly in focusing on basic skills, and options for enhancing curriculum flexibility to allow time for learning.

Systems should be introduced for identifying and measuring, during KS3, as full a range as possible of each young person's latent potential – in the form of aptitudes, interests and other characteristics – as a basis for building confidence and motivation, informing the choice of pathways through the 14-19 phase, underpinning the development of individual learning plans and choice of work experience placements, and providing a foundation for subsequent career, learning and life decisions.

Recommendation 31: aligning 14-19 and adult learning

The approaches to credit in the diploma framework and Framework for Recognising Achievement should be developed to ensure consistency and transferability where appropriate across the two frameworks.

Recommendation 32: institutional performance measurement

In reforming the performance management system, the Government should pay particular attention to:

- promoting participation at levels appropriate to the young people concerned, by recognising increased success in keeping young people in learning, especially after the end of compulsory schooling;

- fostering flexible progression throughout the 14-19 phase which recognises that not all programmes at a given level will take the same length of time for all learners, especially by focusing on continued participation and distance-travelled, rather than specific outcomes at specific ages, before the end of the phase;

- recognising institutions' success in raising the highest level of achievement which their learners reach, especially by focusing on achievement when young people leave the phase;

- ensuring that the achievements of all young people are counted, enabling all young people to feel pride in their achievements;

- recognising the collaborative efforts of all those institutions which contribute to 14-19 programmes, by giving credit for success to all partners in collaborative arrangements; and

- promoting responsible, professional assessment by teachers, by ensuring that their primary consideration is to deliver valid, dependable judgements on their learners, rather than to provide institutional performance monitoring data.

Recommendation 33: implementation strategy

The strategy for implementing reform should include:

- early implementation of some changes that would deliver benefits in their own right and pave the way for implementation of the new system;

- continuation and support of curriculum innovation projects to encourage them to accommodate and pilot elements of the new system;

- establishment of a four-year pilot of the diploma system with a sample of 14-19 year olds. Evaluation of the pilot prior to full roll-out should consider whether it meets the objectives we have set and whether it has any adverse impacts on a specific group of learners; and

- extensive research and modelling of the proposals and their impact on institutions and systems.

A strategy for communication between those involved in delivery, and with stakeholders, young people and the public should be established in the early stages of the work and maintained throughout.

Recommendation 34: resources

We recommend that funding of the reforms should take account of:

- transition costs, including:

  - workforce development

  - curriculum and assessment development

  - developing and piloting the diploma components and system in operation, including the infrastructure to support the system

  - building the national and local infrastructure – including ICT-based information systems, and awarding infrastructure support for extended projects, wider activities and common skills, local planning and increased collaboration

  - communication;

- steady state costs, including:

  - the impact of increased participation, greater take-up of vocational courses and their additional cost and higher average programme volume

  - funding per pupil

  - local infrastructure, to support the assessment system, local timetabling, increased collaboration and improved, information advice and guidance with better advice on pathways and opportunities

  - maintenance of national infrastructure, including ICT and data management to support the diploma system.

Recommendation 35: advising on implementation

Alongside the implementation programme, management arrangements would be needed to ensure that all the strands of activity are co-ordinated and contribute effectively to the implementation process. We recommend the establishment of an independent advisory panel comprising key stakeholders and experts (including young people and representation of equal opportunities issues) to advise upon the implementation of the reforms.

Recommendation 36: decoupling of AS and A2 (annex J)

AS and A2 should be decoupled as A1 and A2 diploma components at the point of transition from free-standing A levels to the diploma system.