

Evaluation of the Implementation and Impact of the Diplomas: Cohort 3 Report - *Findings from the 2010 Consortium Lead and Pupil Surveys*

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This research report was commissioned before the new UK Government took office on 11 May 2010. As a result the content may not reflect current Government policy and may make reference to the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) which has now been replaced by the Department for Education (DFE).

The views expressed in this report are the authors' and do not necessarily reflect those of the Department for Education.

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Executive Summary

Background

This summary presents the findings from a telephone survey conducted with 224 Consortium Leads of consortia that were approved to commence delivering Diplomas, or approved to deliver additional subjects, from September 2010. The interviews with Consortium Leads were conducted in November and December 2009 with the primary aim of identifying key features of consortia to enable a sample to be identified for the subsequent surveys and case-study visits. The survey gathered evidence on the consortia's preparation and planning for Diploma delivery from September 2010. While some consortia were planning for delivery for the first time from 2010, others had previous experience of delivery from 2008 or 2009.

The summary also includes findings from a survey of 741 Year 9 and 556 Year 11 pupils. The pupil surveys were carried out between March and May 2010 and explored young people's choice to take a Diploma, or not, from September 2010, and the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) in place to support decision-making.

It should be noted that a number of changes to the Diploma programme were subsequently announced by the new Coalition Government in July 2010. While these were unknown at the time of undertaking the research summarised in this report, it should be read with these in mind. The changes include:

- Withdrawal of the three proposed 'academic' Diploma subjects (science, humanities and languages) originally planned for 2011 in order to focus on further developing and improving the qualifications already on offer in these areas.
- Termination of the requirement to make every Diploma subject available to all pupils (previously known as the 'Diploma entitlement').
- No requirement to obtain approval from the DfE before delivering new Diploma subjects (and hence no further Gateway rounds).
- Relaxing the requirement to offer the Diploma collaboratively through consortia.
- The centrally funded 14-19 workforce support programme would cease in its current form in August 2010.

Responses from Consortium Leads may well have been different had the research activities taken place following the changing context of government policy relating to Diplomas listed above. For example, plans for Diploma delivery *might* have been different following the removal of the Diploma entitlement that often brought with it the need for institutions to collaborate.

Moreover, the motivations for delivering Diplomas also *might* have been different. It should also be considered that pupils had yet to make their choices for Key Stage 4 and post-16. Therefore, the findings in this summary and the main report should be considered as valid prior to changes in policy. The changing nature of Diploma delivery following policy changes will be explored during future phases of the evaluation.

Updates on the Diploma reform can be found at:

<http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/diploma/a0064056/diploma-announcements>

Key Findings

- The main motivation for delivering Diplomas in September 2010, cited at the time of the interviews (November to December 2009), was the need to prepare for the 14-19 entitlement. Other reasons included demand for the subject (and associated skills in the market place) and having the relevant expertise at consortium level.
- The Diploma level most commonly on offer was Level 2 and, out of the final four Diploma subjects on offer, the one most widely offered was Sport and Active Leisure. Shared delivery between a school and Further Education (FE) college or training provider (TP) was still the main method of delivery. Delivery solely in schools was less common but appeared to be increasing slightly compared to previous years.
- The proportion of Year 9 pupils surveyed who planned to take a Diploma in the following academic year had doubled since Diplomas commenced in 2008. In 2010, Year 11 pupils were less likely than pupils in Year 9 to opt to take a Diploma (as had been the case in 2008) and were no more likely to choose to do a Diploma than they had been in 2008. Additionally, those with higher prior attainment were less likely to take a Diploma.
- Of those planning to take a Diploma, most thought it would give them useful skills, help them get a job and give them a well-recognised qualification they could use in the future. The main reasons for choosing *not* to take a Diploma were a preference for other qualifications or a lack of interest in the subject area.
- A minority of pupils felt they knew a lot about Diplomas, and overall they wanted more information, advice and guidance on progression routes, who teaches the Diploma, qualifications they can take alongside the Diploma and assessment.
- Written materials, events and talking to others, particularly those perceived to be knowledgeable about Diplomas (for example pupils already doing a Diploma) seemed to be important to young people in terms of feeling informed about Diplomas but also in helping to *understand* the Diploma.
- In terms of preparedness for delivery, Consortium Leads were most confident with regard to staffing levels and expertise, availability of facilities, equipment

and resources and involvement of employers. Lessons learned from previous years identified the need to start planning and preparation as early as possible, in particular in terms of improving IAG. Areas of concern included: funding arrangements, the development of the Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL) component, IT and administration issues and transport plans.

Why were consortia delivering Diplomas?

The consortia that had been established to deliver Diplomas through previous Gateways were generally stable in their membership. Two-thirds of these consortia had experienced no changes to the membership of their consortium for September 2010 delivery. Where changes had occurred, these usually related to new partners joining the consortium. New consortia approved through the third Gateway process tended to be built on existing local partnerships, as was the case in previous Gateways, and few challenges were noted in establishing the consortia.

The main motivation for delivering Diplomas cited at the time of the interviews was the need to prepare for the 14-19 entitlement. In addition, existing staff and consortia expertise and the demand for the subject and for the associated skills in the labour market were also motivations for the majority of consortia.

What did they intend to offer?

As was the case in previous years, the most commonly offered Diploma level was Level 2 which 96 per cent of consortia intended to offer. Level 1 and Level 3 were less widely offered as 62 per cent of consortia planned to offer each of these levels. Most (79 per cent) of the consortia surveyed planned to offer at least one of the final four Diploma subjects (Public Services, Retail Business, Sport and Active Leisure and Travel and Tourism) and the most widely offered (by 67 per cent of consortia) was Sport and Active Leisure.

The majority (91 per cent) of consortia planned to offer at least one subject through shared delivery between a school and FE college or TP. Delivery solely in schools either shared (36 per cent) or within one school (21 per cent) was less common but appeared to be increasing slightly compared to previous years.

What was the estimated take-up of Diplomas for 2010?

The majority (77 per cent) of Consortium Leads estimated that the number of pupils starting a Diploma, pre-16 in September 2010 would be 300 or fewer. There was less certainty around post-16 take-up, but 63 per cent thought 300 or fewer pupils would start on a Diploma in 2010.

The proportion of Year 9 pupils surveyed who planned to take a Diploma in the following academic year had increased since Diplomas commenced in 2008 (30 per cent compared with 14 per cent). In 2010, Year 11 pupils were less likely than pupils in Year 9 to opt to take a Diploma, as had been the case in 2008. Year 11 pupils were no more likely to choose to do a Diploma than they had been in 2008 (14 per cent in 2010). It did not appear to be the case that the Diploma subjects introduced in earlier phases were more popular than those introduced in 2009 or 2010. As might be expected, a Higher Diploma (Level 2) was the most popular choice for study pre-16, whereas the Advanced/Progression Diploma (Level 3) was most often chosen for post-16 study. A minority were planning to take Level 1. A total of 36 per cent of Year 9 pupils and 26 per cent of Year 11 pupils did not know what level they would be taking.

Of those planning to take a Diploma, most thought it would give them useful skills, help them get a job and give them a well-recognised qualification they could use in the future. The main reasons for choosing *not* to take a Diploma were a preference for other qualifications or a lack of interest in the subject area.

Those with higher prior attainment were less likely to take a Diploma. Year 11 pupils who planned to stay in education until after taking a course at university were less likely to plan to take a Diploma. Those who were more likely to report bad behaviour and attendance had a higher probability of taking a Diploma.

What IAG was in place to support the decision to take a Diploma or not from 2010?

The proportion of pupils who were surveyed who said that they knew a lot about Diplomas had increased over time, but they were still in a minority (30 per cent of Year 9 and 19 per cent of Year 11 in 2010). Since 2008, more pupils reported that information on Diplomas was helpful, but pupils in Year 11 were less likely than those in Year 9 to think this was the case (68 per cent of Year 9 and 44 per cent of Year 11 in 2010). Overall, pupils wanted more information on progression routes, who teaches the Diploma, qualifications they can take alongside the Diploma and assessment.

Written materials were still the most common and useful source of information on Diplomas. Events were ranked highly in terms of usefulness, but under half of pupils had accessed events. Additionally, talking to others, particularly parents/carers/family, subject teachers, Connexions advisers and pupils who are already doing a Diploma seemed to be important in terms of feeling informed about Diplomas but also in helping to *understand* the Diploma.

Pupils were asked a question which tested their knowledge of Diplomas; a score was derived for each young person from the number of correct answers given to the items in the question. The proportion of pupils in both year groups who answered each item correctly had increased between 2008 and 2010, although there was still some uncertainty about some aspects of Diplomas.

How prepared were consortia for Diploma delivery?

The most commonly identified aspects of preparing for Diploma delivery that were causing minor or major concern among Consortium Leads were:

- Funding arrangements (38 per cent said this was causing a minor or major concern)
- Understanding of assessment (30 per cent)
- Developing the ASL component (29 per cent)
- IT and administration issues (28 per cent)
- Transport plans (26 per cent).

They were most confident about their preparedness in terms of staffing levels (89 per cent were well or fairly well prepared), staff expertise (89 per cent), availability of facilities, equipment and resources (87 per cent) and involvement of employers (87 per cent).

Consortium Leads had learned lessons from previous phases of Diploma delivery, either within their consortium or from other consortia that assisted them in planning for 2010 delivery. They identified the need to start planning and preparation as early as possible, including introducing IAG for potential Diploma pupils at as early a stage as possible, and to improve IAG for parents/carers and pupils in general, through for example taster sessions. In addition, they noted the need to establish protocols and infrastructure to support delivery and to ensure that roles and responsibilities within the partnership were clearly defined.

1 Introduction

In January 2008, the former Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF)¹ commissioned the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) and the University of Exeter to conduct the national evaluation of the implementation and impact of Diplomas over the period 2008-2013.

When the Diplomas were introduced, there was an expectation that they would be delivered by consortia of providers (principally schools, FE colleges and TPs) who collectively would have the specialist skills and resources to deliver the different Diploma subjects. Consortia of providers applied to deliver the Diplomas through a 'Gateway' process that was conducted annually between 2007 and 2009.

This report presents the findings from a telephone survey of the Consortium Leads of consortia that were approved to commence delivering Diplomas, or approved to deliver additional subjects, from September 2010 through the third of these Gateway processes. The interviews with Consortium Leads were conducted in November to December 2009. The majority of consortia had previous experience of delivering Diplomas. More specifically, 85 per cent of survey respondents (or 191 consortia) had been delivering Diploma subjects since September 2008 or September 2009. Although some consortia had already started delivery in September 2008 or 2009, the focus of this survey was on their preparation for the additional subjects they would be starting in September 2010.

The report also presents the findings of a survey of Year 9 and 11 pupils carried out in a sub-sample of 30 consortia approved through the third and final phase of the Gateway processes. The survey, carried out in spring 2010, explored young people's choices to pursue a Diploma or not in Years 10/11 and Years 12/13, and the influences on their decision-making. The findings from the survey are compared with an almost identical survey carried out in the spring 2008, prior to Diplomas being introduced, to explore any change over time.

It should be noted that a number of changes to the Diploma programme were subsequently announced by the new Coalition Government in July (DfE, 2010). While these were unknown at the time of undertaking the research summarised in this report, it should be read with these in mind. The changes include:

- Withdrawal of the three proposed 'academic' Diploma subjects (science, humanities and languages) originally planned for 2011 in order to focus

¹ Now the Department for Education (DfE).

on further developing and improving the qualifications already on offer in these areas.

- Termination of the requirement to make every Diploma subject available to all pupils (previously known as the 'Diploma entitlement').
- No requirement to obtain approval from the DfE before delivering new Diploma subjects (and hence no further Gateway rounds).
- Relaxing the requirement to offer the Diploma collaboratively through consortia.
- The centrally funded 14-19 workforce support programme would cease in its current form in August 2010.

It is important that the findings presented in this report are recognised as reflecting the situation at the time that the research was carried out (November to December 2009 and March to May 2010). Responses from Consortium Leads may well have been different had the research activities taken place following the changing context of government policy relating to Diplomas listed above. For example, plans for Diploma delivery *might* have been different following the removal of the Diploma entitlement that often brought with it the need for institutions to collaborate. Moreover, the motivations for delivering Diplomas also *might* have been different. It should also be considered that pupils had yet to make their choices for Key Stage 4 and post-16.

It should also be considered that the research activities summarised in the report were carried out prior to other changes in the 14-19 arena that might have had an impact on responses from Consortium Leads had the survey been carried out at a later date (including an increased emphasis on the English Baccalaureate², which *could* have an impact on the curriculum offer in schools, and the Wolf Report (2011) and its recommendations for 14-19 education).

Therefore, the findings in this report should be considered as valid at the time the research was undertaken. The changing nature of Diploma delivery following the changes discussed will be explored during future phases of the evaluation.

²Information on the English Baccalaureate can be found at <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/englishbac/a0075975/theenglishbaccalaureate>

1.1 Background to Diplomas

In March 2007, the former DCSF announced that a new Diploma qualification would be available from September 2008 for pupils aged 14-19. A total of 146 consortia (which involved schools, colleges and other partners working in partnership) were approved, through the 'Gateway' 1 application process, to begin delivering Diploma courses in the first five (Phase 1) subjects (also called 'lines of learning'):

- Construction and the Built Environment
- Creative and Media
- Engineering
- Information Technology
- Society, Health and Development.

A further five subjects (Phase 2) were introduced in September 2009:

- Business, Administration and Finance
- Environmental and Land-based Studies
- Hair and Beauty Studies
- Hospitality
- Manufacturing and Product Design.

Details of approved consortia provided by the DCSF in June 2008, indicated that 310 consortia were approved for September 2009 delivery. However, due to changes within some consortia after this time (for example, with some consortia merging), this number may have changed slightly. Consortia approved for delivery from 2009 could be offering any of the ten subjects listed above.

In September 2010, the final four subjects (Phase 3) could be delivered:

- Sport and Active Leisure
- Travel and Tourism
- Retail
- Public Services.

In total 314 consortia were approved to offer at least one new Diploma subject from September 2010 and could be offering any of the 14 Diploma subjects listed above. Consortia could either apply to commence Diploma delivery for the first time through the Gateway process, or could apply to

deliver additional Diploma subjects to those they had already been approved to deliver through a previous Gateway.

It should be noted that a number of changes to the Diploma programme were announced by the new Coalition Government in July 2010, as described above. Updates on the Diploma reform can be found at: <http://www.education.gov.uk/schools/teachingandlearning/qualifications/diploma/a0064056/diploma-announcements>.

1.2 Research aims

The purpose of the overall evaluation of Diplomas is to provide policy makers and practitioners with systematic and robust evidence. This will enable them to make informed judgements about the outcomes of the Diplomas for different stakeholders and to make improvements to design and delivery, if appropriate.

This report summarises the findings from the third survey of Consortium Leads. The aim of this telephone survey was to gather information on the overall strategy and structure of consortia, prior to Diploma delivery in September 2010. The survey explored:

- the type of organisations involved in consortia
- the subjects and levels offered
- the issues experienced by consortia in planning their Diploma delivery
- the extent to which consortia felt prepared for September 2010 delivery.

This report also includes the findings from a survey of pupils in Year 9 and Year 11 in a sub-sample of 30 consortia included in the Consortium Lead survey. The survey focused on young people's decisions about what to do after Year 9 and Year 11, particularly whether they planned to take a Diploma from September 2010 and the influences on their choice to do so or not. The survey also included questions on the Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) provided to pupils to support their decision-making.

1.3 Research methods and sample

The overall research design for the evaluation provides a complementary mixed-method approach to address the complex range of issues and aims associated with the implementation of Diplomas. This involves surveys of a range of stakeholders (including Consortium Leads, staff, pupils, and Higher Education Institutions (HEIs)), longitudinal programmes of qualitative case-

studies of consortia, and statistical analysis of external datasets (such as the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS) and the National Pupil Dataset (NPD)).

One strand of the evaluation focused on in this report involved conducting telephone interviews with 224 of the 314 Consortium Leads approved for September 2010 delivery (71 per cent). These consortia surveyed were located in all of the nine government office regions (GORs)³ and included consortia in both urban and rural areas. Just under a quarter (24 per cent) of the consortia crossed local authority (LA) boundaries, and amongst these 54 consortia, 23 (43 per cent) were reported to match sub-regional groupings⁴.

The other strand included in this report involved carrying out a survey of pupils in Years 9 and 11 across a sub-sample of the consortia included in the telephone survey of Consortium Leads described above. Data from the telephone survey, along with information supplied by the then DCSF about the schools involved in consortia were used to select the sub-sample of 30 consortia. They were selected according to the following criteria (further details of the criteria are given in Appendix A):

- Not selected in other samples.
- Consortium Lead agreement.
- Diploma subject and level offered.
- Involvement in previous Gateways.
- School-level variables, such as achievement levels.
- Government Office Region to ensure a geographical spread.

Full details of the sample drawn and a discussion of the representativeness of the sample compared with all consortia which were approved via the third phase of the Gateway process are presented in Appendix A. A total of 247 schools across 30 consortia were sent questionnaires - one half (123 schools) of the sample received questionnaires for all Year 9 pupils, the other half (124 schools) received questionnaires for all Year 11 pupils. Schools were asked to distribute questionnaires to all pupils, regardless of whether they were planning to take a Diploma in the following academic year or not.

A total of 741 Year 9 pupils and 556 Year 11 pupils responded. The findings from the survey are compared with those from the 2008 survey to explore any change over time.⁵ Pupils' responses to the questionnaire were then matched to background information held on the Pupil Level Annual School Census

³ Government Offices were since abolished in 2011.

⁴Sub-regional groupings were groups of neighbouring LAs which worked collaboratively together to deliver the 14-19 entitlement and ensured that funding was distributed in the most effective way.

⁵ See O'Donnell, *et.al* (2009). A total of 5,424 Year 9 learners and 2,078 Year 11 learners responded in 2008. Response to the 2010 surveys was lower because the evaluation was suspended in May 2010 due to the election and therefore the reminder strategy was curtailed. Response to both surveys was substantial enough for comparisons to be made.

(PLASC) and the NPD to explore differences in responses in relation to their background characteristics. Details of the responding sample of pupils are presented in Appendix A.

2 Establishing consortia

Key findings and implications for policy and practice

- Two-thirds of the consortia that had been established to deliver Diplomas previously had experienced no changes to the membership of their consortium for September 2010 delivery. Where changes had occurred this usually related to new partners joining the consortium.
- New consortia approved for delivery for the first time in 2010 tended to be built on existing local partnerships, as was the case in existing consortia, and few challenges were noted in establishing the consortium.
- **Policy implication:** there may continue to be a preference for delivery of Diplomas through partnerships for some subjects because of the benefits including access to resources and staff expertise, even though collaborative working is no longer a requirement.
- While the main motivation for delivering Diplomas cited at the time of the interviews was the need to prepare for the 14-19 entitlement (a requirement no longer in place, as discussed in Chapter 1), it was evident that existing staff and consortia expertise and the demand for the subject and for the associated skills in the labour market were key motivations for the majority of consortia.
- Employers were found to be the most challenging partner to engage in consortia (in comparison to TPs and HEIs). Consortia new to Diploma delivery in 2010 had found it harder to engage employers than those with previous experience.

This chapter examines the process of establishing consortia including:

- the extent to which partnerships were established prior to delivering Diplomas and whether or not any changes in membership have occurred
- challenges faced in establishing the Diploma consortium
- consortia's main motivation for delivering Diplomas in 2010.

2.1 Composition of consortia and ease of establishment

In exploring the establishment of consortia, it is necessary to distinguish between those who were approved for delivering Diplomas for the first time from September 2010 (33 consortia in the sample) and those who had already delivered Diplomas but had been approved to deliver one or more additional Diploma subjects from September 2010 (191 consortia).

Consortia approved to deliver for the first time from September 2010

In the main, there was some history of partnership working amongst most consortia approved for the first time in 2010. As Table 2.1 below illustrates, the majority (76 per cent) of these consortia had established partnerships prior to the application process. The existing members were sufficient in most cases to become a Diploma consortium (in 61 per cent all partners had been involved prior to the planning for Diploma delivery) although in five consortia (15 per cent) the consortium had been extended to include new partners. Only 18 per cent of consortia (six in total) had been created for the purpose of applying to deliver Diplomas. These findings are, however, based on a small number of consortia, and should, therefore be viewed as indicative.

Table 2.1 Extent to which consortia approved to deliver for the first time from September 2010 were pre-existing partnerships

Pre-existing partnership?	No.	%
Yes-all partners involved previously	20	61
No	6	18
Yes - new partners	5	15
No response	2	6
Total	33	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who were approved to deliver for the first time from September 2010

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Where partnerships had been established or extended in order to deliver Diplomas from September 2010, this had not proved to be challenging for all but two of the consortia. Where establishing a consortium had been challenging this was associated with a lack of experience of working in partnership, lack of familiarity with the qualification and the challenge of encouraging school involvement.

Consortia approved to deliver additional Diploma subjects from September 2010

The consortia that had already been delivering Diplomas, and were approved for additional subjects from September 2010, had a stable membership with two-thirds of these consortia (66 per cent) reporting that there had been no changes to the membership of their consortium for September 2010 delivery. Where there had been changes, this was generally to extend to additional partners (in 26 per cent of consortia), although eight per cent (16 consortia) reported that some partners would no longer be involved in Diploma delivery.

Involving institutions

In the majority of cases, consortia (those involved in previous Diploma delivery previously and new consortia) included all the institutions that Consortium Leads considered were required (81 per cent) while, 17 per cent reported that this was not the case. The main reasons that relevant institutions were not represented in the consortia included:

- Lack of interest/difficulty engaging institutions - for example, some schools were reportedly reluctant to include Diplomas in the curriculum because they felt that it was not appropriate for their pupils or was too burdensome. Moreover, two interviewees specifically highlighted the difficulty of engaging Grammar schools in the qualification which was attributed, for example to their '*traditional academic views*'.
- Lack of capacity of institutions to be involved.

Involving employers, TPs and HEIs

As can be seen in Table 2.2 below, the partners which consortia had most commonly found difficult to engage at the time of the surveys (November to December 2009) were employers (23 per cent found this difficult or very difficult), while fewer reported that engaging with HEIs or TPs was difficult (14 per cent and 13 per cent respectively). While around two-fifths (41 per cent) had found engaging HEIs easy or very easy, a slightly smaller proportion had found engaging with employers and TPs easy (35 per cent and 37 per cent respectively). However, it was evident that a greater proportion of consortia had not yet attempted to engage with TPs at the time of the survey.

Table 2.2 Ease of gaining employer, TP and HEI involvement

How easy has it been to engage employers, TPs and HEIs?	Employers %	TPs %	HEIs %
Very easy	7	8	10
Easy	28	29	31
Neither easy nor difficult	38	28	36
Difficult	21	9	10
Very difficult	1	4	4
Not yet started	2	10	4
Do not feel there is a need for their support	-	7	<1
No response	2	5	4
N=	224	224	224

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Although the number of consortia is small, there are some indications that consortia who were planning delivery for the first time in 2010 had found employer engagement more difficult than those who had previous experience of Diploma delivery (33 per cent approved for the first time in 2010 only had found engaging employers difficult compared with 19 per cent of all other consortia).

The issues most frequently reported amongst consortia that had experienced challenges in engaging TPs (in the development or delivery of Diplomas) included:

- Limited or no availability of providers in the area – a few consortia leads made reference to the difficulties of being in a rural location.
- Cost – some Consortia Leads reported a lack of involvement because they felt that the cost was too prohibitive. A few others reported that TPs would engage in the Diploma if they were given money to do so.
- Lack of capacity and time to commit.

Challenges more commonly cited by those who expressed an opinion about engaging employers included securing commitment, particularly in relation to devoting the time required, and concerns about the current economic climate.

In terms of HEIs, difficulties most commonly related to:

- Personnel – including the difficulties in locating the appropriate personnel to work with (a small number of respondents attributed this to the large size of HEI establishments).
- Lack of understanding – a few respondents for example, felt that there was reluctance amongst some HEI professionals to understand the Diploma.
- Limited or no local deliverers.

2.2 Motivation for delivering Diplomas

At the time of the surveys (November to December 2009), the main motivation for delivering Diplomas from September 2010 for all consortia, as shown in Table 2.3, was the need to prepare for the 14 – 19 entitlement (reported by 92 per cent of consortia). Although this requirement, which is no longer in place (see Chapter 1), was the major motivator, there was evidence of some demand-side motivations. Consortia were motivated by the match between subjects and staff expertise (78 per cent) and the extent to which the consortium was well established or had previous experience (76 per cent). Both demand for subject area and demand for skills in the labour market were also key motivators for most consortia indicating that the decision to offer Diplomas was at least to some extent, demand-driven.

In contrast, the least frequently reported motivational factors amongst all consortia approved for 2010 delivery were waiting to learn from the experience of previous consortia and funding (both 25 per cent). Few consortia who were delivering in 2010 for the first time (15 per cent, five consortia) reported that their main motivation was waiting to learn from previous consortia's experiences.

Table 2.3 Main motivation for delivering Diplomas from September 2010 amongst all consortia

All consortia	N	%
Prepare for 14 - 19 entitlement	205	92
Line(s) match staff expertise	175	78
Consortium well established/had previous experience	170	76
Demand for subject area	150	67
Demand for these skills in labour market	141	63
Demand for the type of qualification	92	41
Waiting to learn from Gateway 1 or Gateway 2 experiences	55	25
Funding related	55	25
Other	25	11
No response	6	3
Total	224	100

*More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100
A total of 218 respondents answered at least one item in this question.
Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010*

It should be considered that Consortium Leads' responses regarding motivations for delivering Diplomas *might* have differed had the survey taken place after the changes to Diploma policy were announced in July 2010 (see Chapter 1 above).

3 Profile of consortia

Key findings

- Sport and Active Leisure, Business, Administration and Finance and Society, Health and Development were the most frequently reported Diploma subjects that consortia planned to offer for the first time in September 2010. Engineering, Retail Business and Manufacturing and Product Design were least commonly offered for the first time.
- The Diploma offer is broadening within consortia as nearly three-quarters (73 per cent) of consortia had chosen to deliver between two and five additional Diploma subjects 2010. Only seven per cent were planning to deliver only one new subject compared with 23 per cent in the 2009 survey of Consortium Leads.
- Over three quarters (79 per cent) of consortia were planning to deliver at least one of the four new Diploma subjects (Public Services, Retail Business, Sport and Active Leisure, Travel and Tourism) and, of these, the most widely offered was Sport and Active Leisure (67 per cent of consortia).
- Consistent with findings from the previous surveys, consortia were most likely to be offering Diplomas at Level 2 (96 per cent).

This chapter explores the profile of consortia approved for delivery from September 2010 in terms of the subjects that consortia will be introducing for the first time in September 2010 (including details of the levels and phase (pre/post-16)).

3.1 What subjects were consortia introducing in 2010?

A consortium could be introducing any of the first 14 Diploma subjects for the first time in 2010, including those from the first, second and third phases of Diploma implementation. This could involve consortia extending their range of Diplomas in 2010 or introducing the Diploma qualification for the first time.

3.1.1 Overview of Diplomas being introduced by consortia from 2010

As can be seen in Table 3.1, Consortium Leads reported at the time of the survey (November to December 2009) that subjects from each of the three phases of introduction would be most widely introduced for the first time in 2010:

- Sport and Active Leisure (67 per cent, Phase 3)
- Business Administration and Finance (40 per cent, Phase 2)
- Society, Health and Development (33 per cent, Phase 1).

This suggests that interest in individual Diploma subjects is dependent on the subject itself rather than how established a Diploma subject is, which reflects the findings in Chapter 2 that 67 per cent were motivated to offer Diplomas because of demand for the subject, and in Chapter 4 that potential take-up of Diplomas is not necessarily higher for the more established subjects.

Table 3.1 provides an overview of the different subjects that consortia reported that they were offering for the first time in 2010. This does not reflect the subjects being offered in total, only those that were being offered for the first time.

Table 3.1 Subjects and levels of Diplomas approved for delivery in September 2010 in consortia surveyed

Subject	Foundation (Level 1)		Higher (Level 2)		Level 3	Total number of consortia offering subject	% of all consortia
	Pre-16 %	Post-16 %	Pre-16 %	Post-16 %			
Phase 1							
Information Technology	16	7	27	15	15	66	29
Construction and the Built Environment	14	4	22	11	12	58	26
Society, Health and Development	13	7	31	14	15	74	33
Creative and Media	12	4	24	10	14	58	26
Engineering	7	3	16	6	12	41	18
Phase 2							
Business, Administration and Finance	18	8	36	17	25	89	40
Hair and Beauty Studies	16	5	22	11	7	55	25
Hospitality	14	5	25	11	12	64	29
Environmental and Land-based	13	5	21	7	8	52	23
Manufacturing and Product Design	2	2	10	2	3	23	10
Phase 3							
Sport and Active Leisure	31	12	63	26	34	151	67
Public Services	11	4	17	11	11	47	21
Travel and Tourism	10	3	19	9	11	49	22
Retail Business	8	3	14	8	9	37	17

*Note: consortia could be offering more than one subject at more than one level
Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010*

3.1.2 Number of new subjects planned by consortia for delivery in 2010

The total number of subjects consortia planned to deliver for the first time from September 2010 is shown in Table 3.2 below. It shows that, at the time of the survey (November to December 2009), 74 per cent of consortia had chosen to deliver between two and five new subjects. In contrast, seven per cent of consortia were planning to deliver one new Diploma subject, compared with 23 per cent in the 2009 survey (see O'Donnell and Lynch, 2009).

Table 3.2 Number of new Diploma subjects that consortia planned to deliver from September 2010*

Number of subjects	Consortia %
One	7
Two	17
Three	19
Four	20
Five	17
Six	8
Seven	6
Eight	3
Nine	1
Ten	<1
No response	2
N= 224	

**Table includes Phase 1, Phase 2 and Phase 3 subjects*

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

3.1.3 Levels at which consortia plan to deliver newly introduced Diplomas in 2010

As Table 3.3 shows, most consortia (96 per cent) were offering new or additional Diplomas at Level 2; a finding which is consistent with the previous surveys. This compares with 62 per cent offering Level 1 and Level 3 Diplomas. These indications of take-up reflect the Consortia Leads' anticipated take-up and may vary in reality as they are subject to young people's choices.

Table 3.3 Levels of Diplomas approved for delivery from September 2010 and offered by consortia pre-16 and post-16

Levels offered	Pre-16	Post-16	Offered at all by consortia	
	%	%	Number of consortia	%
Level 1	59	28	138	62
Level 2	93	52	216	96
Level 3	2	62	139	62
N= 224				

Note: consortia could be offering more than one subject at more than one level. This table presents whether they were offering each level for any subject approved for delivery in September 2010.

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

3.1.4 Extent of the Diploma offer for the four new subjects

In total, at the time of the survey (November to December 2009), 177 consortia (79 per cent) were planning to deliver at least one of the Phase 3 subjects⁶ from September 2010. Among these consortia, it was most common to offer only one of the new subjects (62 per cent) while only six per cent planned to offer all four of the new subjects (see Table 3.4 below).

Table 3.4 Number of new Phase 3 subjects being offered by Consortia

Number of new subjects being offered by consortia	N	%
One	110	62
Two	37	21
Three	20	11
Four	10	6
Total	177	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

⁶ The Phase 3 subjects are: Public Services, Retail Business, Sport and Active Leisure and Travel and Tourism.

4. Estimated take-up of Diplomas for 2010

Key findings and implications for policy and practice

- The majority (77 per cent) of Consortium Leads estimated that the number of pupils starting a Diploma, pre-16 in September 2010 would be 300 or fewer. There was less certainty around post-16 take-up as this may be more difficult to predict, but 63 per cent thought 300 or fewer pupils would start on a Diploma in 2010.
- The proportion of Year 9 pupils surveyed who were planning to take a Diploma in the following academic year had increased since Diplomas commenced in 2008. In 2010, Year 11 pupils were less likely than pupils in Year 9 to opt to take a Diploma, as had been the case in 2008. Year 11 pupils were no more likely to choose to do a Diploma than they had been in 2008 (14 per cent in 2010).
- As might be expected, a Higher Diploma (Level 2) was the most popular choice for study pre-16, whereas the Advanced/Progression Diploma (Level 3) was favoured post-16. A minority were planning to take Level 1.
- It did not appear to be the case that the Diplomas introduced in earlier phases, and therefore potentially more established, were more popular than those introduced in 2009 or 2010.
- Of those planning to take a Diploma, most thought it would give them useful skills, help them get a job and give them a well-recognised qualification they could use in the future.
- Those with higher prior attainment were less likely to take a Diploma. Year 11 pupils who planned to stay in education until after taking a course at university were less likely to plan to take a Diploma, as were those who were more likely to report bad behaviour and attendance.
- **Policy implication:** there is scope for more IAG to support pupils (particularly those in Year 11) when making choices about which courses to take (see Chapter 5 for more on IAG).

This Chapter explores:

- Consortium Leads' estimates of take-up of all Diplomas available in the consortium from 2010
- learner survey findings in relation to expected take-up of Diplomas.

4.1 What was the estimated pupil take-up for 2010 across new and existing Diplomas?

The survey of Consortium Leads (carried out November to December 2009) suggested that the extent of anticipated take-up for any Diploma subject in 2010 varied across consortia but was typically 300 or fewer pupils pre-16 and post-16 (77 per cent and 63 per cent of consortia respectively).

Table 4.1 Estimated take-up of Diplomas

Estimated number of pupils starting on Diplomas	Pre-16	Post-16
	%	%
0-25	5	12
26-50	11	14
51-100	25	17
101-200	24	13
201-300	12	7
301-400	2	2
401-500	2	2
More than 500	2	2
No response	17	30
N=	224	224

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Almost a third (30 per cent) of all Consortium Leads were unable to estimate the potential take-up for post-16 Diplomas. This might reflect the uncertainty that characterises take-up of post-16 qualifications more generally and also the timing of the survey (prior to many pupils making their choices).

Consortia with no previous experience of delivering Diplomas were likely to report smaller Key Stage 4 cohorts for 2010 than consortia who had experience of delivering Diplomas. This may reflect a tendency of consortia to 'start small', which was reported by case-study consortia in previous cohorts.

4.2 Expected Take-up of Diplomas amongst Pupils

The Year 9 and 11 pupil surveys carried out in March to May 2010 provided indications of the likely take-up of Diplomas from September 2010 (the third cohort of potential Diploma pupils). Table 4.2 shows that 30 per cent of Year 9 pupils had chosen to take a Diploma, which was an increase from 14 per cent in 2008. Although 30 per cent of Year 9 pupils had not thought about taking a Diploma, this was a smaller proportion than in 2008 (45 per cent). Year 11 pupils were less likely than those in Year 9 to report having chosen to take a Diploma (14 per cent). They were no more likely to have done so than they were in 2008 (13 per cent), and more than half were still not thinking about taking a Diploma (56 per cent in 2008 and 2010).

Table 4.2 Extent to which pupils have chosen to take a Diploma

Young people's choice	2008 Year 9 %	2008 Year 11 %	2010 Year 9 %	2010 Year 11 %
I did not think about taking a Diploma	45	56	30	56
I have chosen to take a Diploma in Years 10 and 11	14	13	30	14
I thought about taking a Diploma, but decided not to	23	11	27	13
I am thinking about taking a Diploma	8	10	4	9
No response	10	10	9	8
N =	4622	1624	692	460

A single response item

A filter question: all those who said they had heard of Diplomas

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 surveys 2008 and 2010

Multi-level regression analysis⁷ was undertaken to examine the relative impact of a range of variables on **pupils' choice to take a Diploma or not**. Multi-level regression analysis takes into account a range of influential variables, to assess (in this case) whether pupils who said they had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma differ from their peers (those who had thought about taking a Diploma but decided not to and those who did not think of taking a Diploma).

⁷ See Appendix B for details of the variables included in the models. Year 9 and Year 11 models are based on different numbers of responding pupils and different variables and are therefore not directly comparable.

Among **Year 9 pupils**, the variables found to be associated with planned take-up were:

- **Gender:** girls were less likely than boys to plan to take a Diploma (this was also the case in 2008).
- **Prior attainment:** pupils with higher Key Stage 2 attainment (higher than Level 4, on average) had a lower probability than those with lower prior attainment to plan to take a Diploma (this was also the case in 2008).
- **School type:** pupils in schools with sixth forms (11-18 schools) had a higher probability than those in 11-16 schools to opt to take a Diploma (this could be because they were more likely to have received information on Diplomas).

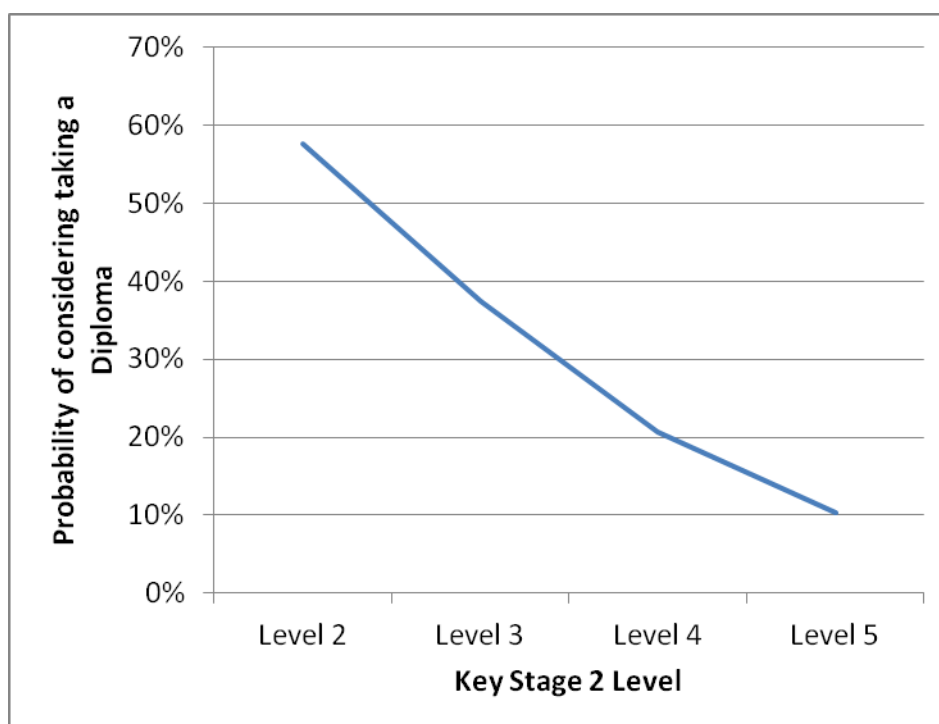
To illustrate these findings, Table 4.3 and Figure 1.1 provide examples of the degree of impact that some of the above factors might have on the likelihood of Year 9 pupils taking a Diploma or not.

Table 4.3 Probabilities of pupils with particular characteristics planning to take a Diploma – Year 9

Learner characteristics	Year 9 %
Year 9 learner in a school with a sixth form	65
Typical Year 9 learner*	18
Year 9 learner with Level 5 Key Stage 2 prior attainment	10
Female Year 9 learner	9

**A typical Year 9 learner reflects the majority of the sample. In this case, a typical learner is male, achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2 and is in a school without a sixth form*
 Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Figure 4.1 Probability of pupils with different levels of prior attainment planning to take a Diploma – Year 9



Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Among **Year 11 pupils**, the variables found to be associated with planned take-up of Diplomas were⁸:

- **Future intentions:** Those who planned to leave education after sixth form, or who were unsure about when to leave education had a higher probability of taking a Diploma compared with those who planned to leave after taking a course at university.
- **School type:** in contrast to Year 9 pupils (discussed above), pupils in Year 11 in schools with sixth forms (11-18 schools) had a *lower* probability than those in 11-16 schools to opt to take a Diploma.
- **Prior attainment:** Those with lower prior attainment at Key Stage 3 (Level 5 or below) had a higher probability of taking a Diploma compared with pupils with higher prior attainment.
- **Behaviour and attendance** (factor analysis Factor 4⁹): Year 11 pupils who were more likely to report poor behaviour and attendance had a higher probability of taking a Diploma.

To illustrate these findings, Table 4.4 and Figure 4.2 provide examples of the degree of impact that some of the above characteristics might have on the likelihood of Year 11 pupils taking a Diploma or not¹⁰.

⁸ Year 9 and Year 11 models are based on different numbers of responding learners and different variables and are therefore not directly comparable.

⁹ A range of survey questions were grouped together using factor analysis, which consolidates the data in order to produce more robust measures than a single question would do. Four Factors were identified. See Appendix C.

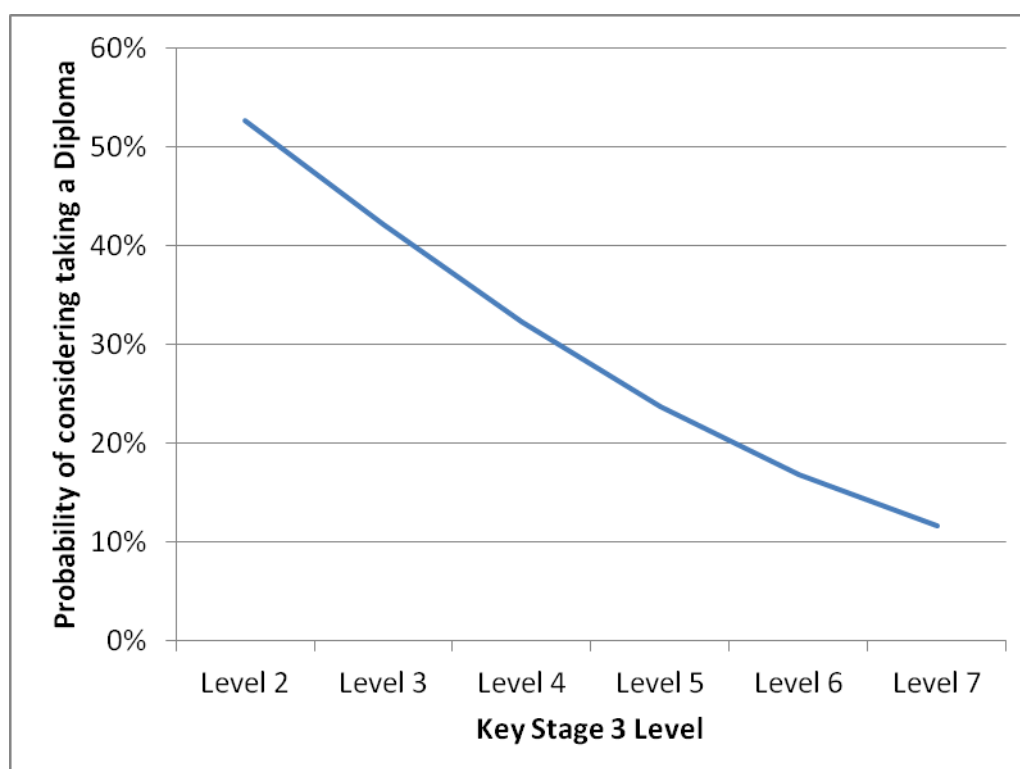
Table 4.4 Probabilities of pupils with particular characteristics planning to take a Diploma – Year 11

Pupil characteristics	Year 11
	%
Most likely to report poor attendance and behaviour	54
Will leave education after sixth form	48
Unsure when to leave education	47
Year 11 pupil with Level 4 Key Stage 3 prior attainment	32
Typical Year 11 pupil*	20
Year 11 pupil with Level 6 Key Stage 3 prior attainment	17
In a school with a sixth form	9

*A typical Year 11 pupil reflects the majority of the sample. In this case, a typical pupil is one who plans to leave education after university, has average attendance and behaviour, has average prior attainment at Key Stage 3, has no special educational needs and is in a school without a sixth form.

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Figure 4.2 Probability of pupils with different levels of prior attainment planning to take a Diploma – Year 11



Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

¹⁰ It might well be the case that the characteristics of Year 11 pupils planning to take a Level 2 Diploma differ from those planning to take a Level 3 Diploma, although the numbers of survey respondents in each sub-category were too small to conduct this analysis.

4.2.1 Pupils' take-up of Diplomas in the future

Year 9 pupils were asked whether they would do a Diploma in future; 44 per cent reported that they thought they would do so (of those, eight per cent said immediately after Year 11 and 36 per cent said at some point in the future). These proportions were very similar to those reported in 2008. Multi-level regression analysis (see Appendix B) was undertaken to examine the characteristics of pupils that were associated with **pupils' choice to take a Diploma in the future or not**. This revealed that among Year 9 pupils, the variables found to be associated with possible take-up of Diplomas in the future were:

- **Prior attainment:** pupils with higher Key Stage 2 attainment (higher than Level 4, on average) had a lower probability than those with lower prior attainment to report the possibility of taking a Diploma in future
- **Attitude to school and learning** (factor analysis Factor 1¹¹): pupils with a positive attitude to school and learning had a greater probability of taking a Diploma in the future, compared with similar pupils with more negative attitudes towards school and learning.

Table 4.5 and Figure 4.3 provide examples of the degree of impact that the above factors might have on the likelihood of taking a Diploma or not.

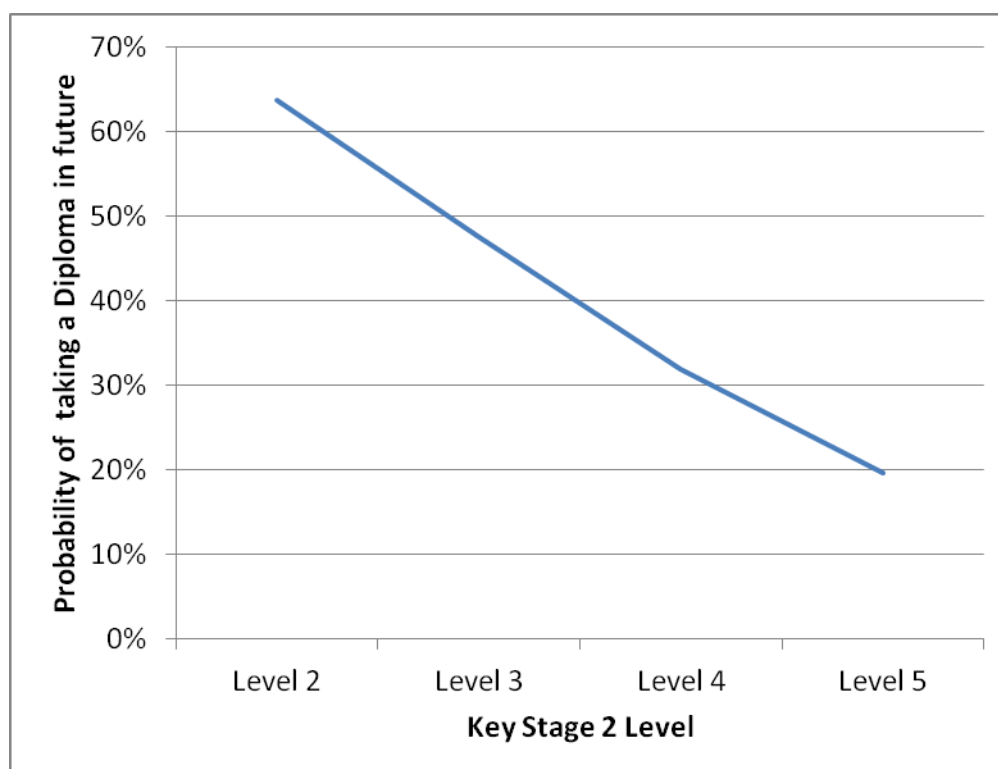
Table 4.5 Probabilities of pupils with particular characteristics planning to take a Diploma in future – Year 9

Pupil characteristics	Year 9 %
Year 9 pupil with most positive attitude to school and learning	47
Typical Year 9 pupil*	29
Year 9 pupil with Level 5 Key Stage 2 prior attainment	20

**A typical Year 9 pupil reflects the majority of the sample. In this case, a typical pupil has an average attitude to school and learning and achieved Level 4 at Key Stage 2*
 Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

¹¹ A range of survey questions were grouped together using factor analysis, which consolidates the data in order to produce more robust measures than a single question would do. Four Factors were identified. See Appendix C.

Figure 4.3 Probability of pupils taking a Diploma in future – Year 9



Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

Of the **Year 9 pupils not planning to take a Diploma in Years 10 and 11**, almost three quarters (72 per cent) of them reported that they did not plan to take one in the future either. Those *not* planning to take a Diploma any time in the future were less likely than those who were at some point in the future to say that information on Diplomas had been very or quite helpful (58 per cent and 67 per cent respectively). Amongst those not planning to take a Diploma in Years 10 and 11, pupils in 11-16 schools were more likely to report that they were planning to at some point in the future (34 per cent) compared with pupils in 11-18 schools with a sixth form (22 per cent).

4.2.2 Pupils' take-up of Diploma subjects

Amongst Year 9 respondents who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, a Diploma, the most popular subject was Creative and Media (as was the case in 2008). It did not appear to be the case that the Diplomas introduced in earlier phases, and therefore potentially more established, were more popular than those introduced in 2009 or due to commence in 2010 (for example, six per cent had chosen the Construction and the Built Environment, available since 2008, and the same proportion had chosen Sport and Active Leisure which was first introduced in 2010). Amongst the Year 11 respondents, the new subjects Public Services and Sport and Active Leisure were equally as popular as subjects available since 2008. This suggests that it is the subject

content which is important to pupils (reasons for take-up are explored in Section 4.2.4).

Table 4.6 Diploma subject chosen – Year 9 and Year 11, 2010

Subject	Year 9 %	Year 11 %
Creative and Media	21	13
Engineering	11	16
Society, Health and Development	10	13
Information Technology	8	4
Construction and the Built Environment	6	10
Business, Administration and Finance	11	3
Hair and Beauty	8	2
Hospitality	6	-
Environmental and Land-based Studies	3	4
Manufacturing and Product Design	1	1
Sport and Active Leisure	6	13
Public Services	3	13
Travel and Tourism	2	-
Retail Business	-	-
No response/more than one box ticked	4	11
N =	234	109

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma in September 2010

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 survey 2010

Further analysis¹² of the survey data revealed some differences in the characteristics of pupils planning to embark on the different Diploma subjects (although the numbers responding to the survey in each sub category were small, so the differences are not statistically significant and findings might not be representative; in some cases findings relate to Year 9 only, as numbers of respondents in Year 11 sub-categories were too small to comment on):

- **Gender:** Amongst the Year 9 and Year 11 survey respondents, those planning to take Construction and the Built Environment, Engineering, Public Services, Information Technology, and Manufacturing and Product Design were more likely to be male. In contrast, those taking Society, Health and Development and Hair and Beauty were more likely to be female. The findings were less clear for other Diploma subjects (for example, the difference was less marked, was contradictory for Years 9 and 11, or numbers were too small to comment).
- **Special educational needs:** In Year 9, a higher proportion of pupils planning to take Society, Health and Development were recognised for

¹² In this case, a series of cross tabulations which explore the possible relationship between two or more variables.

School Action/School Action Plus (18 per cent) compared with pupils planning to take Construction and the Built Environment (six per cent), Engineering (five per cent) or Business, Administration and Finance (four per cent); numbers of responding pupils planning to take other Diploma subjects were too small to be able to make comparisons.

- **Prior attainment:** Amongst the Year 9 survey respondents, higher proportions of pupils planning to take Creative and Media had achieved *lower* prior attainment (less than Level 4 at Key Stage 2) (33 per cent) compared with those planning to take Engineering (14 per cent) or Business, Administration and Finance (four per cent); numbers of responding pupils planning to take other Diploma subjects were too small to be able to make comparisons.
- **Preferred learning style:** As in 2008, Year 9 pupils planning to take an Engineering Diploma were most likely to prefer practical work and team working (factor analysis Factor 3¹³), although numbers of responding pupils planning to take each individual subject were small, so caution should be applied to this finding. Differences were not significant amongst the Year 11 respondents.
- **Behaviour and attendance** (factor analysis Factor 4¹⁴): Year 9 pupils who had opted to take a Manufacturing and Product Design Diploma were more likely than those taking other Diploma subjects to report poor behaviour and attendance; they also had the most negative views of school lessons. Again, numbers of responding pupils planning to take each individual subject were small, so caution should be applied to these findings. Differences were not significant amongst the Year 11 respondents.

4.2.3 Pupils' take-up of Diploma levels

At the time of the pupil surveys (March to May 2010), just over half (52 per cent) of Year 9 pupils were planning to take a Higher (Level 2) Diploma, and a similar proportion in Year 11 (56 per cent) were planning to take either the Higher (Level 2) or Advanced or Progression (Level 3) Diploma (see Table 4.7). A minority (nine per cent in Year 9 and 13 per cent in Year 11) were planning to take a Level 1 Diploma (as was the case in 2008, when 11 per cent of both year groups planned to take Level 1). Just over a third (36 per cent) of Year 9 pupils and a quarter (26 per cent) of Year 11 pupils were unsure about the level of the Diploma they would be taking (see Table 4.7).

¹³ A range of survey questions were grouped together using factor analysis, which consolidates the data in order to produce more robust measures than a single question would do. Four Factors were identified. See Appendix C.

¹⁴ A range of survey questions were grouped together using factor analysis, which consolidates the data in order to produce more robust measures than a single question would do. Four Factors were identified. See Appendix C.

Table 4.7 Diploma level chosen – Year 9 and Year 11, 2010

Level	Year 9 %	Year 11 %
Foundation	9	13
Higher	52	19
Advanced/Progression	N/A	37
Not sure	36	26
No response	3	6
Advanced/Progression	N/A	37
N =	234	109

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma in September 2010

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 survey 2010

Further analysis¹⁵ of the survey data revealed some differences in the characteristics of pupils planning to embark on the different levels of Diplomas:

- **Gender:** Year 9 pupils opting to take a Foundation Diploma were more likely to be boys (55 per cent) than girls (45 per cent respectively). Those opting to take a Higher Diploma were also more likely to be boys (65 per cent compared with 35 per cent). Among Year 11 pupils, boys and girls were equally as likely to opt to take a Foundation Diploma post-16, whereas boys were more likely than girls to opt to take a Higher Diploma (57 per cent compared with 43 per cent) or an Advanced/Progression Diploma (67 per cent and 33 per cent).
- **Future intentions:** Overall, a course-based route post-16 was favoured among Year 9 and Year 11 pupils. However, a greater proportion of those planning to take a Foundation Diploma intended to follow a work-based route post-16 (19 per cent of Year 9 pupils and 21 per cent of Year 11 pupils) compared with those planning to take a Higher Diploma (14 per cent of Year 9 and 11 pupils) or an Advanced/Progression Diploma (none of the Year 11 pupils taking this level planned a work-based route). Among Year 11 pupils, those opting to take the Advanced/Progression level Diplomas planned to stay in education the longest.
- **Eligibility for free school meals:** A greater proportion of those planning to take a Foundation Diploma compared to those taking a Higher Diploma were eligible for free school meals (11 per cent compared with six per cent). Numbers in sub-categories were too small to be able to comment on Year 11 pupils.
- **Special educational needs:** In Years 9 and 11, pupils opting to do a Foundation Diploma were more likely than those taking other levels to be recognised for School Action/School Action Plus.
- **Prior attainment:** As might be expected, pupils with higher prior attainment planned to do higher level Diplomas. For example, 53 per cent of Year 9 pupils doing a Foundation Diploma had achieved Level 4 or

¹⁵ In this case, a series of cross tabulations which explore the possible relationship between two or more variables.

higher at Key Stage 2, compared with 84 per cent of pupils who planned to take a Higher Diploma. A similar pattern emerged for Year 11 pupils.

- **Attendance and behaviour** (factor analysis Factor 4¹⁶): Among the Year 9 pupils, there was significant variation in tendency for poor attendance and poor behaviour according to the level of the Diploma they were opting to take, with those choosing a Foundation Diploma having a greater tendency on average.

4.2.4 Reasons for choosing to study a Diploma

Tables 4.8 and 4.9 show that, in 2010 and 2008, the most common reasons for pupils in Years 9 and 11 choosing to study a Diploma were that they thought the subject area was related to a career they were interested in or that they thought it would help them get a job in the future. Notable proportions also thought it would help them get into college or higher education/university in future. Only a minority in both year groups chose to study a Diploma because they did not know what else to do, because they were told to, or because their friends had chosen to.

Pupils (particularly those in Year 11) were less likely in 2010 compared with 2008 to say they had been encouraged to take a Diploma by teachers or their parents/carers, or that they thought it would help them get into university/higher education.

¹⁶ A range of survey questions were grouped together using factor analysis, which consolidates the data in order to produce more robust measures than a single question would do. Four Factors were identified. See Appendix C.

Table 4.8 Reasons for choosing to study a Diploma – Year 9

Reasons	Year 9 2008 %	Year 9 2010 %
The subject area is in a career I am interested in	59	67
I thought it would help me get a job in the future	60	64
I thought it would help me get into university/higher education	41	39
I thought it would help me get into college	35	33
I wanted to gain work experience	41	32
I wanted to try a different way of learning	29	25
I wanted to study a different subject area	28	24
My parents/carers encouraged me	21	19
I wanted to study out of school	27	17
Diploma pupils say they like it	N/A in 2008	14
I like the teacher(s)	6	6
I was told to by my school	5	4
My friends chose to study for a Diploma	4	4
I didn't know what else to do	4	2
Other	9	6
No response	5	5
N =	1004	234

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.

A filter question: all those who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma in September 2010 and 2008

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 survey 2010 and 2008

Table 4.9 Reasons for choosing to study a Diploma – Year 11

Reasons	Year 11	Year 11
	2008	2010
	%	%
The subject area is in a career I am interested in	67	70
I thought it would help me get a job in the future	49	48
I thought it would help me get into university/higher education	35	28
I wanted to gain work experience	19	21
I wanted to try a different way of learning	13	18
I wanted to study a different subject area	23	13
I thought it might help me get an apprenticeship in the future	11	9
My parents/carers encouraged me	21	9
Teachers at my school encouraged me	12	6
Diploma pupils say they like it	NA in 2008	6
I like the teacher(s)	5	5
My friends chose to study for a Diploma	4	4
I didn't know what else to do	4	3
Other	6	14
No response	8	4
N =	371	109

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.

A filter question: all those who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma in September 2010 and 2008

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 11 survey 2010 and 2008

Other reasons for choosing to study a Diploma reported by Year 11 pupils included liking the assessment method (for example fewer exams and no final exam), feeling it would lead to a career and feeling that the Diploma looked interesting.

Pupils who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing to take a Diploma, were also asked a separate question on the extent to which they agreed with a number of statements about how they thought the Diploma would help them in the future. Approximately eight out of ten strongly agreed or agreed the qualification would:

- give them useful skills for the future (87 per cent in Year 9 and 88 per cent in Year 11)
- help them get a job in the future (82 per cent in Year 9 and in Year 11)
- give them a well-recognised qualification they can use in the future (79 per cent in Year 9 and 83 per cent in Year 11).

Seven out of ten pupils in Year 9 thought the qualification would help them get into college in the future (73 per cent) or help them get into higher education/university in the future (70 per cent). Year 11 pupils were slightly less likely (62 per cent) to strongly agree or agree that doing a Diploma would help them get into higher education. Around half of pupils in Year 9 and 11 chose a Diploma because they thought it would be more interesting than other qualifications (50 per cent in Year 9 and 58 per cent in Year 11). Fewer Year 11 pupils (38 per cent) chose to take a Diploma as a route to get an apprenticeship in future.

4.2.5 Reasons for choosing *not* to study a Diploma

Tables 4.10 and 4.11 show that, at the time of the pupil surveys (March to May 2010), the main reason why pupils decided not to take a Diploma was that they preferred to take other qualifications, and that the proportions giving this as a reason increased since 2008 (61 per cent in Year 9 in 2010 compared with 48 per cent in 2008, and 62 per cent in Year 11 in 2010 compared with 48 per cent in 2008). A lack of interest in the Diploma subject areas was also one of the main reasons for not taking the qualification. Notable proportions in both year groups also decided not to take a Diploma because they did not think it would help them in the future or because they did not know enough about the Diploma.

Table 4.10 Reasons for choosing *not* to study a Diploma, Year 9

Reasons	Year 9	Year 9
	2008	2010
	%	%
I preferred to take only GCSEs/other qualifications	48	61
I was not interested in the subject area(s) offered	51	49
I did not know enough about Diplomas	45	37
I did not think a Diploma would help me with my future	32	37
My parents/carers did not think I should	15	27
I did not want to study out of school	11	22
I did not want to travel somewhere else	10	20
I do not know the teacher(s) teaching the Diploma	7	14
Diplomas were not available to me	11	9
It is a new qualification	6	7
Teachers at my school did not think I should	6	7
Pupils doing a Diploma say they do not like it	N/A in 2008	6
My friends are not taking a Diploma	5	6
My friends did not think I should	2	4
I did not like the teacher(s) teaching the Diploma	2	2
Other	17	16
No response	4	3
N =	3159	396

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.

A filter question: all those who had decided not to take a Diploma in September 2010 or 2008

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 surveys 2010 and 2008

Table 4.11 Reasons for choosing *not* to study a Diploma, Year 11

Reasons	Year 11	Year 11
	2008	2010
	%	%
I preferred to take only A levels/other qualifications	48	62
I was not interested in the subject area	28	37
I did not know enough about Diplomas	42	36
I did not think a Diploma would help me with my future	23	33
My parents/carers did not think I should	9	14
I did not want to travel to another place of study	11	11
Diplomas were not available to me	14	9
I don't think I will achieve the grades needed	13	9
Teachers at my school did not think I should	6	7
Pupils doing a Diploma say they do not like it	N/A in 2008	6
I wanted to start an apprenticeship	8	5
I wanted to get a job	7	5
I do not know the teacher teaching the Diploma	2	5
My friends did not think I should	3	4
It is a new qualification	4	3
My friends were not taking a Diploma	4	3
I cannot afford it	4	2
I did not like the teacher(s) teaching the Diploma	2	1
Other	13	12
No response	3	3
N =	1091	316

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100.

A filter question: all those who had decided not to take a Diploma in September 2010 or 2008

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: 11 surveys 2010 and 2008

Further analysis¹⁷ explored whether there were any differences in the responses of pupils who reported that they had thought about taking a Diploma, but decided not to, compared with those who did not consider taking a Diploma at all. As in 2008, this revealed that **Year 9 pupils** who did not consider taking a Diploma were more likely than those who had thought about it to report that Diplomas were not available to them and that they were not interested in the subject areas. Pupils in Year 9 who had thought about it but decided not to take a Diploma were slightly more likely to say that they had been influenced by pupils who had taken a Diploma but did not like it. They were also more likely to say they did not want to travel and that they did not

¹⁷ In this case, a series of cross tabulations which explore the possible relationship between two or more variables.

know the teachers who would be teaching the Diploma. Among Year 9 pupils not planning to take a Diploma, girls were more likely than boys to say that they had decided not to do so because they did not think it would help them with their future (43 per cent of girls; 32 per cent of boys). Those with higher prior attainment (Level 4 or higher at Key Stage 2) were more likely than pupils with lower prior attainment to say they had not opted to take a Diploma because they did not think it would help them with their future (40 per cent compared with 27 per cent).

Amongst **Year 11 pupils**, those who did not consider taking a Diploma were more likely than those who had considered it, but decided not to do so, to report, on reflection, that their parents/carers did not think they should take a Diploma. They were also more likely to say that they preferred to take other qualifications (such as A Levels), and that they did not know about Diplomas.

Those who had considered taking a Diploma were more likely to say they did not want to travel and that they did not think they would achieve the grades needed to do a Diploma. Among Year 11 pupils not planning to take a Diploma, boys were more likely than girls to say this was because they did not think they would achieve the grades needed (12 per cent and seven per cent respectively). As expected, those with lower prior attainment were also more likely to say they did not think they would achieve the grades needed (25 per cent of those who achieved below Level 5 at Key Stage 3 compared with six per cent who achieved Level 5 or above). Boys were slightly more likely than girls to say their teachers did not think they should do a Diploma (nine per cent and five per cent respectively) and that their parents/carers did not think they should (17 per cent and 11 per cent). Those pupils with higher prior attainment were more likely to report that they remembered that teachers and parents/carers did not think they should take a Diploma, and that they recalled wanting to do other qualifications such as A Levels.

5. Information, Advice and Guidance to Support Take-up of Diplomas

Key findings and implications for policy and practice

- The proportion of pupils saying that they know a lot about Diplomas had increased over time, but they were still in a minority. Most pupils knew about Diplomas, but still did not know much.
- Since 2008, more pupils reported that information on Diplomas was helpful, but pupils in Year 11 were less likely than those in Year 9 to think this was the case.
- Overall, pupils wanted more information on progression routes, who teaches the Diploma, qualifications you can do alongside the Diploma and assessment.
- Written materials were still the most common and useful source of information on Diplomas. Events were also ranked highly in terms of usefulness, but under half of pupils had accessed events on Diplomas.
- Talking to people, particularly parents/carers/family, subject teachers, Connexions advisers and pupils who were already doing a Diploma, seemed to be important in terms of feeling informed about Diplomas but also in helping to *understand* the Diploma.
- The proportion of pupils in both year groups answering each item in a knowledge question correctly had increased between 2008 and 2010, although there was still some uncertainty about some aspects of Diplomas.
- **Policy implication:** there is scope for more IAG to ensure pupils know more about Diplomas. Policy-makers, consortia and institutions should consider how to utilise the people who are most influential to support IAG (namely parents/carers/family, teachers, Connexions advisers and pupils already doing or who have completed Diplomas) and should ensure that they fully understand Diplomas to be able to provide advice.

This Chapter focuses on the findings from the pupil surveys (carried out March to May 2010) which explore their experiences of IAG relating to Diplomas, which could potentially have an impact on take-up of the qualification.

5.1 Pupils' awareness of Diplomas

When asked about IAG in general, three-quarters (73 per cent) of pupils in Year 9 and two thirds (65 per cent) in Year 11 felt that they had been given enough information and support to help them choose what subjects to do in the following academic year. Those in Year 11 were more likely than those in Year 9 to feel that they had not been given enough information and support (14 per cent and seven per cent respectively).

In relation to Diplomas specifically, the surveys (carried out March to May 2010) revealed that the majority of pupils had heard of Diplomas (see Table 5.1). Over time, they were still most likely to report that, although they knew about Diplomas, they did not know much about them. However, pupils in 2010 were more likely than those in 2008 to report knowing a lot about Diplomas, which suggests some increased awareness over time. A notable minority of pupils surveyed still stated that they had never heard of Diplomas. Although this was a smaller proportion than in 2008, it was still the case that a higher percentage of pupils in Year 11 compared with those in Year 9 reported that they had never heard of Diplomas.

Table 5.1 Extent to which pupils had heard of Diplomas

Have you heard of Diplomas?	2008 Year 9	2008 Year 11	2010 Year 9	2010 Year 11
	%	%	%	%
Yes, but I don't know much about them	68	64	61	61
Yes, and I know a lot about them	12	10	30	19
No, I have never heard of them	13	20	7	17
Not sure	4	4	1	2
No response	2	2	1	1
N =	5481	2080	741	556

A single response item

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 surveys 2008 and 2010

Further analysis¹⁸ revealed that Year 9 pupils who had achieved a higher prior attainment at Key Stage 2 (Level 4 or above, on average), and Year 11 pupils who achieved a higher prior attainment at Key Stage 3 (Level 5 or above, on average), were significantly more likely to report that they had heard of Diplomas compared with those who achieved lower prior attainment.

5.2 Helpfulness of Information on Diplomas

There was a noticeable increase over time in the proportion of all Year 9 and Year 11 pupils who reported that they had found information in general about Diplomas very or quite helpful (68 per cent of Year 9 pupils in 2010 compared with 45 per cent in 2008, and 44 per cent compared with 33 per cent respectively for Year 11 pupils). However, pupils in Year 11 were still less likely than those in Year 9 to have found information helpful; amongst pupils in 2010, 14 per cent in Year 9 compared with 29 per cent in Year 11 had found information either not very helpful or not at all helpful.

Year 9 pupils in schools with sixth forms were significantly more likely than those in 11-16 schools to have found information on Diplomas very or quite helpful (76 per cent and 60 per cent respectively). However, this was not the case in 2008, nor was it the case amongst Year 11 pupils; 54 per cent in 11-16 schools compared with 38 per cent in 11-18 schools felt information on Diplomas had been very or quite helpful.

When asked how helpful information had been, a notable minority (eight per cent of Year 9 and 15 per cent of Year 11 pupils) reported that they did not recall receiving information. Among those who did not recall receiving information about Diplomas, most had higher prior attainment (Level 4 and above at Key Stage 2 or Level 5 and above at Key Stage 3).

5.3 Sources of Information on Diplomas

Talking to different people

Table 5.2 shows that pupils across both year groups were most likely to have talked to their parents/carers or family about taking a Diploma (79 per cent in Year 9 and 68 per cent in Year 11) or to their friends (57 per cent and 50 per cent respectively). This was also the case in 2008. Just under a third of pupils reported that they had talked to pupils who were already doing a Diploma, and were more likely to have talked to them than many of the other people listed (other than subject teachers). It was more likely for pupils in Year 9 than those in Year 11 to report having received advice from subject teachers or other teachers in school, whereas pupils in Year 11 were more likely to have

¹⁸ In this case, a series of cross tabulations which explore the possible relationship between two or more variables.

spoken to the careers service/Connexions or someone at a college or TP. It was more likely for Year 11 pupils in schools without sixth forms to have spoken to a careers teacher (28 per cent) compared with those in schools with sixth forms (nine per cent). They were also more likely to have spoken to someone at a college or TP (41 per cent in 11-16 schools and 21 per cent in 11-18 schools).

Table 5.2 Advice on Diplomas, 2010

People giving advice	Year 9 Yes %	Year 11 Yes %
Parents/carers/family	79	68
Friend(s)	57	50
Subject teacher	43	34
Diploma pupils	32	28
Other teacher(s) in school	32	13
Form tutor	28	26
Careers teacher	20	22
Careers Service/Connexions	14	36
College or TP	10	35
Mentor in school	6	13
Employer	3	8
N =	234	109

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma in September 2010

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 survey 2010

Year 9 pupils found subject teachers and parents/carers/family most helpful (42 per cent and 41 per cent respectively among those who had talked to these people) and Year 11 pupils found careers service/Connexions advisers and subject teachers most helpful (44 per cent and 43 per cent respectively).

The value of pupils talking to people about Diplomas is evident from the findings that, in 2010, those in Year 9 who reported that they had talked to subject teachers, a Connexions personal adviser and their parents/carers were significantly more likely than those who had not to have a better understanding of Diplomas. This was also the case in Year 11 for pupils who had talked to friends and other pupils taking a Diploma.

Other sources of information

It was still the case that, since 2008, the most common source of information about Diplomas was written information (for example, booklets). Indeed the

proportions of pupils reporting having heard about Diplomas via written sources had increased since the 2008 survey (from 46 per cent to 74 per cent in Year 9 and from 42 per cent to 62 per cent in Year 11), suggesting that over time more written material has become available about Diplomas to support pupils making choices. As shown in Table 5.3, it was more likely for pupils in Year 9 than those in Year 11 to have heard about Diplomas during lessons or discussions in school. As was the case in 2008, few pupils had heard about Diplomas through public media, such as radio and magazines.

Table 5.3 Sources of information on Diplomas, 2010

Seen or heard about Diplomas through:	Year 9 Yes %	Year 11 Yes %
Written information about Diplomas	74	62
Whole class lessons at school about subject choices	50	29
Information on websites	46	33
Events (for example, careers events, Diploma launch)	39	42
Group discussions at school about subject choices	39	23
Radio adverts	14	11
Articles in newspapers/magazines	9	10
N =	234	109

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who had chosen, or were thinking of choosing, to take a Diploma in September 2010

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 survey 2010

Year 9 pupils found events and written information most helpful (42 per cent and 38 per cent respectively among those who had accessed these sources) and Year 11 pupils found written information and group discussions about subject choices most helpful (44 per cent and 40 per cent respectively). There was a positive relationship between seeing or hearing about Diplomas via certain sources (written information, events, websites, group discussions at school and via whole-class lessons) and understanding of the Diploma (see Section 5.5).

5.4 Nature of the information received

The proportions of pupils in Year 9 and Year 11 reporting that they had been given specific pieces of information on Diplomas had increased since 2008 (see all items listed in Table 5.4). However, it was still the case that less than half of the pupils sampled had been given information about a number of the Diploma-related issues listed below (with the exception of information about Diploma subject areas and qualification equivalences received by Year 9 pupils). In fact, less than a quarter of respondents in either year group had received information about who would teach the Diploma, what courses you can do after completing a Diploma and how the Diploma is assessed (the latter applies to Year 11 only).

Moreover, when comparing the year groups, a greater proportion of Year 9 pupils compared with those in Year 11 reported that they had been given each piece of information listed.

Table 5.4 Information received about Diplomas by Year 9 and Year 11 pupils

Information given	2008	2008	2010	2010
	Year 9 Yes %	Year 11 Yes %	Year 9 Yes %	Year 11 Yes %
Diploma subject areas that you can take	47	33	62	41
What a Diploma is worth compared to other qualifications (e.g. A levels or GCSEs)	42	29	57	37
Different levels of Diploma that you can take	42	38	52	41
Where you could study for Diplomas	29	36	48	43
The amount of time the Diploma would take up	*	24	45	32
What you need to do to pass a Diploma	26	21	39	25
The other qualifications that you could take alongside the Diploma	27	20	39	23
What jobs you can get after completing a Diploma	26	22	32	28
How Diploma work will be assessed	*	15	31	21
Courses you can do after completing a Diploma	19	18	24	22
Who would teach you the Diploma	*	12	16	15
N =	4622	1624	692	460

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to 100

A filter question: all those who said they had heard of Diplomas

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 and Year 11 surveys 2008 and 2010

**Year 9 respondents were not asked this question in the 2008 survey*

Therefore, there is more scope to improve the provision of information about Diplomas. Specifically, pupils surveyed were most likely to report that they would like more information on the following:

- Progression routes: including what courses you can do after a Diploma (29 per cent of Year 9 and 25 per cent of Year 10) and what jobs you can do after completing a Diploma (29 per cent of Year 9 and 25 per cent of Year 11)
- Who teaches the Diploma (27 per cent of Year 9 and 25 per cent of Year 11)
- Assessment: including how the Diploma is assessed (25 per cent of Year 9 and 24 per cent of Year 11) and what you need to do to pass a Diploma (25 per cent of Year 9 and Year 11)
- Qualifications that you can do alongside a Diploma (22 per cent of Year 9 and 26 per cent of Year 11).

5.5 Pupils' understanding of the Diploma

Pupils were asked a question which tested their knowledge of Diplomas. Table 5.5 presents the results for Year 9, comparing the 2008 and 2010 findings. It shows that the Year 9 pupils responding in 2010 were more likely to have answered each question correctly. Most pupils (66 per cent) knew that Diplomas involve a mix of written, practical and employer-based work, half (51 per cent) knew that you can take GCSEs at the same time as a Diploma, and two fifths (43 per cent) understood that a Higher Diploma is the same as seven GCSEs at grades A*-C. However, there was still a relatively high level of uncertainty among pupils in Year 9 in 2010, particularly about whether a Diploma can be taken post-16 if they have not completed one pre-16.

Table 5.5 Pupils' knowledge of Diplomas – Year 9

Are the statements below true or false?	2008 %			2010 %		
	True	False	Not sure	True	False	Not sure
Diplomas involve a mix of written, practical and employer-based work	56*	3	35	66*	2	27
You can take GCSEs at the same time as a Diploma	37*	14	42	51*	14	31
A Higher Diploma (Level 2) is the same as 7 GCSEs at grades A*-C	28*	8	57	43*	7	46
You can get into university / higher education with an Advanced Diploma	36*	6	51	37*	6	52
You do at least 10 days of work experience if you do a Diploma	27*	7	59	34*	8	53
You can take a Diploma in more than one subject at a time	22	20*	52	15	37*	44
You can't do A levels after taking a Diploma	12	30*	52	12	36*	47
You can't do a Diploma at age 16 unless you have done one in Years 10 and 11	11	23*	59	7	26*	62
N =	4622			692		

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

A filter question: all those who said they had heard of Diplomas

** shows the correct answer to each item*

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 9 Surveys, 2008 and 2010

Similarly to the Year 9 findings, Year 11 pupils who responded in 2010 were more likely than those in 2008 to answer correctly (see Table 5.6). They were also most knowledgeable about the different types of learning involved in doing a Diploma, but also that you can get in to university/higher education with an Advanced Diploma (although still only answered correctly by 38 per cent of respondents). As was the case with Year 9 pupils, there was still uncertainty, particularly about the 10 days work experience required or whether you can do a Diploma in more than one subject at a time.

Table 5.6 Pupils' knowledge of Diplomas – Year 11

Are the statements below true or false?	2008			2010		
	True	False	Not sure	True	False	Not sure
Diplomas involve a mix of written, practical and employer-based work	43*	3	46	54*	4	37
You can get into university / higher education with an Advanced Diploma	34*	4	54	38*	5	51
You can take GCSEs at the same time as a Diploma	28*	7	58	34*	9	52
You do at least 10 days of work experience if you do a Diploma	17*	7	69	25*	9	59
A Higher Diploma (Level 2) is the same as 7 GCSEs at grades A*-C	18*	6	69	23*	7	64
You can take a Diploma in more than one subject at a time	24	14*	56	17	21*	57
You can't do A levels after taking a Diploma	8	24*	61	10	33*	51
You can't do a Diploma at age 16 unless you have done one in Years 10 and 11	8	26*	59	11	34*	49
N =	1624			460		

A series of single response items

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

A filter question: all those who said they had heard of Diplomas

** shows the correct answer to each item*

Source: NFER/University of Exeter Evaluation of Diplomas: Year 11 Surveys, 2008 and 2010

Further analysis¹⁹ revealed a positive relationship between the following factors and knowledge of Diplomas:

- **Information on Diplomas:** those in Year 9 who had found information very/quite helpful scored significantly higher in the knowledge question than pupils who said information had not been helpful (an average score of 4.02 compared with 2.37 for Year 9 pupils). Among Year 11 pupils, those who were not sure how useful they had found information, or who

¹⁹ A score was derived for the knowledge question for each pupil from the number of correct answers given to the questions in Tables 5.5 and 5.6. A series of cross tabulations then explored the possible relationship between knowledge score and other variables.

had not received any, scored significantly lower than those who had. Yet, helpfulness of information had little impact on scores (those finding information helpful scored 2.89 on average compared with an average score of 2.51 from those who did not find information helpful). There was a significant relationship between the information provided to pupils in Years 9 and 11 and their knowledge of certain aspects of the Diploma (for example, pupils in Year 9 who stated they had been given information about what a Diploma is worth compared with other qualifications were significantly more likely than pupils who had not to answer correctly that a Higher (Level 2) Diploma is worth the same as seven GCSEs (this was also the case in 2008)).

- **Sources of information:** Year 9 pupils who had talked to subject teachers, a Connexions personal adviser or their parents/carers were significantly more likely than those who had not to have a better understanding of Diplomas. For Year 11 pupils, this was the case for those who had talked to friends and other pupils taking a Diploma. Pupils in Year 9 who had seen or heard about Diplomas via certain sources (written information, events, websites, group discussions at school and via whole-class lessons) scored significantly higher on the knowledge question compared to those who had not accessed such sources. For Year 11 pupils, those who had seen or heard about Diplomas via written information and events scored significantly higher than those who had not accessed such sources.
- **Prior attainment:** Also as in 2008, those pupils in Years 9 and 11 with higher prior attainment were significantly more likely than those with lower prior attainment to give correct answers to the knowledge questions.
- **Attitude towards the Diploma:** Amongst Year 9 pupils who were planning to take a Diploma, those with a more positive attitude towards the Diploma tended to score more highly on the knowledge question. No such relationship existed for Year 11 pupils.

6 Diploma development and delivery from 2010

Key findings and implications for policy and practice

- As was the case in previous years, the majority of consortia (91 per cent) intended to adopt a model of *shared delivery between a school and FE college or TP* to deliver at least some of the Diploma subjects from 2010.
- Although delivery within a school was the least common approach to Diploma delivery (21 per cent) it had increased slightly compared with 2009 (17 per cent).
- **Policy implication:** the intended use of shared delivery suggests that providers were planning to continue to work in partnership for the provision of Diplomas in order to extend learner choice and experience, where it is a practical option. It would be interesting to explore any change in these plans following the removal of the Diploma entitlement and the need to collaborate.
- Nearly all (99 per cent) of consortia intended to involve employers in delivery, particularly to provide work placements (97 per cent), hosting individual visits (97 per cent) and visiting schools/colleges (95 per cent).
- A majority (89 per cent) said that they planned to use HEIs to support Diploma delivery. This was most commonly for visiting schools and colleges (78 per cent), hosting individual visits (75 per cent) or assisting with development of curriculum materials (69 per cent).
- TPs were less widely reported as potentially contributing to Diploma delivery (74 per cent) but, where this was the intention, their role was most commonly reported to be in relation to assisting with development of curriculum materials (60 per cent), visiting schools/colleges (56 per cent), providing facilities (54 per cent) or teaching part of the course (53 per cent).
- **Policy implication:** the evidence suggests that delivery of Diplomas requires the support and input potentially of organisations other than the main providers. In particular, the support required relates to providing pupils with access to real examples of the working world. As noted in section 2.1, engaging such partners is a challenge and providers could benefit from ongoing support to achieve this.

This chapter explores:

- the models of delivery planned by consortia for 2010/11 across the Diploma subjects
- the extent of involvement of TPs, employers and HEIs in Diploma development and delivery.

6.1 What were the main anticipated models of delivery?

During case-study visits to 15 consortia who commenced delivery in 2008, six models of Diploma delivery were identified (see O'Donnell *et al.* 2009):

- Model A: a school and FE/other provider share delivery
- Model B: a school sends own pupils to an FE college for *all* of their Diploma learning
- Model C: a school delivers the entire Diploma 'in-house' to its own pupils only
- Model D: a school sends own pupils to another school for *all* Diploma learning
- Model E: a number of schools share delivery (pupils travel to and from each school)
- Model F: an FE college delivers the entire Diploma in-house to their own pupils only.

These models were simplified for the survey of Consortium Leads (see Table 6.1), who were asked to indicate which of these delivery models, or others, were planned for any of the subjects that they would be delivering for the first time in 2010. A consortium may have more than one model of delivery, for example, where they adopt different models for different subjects or levels. The Consortium Lead telephone survey did not explore which 'type' of institution would take responsibility for which aspect of Diploma delivery (for example, who would deliver the principal learning or functional skills).

Table 6.1 below shows that the majority of consortia (91 per cent) had adopted a model of *shared delivery between a school and FE college or TP* (model A) to deliver subjects approved for delivery in 2010.

Just over a third (36 per cent) reported that subjects approved for delivery in 2010 would be delivered using a model of *shared delivery between schools* (model E), and similarly a third (33 per cent) reported that they used a model of *FE college/TP delivery only* (model F). The least common approach to planned delivery of Diploma subjects approved for delivery in 2010, was *school delivery only* (model C) (21 per cent of consortia). This was also the least common mode of delivery in 2009 (17 per cent) although it had increased slightly perhaps reflecting a growing tendency reported by case-study consortia to deliver Diplomas in-house.

Where Consortium Leads commented on the rationale for the delivery models, these included:

- Reducing the number of centres actively delivering Diplomas
- So that staff travel, rather than pupils
- In response to the available providers' facilities and expertise.

Table 6.1 Models of Diploma delivery for subjects approved through for delivery in 2010

Model	Which models of delivery are you using for 2009 and 2010 delivery?	2009 %	2010 %
A	Shared delivery between a school and FE College or TP	91	91
C	School delivery only	17	21
E	Shared delivery between schools	31	36
F	FE college or TP delivery only	24	33
	Other	6	6
	No response	1	1
	N=	254	224

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100

A total of 222 respondents answered at least one item in this question

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

In general, consortia who had been delivering Diplomas before 2010 were content with the delivery models that they had adopted as 68 per cent had not changed their model in 2010, while just over a quarter (27 per cent) of Consortium Leads reported that they had changed their delivery models to some extent. As can be seen in the table, a comparison of the models adopted in 2009 (see O'Donnell and Lynch, 2009) and 2010 shows that the most and least common models were the same in both years, for example the most common models adopted in both years were:

- shared delivery between a school and FE college or TP (model A)
- shared delivery between schools (model E).

However there was some evidence that models of delivery where providers worked independently, rather than in partnership, were becoming more common, for example:

- the proportion of consortia where an FE college or TP delivered in-house to their own pupils only (model F) had increased from 2009 to 2010
- the proportion of consortia adopting school delivery only (model C) for one or more subjects had increased slightly from 2009 to 2010.

It should also be considered that plans for Diploma delivery *might* now be different following the removal of the Diploma entitlement that often brought with it the need for institutions to collaborate (see government policy changes regarding Diplomas outlined in Chapter 1.)

6.2 What was the expected role of organisations involved in supporting Diploma development and delivery?

As Table 6.2 shows, the majority of consortia intended to involve employers, HEIs or TPs in Diploma development and/or delivery from 2010. It was most common for consortia to intend to involve employers (99 per cent planned this) while slightly fewer planned to involve HEIs (89 per cent)²⁰ and involving TPs was least common (74 per cent).

The main purpose for involving employers in Diploma delivery was to provide opportunities for pupils to experience the working world through, for example, providing work placements (97 per cent), hosting one-off visits (97 per cent) or visiting schools/colleges (95 per cent). These approaches to using employers to support Diplomas reflect the main ways in which pupils who started the first phase of Diplomas in 2008 had engaged with employers (see Golden, *et al.*, forthcoming). Two-thirds of the Diploma pupils surveyed in 2008 (66 per cent) had undertaken a work placement, 69 per cent had attended a talk by an employer and 67 per cent had visited an employer. To a lesser, but still notable extent, employers were intended to support the content of the Diploma through, for example, providing projects and contributing to the development of curriculum materials (both 90 per cent). Although a majority of consortia (91 per cent) reported that employers would provide work placements or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) for teaching staff, their potential involvement in supporting teaching staff through mentoring and advising was less commonly reported (80 per cent and 77 per cent respectively).

Consortia that intended to involve HEIs were generally planning to use them for visits and talks but HEIs were expected to support the development of curriculum materials in 69 per cent of consortia. HEIs were less likely than employers or TPs to be seen as potential providers of work placements (19 per cent), as might be expected, however they were also less likely to be identified as potentially teaching part of the Diploma course (45 per cent).

In addition to hosting one-off visits (51 per cent) and visiting schools and colleges (56 per cent) to support the delivery of Diplomas, the anticipated role of TPs was most commonly reported to be to support teaching. This included, for example, assisting with the development of curriculum materials (60 per cent), providing facilities (54 per cent) and teaching part of the course (53 per cent).

²⁰ It should be noted that these figures reflect the aspirations and intentions of Consortium Leads at the time of the survey (November-December 2009). However, findings from the survey of HEIs (see Haynes and Richardson, 2011) suggests that HEIs were more likely to get involved in Diploma development rather than delivery.

Table 6.2 Role of employers, TPs and HEIs in Diplomas approved for delivery in 2010

	Employers %	TPs %	HEIs %
Providing work placements	97	29	19
Hosting one-off visits	97	51	75
Visiting schools/colleges	95	56	78
Providing placements/CPD for staff	91	33	42
Providing projects	90	43	53
Assisting with development of curriculum materials	90	60	69
Providing facilities	88	54	65
Advising teaching staff	80	48	56
Mentoring pupils or staff	77	30	41
Teaching part of course	63	53	45
Other	2	<1	1
No response	1	26	11
N	224	224	224

More than one answer could be given so percentages may sum to more than 100

A total of 221 respondents answered at least one item in this question

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

In summary, it was common, at the time of the survey, for consortia to anticipate adopting partnership models of delivery where pupils would learn in different centres. In addition, it was evident that the involvement of partners from the employers, HEI and TP sectors was anticipated to provide opportunities for pupils to access examples from the working world and, to some extent, to support the teaching of Diplomas. Nevertheless, as noted in Chapter 2, a higher proportion of consortia reported that engaging employers was difficult or very difficult than said this of engaging HEIs and TPs, and there may be value in ensuring consortia are well-supported in engaging employers in Diploma delivery.

7 Preparedness for Diploma delivery

Key findings and implications for policy and practice

- In the 2010 survey, Consortium Leads were most confident about their preparedness in relation to staffing levels and facilities, while they were less confident about their preparedness in relation to aspects of management and logistics, such as funding and transport.
- Concerns in relation to transport plans peaked in 2009 (44 per cent), but by 2010 had returned to levels consistent with 2008 responses (26 and 23 per cent respectively).
- The Environment and Land Based Studies Diploma was introduced in 2009. Due to the subject matter, this subject may have been taken up by more rural consortia. The evaluation has found that rural areas have more complex transport considerations, so the introduction of this Diploma subject may have led to transport issues being more of a concern in 2010 than in 2008.
- Data from 2010 also shows that confidence amongst all consortia in relation to quality assurance (QA) procedures has improved when compared with previous years from 70 per cent in 2008, to 74 per cent in 2009 and 81 per cent in 2010.
- **Policy implication:** the findings indicate that QA procedures become increasingly embedded over time and, where providers work in partnership, it is worth ensuring that time is allowed for providers to agree and apply common practice.
- Consortia that were planning to deliver Diplomas for the first time in 2010 were less prepared in relation to all factors than consortia currently delivering Diplomas. The largest disparity was seen in relation to preparation of QA procedures and employer engagement.
- **Policy implication:** of consortia which had experience of delivering Diplomas, 69 per cent felt more prepared for delivery in 2010 than they had done before. This highlights the value of experience and the importance of consortia sharing lessons learned with new consortia.
- Consortia with prior experience highlighted the need to prepare early, provide responsive IAG, develop effective procedures and clearly define the roles of partners.

This chapter examines:

- The extent to which consortia considered themselves to be prepared to deliver Diplomas from September 2010, in terms of, for example, staff expertise and confidence, development of Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL), understanding of assessment and IAG.
- The extent to which consortia that were involved in delivering Diplomas previously felt more or less prepared for September 2010 delivery, and the lessons they had learned from implementation in previous years.

7.1 How prepared were consortia for delivery of Diplomas in September 2010 for the first time?

Table 7.1 below presents the extent to which Consortium Leads felt institutions were prepared for delivery in relation to the management and teaching of Diplomas.

Table 7.1 Consortium Leads that felt institutions were prepared for delivery in relation to the management and teaching of Diplomas.

Preparedness	Well prepared	Fairly well prepared	Causing minor concern	Causing major concern	No response
	%	%	%	%	%
Staffing levels	38	51	8	<1	1
Marketing and promotional activities	38	46	12	2	2
Availability of facilities/equipment/resources	35	52	9	1	3
Transport plans	35	35	23	3	4
QA procedures across partners	31	50	16	1	2
Employer involvement	30	56	12	1	1
Staff expertise/confidence to deliver Diplomas	28	61	9	<1	2
Quality of IAG for pupils	26	51	20	3	1
IT and administration	24	46	24	4	2
Funding arrangements	22	37	29	9	3
Level of HEI support	21	53	18	4	4
Understanding of assessment	15	54	29	1	1
Development of ASL component	14	54	27	2	3
N = 224					

A series of single response questions. Due to rounding, percentages may not sum to more than 100

Source: NFER/Exeter evaluation of Diplomas: Consortium Lead Survey 2010

In the 2010 survey, Consortium Leads were most confident about institutions' preparedness in relation to staffing levels, staff expertise and the availability of resources and facilities, as was the case in 2008 and 2009 (see O'Donnell and Lynch, 2009 and O'Donnell *et al.*, 2009). Although in general the interviewees considered that they were well-prepared in relation to these, their comments revealed a perception among some that staff experience and confidence were variable across institutions. For example, four respondents reported concerns about new staff and the need for training and support in order to ensure that they are confident and have the necessary skills to deliver the qualification. However, there was some evidence to suggest that staff were perceived to be more confident in those cases where they had good vocational experience.

Concerns in relation to transport plans were most widely reported in 2009 (44 per cent), but by 2010 had returned to levels consistent with 2008 responses (26 and 23 per cent respectively).

The Environment and Land Based Studies Diploma was introduced in 2009. Due to the subject matter, this subject may have been taken up by more rural consortia. The evaluation has found that rural areas have more complex transport considerations, so the introduction of this Diploma subject may have led to transport issues being more of a concern in 2010 than in 2008. Comments in 2010 relating to transport issues included the cost required for pupils to travel given the reliance on private transport and the time it takes to travel across the authority.

Funding arrangements were also a concern to those interviewed in 2009 (causing minor or major concern for 53 per cent of Consortium Leads in 2009 compared to 41 per cent in 2008 and 38 per cent in 2010). Concerns identified amongst Consortium Leads in 2010 included future funding, a lack of funding and sustainability of the Diploma in the future.

The experience of consortia approved in 2009 suggests that some issues relate more to the profile of consortia going through in that year, the subjects offered, or the models of delivery adopted rather than simply the level of experience in delivering Diplomas. In those cases where centres were considered to be well prepared Consortium Leads mentioned that schools supported one another and built on best practice from previous experienced consortia.

The survey findings in 2010 also show that confidence amongst all consortia in relation to QA procedures has improved when compared to responses in 2009 and 2008 (from 70 per cent feeling prepared in 2008, to 74 per cent in 2009 and 81 per cent in 2010). Overall, confidence in all other aspects has remained relatively static over the three years of the survey. Understanding of assessment and funding were the two aspects that caused most concern in each year of the survey. The development of the ASL component and establishing IT and administration systems were the next most commonly reported concerns in 2009 and 2010.

Amongst those Consortium Leads who gave further comments about assessment and accreditation, four respondents said that lead assessors were not yet in place, while six reported that this was an area still under development. Where specific concerns were mentioned, they varied and included a lack of support from awarding bodies or receiving information at a late stage or advice that was unclear.

7.2 What were the main lessons learned from previous phases of Diploma implementation?

Readiness compared to previous phases

Consortia that were planning to deliver Diplomas for the first time in 2010 were less prepared in relation to all factors than consortia with previous experience of delivering Diplomas²¹. This was most notable in relation to the development of QA procedures and employer engagement. Of consortia who had experience of delivering Diplomas (191 consortia), 69 per cent felt more prepared for delivery in 2010 than they had done before, while 27 per cent felt as prepared, and one per cent felt less prepared (the remainder were unsure or did not respond). This implies that consortia currently delivering Diplomas have benefited from their experience and the lessons learnt in relation to these factors or may have developed consortium-wide procedures that were applicable to newly introduced Diplomas. Consortia new to Diplomas may therefore continue to require further assistance.

Lessons learnt from previous phases

Consortium Leads reflected on their previous experience and identified the lessons they had learnt from planning the implementation of previous phases, which helped their consortium prepare for September 2010 delivery. The main lessons identified were:

- Start the planning and preparation as early as possible. Three respondents felt this was both a time-consuming and demanding process which should not be underestimated. One consortium lead recommended setting target dates to ensure the necessary tasks were completed on time.
- Improve IAG for parents/carers and pupils and start the IAG process at the earliest opportunity (see Chapter 5 for more on IAG).
- Develop effective protocols, infrastructures and/or systems that support delivery.
- Ensure that the roles and responsibilities of partners are clearly defined.

²¹ Just 15 per cent of consortia (33 of the 224 consortia interviewed) interviewed had not delivered Diplomas before 2010, therefore these results should be treated with some caution.

8 Conclusion

As previously noted in Chapter 1, the surveys summarised in this report were carried out prior to changes in government policy relating to Diplomas and reforms in 14-19 education. Therefore, the views of Consortium Leads and pupils *might* have been different subsequent to those changes and thus the findings should be considered in this context.

At the time of the Consortium Lead survey (November to December 2009), the demand for the subjects, and consideration of the skills required in the labour market, were considerations for the majority of consortia. This suggests the Diploma *may* continue to be chosen by providers and pupils where it fulfils such a need. This impetus now replaces the requirement to prepare for the 14-19 entitlement.

The collaborative approach to Diploma implementation enabled schools and colleges to make new subjects available to their pupils, and this factor *may* continue to drive collaborative Diploma provision despite the recent removal of this requirement. However, it must be noted that there were indications of a slight increase in models which were within one institution and did not require pupils to travel to learn. Given the complexity of collaborative delivery (as discussed in previous reports; see Lynch, *et al.*, 2010), it may be that schools will continue to work collaboratively where it provides access to the facilities and expertise necessary to deliver new qualifications and subject areas. However, for pragmatic reasons they are likely to favour in-house delivery where possible.

Engaging employers was identified as difficult or very difficult by around a quarter of consortia. Nevertheless, it was evident that nearly all consortia expected to overcome these challenges as they intended to use employers to support the delivery of Diplomas. This was particularly in relation to providing experience of the working world through providing placements or visiting schools but also included contributing more directly to the learning experience, for example by assisting with the development of materials and providing projects. Employer involvement is important given that a substantial proportion of pupils (particularly in Year 9) were planning to take a Diploma because they wanted to gain work experience. Overall, consortia are making good progress in engaging with employers as the proportion who indicated that they were well-prepared increased each year from 70 per cent in 2008 to 86 per cent in 2010. As new consortia in 2010 were more likely to indicate that this was difficult, this suggests that engaging with employers takes time to develop but is likely to become more embedded in practice over time.

It was evident that, at the time of the surveys, the proportion of Year 9 pupils planning to take a Diploma had increased since 2008, as Diplomas had become more established. However, this was not the case for Year 11 pupils.

Moreover, those in Year 11 were less likely to have received information on Diplomas than pupils in Year 9, and they were less knowledgeable about the qualification.

There is therefore scope for more IAG to support pupils (particularly those in Year 11) when making choices about which courses to take. The findings show that particular groups of people (namely parents/carers, subject teachers, Connexions advisers and pupils already doing a Diploma) are likely to be useful in supporting young people's decision-making, which emphasises the importance of these people being fully informed and able to offer such assistance.

Appendix A. Representativeness of Gateway 3 (for 2010 Diploma delivery) sample

Using data from the Consortium Lead telephone survey (described in Chapter 1), and data on schools in all consortia supplied by the DfE, a sample of 30 consortia was drawn for involvement in the pupil surveys. As outlined in Chapter 1, the sample was selected according to the following criteria:

- **Not selected in other samples** – only those consortia which were not in the NFER/Exeter Gateway 1 or 2 samples were included.
- **Consortium lead agreement** – only those consortia who agreed in principle during the telephone interview to be involved in the next stages in the sample frame.
- **Diploma subject and level offered** – to ensure that all Phase 3 subjects and levels were represented. The sample was drawn to include consortia that offered at least one of the Phase 3 subjects. The sample also over-sampled the larger consortia (in terms of the number of subjects offered, and the number of estimated pupils) and under-represent the smaller consortia.
- **Involvement in previous Gateways** – the sample was selected to include some consortia that began delivering Diplomas in September 2008 and 2009 (Gateway 1 and Gateway 2), *and* were due to embark on new Diplomas in September 2010 (Gateway 3), as well as some which started delivering Diplomas in September 2010 (Gateway 3 only).
- **School-level variables** - in order to ensure that the sample could be said to be representative of Diploma pupils as a whole, the sample of consortia was selected to be representative in terms of school-level variables (for example, achievement, and free school meal eligibility). It is worth noting that schools' membership of a consortium was based on information provided by the DfE which drew on consortia's Gateway applications.
- **Government Office Region²²** at consortium level – to ensure a geographical spread of consortia.

The tables below detail the key characteristics of the Gateway 3 (for 2010 Diploma delivery) sample – at a **consortium level** (Table A1) and at a **school level** (Table A2). Once the Gateway 1 and 2 samples and those consortia where the Consortium Leads either did not respond to the survey or declined to take part were excluded, the sample size was 122.

At consortium level the most important criterion for the sample was that all Diploma subjects were represented (particularly the new subjects starting in 2010). In addition, we purposively over represented the larger consortia to maximise pupil numbers. At institution level the most important criterion for the sample was that it was broadly representative in terms of free school meal

²² Government Offices were since abolished in 2011.

eligibility and achievement (Table A2 shows that the sample was indeed broadly representative in relation to both).

In terms of other criteria, such as Government Office Region, the sample was not *fully* representative (especially in the north east). Additionally, rural schools were over-represented. However, the sample was representative in terms of the criteria deemed most important (for example, Diploma subject and size of consortia) and if the sample was manipulated to ensure that other slightly less important criteria were equally well-represented this may well have changed the balance of the more important variables.

Larger consortia have been over-represented within the sample, in terms of the number of subjects they were offering, and the number of Diploma pupils they were anticipating. For example, 20 of the 30 consortia in the sample were anticipating 201 Diploma pupils or more from September 2010. This will help to maximise the numbers of pupils available for the surveys in 2011.

All 14 Diploma subjects are represented. In relation to the Phase 3 subjects, they are represented by at least nine (Retail Business) and as many as 27 (Sport and Active Leisure) of the 30 consortia. Additionally, four of the sample of 30 consortia were approved through Gateway 3 only – this is broadly representative of the population.

Table A1 Representativeness of consortia in the Gateway 3 (2010) sample

		Sampled consortia		All consortia surveyed	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Government Office Region	Eastern	5	17	38	17
	East Midlands	4	13	23	10
	London	2	7	24	11
	North East	1	3	12	5
	North West	5	17	22	10
	South East	3	10	31	14
	South West	4	13	23	10
	West Midlands	3	10	31	14
	Yorkshire and the Humber	3	10	20	9
% pupils eligible for FSM in schools associated with consortium	Less than 10%	19	63	126	57
	10-20%	9	30	74	33
	More than 20%	2	7	22	10
Pre/Post 16 Engineering	No	26	87	183	82
	Yes	4	13	41	18
Pre/Post 16 Society, Health and Development	No	21	70	150	67
	Yes	9	30	74	33
Pre/Post 16 Information Technology	No	21	70	158	71
	Yes	9	30	66	29
Pre/Post 16 Creative and Media	No	22	73	166	74
	Yes	8	27	58	26
Pre/Post 16 Construction and the Built Environment	No	25	83	166	74
	Yes	5	17	58	26
Pre/Post 16 Business Admin and Finance	No	18	60	135	60
	Yes	12	40	89	40
Pre/Post 16 Hair and Beauty Studies	No	23	77	169	75
	Yes	7	23	55	25
Pre/Post 16 Hospitality	No	21	70	160	71
	Yes	9	30	64	29
Pre/Post 16 Environmental and Land-based Studies	No	25	83	172	77
	Yes	5	17	52	23
Pre/Post 16 Manufacturing and Product Design	No	26	87	201	90
	Yes	4	13	23	10

		Sampled consortia		All consortia surveyed	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Pre/Post 16 Public Services	No	19	63	177	79
	Yes	11	37	47	21
Pre/Post 16 Retail Business	No	21	70	187	83
	Yes	9	30	37	17
Pre/Post 16 Sport and Active Leisure	No	3	10	73	33
	Yes	27	90	151	67
Pre/Post 16 Travel and Tourism	No	20	67	175	78
	Yes	10	33	49	22
Number of subjects starting in Sept 2010	One or fewer	0	0	20	9
	Two	2	7	39	17
	Three	6	20	42	19
	Four	10	33	45	20
	Five or more subjects	12	40	78	35
Consortium size (number of pupils)	0-100	4	13	11	7
	101-200	6	20	57	35
	201-400	10	33	54	33
	401 or higher	10	33	40	25
Any rural schools in consortium	No rural schools	9	30	93	42
	At least one rural school	21	70	129	58
Percentage of schools in consortium in top 60% of GCSE performers nationally	Less than half	5	17	70	32
	More than half	25	83	152	68

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

Table A 2 Representativeness of schools and colleges in the sample consortia

		Schools in sampled consortia		All schools involved with Diplomas	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
LA type	London Borough	42	11	472	13
	Metropolitan Authorities	108	29	547	15
	English Unitary Authorities	35	9	634	18
	Counties	184	50	1928	54
	Total	369	100	3581	100
	Government Office Region	North East	22	6	521
North		61	17	321	9
West/Merseyside					
Yorkshire & The Humber		60	16	332	9
East Midlands		28	8	317	9
West Midlands		27	7	361	10
Eastern		57	15	374	10
London		42	11	472	13
South East		28	8	599	17
South West		44	12	284	8
Total		369	100	3581	100
School type	Middle deemed Secondary	1	0	4	0
	Secondary Modern	1	0	160	4
	Comprehensive to 16	116	32	879	25
	Comprehensive to 18	118	32	1291	36
	Grammar	1	0	122	3
	Other Secondary school	0	0	1	0
	Independent school	0	0	9	0
	Special school	39	11	363	10
	Pupil referral unit	12	3	49	1
	6th Form college	8	2	71	2
	Tertiary college	7	2	43	1
	FE college	24	7	359	10
	Academies	13	4	86	2
	6 th Form Centre	0	0	7	0
	HE institution (inc. Uni)	28	8	136	4
	Total	368	100	3580	100

		Schools in sampled consortia		All schools involved with Diplomas	
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%
% pupils eligible for FSM (2008)	less than 10%	144	51	1305	45
	10% - 20%	67	24	716	24
	more than 20%	74	26	903	31
	Total	285	100	2924	100
GCSE Achievement band (2008)	Lowest band	51	20	717	26
	2nd lowest band	46	18	507	19
	Middle band	53	21	482	18
	2nd highest band	62	24	457	17
	Highest band	45	18	553	20
	Total	257	100	2716	100

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

Representativeness of pupils responding to the survey

A total of 741 Year 9 pupils and 556 Year 11 pupils responded to the questionnaire survey, from across 33 schools within 21 of the 30 consortia.²³ Tables A3 and A4 present the characteristics of the Year 9 and Year 11 pupils who responded to the survey, compared with the whole cohort in their schools (which includes those pupils in the same year groups who did not respond to the survey) and their peers nationally. The tables show that for both year groups the responding samples were broadly representative in terms of gender and attainment (although the Year 11 respondents were less likely than peers in their schools or nationally to have achieved Level 3 or below on average at Key Stage 3). There appear to be some differences in terms of special educational needs, eligibility for free school meals, English as an Additional Language (EAL) and ethnicity, although this could be due to missing data, resulting from a proportion of responding pupils who could not be matched to NPD by name, date of birth or the name of their school.

The findings from the survey are compared in the main report with those from the 2008 survey to explore any change over time. See O'Donnell *et al.* (2009) for details of the responding sample relevant to the 2008 survey.

²³ A total of 14 consortia returned Year 9 surveys and 11 returned Year 11 surveys; four returned both.

Table A3 Background characteristics of Year 9 pupils – responding pupils, all Year 9 pupils in responding schools and all Year 9 pupils nationally

Characteristic	Respondents to the survey	All Year 9 pupils in responding schools	All Year 9 pupils in England
	%	%	%
Gender			
Male	49	49	51
Female	46	51	49
Missing	6		
N =	741	3574	568,873
Eligibility for free school meals			
Not eligible	69	90	84
Eligible	8	10	16
Missing	23*	0	0
N =	741	3574	568,873
Special Educational Needs			
No SEN	65	81	75
School Action/Plus	11	17	21
Statement	1	2	4
Missing	23*	0	0
N =	741	3574	568,873
English as an additional language			
No EAL	75	92	79
EAL	2	2	9
Missing	24*	6	12
N =	741	3574	568,873
Ethnicity			
White – British	72	91	77
White – Other	1	2	4
Gypsy/Roma	<1	<1	<1
Mixed	1	2	4
Asian – Indian	1	1	2
Asian – Pakistani	<1	1	3
Asian – Bangladeshi	<1	<1	1
Asian – Other	0	1	1
Black – Caribbean	0	<1	1
Black – African	<1	1	3
Black – Other	0	<1	<1
Chinese	<1	<1	<1
Other	<1	<1	1
Preferred not to say	<1	<1	1
Missing	23*	<1	1
N =	741	3574	568,873
Key Stage 2 Average			
Level 2 and below	2	4	6
Level 3	14	20	19
Level 4	46	53	48
Level 5	14	20	18
Missing	24*	2	8

N =	741	3574	568,873
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Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

**The proportion of missing data is due to not being able to match those responding pupils to NPD by their name, date of birth or the name of their school.*

Table A4 Background characteristics of Year 11 pupils – responding pupils, all Year 11 pupils in responding schools and all Year 11 pupils nationally

Characteristic	Respondents to the survey	All Year 11 pupils in responding schools	All Year 11 pupils in England
	%	%	%
Gender			
Male	53	53	51
Female	47	47	49
Missing	<1	0	0
N =	556	2952	579,155
Eligibility for free school meals			
Not eligible	70	91	87
Eligible	4	9	13
Missing	26*	0	0
N =	556	2952	579,155
Special Educational Needs			
No SEN	65	85	75
School Action/Plus	6	12	21
Statement	3	3	4
Missing	26*	0	0
N =	556	2952	579,155
English as an additional language			
No EAL	72	93	87
EAL	3	5	8
Missing	26*	3	5
N =	556	2952	579,155
Ethnicity			
White – British	66	84	79
White – Other	4	8	4
Gypsy/Roma	<1	<1	<1
Mixed	1	2	3
Asian – Indian	1	1	2
Asian – Pakistani	1	2	3
Asian – Bangladeshi	0	1	1
Asian – Other	<1	1	1
Black – Caribbean	0	<1	1
Black – African	0	<1	2
Black – Other	<1	<1	0
Chinese	0	<1	<1
Other	0	<1	1
Preferred not to say	1	<1	1
Missing	26*	0	0
N =	556	2952	579155

Key Stage 3 Average			
Level 3 and below	6	9	11
Level 4	11	17	18
Level 5	26	34	33
Level 6	23	29	26
Level 7 and above	8	10	9
Missing	26*	2	3
N =			

Due to rounding, percentages may not always sum to 100

**The proportion of missing data is due to not being able to match those responding pupils to NPD by their name, date of birth or the name of their school.*

Appendix B Variables included in the multi-level model analyses

Further exploration of the relationship between pupils' attitudes and various background factors that might have an impact on outcomes for pupils, such as the choice to do a Diploma or not, was carried out using **multi-level modelling**, which estimates the true relationship between each background factor and the outcome of interest, whilst taking account of other influences.

Due to the relatively low numbers of pupils included in the models, insignificant variables were removed by backwards elimination. Year 9 and Year 11 models include a different set of variables and are therefore not directly comparable.

The variables considered for each model are listed in the following tables, with fixed effects reported for the significant variables.

Table B1 Variables included in the Year 9 analysis of the choice to take a Diploma (from September 2010)

Variable	Label	Fixed effects Choice to take a Diploma*
q21work	Post-16 intentions - Work based	
q21unc	Post-16 intentions - Unclear	
factor1	Enjoy school and learning	
factor2	Lessons boring/waste of time	
factor3	Enjoy practical and team work	
factor4	Poor behaviour/attendance	
female	Female pupil	-0.730*
nonwhitu	Non white-UK pupil	
sensa	SEN - school action/plus	
senstat	SEN - statement	
k2av	Key Stage 2 Average attainment	-0.138*
k2miss	Missing Key Stage 2 attainment information	
schage	School with sixth form	2.178*

* Indicates a significant difference at the 5% level.

Table B2 **Variables included in the Year 9 analysis of the choice to take a Diploma in future**

Variable	Label	Fixed effects Choice to take a Diploma in future*
q21work	Post-16 intentions - Work based	
q21unc	Post-16 intentions - Unclear	
factor1	Enjoy school and learning	0.724*
factor2	Lessons boring/waste of time	
factor3	Enjoy practical and team work	
factor4	Poor behaviour/attendance	
female	Female pupil	
nonwhitu	Non white-UK pupil	
sensa	SEN - school action/plus	
senstat	SEN - statement	
k2av	Key Stage 2 Average attainment	-0.110*
k2miss	Missing Key Stage 2 attainment information	
schage	School with sixth form	

* Indicates a significant difference at the 5% level.

Table B3 Variables included in the Year 11 analysis of the choice to take a Diploma (from September 2010)

Variable	Label	Fixed effects Choice to take a Diploma*
q22after11	Leave full-time education after Year 11	
q22sixthform	Leave full-time education after sixth form/college	1.304*
Q22dk	Don't know when they will leave full time education	1.290*
q4work	Post-16 intentions - Work based	
q4unc	Post-16 intentions - Unclear	
factor1	Enjoy school and learning	
factor2	Lessons boring/waste of time	
factor3	Enjoy practical & team work	
factor4	Poor behaviour/attendance	0.434*
female	Female pupil	
nonwhitu	Non white-UK pupil	
sensa	SEN - school action/plus	
senstat	SEN - statement	-2.796*
K3av	Key Stage 2 Average attainment	-0.071*
K3miss	Missing Key Stage 2 attainment information	
schage	School with sixth form	-0.909*

* Indicates a significant difference at the 5% level.

Appendix C Factor analysis of pupil attitudes

Exploratory factor analyses were carried out to consolidate the data on the Year 9 and Year 11 pupil questionnaires (in 2008 and 2010) relating to young people's attitudes to school and learning. These aggregate variables produced more robust measures of pupils' attitudes than a consideration of the individual items on the questionnaire alone. The factor analyses also allowed simpler analyses to be undertaken, comparing pupils' attitudes with other variables (such as whether they chose a Diploma, and the Diploma subject they had opted for), than would have been possible if using each of the individual variables.

Factor analysis looks for variables that correlate highly with each other. The existence of such correlations between variables suggests that those variables could be measuring aspects of the same underlying issues. These underlying issues are known as factors. Thus, the aim of the factor analyses was to derive a smaller number of 'attitude' composite variables from selected questions on the questionnaire which could be used to explore the attitudes of pupils in further detail.

Factor analyses were conducted on three questions within the Year 9 and Year 11 questionnaires, which explored pupils' feelings about their school lessons and their attitude to school; their punctuality and attendance at school; pupils' views of their preferred learning style; and the support provided to pupils by their parents/carers. Items that appeared to relate closely to one another were grouped together as a scale and, after subsequent analysis, four separate factors were identified, relating to different aspects of pupils' attitudes. These four factors were related to:

- pupils' attitude to school and learning
- pupils' views on their school lessons
- pupils' preference for practical learning and team work
- pupils' tendency to have poor attendance and behaviour.

A description of the individual items on the questionnaire that made up each factor is presented below:

Factor 1: Positive attitude to school and learning

I work as hard as I can in lessons

The work I do in lessons is interesting

I am good at working on my own

I like to look up information in books or on the internet

I like to know how I am doing in my learning

I like to be given responsibility

Most of the time I like coming to school
My parents / carers always make sure I do my homework
School work is worth doing
I am well behaved in school
I always meet homework/ coursework deadlines
I enjoy learning
My parents/carers praise me for doing good work at school.

Factor 2: Negative views of school lessons

I often count the minutes until a lesson ends
I am bored in lessons
The work I do in lessons is a waste of time.

Factor 3: Preference for practical learning and team work

I prefer practical work to lots of writing
I don't like lessons where we work in groups (negative)
I learn best by doing something
I like working in a team.

Factor 4: Tendency to have poor attendance and behaviour

I am late for lessons
I play truant / skip lessons

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