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Qualifications and
Curriculum Authority



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The Prospectus for Progression Pathways

Of interest to providers, Awarding Bodies and Sector Skills Councils, and to people and organisations involved in learning and skills at Entry level and Level 1

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We welcome comments and feedback on this document, please email cvhQualificationsandFrameworkReform@lsc.gov.uk.

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Purpose of Document

- 1 This document has been produced to support Awarding Bodies in the design and development of qualifications for inclusion in Progression Pathways, and to support Providers in planning and delivering Progression Pathways which will enable learners to progress to new and relevant learning destinations. This document also sets out the responsibilities and expectations of Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) in the development of Progression Pathways. As Progression Pathways are further developed and implemented this document will be subject to revision and expansion. It is anticipated that this document will be revised as a working version for 2008/09 in summer 2008. It is then anticipated a final version of this Prospectus will be produced in summer 2009 to support the delivery of Progression Pathways as an established part of mainstream provision from 1 August 2009.
- 2 Progression Pathways are not qualifications in and of themselves but are frameworks for learning, built from qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 within the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) – the Foundation Learning Tier. In order for qualifications submitted for accreditation into the QCF to be eligible for inclusion in a Progression Pathway, there are additional criteria which both the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) expect Awarding Bodies to follow. These criteria are identified in paragraphs 51 to 56 on pages 18 and 19 of this document. SSCs also have a role and responsibilities in this and these are also set out in the relevant section of this document.
- 3 Similarly, in delivering a Progression Pathway, there are particular requirements the LSC will expect providers to follow and show evidence of; these requirements are identified in paragraphs 57 to 73 on pages 20 to 23 of this document.
- 4 The need for additional criteria and requirements for Awarding Bodies and providers in the context of Progression Pathways is to ensure that appropriate and high quality qualifications are available across Progression Pathways, and that providers can access and deliver those qualifications within a coherent and high quality programme.
- 5 This document identifies what is permissible within Progression Pathways, both in terms of eligible qualifications and in terms of expectations of delivery, achievement and progression of learners. The current LSC Provider Requirements and the Principles for the Delivery of Entry Level and Level 1 Progression Pathways are incorporated within this document. This document will also form the basis for the confirmation of Progression Pathways through a LSC convened a panel (which will act as a sub-group of the existing Foundation Learning Tier Programme Board). This panel will

also monitor and sample the ongoing progress, development and implementation of Progression Pathways, working closely with Awarding Bodies, providers and, where relevant, SSCs.

Introduction

- 6 The LSC and the QCA are working together to reform provision below Level 2. By 2010 a revised set of credit-based units and qualifications will be in place with clear progression routes through Entry Level and Level 1 to Level 2 in order to raise participation and achievement amongst learners and help them to progress through work and life. This programme of work is known as the Foundation Learning Tier; Foundation Learning Tier is also the term used to describe qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 within the QCF.
- 7 The Foundation Learning Tier is being developed in response to the concern that for some learners the 'gap' from Entry Level to Level 2 is too large and too complex in terms of qualification structure, or simply too inaccessible.
- 8 The Foundation Learning Tier reform is also being developed because there is a significant amount of provision at Entry Level and Level 1 which fails to lead to any progression and tends to trap learners in a revolving door of engagement and recurring achievement at the same level.
- 9 A key outcome of the Foundation Learning Tier reform is the development of Progression Pathways. These are frameworks for learning built from Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications within the QCF. Each Progression Pathway will include three distinct components namely, vocational knowledge, skills and understanding; Functional Skills¹ and personal and social development, which will be supported by a wrap-around of information, advice and guidance, effective initial assessment, comprehensive ongoing review, and provider collaboration. Progression Pathways are specifically designed to promote progression as well as helping learners to achieve formal qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1.
- 10 Over time, the LSC will concentrate more of the funding identified for the Foundation Learning Tier on Progression Pathways. Whilst not all qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 within the QCF will need to be offered within a Progression Pathway, and learners may still choose to follow 'stand alone' qualifications outside of a Progression Pathway, these qualifications outside of a Progression Pathway may not be an automatic priority for public funding.
- 11 By 2010/11, Progression Pathways will replace current arrangements in terms of the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme, Entry to Employment,

¹ Functional skills are practical skills in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT) that allow individuals to work confidently, effectively and independently in life. To ensure that Functional Skills are readily available to the full range of learners, they are being offered as free-standing qualifications at Entry Level, Level 1 and Level 2 during the three-year Functional Skills pilot that began in September 2007.

Foundation Learning in Further Education and First Steps learning. These proposals are expected to have benefits for some of the most disadvantaged learners.

- 12 Provision within the Adult Learning Safeguard – which includes family literacy language and numeracy; wider family learning; neighbourhood learning in deprived communities; and, personal and community development learning – is out of scope of the Foundation Learning Tier programme of work. Provision for Learners with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities, however, is within the scope of the programme. Provision within the Adult Learning Safeguard will be examined as part of the strategy to identify which provision outside of Sector Qualification Strategies should or may be brought within the QCF; this work will begin in 2008.

Overview of Progression Pathways – purpose, rationale and implementation

13 Progression Pathways are necessary to:

- improve progression through Entry Level and Level 1 towards Level 2 where learners are unable to progress direct to the Level 2 threshold (and provide a mechanism to ensure that funding supports progression)
- provide a sound foundation for employment and progression
- create an underpinning minimum threshold around skills – depth and breadth
- specify requirements around quality of the learning programme, including initial assessment, personalisation and provider collaboration.

14 Progression Pathways will:

- be drawn from qualifications in the QCF
- end with achievement at Level 1 and progression opportunities to Level 2 and beyond, or to other meaningful destinations
- take into account the learning capacity and starting point of learners in order to ensure access to appropriate levels of achievement and progression destinations.

15 The Progression Pathways identified as priorities for development in 2007/08; are intended to provide progression:

- to a first full Level 2
- to a Level 2 Apprenticeship Framework
- to independent living or supported employment
- to a Foundation (Level 1) Diploma or GCSEs.

Design and Criteria for Progression Pathways

16 The LSC will own Progression Pathways² and determine the title and number. Working with QCA, the LSC will also determine the specifications of each Progression Pathway that will detail the minimum requirements in terms of level, credit and content. In order for qualifications to be considered as eligible for inclusion within a Progression Pathway, Awarding Bodies will have to explain how their qualifications fit within those minimum requirements and align with the purpose of the Progression Pathway. Through the web based accreditation (WBA) process³ for the QCF, QCA

² With the exception of 14-16, which will be developed and owned by QCA

³ Please see http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_4222.aspx for more information

will have responsibility for confirming which qualifications fall into which Progression Pathway and will flag qualifications accredited into QCF as eligible for inclusion within Progression Pathways where appropriate. The LSC will oversee the process for monitoring and sampling the packages of provision within Progression Pathways to ensure conformity to criteria.

- 17 The LSC will work with QCA to ensure there is a robust process for flagging qualifications accredited into QCF as appropriate and eligible for inclusion within Progression Pathways.
- 18 Through the expert panel identified above, the LSC will oversee the process for monitoring and sampling the packages of provision within Progression Pathways to ensure conformity to criteria.

Curriculum Design Principles

- a Progression Pathways must be built using provision from the QCF⁴. A Progression Pathway is a combination of appropriate qualifications drawn from Entry Level and Level 1 of the QCF and as such may be regarded as a framework for learning. A Progression Pathway is not a qualification in itself. There is no achievement or certification associated with the completion of a Progression Pathway as they are specifically designed to promote progression as well as to help learners to achieve formal qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1.
- b The destinations of the first four Progression Pathways identified for early development and phased implementation from September 2008 are:
 - to a first full Level 2 – initially for adults and anticipated to support progression and access to Level 2 for those adults who would be unable to progress direct to a first full Level 2⁵
 - to a Level 2 Apprenticeship framework – a ‘Pre-Apprenticeship’ developed as both a Progression Pathway and as part of the ‘Apprenticeship family’. This Progression Pathway will therefore form part of the Apprenticeship entitlement and so is focussed initially on 16 to 18 year olds, but will potentially over time extend to 19 to 25 year olds
 - to independent living or supported employment – designed primarily for those learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who wish to move to independent living or supported employment. It is recognised that some adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will access other Progression Pathways. The

⁴ The technical specifications for the QCF and other related information can be found at www.qca.org.uk/framework.

⁵ During the modelling and development activities we will be exploring the place of sustainable employment with training as either or both a destination and a delivery model.

Progression Pathway to independent living or supported employment is appropriate for learners of all ages; 16 to 18 year olds, 19 to 25 year olds and learners over 26 years of age.

- to a Foundation (Level 1) Diploma or GCSEs – an offer at Entry Level specifically targeted at 14 to 16 year old learners⁶.

Employability and employment as such will not be a specific or necessary destination from Progression Pathways. The development of an individual's employability skills however, is implicit (and contributes added value) across all Progression Pathways not least through the deliberate inclusion of vocational qualifications. Successful achievement of these help equip learners with the knowledge, skills and/or competence directly relevant to work or employment. They also provide a range of sector-related knowledge, skills and capabilities that serve as a pre-entry qualification for preparation for employability in that sector⁷.

- c In identifying four Progression Pathways, it is important to state that, for some learners, progression may be across Progression Pathways and that the Progression Pathways themselves share a degree of interdependencies. Whilst Progression Pathways must provide structure for the individual, the inherent flexibility of the technical specifications of the QCF must be utilised where appropriate to take account of learners who seek to begin on one Progression Pathway but then move across to another.
- d Horizontal progression and accumulation of accredited achievement for small steps of learning will be important for some learners for whom vertical progression, including to Level 2, may not be appropriate, although we would expect the majority of learners to progress to Level 2. The LSC would only expect to fund horizontal progression:
- where a learner begins on one Progression Pathway, accumulates achievement but decides that they should be on another Progression Pathway; although we would expect, given the emphasis on effective information, advice and guidance, and robust initial assessment, that such circumstances would be rare, and where this did occur we would expect this to be at an individual learner level and not for whole cohorts of learners
 - where we must support the relatively small number of learners for whom vertical progression is not a reality, this is in line with emerging adult policy and Progression through Partnership, these learners may either leave with achievement at their potential or seek horizontal progression.

⁶ Activity is also ongoing as part of the Foundation Learning Tier programme of work to explore Entry Level engagement provision for adults.

⁷ Taken from the definition of vocational qualifications as agreed by the UK VQ Reform Programme Board.

- e Progression Pathways must cover the three curriculum areas of vocational knowledge, skills and understanding; Functional Skills; and personal and social development skills. The weighting and combination of these three areas will depend on the requirements of the Progression Pathway and the learner's:
- aims and aspirations
 - prior achievement or attainment
 - starting point
 - learning capacity.
- f The principal curriculum element of the learner's programme will reflect the destination of the Progression Pathway, for example, within the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship and the Progression Pathway to a first full Level 2, the principal curriculum element should be vocational, for the independent living Progression Pathway the principal curriculum element would be personal and social development skills.
- g To ensure the opportunity for learner progression, qualifications within Progression Pathways will make use of the flexibilities of the QCF. All four Progression Pathways allow for the achievement of both more credit and higher levels where this appropriate to the individual learner; specifically:
- qualifications approved within Progression Pathways will include units which count towards QCF qualifications at Level 2⁸
 - qualifications approved within Progression Pathways will allow the potential to achieve appropriate units at Level 2⁹.
- In both these instances, when the qualification is part of the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship or the Progression Pathway for adults to access a first full Level 2, any Level 2 units achieved must map against the component qualifications of the Level 2 offer.
- h Qualifications accredited within the QCF will be sized in standard learner numbers (SLN) terms on the Learning Aims Database (LAD). SLN are a measure of the volume of learning activity. Funding of a Progression Pathway will be calculated based on the SLN value of each qualification recorded on the Learners ILR. The LSC will fund a learner programme up to a maximum of 1.75 SLN in any one academic year.

⁸ Within current technical specifications for the QCF this could mean units at Entry Level 3, Level 1 or Level 2.

⁹ This is to ensure all Progression Pathways offer the scope to achieve at Level 2. Individual learners however will not be obliged to achieve at Level 2 if it is not appropriate from them to do so unless the specification of the Progression Pathway requires this achievement.

- i The existing eligibility restrictions in regard to provision to meet employers' statutory responsibilities would still apply. The implications of this are specific learning aims including first aid, food safety, and health and safety, would only be eligible for funding where they are clearly part of a coherent programme of learning and are not already embedded within the vocational learning being delivered as part of the Progression Pathway. The exception would be within the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship whereby these aims would be ineligible for funding as we would expect them to be embedded within the vocational learning; this is in line with the existing arrangements for Apprenticeships. This is only an exception currently, in future under the QCF we would expect vocational qualifications to be designed with these units embedded within them. The funding rules are detailed within the appropriate Funding Guidance documents that can be found on the LSC website.

Functional Skills

- j Functional Skills are a required element of Progression Pathways, as such, and given that 2009/10 will be the first year when delivery of Progression Pathways becomes an established part of mainstream provision, Progression Pathways will form part of the transition between existing arrangements and Functional Skills. This also ensures that Progression Pathways are only built from QCF Provision.
- k Where a learner does not have an appropriate English, maths or Information and Communication Technology (ICT) qualification it is expected that they will achieve the relevant Functional Skills qualification as part of their Progression Pathway.
- l Learners are not expected to achieve multiple qualifications in the same Functional Skills area at different levels within a Progression Pathway. As such, effective initial assessment will be required to ensure that learners are put into the correct level assessment to enable stretch and promote progression. Learners might however, be able to undertake additional Functional Skills assessments through the Skills for Life Entitlement outside, but at the same time as, their Progression Pathway.
- m ESOL qualifications from within the QCF might be eligible for inclusion within Progression Pathways within the LSC's existing funding eligibility restrictions, for more information please see the appropriate Funding Guidance documents on the LSC website.

Personal and Social Development Skills

- n In considering the personal and social development aspects of an individual learner's Progression Pathway, consideration must be given to the full

range of personal and social development learning, comprising interpersonal skills, intrapersonal skills and wider community development skills including amongst others, citizenship and rights and responsibilities. This needs to be balanced with the principal learning route and the focus on the best choices to achieve progression¹⁰.

Principles for the Individual Progression Pathways

The Progression Pathway to a first full Level 2

- 19 This Progression Pathway is being initially designed for adults and is anticipated to support achievement and progression to a first full Level 2.
- 20 The Progression Pathway is built around the achievement of a certificate sized qualification¹¹, supported by the achievement of Functional Skills in Maths, English and ICT at, at least, the minimum specified levels.
- 21 The focus of the certificate-sized qualification must be developing vocational knowledge, skills and understanding which includes developing cross-cutting employability skills.
- 22 Within the personal and social development strand, provision should develop the interpersonal, intrapersonal and wider community skills that would be expected in the workplace and that underpin further study and success in life.
- 23 The minimum requirements to complete the Progression Pathway are:
 - achievement of at least one certificate sized qualification at Level 1
 - achievement of at least four credits of personal and social development skills
 - achievement of Functional Skills in ICT at least at Entry Level 2 (5 credits)
 - achievement of Functional Skills in Maths at least at Entry Level 2 (5 credits)
 - achievement of Functional Skills in English at least at Entry Level 3 (5 credits).
- 24 The levels for the achievement of Functional Skills represent the level required for entry into, and therefore the level below, what might be seen as the required benchmark in a broad Level 2 offer.

¹⁰ The Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills framework (for further information see http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_13476.aspx) covers the same area of skills as Personal and Social Development; as part of the phased implementation of Progression Pathways we will be moving towards using one framework (PLTS) by 2010/11 ensuring that it is appropriate for both young people and adult learners.

¹¹ A certificate-sized qualification is currently defined within the QCF as between 13 and 36 credits however this might be subject to amendment following the QCF regulatory arrangements consultation.

- 25 The achievement of credits in personal and social development may be embedded within other qualifications as appropriate.

The Progression Pathway to a Level 2 Apprenticeship framework

- 26 The Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship is being developed as both a Progression Pathway and as part of the Apprenticeship family to form part of the Apprenticeship entitlement. It is initially focussed upon 16 to 18 year olds but potentially in time will extend to 19 to 25 year olds.
- 27 Through the 'expert panel', the LSC will put in place a mechanism to ensure that the current Apprenticeship Approvals Group (AAG) will also endorse the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship across sectors.
- 28 The qualifications and levels of achievement within the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship must align with the entry requirements of the destination Apprenticeship framework. In addition, consideration should be given to the importance of an enhanced emphasis on employment rights, responsibilities and skills specifically related to the framework sector and job roles the learner is considering.
- 29 The vocational strand (and qualification(s)) should embrace sector specific learning and the opportunity to begin to accumulate credit towards the vocational component of the Apprenticeship. This must be supported by the achievement of Functional Skills in Maths, English and ICT at the appropriate level and relevant personal and social development learning.
- 30 The Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship cannot be a retrospective offer for learners and must begin as a result of initial assessment.
- 31 The minimum requirements to complete the Progression Pathway are:
- achievement of at least one certificate sized qualification at Level 1
 - achievement of at least four credits of personal and social development skills
 - achievement of Functional Skills in ICT (5 credits)
 - achievement of Functional Skills in Maths (5 credits)
 - achievement of Functional Skills in English (5 credits).
- 32 Minimum levels for the achievement of Functional Skills will be determined during the development work in 2007/08 and 2008/09. It must also be recognised that there will be different Functional Skills requirements for different sector routes within the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship as determined by the destination Apprenticeship framework.

- 33 The achievement of credits in personal and social development may be embedded within other qualifications as appropriate.

The Progression Pathway to independent living or supported employment

- 34 This Progression Pathway has been designed primarily for those learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities who wish to move to independent living or supported employment. It is recognised that some adults with learning difficulties and/or disabilities will access other Progression Pathways. The Progression Pathway to independent living or supported employment is appropriate for both 16 to 18 year olds and 19 to 25 year old learners.

- 35 The Disability Rights Commission¹² has defined independent living as referring to:

“all disabled people having the same choice, control and freedom as any other citizen – at home, at work, and as members of the community. This does not necessarily mean disabled people 'doing everything for themselves', but it does mean that any practical assistance people need should be based on their own choices and aspirations.”¹³

As such, the Progression Pathway towards independent living must focus upon helping the learner develop the underpinning skills to express their choice, control and freedom.

- 36 Supported employment services specialise in working with disabled people to help them find employment and provide ongoing support once they are in a job. In supported employment the focus is usually on finding ‘real jobs in the community’ rather than sheltered employment. One of the principles of supported employment is a strong belief that no one who wants to work is unemployable and as such the Progression Pathway to supported employment is focussed in helping the learners acquire the underpinning skills and abilities needed to enter and sustain supported employment.
- 37 The Progression Pathway is built around the achievement of an award sized qualification of at least six credits, supported by the achievement of Functional Skills and personal and social development learning at the appropriate level for the learner, where relevant.
- 38 The focus of the award-sized qualification can be either on vocational or personal and social development elements. It is expected that where the intended destination is independent living, the focus would be on the

¹² As of 1 October 2007 the Disability Rights Commission became part of the Equality and Human Rights Commission

¹³ Disability Rights Commission (2002) Policy Statement on Social care and Independent Living

personal and social development element, and where the intended destination is supported employment that the focus would be on developing vocational knowledge, skills and understanding which includes developing cross-cutting employability skills.

- 39 The minimum requirements to complete the Progression Pathway are:
- achievement of at least one award sized qualification of at least six credits at the appropriate Entry Level.
 - achievement of at least 13 credits in total, of which at least four must be in personal and social development learning.
- 40 Functional Skills achievement is essential where relevant and appropriate for the learner.
- 41 The achievement of credits in personal and social development may be embedded within other qualifications as appropriate.
- 42 Progression Pathways will not be appropriate or relevant for all learners and this is particularly the situation for some learners with profound and complex needs. The LSC is investigating the scope, nature and scale of provision that it might support outside of Progression Pathways.

The Progression Pathway to a Foundation Diploma or GCSEs

- 43 The purpose of this Progression Pathway is to support Key Stage 4 learners who are working predominately within the Entry sub-levels (Entry Level 1, 2 and 3). It is intended to provide progression on to the Foundation (Level 1) Diploma or GCSEs for those learners with the potential to progress. It will support the aims of the National Curriculum and of Every Child Matters and will provide greater potential for recognising achievement through qualifications better suited to the needs and abilities of learners at this age and level(s).
- 44 The Progression Pathway will be available from the start of Key Stage 4. It is designed to provide a motivating and engaging experience for those at risk of disengaging, with progression focussed on the Foundation Diploma or GCSEs. In order to ensure this, the Progression Pathway specification needs to be flexible enough to allow for the following key features:
- Delivery needs to be flexible - learners should not be required to achieve at Entry Level before moving on to Level 1 or 2 achievement, and qualifications within the Progression Pathway should include the potential for Level 1 achievement where appropriate. This achievement must articulate with the components of the Foundation Diploma

- It needs to support the delivery of the national curriculum, covering the statutory programmes of study for the core subjects (English; Mathematics; Science, ICT; Physical education (PE) and Citizenship as well as Religious Education, sex education and work related learning) and underpinning the young person's entitlement to areas of learning in the arts, humanities, languages and design and technology, or a Diploma route
 - It needs to respond to the focus of the revised programmes of study on building skills across the curriculum, and the three aims of helping all children become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens
 - It needs to include the potential for both sectoral / vocational content and subject-based achievement
- 45 In order to achieve these aims the following minimum requirements for the 14-16 Progression Pathway are:
- achievement of at least one certificate sized qualification at Entry Level 1, 2 or 3
 - achievement of at least four credits of personal and social development skills
 - achievement of at least Functional Skills in Maths, English and ICT at Entry Level 1, 2 or 3 (5 credits each).
- 46 The focus of the certificate-sized qualification may be sectoral / vocational, it is assumed that this will focus on developing cross-cutting employability skills, or subject knowledge.
- 47 The Progression Pathway will support the achievement of Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS). In the post-16 context this strand of Progression Pathway content has been referred to as personal and social development. The Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills framework covers the same area of skills, and will support the achievement of the citizenship programme of study. Where appropriate the draft common units in personal and social development currently being trialled within the QCF will provide a vehicle for accrediting these skills.
- 48 Within the personal and social development (PLTS) strand, provision should develop attitudes and behaviour expected in the workplace as well as further study. This strand should also cover preparation for transition into an Apprenticeship or the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship. Achievement of credits in this area may be embedded within sectoral / vocational qualifications as appropriate.
- 49 It is proposed, subject to agreement at the Foundation Learning Tier Programme Board, to begin phased implementation of this Progression

Pathway from September 2008. This would utilise pilot-based qualifications within the QCF. The reason for taking a pilot based approach is to ensure that links with the revised programmes of study (which roll out from 2009) are explored prior to full roll-out, and that time is allowed to explore the position of the QCF as a pre-16 framework (see below). Pilot organisations would be those identified by Awarding Bodies, those previously involved in the development of Foundation Learning Tier pre-16 and – where appropriate – those Gateway institutions involved in the phased implementation of the Foundation Diploma.

- 50 The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is asking its 14-19 Expert Advisory Group to advise on the strategic direction of the 14-19 qualifications offer, for consultation early in 2008. This will include consideration of the place of 14-19 qualifications within the QCF. In this context it will consider how this Progression Pathway might fit as the Entry Level element of the strategy pre-16. As part of this it will look at how best to incentivise completion and progression in a pre-16 context, including how funding, performance and inspection levers could be used, and the potential role of the QCF.

Requirements Part 1 – Awarding Bodies

- 51 This section sets out the requirements for Awarding Bodies to have qualifications accredited by the QCA for use within Progression Pathways. It provides a single set of requirements which will apply to all qualifications being put forward for use within any of the four Progression Pathways.¹⁴
- 52 All qualifications eligible for inclusion within any Progression Pathway must:
- i. be accredited within the QCF, using the working specification until the final QCF criteria are agreed
 - ii. align with the aims and purposes for Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications set out in the FLT qualifications strategy (appendix 1) and agreed with QCA via early dialogue
 - iii. support the aims and purposes of the Progression Pathway(s) within which they sit
 - iv. consist of shared units¹⁵
 - v. as appropriate, make use of agreed common units where these have been developed (for example personal and social development, at Entry Level 1, and in Functional Skills)
 - vi. where the aim is progression to Level 2, include units which count towards QCF qualifications at Level 2, specifically those identified within approved Apprenticeship frameworks and approved full Level 2 qualifications.¹⁶
 - vii. where appropriate, include the potential for unit achievement at a higher or lower level than the overall award. Specifically where Level 2 achievement is the aim, rules of combination must allow for achievement of appropriate units at Level 2¹⁷.
- 53 Within the existing regulatory arrangements for the QCF vocational qualifications at all levels, including Entry Level and Level 1, must carry the approval of the relevant SSC or Standard Setting Body (SSB) for accreditation into the QCF. Where qualifications cover cross sector or employability skills they will require the support from the Skills for Business Network (SfBN)¹⁸.

¹⁴ The requirements set out in this section are not requirements for accrediting qualifications, only to recognising them within Progression Pathways. The qualification regulators will accredit qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 which do not support Progression Pathways, where these meet learner/employer need.

¹⁵ The level of information contained in QCF units is sufficient to support the accumulation and transfer of credit as appropriate. A unit does not contain information or guidance to learning providers or learners themselves on the supporting curriculum, content or assessment method of that unit.

¹⁶ Within current technical specifications for the QCF this could mean units at Entry Level 3, Level 1 or Level 2.

¹⁷ This is to ensure all Progression Pathways offer the scope to achieve at Level 2. Individual learners however will not be obliged to achieve at Level 2 if it is not appropriate from them to do so unless the specification of the Progression Pathway requires this achievement.

¹⁸ From 1 April 2008, the 25 Sector Skills Councils will be part of the Alliance of Sector Skills Councils

- 54 Where the qualification is intended to fit within the Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship or the Progression Pathway for adults to access a first full Level 2, any Level 2 units included in the rule of combination must enable achievement towards the destination Apprenticeship framework or full Level 2 qualifications.
- 55 At the point of accreditation Awarding Bodies will be asked to indicate which Progression Pathway(s) a qualification supports through a question on the Web Based Accreditation system. QCA will endorse this indication through standard accreditation review and, prior to this, via early dialogue. This indication will be flagged onto the National Database of Accredited Qualifications and indicated on the Learning Aims Database to allow providers to choose from available qualifications to complete each Progression Pathway.
- 56 All Awarding Bodies submitting qualifications will be required (through new regulatory arrangements for the QCF) to provide a Foundation Learning Tier strategy and plan for Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications indicating what provision they intend to develop over a 12 month period and how this supports the aims of FLT and which Progression Pathways it will support, if any. This will be monitored as part of the regulatory arrangements for the QCA.

Requirements Part 2 – Providers

- 57 This section provides guidance on implementing Progression Pathways for providers. The requirements identify the components that providers must deliver in the context of Progression Pathways.
- 58 The LSC will expect providers delivering Progression Pathways to ensure that the portfolio of qualifications offered within each Progression Pathway is a coherent offer. Some providers may choose to purchase all the component qualifications from the same Awarding Body; however, the LSC also recognises that some providers may well seek further flexibility and choice by offering qualifications from several Awarding Bodies; we will seek to work with Awarding Bodies to better understand the benefits and choices that can be offered to providers. Where a provider is using several Awarding Bodies the following mechanisms will be expected to be evidenced:
- the offer is coherent and that the purpose of the qualification selected is considered alongside the likely progression route of the Progression Pathway
 - the package will support embedding and integration of learning across the three strands
 - the requirements of the qualifications selected do not dictate a curriculum or approach to teaching and learning that works against the learning needs of the individual
 - credit can be accumulated and transferred and that the assessment burden for learner is streamlined (although this must not compromise appropriateness or rigour). In selecting qualifications from a range of Awarding Bodies providers should consider not just the outcomes, but how the qualification can act as a motivating factor.
- 59 The LSC has revised and amplified the current provider requirements document to create a new set of Requirements of Providers for Progression Pathways for inclusion within this document. These new requirements incorporate the Principles for the Delivery of Entry Level and Level 1 Progression Pathways, and include further checks and balances to ensure providers build and deliver Progression Pathways in a coherent way. Coherence therefore becomes an essential part of the criteria for providers wanting to deliver Progression Pathways.
- 60 The LSC will also expect that providers will have determined first that the learner genuinely needs Foundation Learning Tier provision before progressing to their higher level destination and that they have identified potential destination routes (including other providers who may be offering

Apprenticeships or Diplomas) and that, where appropriate the Progression Pathway offer is mapped against receiving provider destinations.

61 The coherence of the content of Progression Pathways is critical, as important however is the delivery and the 'wrappers' around the learning programme in terms of aspects such as effective information advice and guidance, robust initial assessment and ongoing support. The requirements therefore cover both curriculum design and delivery as well as the structural and organisational aspects for Progression Pathway, including:

- personalised learning
- recognition of achievement and progression
- coherent Progression Pathways
- effective initial assessment and ongoing review
- reaching priority learners
- partnerships
- support for learners
- organisation and management.

62 The full version of the requirements is in appendix 2.

Phased Implementation of Progression Pathways in LSC funded Provision

63 The first year of phased implementation (2007/08) of Progression Pathways will be a developmental year, where the LSC with the Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) will work with providers (approximately 80) to model and develop the first three Progression Pathways (QCA lead on the fourth Progression Pathway which is intended to promote progression to the Foundation Diploma or GCSEs). Approximately 40 of the providers will focus specifically on modelling and developing Progression Pathway to an Apprenticeship and will work with NQF provision within the overall pattern of the Progression Pathway structure¹⁹. Through this work an online resource will be developed to support all providers from 2008/09. To complement this programme of provider development and support, activities to support workforce development for post-16 providers are being taken forward through LLUK²⁰ who are aware of developments in the Foundation Learning Tier.

¹⁹ It is anticipated that components of Apprenticeships will now be drawn from the QCF.

²⁰ Lifelong Learning UK is the Sector Skills Council responsible for the professional development of all those working in community learning and development; further education; higher education; libraries, archives and information services; and work-based learning. More information is available at <http://www.lifelonglearninguk.org/>

- 64 In 2008/09 the priority Progression Pathways will be delivered by providers involved in the development and modelling work in 2007/08. This delivery will be on a developmental basis.
- 65 To support the development and implementation of Progression Pathways the LSC will ensure that over 2007/08 and 2008/09 it continues to appropriately manage the mix of programmes and balance of existing provision at Entry Level (to include the current concept of pre-entry) and Level 1 to secure a breadth of provision that could potentially support Progression Pathways for adults.
- 66 2009/10 will be the first year when delivery of Progression Pathways becomes an established part of mainstream provision, as the number of qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 within the QCF continues to grow. We would therefore expect to see a significant increase in the number of providers delivering Progression Pathways in this year in preparation for full implementation in 2010/11. This means that we would also expect to see a substantial reduction in existing provision such as Entry to Employment, first steps, and foundation learning in Further Education, as these programmes are replaced by the new provision.
- 67 2010/11 will see the full implementation of a complete set of Progression Pathways supported by a sufficient number of Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications within the QCF. It is therefore anticipated that by 2010/11 all legacy provision (such as Entry to Employment, first steps, and foundation learning in Further Education) will have been replaced.
- 68 By 2010 it is anticipated that the transition from the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to the QCF will be more or less complete. Providers and Awarding Bodies should already be aware of the work the LSC is taking forward with regard to aligning public funding to priority qualifications identified by SSCs within the QCF²¹.
- 69 This document is a working version for 2007/08, the document will be further developed, refined and articulated through consultation with stakeholders, partners, Awarding Bodies and providers, both pre 16 and post 16, especially in the post 16 context through the QIA support and development programme being delivered by the Learning and Skills Network²². Providers within the support and development programme have already been working with and responding to some of the information in this Prospectus.

²¹ For more information please see the Addendum to Statement of Priorities: Aligning Public Funding with Priority Vocational Qualifications in England in 2008/09 which is available on the LSC website at <http://www.lsc.gov.uk/aboutus/businesscycle/>.

²² More information on the support and development programme can be found on the QIA Excellence gateway at <http://excellence.qia.org.uk/page.aspx?o=114607>.

Confirmation of LSC-Funded Providers to Deliver Progression Pathways

- 70 An output from the QIA support and Development Programme will be a Provider Development Framework, this Framework will enable providers to:
- review their current practice against the requirements in appendix 2
 - identify evidence to support the effectiveness and appropriateness of their current practice against the requirements
 - identify development needs to meet the requirements
 - create a comprehensive, detailed and robust development and action plan to fulfil the requirements.
- 71 It is anticipated that the Provider Development Framework will be used as a tool to confirm the readiness, capacity and capability of provider participating in the development and modelling work in 2007/08 to deliver Progression Pathways on a developmental basis in 2008/09. As part of the 2007/08 QIA Support and Development Programme all the providers involved in the modelling and development work in 2007/08 will be supported to complete the Development Framework.
- 72 It is anticipated that the Framework would then form the basis of the procurement of Progression Pathways for delivery from 2009/10, the first year when delivery of Progression Pathways becomes an established part of mainstream provision. The process for the procurement of Progression Pathways from 2009/10 has still to be confirmed; Progression Pathways may be procured as existing provision through the LSC's provider dialogues or as new provision through the LSC's open and competitive tendering process.
- 73 The use of a provider driven Development Framework approach to the confirmation of providers to deliver Progression Pathways is light touch and fully aligns with moves towards a self-determining, self-regulating system.

Requirements Part 3 – Sector Skills Councils

- 74 This section sets out the role, responsibilities and expectations of Sector Skills Councils in the development of Progression Pathways.
- 75 As explained in paragraph 53 above, for vocational qualifications (including those at Entry Level and Level 1) to be accredited within the QCF, and therefore eligible to be within a Progression Pathway, they must carry the approval of the relevant Sector Skills Council (SSC) or Standard Setting Body (SSB).
- 76 In addition, there is a need to align with the Priority Qualifications work in relation to the requirement for Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications. This means that not only do the vocational qualifications need to be accredited within the QCF but, where appropriate, they also must be set out in Sector Qualification Strategy Action Plans and agreed as part of the dialogue between LSC and SSCs.
- 77 The Skills for Business Network has identified employability skills as a major cross cutting theme emerging from work on Sector Skills Agreements. The Network Employability Project, led by Asset Skills, has been established to develop approaches to employability that are appropriate across the network and in different sector contexts. The Employability Project includes a strand of work designed to support the development of employability skills within qualifications and units. This work will contribute to the Foundation Learning Tier and the enable SSC input to the development of Progression Pathways, with particular focus on progression routes to Full Level 2 provision, Apprenticeships and the Foundation Diplomas.

Validation of Progression Pathways

- 78 The LSC has convened a Panel to confirm Progression Pathways; the panel will act as a Sub Group of the existing Foundation Learning Tier Programme Board.
- 79 This panel will monitor and sample the ongoing progress, development and implementation of Progression Pathways, working closely with providers, Awarding Bodies and SSCs. The panel will also consider success factors related to Progression Pathways, potentially including:
- learner feedback
 - retention rates
 - completion rates
 - progression rates.
- 80 This panel will not endorse qualifications as part of Progression Pathways, as QCA will do this as part of the accreditation process. Neither will the panel need to support the combinations of qualifications to build Progression Pathways as the criteria within this Prospectus incorporates sufficient checks and balances to allow flexibility within robust national parameters.
- 81 The group is scheduled to meet in April to:
- review this Prospectus against the outcomes of the QIA development programme and consultations with Awarding Bodies
 - assess the appropriateness of qualifications emerging within Progression Pathways.

As such it is anticipated that this document will be revised as a working version for 2008/09 in summer 2008. It is then anticipated a final version of this Prospectus will be produced in summer 2009 to support the delivery of Progression Pathways as an established part of mainstream provision from 1 August 2009.

- 82 From April 2008, the panel will meet quarterly to sample, monitor and evaluate the requirements, with a particular regard to the appropriateness of the combinations of qualifications within Progression Pathways being constructed by providers, and this Prospectus as a framework for guiding these combinations and their delivery.

Appendix 1

Qualifications strategy for the foundation learning tier

Version to support the fast-track process

© QCA, December 2007

Version 2.0

13 December 07

Authors:

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Audience:

This document will be of particular interest to Awarding Bodies and Sector Skills Councils.

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Section 1 – Introduction

1.1 Background

Research into qualifications provision at Entry and Level 1 has revealed a number of issues with the current offer, including:

- a significant amount of provision which fails to lead at any progression and tends to trap learners in a revolving door of engagement and recurring achievement
- concerns that the 'gap' from Entry Level to Level 2 is often too large and too complex in terms of qualification structure, or simply too inaccessible for both adults and young people.
- the limited range of qualifications in the National Qualifications Framework (NQF)
- a lack of clarity of purpose in qualifications
- the value of qualifications to learners and end users in terms of what the individual is 'qualified to do' and what skills, knowledge and understanding has been achieved during the course of qualification.

In response to these and related issues the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) are working together on the Foundation Learning Tier programme. The key outcomes of this work are that by 2010 all learners aged 14 and above will have access to:

- a qualification offer which recognises a broad range of achievements at Entry and Level 1, accredited within the QCF
- Progression Pathways which drive progression towards Level 2 and other positive destinations (for example supported employment, and independent living skills) for those not capable of reaching Level 2
- coherent personalized learning programmes building on robust initial assessment and ongoing review

This will be supported by clear funding mechanisms that support participation, achievement and progression within the context of ongoing funding reform across England.

The benefits of this will be:

- a high-quality offer that meets learner needs and formally recognises their achievements
- employers will be able to influence the offer through Sector Skills Councils (SSCs) and to recruit learners with an appropriate range of skills and understanding.

1.2 Purpose

This strategy will form the basis of accrediting new units and qualifications through the fast track process in order to populate the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF) for implementation of the FLT from September 08 onwards. Following the completion of fast-track accreditation and the consultation on regulatory aspects of the QCF this strategy will be revised and updated.

The rest of this strategy specifies guidelines and some key requirements in terms of units and qualifications to ensure that learner needs are met. But it also leaves room

for awarding bodies to develop their own units and qualifications so long as they meet the parameters set down in this strategy.

1.3 Scope

The FLT qualifications strategy is concerned with all units and qualifications at Entry 1 to Level 1¹ with the exception of GCSE grades D–G. Although these grades result in a qualification at level 1 the FLT programme of work is not addressing changes to GCSE. Changes to GCSE will be taken forward as part of the existing GCSE development timetable.

1.4 How to use this strategy

Awarding bodies are advised to begin by carrying out an audit of their existing offer and plans for new developments against the content of this strategy. It is anticipated that they will identify three categories of provision, as follows:

- provision that matches the strategy but may need reformatting in order to meet requirements of the new framework
- provision that is broadly consistent with the strategy but which will need amending or combining differently
- provision that is inconsistent with the strategy.

They may also identify gaps in their own provision or in what is currently offered across the board. Here there may be development opportunities. In all cases where qualifications are being prepared for use within the QCF, awarding and other bodies must ensure that any units or qualifications submitted for accreditation are consistent with the strategy in terms of meeting the purposes identified, being consistent with the relevant design principles and containing any required design features.

¹ *There are exceptions, such as some MFL qualifications (such as Japanese for business) and some ICT qualifications, for example those introducing learners to a particular piece of software where the learners are generally working at higher levels and not seeking to build the qualification into an FLT programme. These types of qualification are not referenced in the FLT qualifications strategy. However, units from these qualifications may form part of FLT qualifications.*

Section 2 - Key principles

2.1 Features of all Entry and Level 1 qualifications

All qualifications and units at Entry and Level 1 within the QCF should be designed to:

- be consistent with the revised level descriptors which differentiate between Entry levels 1, 2, 3 and level 1 (see annex B)
- include the potential for learners to achieve units at a higher or lower level than the overall award, including level 2 where appropriate
- motivate learners and encourage them to re-engage/continue in lifelong learning
- raise learners' confidence in their ability to achieve
- enable meaningful progression into employment (included supporting employment) independent living or further education
- where appropriate, fit within Diploma Additional/Specialist learning, to facilitate progression from Entry to Level 1 for 14-19 year olds.
- where appropriate, align with the aims and purpose of the Progression Pathway which they support

2.2 Progression Pathways

A key outcome of the Foundation Learning Tier reform is the development of Progression Pathways. These are frameworks for learning built of qualifications drawn from Entry Level and Level 1 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework. Progression Pathways will incorporate the three curriculum areas of:

- vocational knowledge, skills and understanding
- Functional Skills; and
- Personal and Social Development.

They will end with achievement at Entry or Level 1 and progression opportunities to Level 2 (or to other meaningful destinations for those learners not able to achieve at Level 2).

Over time, the LSC will concentrate public funds on Progression Pathways. Whilst not all units and qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 within the QCF will need to be offered within a Progression Pathway, and learners may still choose to follow 'stand alone' qualifications outside of a Progression Pathway, these units and qualifications outside of a Progression Pathway may not be a priority for public funding.

The Prospectus for Progression Pathways (LSC/QCA) sets out the high-level specifications of Progression Pathways, along with specific information on the requirements for providers and for awarding bodies. Awarding bodies should refer to this document for further information on Progression Pathways.

Section 3 - Developing units and qualifications

3.1 Personal and social development (PSD)

Background

A set of shared common units/qualifications in personal and social development (PSD) is currently being trialled within the QCF. These have been developed based on extensive research and analysis of the current offer carried out by the Network for Accrediting Young People's Achievement (NfAYPA).

Following the outcomes of this trial, it is proposed that these units are used by all awarding bodies wishing to offer provision in the areas covered. Awarding bodies may also submit PSD units that do not appear in the common set, so long as they have established that there is a need for these units and that they do not duplicate the content of the common units.

Purposes of units and qualifications for PSD

In addition to the key features outlined in 2.1, all PSD units and qualifications at Entry or Level 1 of the QCF should meet one or more of the purposes below:

- to indicate to employers/other institutions that a learner has certain positive attitudes, in particular towards learning or employment
- to recognise types of achievements that are often gained outside a formal learning environment
- to recognise achievements in areas of learning that are of key significance to the individual
- to encourage learners to address personal or social issues which will help them move forward either in their learning or in other aspects of their lives
- to provide a structure in which learners can identify their own strengths, weaknesses and goals and set about achieving them

Where appropriate, units and qualifications in PSD should allow for the recognition of learner-referenced achievement. Guidance and support in applying a learner-referenced approach to units in the FLT is available from QCA, either by emailing flt@qca.org.uk or by contacting any member of the FLT team.

3.2 Vocational units and qualifications

Background

Vocational qualifications at any level sit along a spectrum from completely generic personal skills to specific job skills aligned to National Occupational Standards (NOS).

Within Entry level there appears to be little value in specific occupational qualifications, as these will not normally provide entry to work. Consequently Entry-level vocational qualifications within the FLT should normally focus on employability.

Specific vocational qualifications at level 1 will be suitable for learners gaining competence in the workplace but also for learners planning to progress into

employment at level 2. Any qualifications purporting to offer progression into employment in a sector will need to have been identified in the relevant SQS.

Purposes of vocational units and qualifications

In addition to the key features outlined in 2.1, all vocational qualifications at Entry or Level 1 of the QCF should meet one or more of the following aims:

- to equip learners with personal or social skills for working life
- to equip learners with employability skills
- to equip learners with job-specific skills (Level 1 and above only – see below)

Design principles

In addition to the key principles set out in Section 2, all vocational qualifications at Entry level and level 1 should be designed to:

- support learners in managing their own learning, making progress towards an agreed progression aim/personal objective and building their capacity to continue in learning or employment
- where applicable, meet the requirements and priorities set out in the Sector Qualification Strategy (SQS)
- where relevant, provide a motivating context to support the development and practice of personal, social, literacy and numeracy skills
- equip learners for a range of progression opportunities beyond those they identify at the beginning of a programme
- develop up-to-date practical skills and knowledge relevant to one or more sector areas
- support progression from a smaller to a larger qualification at the same level and from a qualification at one level to a qualification at the next, for example through the use of the same unit(s) in a range of rules of combination.

In order to gain accreditation to the QCF, all qualifications will require the support of a relevant body. In the case of vocationally-specific qualifications this will be the relevant SSC. Qualifications in employability will need to align with the SfBN's employability strategy, and have the support of relevant bodies as appropriate. In approving sector-specific qualifications at level 1, SSCs will want to ensure that they meet the requirements and priorities of the relevant SQS.

3.3 Subject-based units and qualifications

There are currently two main types of subject-based qualifications at Entry and level 1 primarily taken by 14- to 16-year-olds in schools, relating to the key stage 4 curriculum:

- GCSEs (grades D–G)
- Entry level certificates in national curriculum subjects

GCSEs will remain the primary offer for level 1 learners in terms of their subject-based learning, although the FLT will not involve any specific work in relation to GCSE. Subject-specific Entry level qualifications will also remain available. Timescales for the redevelopment of the current Entry level subject qualifications are currently being agreed with awarding bodies, to align these qualifications with changes to GCSE and the revised Programmes of Study.

GCSEs will remain the primary offer for level 1 learners in terms of their subject-based learning, although the FLT will not involve any specific work in relation to GCSE.

Design features/principles for subject-based qualifications

In addition to the key features outlined in 2.1 all subject-based Entry and Level 1 qualifications should be designed to meet the following principles:

- provide a motivating experience of the subject for those not ready to achieve GCSE
- place an emphasis on skills as well as knowledge, allowing some room for context to be chosen by the learner/teacher
- develop knowledge and understanding of the subject, to encourage further progression
- develop cross-curricular skills – for example research, using resources, following instructions – in particular those that will help learners progress to further learning and higher levels
- assessment should focus on the cross-curricular skills being developed
- assessment should concentrate on the application of skills and, where possible, be practical. At the lower sub-levels paper and pen tests should not normally be used
- assessment should be appropriate both to the skills and knowledge being assessed and to the ability of the learner, with as narrow a gap between the learning activity and the assessment activity as possible
- where appropriate, be capable of contributing to level 1 Diplomas via ASL.

For 14-19 year olds the Diploma will form the principal qualifications offer for learners at level 1, although additional units/qualifications may be available outside the Diploma, for example for learners with Special Educational Needs.

3.4 Progression Pathway for 14-16 year-olds

For 14-16 learners at Entry Level, it is proposed that new qualifications be developed within the Progression Pathway to Diploma or GCSE. Over time this Pathway will replace the existing Entry Level offer with a more coherent organising structure. Qualifications within the pathway should be flexible enough to suit both pre-and post-16 learners. Initial research has shown that there is strong support for this development. Consultation has identified the need for larger, more coherent programmes that draw together the areas of learning most significant to learners at this level.

The proposed Progression Pathway model for such qualifications would allow flexibility through the use of a choice of qualifications and units. This would enable highly individualised packages to be put together while maintaining an agreed common core of essential skills. The Progression Pathway would need to deliver personalised learning, and combine subject /vocational learning, functional skills and personal/learning/thinking skills into a coherent whole.

Any qualifications developed for use within the 14-16 Progression Pathway would have to meet the design principles for various qualification types set out elsewhere in this strategy.

Plans for development

From September 2008, QCA will work with awarding bodies and those 14-16 centres that wish to volunteer, to pilot the use of qualifications within the Progression Pathway. Further information is available from the FLT team: flt@qca.org.uk

3.5 Recognising achievements below Entry level 1

A key part of the work to develop the FLT has been to introduce the concept of an inclusive unit and qualifications offer that recognises achievements by learners working below Entry level 1. The removal of the baseline at Entry level means encompassing a whole range of learning previously unregulated by QCA.

Qualifications at this level will tend to be broad, encompassing more than one of the qualification strands. Flexible rules of combination will allow the qualifications to focus on a range of learning, depending on learner need.

A set of draft units/qualifications at Entry 1 - which incorporate pre-Entry achievement via the use of an achievement continuum - are currently being trialled within the QCF. Following the outcomes of this trial, it is proposed that these units are used by all awarding bodies wishing to offer provision in the areas covered. Awarding bodies may also submit units that do not appear in the common set, so long as they have established that there is a need for these units and that they do not duplicate the content of the common units.

Design principles and features

Units and qualifications at this level must be consistent with the following design principles and features:

- qualifications must provide a means of recognising the achievements relevant to the individual. They must not, therefore, dictate the content of a learning programme, the approach to teaching or learning or require the use of a particular assessment tool or form of evidence
- they must allow for the recognition of learner-referenced achievement
- the only compulsory unit at Entry 1 will be communication
- units may be combined to create a relatively focused qualification but these combinations should be determined by the tutor and learner and not fixed by the rules of combination.

Expressing the degree of achievement within Entry 1

In terms of reporting the unit outcome, the certificate and/or the Learner Achievement Record will record achievement at Entry 1. However, an assessor record of the detail of the achievement must also be provided. Wherever possible this should relate achievement to the pre-Entry skills for life curriculum milestones or the continuum set out in the publication *Enhancing quality of life* (Skill, 2002).

Assessment requirements

Assessment of achievement below Entry level 1 should be internal and generally conducted by the teacher/tutor. The primary method will be observation with evidence in the form of observation records, video or photographs.

Quality assurance requirements

Quality assurance will normally be devolved to the centre which must meet minimum requirements set out by the awarding body in terms of its approach to the planning and delivery of the curriculum, assembling the qualification from the range of units available and making assessment decisions. Requirements should also be placed on the providers in terms of resources including suitably qualified staff. External verification or moderation from the awarding body or its agent will secure the validity of those internal assessment decisions. Consideration will be given to the extent to

which the recognising and recording progress and achievement (RARPA) process can be applied to quality assuring pre-Entry achievement.

Unit content

An awarding body may seek to have accredited units covering areas beyond those represented in the common units. However they will need a clear rationale for such units and be able to demonstrate why the achievements covered cannot be recognised through the learning outcomes in the common units.

Developing common units below Entry 1 is intended as a means of addressing the incoherence of the existing offer, described by providers as difficult to understand and hard to navigate. Achievements in common units at this level will be specified in learning outcomes that are broad enough to be evidenced in a wide variety of ways relevant to individual learners. In this way it should be possible to recognise a wide range of skills through a limited set of units.

The QCF level descriptors describe achievement categorized as Entry level 1. QCA will produce further guidance will be produced shortly on recognising achievement below this level.

Relationship of the FLT strategy to other initiatives

The FLT development will inform and be informed by a number of other qualifications reform projects concerned with 14-19 and adults. Success will depend on the interdependencies and links being clear to all stakeholders. The following is intended as a brief summary of links to other key projects:

Foundation Diplomas: Diplomas at level 1 will be one of a number of qualifications available for learners at level 1 within the FLT. For 14-19 year olds the Diploma will form the principal qualification offer for learners at level 1, although additional units/qualifications may be available outside the Diploma, for example for learners with Special Educational Needs. However, most units or qualifications developed for 14-19 within the FLT should aim to be recognised as A/SL within Diplomas. This will extend to units at Entry 3, which could provide partial credit towards the level 1 Diploma, and thus improve progression for learners.

VQ reform: Sector bodies will use the strategy to inform the development of qualifications through sector strategies. Sectors will have a key role to play in the validation of progression pathways to level 2, providing a quality check on vocational content at Entry levels/level 1, to ensure that units/qualifications at this level provide real progression to employment or further study in the sector concerned.

Key Stage 4 Re-engagement programme: The qualifications strategy is intended to support the pilot work being taken forward as part of the re-engagement programme for 14–16 learners in the sense that these learners will be able to receive some recognition for achievements during the programme, should this be appropriate.

Skills for life (key and basic skills): The units and qualifications available will be those that comply with the relevant national standards at Entry and level 1 and with the necessary accreditation criteria. All skills for life units will be shared by awarding bodies. The functional skills once developed will be incorporated into this part of the strategy

Personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS): The PLTS framework will be used as a reference to the consistent identification of these skills across all units and qualifications, including those developed for the FLT. It may be that these skills are embedded implicitly across the qualification and supported by appropriate assessment methodologies.

Annex B

QCF level descriptors

Level	Summary	Knowledge and understanding	Application and action	Autonomy and accountability
Entry level	Entry 1 recognises progress along a continuum that ranges from the most elementary of achievements to beginning to make use of skills, knowledge or understanding that relate to the immediate environment.			
	Achievement at Entry 2 reflects the ability to make use of skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities with guidance.	<p>Use knowledge or understanding to carry out simple, familiar activities.</p> <p>Know the steps needed to complete simple activities.</p>	<p>Carry out simple, familiar tasks and activities.</p> <p>Follow instructions or use rehearsed steps to complete tasks and activities.</p>	<p>With appropriate guidance, begin to take some responsibility for the outcomes of simple activities.</p> <p>Actively participate in simple and familiar activities.</p>
	Achievement at Entry 3 reflects the ability to make use of skills, knowledge and understanding to carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts, with appropriate guidance where needed.	<p>Use knowledge or understanding to carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts.</p> <p>Know and understand the steps needed to complete structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts.</p>	<p>Carry out structured tasks and activities in familiar contexts.</p> <p>Be aware of the consequences of actions for self and others.</p>	<p>With appropriate guidance, take responsibility for the outcomes of structured activities.</p> <p>Actively participate in activities in familiar contexts.</p>

Level	Summary	Knowledge and understanding	Application and action	Autonomy and accountability
Level 1	Achievement at level 1 reflects the ability to use relevant knowledge, skills and procedures to complete routine tasks. It includes responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance.	<p>Use knowledge of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined, routine tasks.</p> <p>Be aware of information relevant to the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Complete well-defined, routine tasks.</p> <p>Use relevant skills and procedures.</p> <p>Select and use relevant information.</p> <p>Identify whether actions have been effective.</p>	<p>Take responsibility for completing tasks and procedures subject to direction or guidance as needed.</p>
Level 2	Achievement at level 2 reflects the ability to select and use relevant knowledge, ideas, skills and procedures to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems. It includes taking responsibility for completing tasks and procedures and exercising autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance.	<p>Use understanding of facts, procedures and ideas to complete well-defined tasks and address straightforward problems.</p> <p>Interpret relevant information and ideas.</p> <p>Be aware of the types of information that are relevant to the area of study or work.</p>	<p>Complete well-defined, generally routine tasks and address straightforward problems.</p> <p>Select and use relevant skills and procedures.</p> <p>Identify, gather and use relevant information to inform actions.</p> <p>Identify how effective actions have been.</p>	<p>Take responsibility for completing tasks and procedures.</p> <p>Exercise autonomy and judgement subject to overall direction or guidance.</p>

Background research for the FLT

The first phase of the programme of work to develop the FLT involved a thorough analysis of existing provision, via research work and discussions with key partners. The following research reports were produced:

1. Adult learning, Skills and Progression to Level 2: A Study of Market Failure (Credit Works - Commissioned by LSC)
2. Characterising First Steps Learning, (Credit Works Commissioned by LSC)
3. A comparative analysis of the NOCN Progression Qualifications in relation to the FLT and QCF (Credit Works, commissioned by LSC)
4. Segmenting Adult Learning Provision (NIACE, commissioned by LSC)
5. A Study of the Implications of the FLT for E2E (Credit Works, commissioned by LSC)
6. Research to investigate provision, development and Quality Assurance in Personal and Social Development Phase 1: A mapping exercise of PSD provision (NfAYPA - Commissioned by QCA)
7. Entry level provision - Research report into existing provision (QCA)
8. Identification of vocational provision at Level 1 within and outside the National Qualifications Framework (Education Relations, commissioned by QCA)
9. Defining coherence in the FLT workshop and paper (Workshop and paper organised by QCA, February 2006)
10. Subject-based qualifications at Entry-level: Moving forward – paper based on discussions at ‘Purposes of qualifications at Entry and Level 1’ workshop (QCA)
11. Development of a toolkit for designing QCF units to recognise learner referenced achievement (Creditworks commissioned by QCA, March 2006)
12. Project to explore the concept of an Adult Learning Certificate for use in the QCF (Learning South West, commissioned by QCA, March 2006)
13. Research into quality assurance models for non-formal awards and the QCF (NfAYPA, commissioned by QCA, mid March 2006)
14. Scoping the content of the lower end of the Entry level of the Framework for Achievement (NIACE, commissioned by QCA, March 2006)
15. Mapping Independent Living Skills provision at Entry and Level 1 (NfAYPA, March 2006)
16. Taking forward the personal and social development offer in the FLT (NfAYPA commissioned by QCA – ongoing)
17. Planning the vocational unit and qualification offer for the Foundation Learning Tier (Education Relations, commissioned by QCA)
18. Exploration and development of units and qualifications to support coherent programmes in the Foundation Learning Tier (ASDAN, commissioned by QCA, March 2006)

Appendix 2

Requirements of Providers for Progression Pathways

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Requirement 1: Personalised Learning

- 1.1 Providers must demonstrate that they are working towards increased and improved personalisation of learning.**
- 1.2 Successful providers in terms of learner satisfaction are characterised by a strong commitment to learner welfare and to learner outcomes. There are high expectations of learners supported by good staff-learner relations. In particular, there is an emphasis on tailoring learning to the needs of individuals. Major improvements in learner motivation and outcomes have occurred when achievement goals are negotiated separately with individuals by course tutors on the basis of the learner's personal characteristics and attainment on entry to the course. Learners' experience of all aspects of learning is more likely to be enhanced if they are given an effective voice in the organisation and delivery of their learning.
- 1.3 The delivery of learning programmes should be personalised and designed in partnership with learners through a learner-centred approach to help them achieve their goals, ensuring that these will lead to the achievement of the qualifications identified in the Progression Pathway.
- 1.4 Providers will use Progression Pathways to design programmes which can be personalised according to the abilities and interests of individual learners in response to identified progression aspirations. Progression Pathways will enable providers to balance the personal choice and preferences of learners with the need to provide coherent, meaningful routes which support real progression.
- 1.5 Learners should be engaged appropriately in order to promote ownership, autonomy and control of their learning experience.
- 1.6 To facilitate this, the following should be considered:
 - i. using approaches to teaching and learning which are conducive to learner autonomy
 - ii. discussing with the learner what is expected of them at each stage of their programme
 - iii. encouraging the learner to assess their own learning at each stage
 - iv. actively seeking the learner's ideas and views to create a learner driven and owned curriculum
 - v. encouraging the learner to develop a conscious understanding of how they learn as well as what they learn
 - vi. providing elements of choice in the design and delivery of a programme and access to accreditation
 - vii. providing learners with regular feedback during the programme.

- 1.7 The level of ownership will be different from learner to learner and should be well managed, with recognition of, and response to, the learner's willingness to own their learning.

Requirement 2: Recognition of Achievement and Progression

- 2.1 Providers must have processes and systems to offer recognition of achievement (including prior learning and achievement) from the outset of the learner's journey, using qualifications from the QCF as specified in the Progression Pathway(s). Providers will be expected to demonstrate success for learners in their achievements, identify meaningful progression destinations, track learner achievement and onward progress of learners over time.**
- 2.2 Learning programmes must be designed to enable and support learners in achieving and progressing to Level 2 or achieve at the highest level possible.
- 2.3 Recognition of achievement is a key entitlement within the QCF, and progression is a core purpose and organising principle. Progression Pathways are therefore designed to recognise learner achievements and support real progression to defined destinations. Providers must be capable of recognising learners' achievements, using qualifications specified in the Progression Pathways.
- 2.4 Learners often want access to recognition of achievement on their learning journey at a point they choose themselves. This means that providers have to be organised to record learning achievements from the outset, in order to encourage and respond to this demand. Providers must be capable of responding to individual needs and recognising individual achievements within Progression Pathways.
- 2.5 Ultimately providers will need to be able to accommodate a range of possibilities, adapting the personalised learning programme to suit individual learner need and pace, while maintaining the momentum towards achievement of the learner's goal and completion of, and progression from, the Progression Pathway(s). Being ready to recognise achievement from the outset is crucial to maintaining that momentum and focus.
- 2.6 Providers must:
- Take an approach which assumes that all learners may wish to exercise a right to recognition of achievement at a chosen point on their learning journey.
 - Work with the learner to record and recognise achievements from the outset of their learning journey and facilitate production of evidence that counts towards the award of credit. Transparent systems to record and recognise achievements, including through the use of APL, must be in place.

- Secure the necessary approval to award the credits and qualifications from the QCF specified in the Progression Pathways.
- Have meaningful progression destinations in place which meet the objectives of each Progression Pathway offered.
- Be able to track and produce evidence of learner achievement and onward progression over time.

- 2.7 It is important for providers to understand that the Recognising and Recording Progress and Achievement (RARPA) process has been developed as a system of recognising both anticipated and unanticipated learning outcomes arising from non-accredited programmes.
- 2.8 The Foundation Learning Tier is Entry Level and Level 1 of the Qualifications and Credit Framework (QCF). Progression Pathways are frameworks for learning that will be built from Entry Level and Level 1 qualifications from the Foundation Learning Tier (that is from Entry Level and Level 1 of the QCF). The QCF is intended to be a more inclusive and flexible qualification system than the present National Qualifications System and will embrace some degree of what was previously seen as 'non accredited provision'.
- 2.9 Qualifications within the QCF (and therefore the Foundation Learning Tier and Progression Pathways) are accredited provision and therefore RARPA as an approach for non-accredited programmes is not currently applicable to the Foundation Learning Tier or to Progression Pathways.
- 2.10 RARPA however continues to be recognised by Ofsted as measure for non-accredited provision, and many providers will find it a helpful process. There are conversations about the relationship between RARPA and the Framework for Excellence, however RARPA is not currently part of the Framework and will not be before 2009 if at all¹. The lack of alignment between RARPA and the Framework for Excellence is because RARPA is based on self assessment; self assessment is currently not recognised as a basis for measures within Framework for Excellence.
- 2.11 The Framework for Excellence will be operational in colleges and work-based learning providers from summer 2008, and across the whole FE system from summer 2009.

¹ More information about RARPA and Framework for Excellence can be obtained from the Framework for Excellence team on frameworkforexcellence@lsc.gov.uk.

Requirement 3: Coherent Progression Pathways

- 3.1 Providers must demonstrate that learners have access to a coherent integrated curriculum offer which includes vocational knowledge, skills and understanding; Functional Skills; and, Personal and Social Development skills.**
- 3.2 Vocational and subject learning: Providers should ensure that vocational learning is focussed on the development of cross-cutting employability skills, and, where appropriate for individuals, is work related in specific sector contexts. This curriculum should be delivered in realistic work environments or real work contexts in partnership with employers.
- 3.3 Functional skills for life and work: Functional skills are practical skills in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT) that allow individuals to work confidently, effectively and independently in life. These skills are essential to everyday life as well as supporting progression to further learning and employment.
- 3.4 Personal and Social Development (PSD): These are skills to help individuals become successful learners, confident individuals and responsible citizens. These generic skills, together with the Functional Skills, are essential to success in life, learning and work. There may also be personal blocks to progression for learners on Progression Pathways, PSD learning should be available to learners if it helps unblock such obstacles and improves their chances of sustained engagement in learning and employment.
- 3.5 The individual learning plan should be used to support embedding alongside the achievement of qualifications.
- 3.6 Teaching and learning of the Functional Skills and personal and social development aspects of Progression Pathways should be embedded within the vocational area, so that the learning is fully contextualised wherever possible.
- 3.7 Coherently designed learning programmes should be supported by high quality provider delivery to improve the learning experience of learners through a holistic approach. A range of factors will contribute to high quality teaching, delivery and learning experiences. These include:
- planning teaching/learning activities that take account of the learner's needs, wants, aspirations, barriers and capacities
 - using a range of teaching and learning methods to stimulate and engage

- checking the learner's understanding and providing feedback on the learning undertaken
- using appropriate assessment techniques
- evaluating teaching and learning activities by the learner and the provider.

Requirement 4: Effective Initial Assessment and Ongoing Review

4.1 Providers must demonstrate that their processes and systems for initial assessment and ongoing review will support successful progress through the Progression Pathways. Systems and processes must adhere to the nine specified principles.

4.2 Initial assessment and ongoing review is a continual learner-centred process to establish a skills profile of the learner and which Progression Pathway is most appropriate for them. Alongside the skills profile a personalised learning programme and support plan are identified with the learner, and these are then regularly reviewed and amended as the learner progresses. This process is especially important for learning at Entry Level and Level 1 as without it, it is not possible to fully understand learners and their needs, or to plan learning and support to help them succeed.

4.3 The purpose of the initial assessment is to identify, understand and record:

- identifying a learner's starting point based on any previous experience and achievement
- the learner's strengths and weaknesses
- any potential barriers to learning and achievement that need to be addressed
- the learner's specific needs in relation to the three content areas (vocational knowledge, skills and understanding; functional skills; and personal and social development) taking into account that learners' skills will be at different levels in each (that is, learners will have 'spiky' profiles)
- the learner's specific additional support needs
- an appropriate starting point for each learner, against which their progress can be measured
- an appropriate, individual learning programme matched to the learner's interests, aspirations and identified progression route.

4.4 Providers should assist the learner to set realistic and challenging learning goals that match their needs, interests and aspirations, ensuring that these include the achievement of accredited units and qualifications within an appropriate progression pathway.

4.5 Learning goals should represent steps towards the achievement of pathways and should be measurable and achievable against the baseline set by initial assessment.

4.6 Learning goals should be recorded in an individual learning plan owned by the learner.

4.7 Ongoing review should follow on from the initial assessment at agreed intervals and should be thoroughly documented by providers.

- Ongoing review should be used to actively shape the programme in response to the learner's progress and changing needs.
- Providers and learners should agree when ongoing reviews should take place and how best to conduct them.
- Reviews should refer to the initial assessment and the learner's individual learning plan.
- Reviews should encourage the learner to discuss their experience, reflect on any positive and negative aspects of the learning programme, seek guidance and advice, and consider any changes that may need to be made to the programme.
- The learner's progress and achievements, including against individual learning goals and achievement of units and qualifications, should be recorded at the end of each review.

4.8 Providers must provide evidence that demonstrates that their processes and systems for initial assessment and ongoing review meet the following principles:

- i. Be a planned, clear, consistent and well managed process, where learners understand its purposes, the contribution that different elements in the process make, and how the results will be used.
- ii. Ensure that information gained from the process is used so that there is a clear relationship between the outcomes and an individual's learning and support plan, and any targets and/or objectives.
- iii. Ensure the involvement and engagement of learners with professionals in processes which incorporate self-assessment, feedback and dialogue in order to promote ownership, self reflection and learner autonomy.
- iv. Operate as a continual process so that targets and objectives, and the learner's progress, learning and support activities, are regularly reviewed with the learner and any changes to the learning plan are mutually agreed.
- v. Look at the whole person; offer breadth and depth by using a diverse range of activities to identify and recognise the full range of achievements, skills and experiences as well as the aspirations, aptitudes, circumstances and full range of needs of all learners.
- vi. Be a positive and developmental process for the learner which promotes motivation, commitment to learning goals and targets, and a shared understanding of any criteria for assessing progress and achievements.

- vii. Provide opportunities to gather and record evidence of achievements and where appropriate to formally recognise achievements through the award of credit, including the use of APL.
- viii. Focus on how the learner learns and is assessed as well as what they are or will be learning.
- ix. Be undertaken by skilled professionals who are properly trained and supported in the range of activities and processes that support initial assessment and ongoing review.

Requirement 5: Reaching Priority Learners

- 5.1 **Providers must demonstrate that they have effective strategies for reaching priority learners and motivating them to succeed.**
- 5.2 Access to Progression Pathways will be an entitlement for key groups of priority learners. Broadly speaking priority learners are identified as those adults and young people without level 2 qualifications. These may include for example people with:
- learning difficulties and disabilities (for whom lower level discrete learning programmes address those needs)
 - poor learning skills who need learning programmes to help them progress to their first full level 2, and for whom skills for life learning alone is insufficient
- 5.3 The LSC publishes information and guidance in its *Annual Statement of Priorities* and Regional Commission Plans. These documents and other supporting national and regional documents can help to identify priority learners more specifically.
- 5.4 Priority learners are not a homogenous group within the population, and therefore providers need to understand the different needs and motivations of priority groups in their locality. This understanding should be matched by knowledge and understanding of the labour market and demands and requirements of local employers.
- 5.5 Reaching priority learners requires effective and often innovative strategies. In addition to the more conventional methods these may include for example interpersonal methods, using trusted individuals and settings to reach and support learners. Partnership working can often be crucial in this context.
- 5.6 Strategies and arrangements for reaching priority learners should demonstrate how the provider:
- uses market intelligence and understanding of different segments of the target population to reach and support people to learn successfully
 - uses this knowledge and information to influence and shape provision
 - employs a detailed understanding of the labour market and requirements of local employers
 - uses innovative ways of reaching the members of the priority group(s)

- demonstrates the ability to deliver Progression Pathways in a range of settings appropriate to the priority group(s).

Requirement 6: Partnerships

- 6.1 Providers must show how they work in partnership with support agencies, employers and other providers to implement Progression Pathways.**
- 6.2 Partnerships are essential to successful implementation of Progression Pathways. Partnerships should address effective reach, delivery and support for learners.
- 6.3 Individual providers may find it challenging to deliver personalised and coherent Progression Pathways providing real progression opportunities for the full range of learners. Usually, partnerships that support the range of content, delivery modes and progression opportunities are needed.
- 6.4 Developing effective employer links will be important to successful delivery and progression for learners. Providers' engagement with employers should support delivery of work placements where relevant; as well as ensuring an understanding of the requirements of employers and the labour market locally.
- 6.5 Providers must also be clear about their primary role in learning, and work in partnership with other public and voluntary services and agencies as necessary to reach and support priority learners.
- 6.6 In relation to helping learners progress into supported employment, partnership working, in particular with supported employment services, is especially important in facilitating success for learners. Supported employment services specialise in working with disabled people to help them find and keep work. Supported employment services are provided by:
- voluntary sector organisations such as Mencap Pathways services.
 - social services departments in some areas.
 - organisations such as Remploy which deliver a number of Government funded
 - employment programmes for disabled people.
- 6.7 All partnership arrangements should demonstrate:
- a comprehensive range of provision to meet the needs of priority learners, where each partner works to their strengths
 - evidence of clearly defined individual and mutual accountability, with the responsibility of each provider or agency clearly defined.

Requirement 7: Support for Learners

- 7.1 Providers will need to show how support for learners is used to improve access to and progression through the learning related to identified needs of learners.**
- 7.2 Support for learners includes pastoral support (mentoring, personal tutors, personal development programmes), support services, Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG). Support for learners may also include, for example, access to childcare or transport, as well as access to (through partnership and collaboration) for example, children's services, mental health services, social services, financial and housing advice services.
- 7.3 Learners should be positively supported throughout their learning programme. Providers should identify any support requirements during the initial assessment and keep these under review throughout the programme. Providing support may involve making reasonable adjustments to the programme and/or learning environment.
- 7.4 Providers are also expected to ensure learners have appropriate information about the availability, entitlement and eligibility for Learner Support Funds, including (but not limited to) Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA), Adult Learning Grant and Care to Learn where appropriate and relevant.
- 7.5 Providers will be expected to show positive evidence that support for learners improves retention and progression. Where necessary, innovative approaches to offering or collaborating to provide such services will be expected.
- 7.6 Providers should hold, or be working towards an appropriate IAG accreditation, for example matrix accreditation. IAG should be connected with initial assessment and ongoing review, and embedded in the curriculum where possible. Providers will be expected to demonstrate how learners will have access to joined-up referral, monitoring and review systems and practice.

Requirement 8: Organisation and Management

8.1 **Providers need to demonstrate that they have high standards within their organisation, appropriate organisational structure and effective organisational processes to implement the Progression Pathways successfully.**

8.2 High standards should be evident in:

- Leadership and Management
- Workforce Development
- Resources

8.3 **Leadership and management:** High quality leadership and management, which demonstrates commitment to the success of learners on Progression Pathways is essential.

8.4 Effective leadership and management should include, and not be limited to:

- senior management and governing bodies demonstrating commitment to the Progression Pathways
- clear strategies to plan and manage the learner's journey and their curriculum ensuring the learning programme supports coherent Partnership Pathways
- suitable provision and effective use of physical, financial and human resources
- effective internal and external communication
- the collection and use of management information
- delivery staff demonstrating appropriate knowledge, skills and experience, with regular opportunities to update such knowledge (that is, continuing professional development)
- clear strategies to promote and monitor equality and diversity
- robust quality assurance arrangements and clear strategies to promote continuous improvement, including the sharing of best practice.

8.5 **Workforce development:** Providers need to demonstrate an understanding of the skills and qualities of staff needed to successfully reach priority learners and support their successful progress through Progression Pathways. They must show commitment to necessary training and development for existing staff, and to recruiting new staff where gaps and weaknesses have been identified.

8.6 **Resources:** Providers need to demonstrate that they have the necessary resources – accommodation, equipment, facilities – to support high quality teaching and learning for the Progression Pathways. Where relevant some

resources may be shared amongst partnership members and partnership arrangements should reflect this.

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