

**For:**

➤ Exams office staff



**Qualifications  
and Curriculum  
Development  
Agency**

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**2010  
Diploma  
aggregation**

# **Successful Diploma awarding**

## **A workbook for exams office staff**

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# Introduction

## What is the purpose of this workbook?

This workbook is part of a wider campaign of support and information for exams office staff in centres where students have already begun a Diploma and are hoping to claim awards in summer 2010. Over the coming months QCDA will be sending *AutoAlert* emails to exams officers reminding them about the administrative tasks that must be completed in order for students to claim Diplomas in 2010.

To assist you in completing these essential tasks, this workbook groups them into seven sections (as in the diagram below) running in chronological order through the academic year, from pre-term preparation before September 2009, to Diploma awarding in August 2010. Although the first three sections detail tasks that should have been done they can be used to assess the effectiveness of the processes you used to complete them and to double check that you have covered all the steps needed so far to ensure students in your centre can claim Diplomas in 2010.



## How do I use this workbook?

For each section the workbook features a reminder of the tasks that need to be completed during that time period, to help you evaluate whether your centre (and consortium) are prepared for Diploma awarding in summer 2010. The tasks are set out as a table (see example from section 1 below). Tick the appropriate column to indicate how ready (or not) you feel your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

### Be prepared (pre September 2009)

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to show how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Your centre should have acquired login details for the Diploma aggregation service and the Learner registration service.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were the required forms submitted to QCDA and MIAP?</li> <li>• Do centres in your consortium requiring access to your learner accounts have access to the appropriate logins?</li> <li>• Is there a process for managing changes affecting <i>Diploma aggregation service</i> logins? (For example, if a user leaves, or if a centre joins/leaves the consortium?)</li> </ul>			

Actions to improve processes or put new ones in place can be recorded in the *Actions to be taken* table at the end of each section.

## Developing and reviewing Diploma administration processes

This workbook also offers general help and advice on developing and maintaining effective processes. The following questions are worth asking, not only when you first put a process into place, but also when you are reviewing it:

- has someone been appointed to oversee the process from start to finish?
- have all the steps needed to complete the task been identified?
- what timescale is involved?
- have the individuals involved been identified?
- have they agreed to take on these responsibilities?
- can they do this work in time available?
- will this process ensure the task will be completed on time?
- are there any risks associated with the process? What can be done to prevent or ameliorate them?

With so many tasks requiring collaborative working, not only within a centre but across a consortium or even externally, good communication is particularly important. Cultivating good working relationships will help foster a two-way flow of information between colleagues that, hopefully, will ensure you have the information you need to complete tasks on time, so students can receive their Diploma award in summer 2010.

If you believe that current processes relating to Diploma administration arrangements in your centre need to change, two-way communication will be critical in getting support and cooperation from colleagues. Set aside time to explain why the change is necessary, how it affects their role and the benefits it will deliver, allowing time for feedback and response.

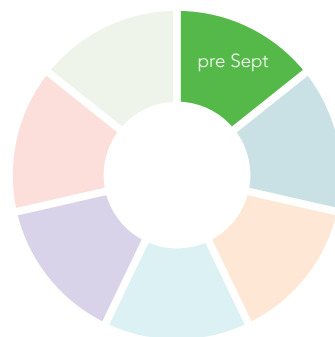
## How can I access additional help and support if I need it?

The final section of this workbook features lists of Diploma related publications and online resources from QCDA and other organisations such as awarding bodies that you may find useful.

If after reading this workbook or receiving the *AutoAlert* emails or consulting these related resources you feel that you need to access additional help and support from QCDA please do not hesitate to contact the QCDA Diploma Helpdesk on 0300 100 0100.

# Be prepared

pre September 2009



## What's required?

The following tasks should have been completed at the start of the 2009/2010 academic year:

- › signing up with the Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP) *Learner registration service*, so you can acquire unique learner numbers (ULNs)
- › signing the QCDA *Head of Centre agreement*, to enable access to the *Diploma aggregation service* and management of learner accounts
- › ensuring a consortium exams administration policy is in place specifying who is responsible for the various aspects of Diploma delivery and assessment.

## How do you do it?

### *Learner registration service and Head of Centre agreement*

By signing up for the *MIAP Learner registration service* you should have a login that enables your centre to acquire ULNs. Sending a completed *Head of Centre agreement* to QCDA means your centre should receive login details that will enable it to log in to the *Diploma aggregation service*. If you haven't received your logins, or can't access either service, contact the relevant helpdesk.

### *Consortium exams administration policy*

Your consortium should also have developed an exams administration policy. This identifies home and assessment centre roles and responsibilities and specifies the component awarding bodies and Diploma awarding bodies to be used for each individual component and overall Diploma award.

If such a policy does not exist it should be created as a matter of urgency. The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) publication *Nuts and bolts guide: Leading Diploma administration* and QCDA's online tool *Consortium exam policy generator* offer guidance for consortium senior leaders on developing an effective policy.

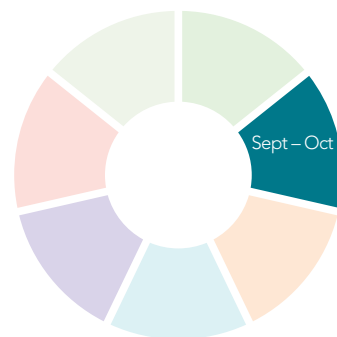
Developing a consortium exams administration policy is usually the responsibility of senior consortium leaders. If a policy has not been developed, they must be made aware that this is a critical part of the Diploma administration process, and that a consortium will not be able to proceed effectively to Diploma awarding without it.





# All about the student

September – October 2009



2

## What's required?

The following tasks should have been completed during September/October 2009:

- › student unique learner numbers (ULNs) should have been received and validated
- › learner accounts should have been opened in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- › valid *Diploma learner study plans* should have been developed and communicated to all relevant staff, both in your centre and across your consortium
- › assessment entries should have been made by the relevant centres across your consortium.

## How do you do it?

Valid student details, *Diploma Learner study plans* and associated exam entries are critical to Diploma administration. This information is shared and used by key stakeholders across the awarding process and must be managed and communicated carefully to ensure each student receives the Diploma award that they deserve, on time.

### Student details/ULNs

ULNs should be used consistently in your own centre and across the consortium. It's the home centre's responsibility to ensure changes to student details are validated and communicated to relevant staff. Assessment centres should receive ULNs and student details from home centres, and follow up any missing or incorrect details with them.

Remember that students have to give permission before their personal details can be shared between centres. You must have evidence (usually a signed form) that they have agreed to this.

### Learner accounts

Make sure learner accounts have been created using the *Diploma aggregation service*. You can retrieve a *Participation Report* from the *Diploma aggregation service* which lists learners who have had learner accounts created for a specified academic year and term. Follow guidelines on *Extracting management information reports* in the *Diploma aggregation service quick guide*.

### Diploma learner study plans

Curriculum planners should use the *Diploma validator* at the start of a Diploma student's first year, to check a valid programme of study is being followed. Early checking means that students who need to change their programme of study can do so with minimal disruption.

Once a programme of study has been validated, a *Diploma learner study plan* should be developed for each student. This is essential for effective administration. QCDA's *Diploma learner study plan* template can be partially completed automatically by importing a programme of study validated and downloaded from the *Diploma validator*.

Every student in your centre must have a complete *Diploma learner study plan*. Missing or incomplete plans must be investigated immediately with teaching staff or line of learning leaders. Working collaboratively will enable finished plans to be shared more easily with students, tutors or advisers, and others in your consortium.

## Assessment entries

A *Diploma learner study plan* should include key administration dates for all entry submissions, including:

- principal learning
- project
- functional skills
- additional and specialist learning (ASL).

Some component awarding bodies offer functional skills and vocational qualifications (which can be used for ASL) that can be taken on demand. Make sure everyone in your consortium understands these deadlines, and their responsibilities for making entries.

Registrations for principal learning, project, functional skills and ASL must be carried out, as detailed by the component awarding body. For example, if you have students hoping to get their principal learning and project results for the January series, entries should have been submitted in October.

## Access arrangements

You should have established clear lines of communication with your special educational needs department, and agreed responsibility for each step in the application process; for example, who is responsible for gathering, recording and filing supporting evidence, liaising with teaching staff, submitting applications and setting the timescales for these actions? Work together to compile a complete list of candidates who may need access arrangements. This will help ensure that the necessary applications are made within designated timescales.

## All about the student (September – October) 2009

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to indicate how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Your centre should have valid ULNs/personal details for all students.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there processes for acquiring ULNs and storing student details in a secure place in your management information system?</li> <li>• Were checks made to ensure this information was correct and that it was circulated to the right people?</li> <li>• If changes were made to student details were the relevant people informed?</li> <li>• Does your centre have records of students' permission to share personal details?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Learner accounts should have been opened for all Diploma students in the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has your centre defined who is responsible for doing this?</li> <li>• Has a <i>Participation Report</i> been retrieved to check that all necessary accounts have been opened?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>There should be a <i>Diploma learner study plan</i> for each Diploma student.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are there records of who developed <i>Diploma learner study plans</i> (including how and with who they were shared)?</li> <li>• Were plans validated to ensure they included all relevant components, including work experience and personal, learning and thinking skills?</li> <li>• Is there a process for resolving errors/making changes?</li> <li>• If changes were made, were these recorded and shared with the appropriate people? Was the programme of study revalidated using the <i>Diploma validator</i> tool?</li> </ul>			

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>All Diploma learner study plans should include component awarding body key administration dates for entry submissions for all relevant qualifications.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did your centre know how to access this information?</li> <li>• Did other centres need this information? Was it shared it with them?</li> <li>• Did you check if results would be available in time for students to get their Diploma award when expected?</li> <li>• If they were not was there a process to follow?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Students must be registered with component awarding bodies as required, using ULNs.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has someone in your centre been identified as having responsibility for submitting registrations?</li> <li>• Did this person know how to find the appropriate information and identify whether ASL qualifications were vocational or whether functional skills were 'on demand'?</li> <li>• Is there evidence that principal learning, ASL and functional skills entries were made correctly using the correct ULN for each learner?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Entry requirements for January series and unit entries for the next exam series (if appropriate) should have been made in October.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did the person responsible for submitting entries in your centre know which component awarding bodies to use and deadlines for submission?</li> <li>• Did they know which centre in your consortium was responsible for which entries?</li> <li>• Were entry procedures and administration deadlines communicated to teaching and administrative staff?</li> <li>• Is there evidence staff understand their responsibilities and the relevant deadlines?</li> </ul>			

## How ready is your centre?

Completely

Partly

Not at all

- Is there evidence that principal learning entries were made and the correct ULNs were used?
- Is there a process for correcting mistakes in entries (such as entering the wrong ULN)?

### Access arrangements deadlines for January 2010 series<sup>1</sup> were met.

- Has someone in your centre been identified as being responsible for administering access arrangements?
- Is there evidence staff understand their responsibilities and the relevant deadlines?
- Is there evidence that deadlines for submitting access arrangement requests were met?
- Is there a process to follow if an application is missed or details are entered incorrectly?

<sup>1</sup> except modified question papers

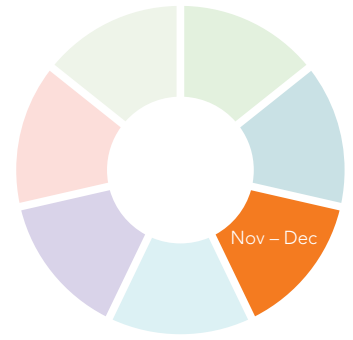
## Actions to be taken




Later this year, QCDA will launch a new version of the *Diploma aggregation service*. This will have an integrated *Diploma validator*, so you'll be able to check *Diploma learner study plans* and open a learner account in one step.

# Health checks

November – December 2009



## What's required?

In November and December, you should have carried out a series of 'health checks' to ensure that:

- › changes to *Diploma learner study plans* have been recorded, validated and communicated to all relevant staff within your centre and across your consortium
- › centre deadlines for submitting internally marked and on demand assessments allow for time required for component awarding bodies to moderate results and post them in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- › arrangements are in place for each student to gain work experience, and demonstrate personal, learning and thinking skills
- › Diploma awarding bodies have been identified and associated with your centre in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- › learner accounts have been opened using the *Diploma aggregation service*, ready to receive component results
- › plans exist to quality assure marking of controlled internal assessments in each line of learning, across your consortium
- › applications to record prior achievement have been made to the appropriate awarding body.

## How do you do it?

### Changes to the *Diploma learner study plans*

The person responsible for managing *Diploma learner study plans* in your consortium should have informed you if changes were made as a result of checking their validity. If there are problems discuss them with curriculum and line of learning leads, so you can decide what to do next. If a student is found to be on an invalid programme of study their course leader/teacher should discuss the alternative choices available that will lead to a programme of study that is eligible for a Diploma award. Validated changes must be communicated to all those affected in your consortium. You may also have to contact component awarding bodies if entries have been made, so make sure you have accurate ULNs, and qualification names or reference numbers to hand to explain the change to them.

### Awarding body assessment and moderation deadlines

Assessment and administrative staff must be aware of their responsibilities and of awarding body deadlines. This is critical for principal learning and projects, where the majority of assessments are internal and marks and assessment materials must be submitted by certain dates.

If these deadlines are missed, the component awarding body may not have time to moderate this work, and this could lead to delays on posting results in the *Diploma aggregation service*, and a delay to the Diploma being awarded.

## Work experience and personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

You should have processes in place to record work experience and PLTS and enter this information into learner accounts in the *Diploma aggregation service*.

### Learner accounts

Use reports from the *Diploma aggregation service* to check learner accounts have been opened for all Diploma students, and that an intention to claim has been set for those intending to claim their award as soon as possible. You can also get information on which students have work experience and PLTS recorded (or missing), to help you with your administration.

### Controlled internal assessments

Your domain assessor should be responsible for effective internal standardisation, which should take place for each internally assessed unit of the Diploma, including principal learning and project. Make sure there's a process in place that identifies roles and responsibilities for assessing and confirming students' work for each unit.

Staff involved in Diploma delivery must understand the controlled conditions that need to be complied with when students produce their assessment evidence, and ensure that appropriate documentation is completed. The process should include regular feedback to assessment staff on their assessment of students' work.

### Prior achievements

Roles and responsibilities should have been agreed for identifying and submitting prior achievement applications. Make sure that applications have been submitted to the correct component awarding body, and that a response has been received within the agreed deadline. Communicate any results to relevant staff within your centre, as this may affect the student's *Diploma learner study plan*.

## Health checks (November – December 2009)

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to indicate how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Changes to <i>Diploma learner study plans</i> have been communicated to relevant staff and centres.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was your centre informed of changes to plans and who has communicated this change?</li> <li>• Is there a way to check if amended plans are valid?</li> <li>• Do you have a system for communicating changes to relevant staff in your centre and consortium?</li> <li>• Is there a process for resolving errors or discrepancies resulting in changes?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>On-demand and internally marked assessments have been sent to component awarding bodies in enough time so they can post results to learner accounts in time for Diploma awarding dates.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Did your centre's deadlines take this into account?</li> <li>• Were teaching and assessment staff informed by the deadline?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Work experience arrangements have been put in place.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a process to follow if an employer or teacher failed to confirm work experience completion or if an employer withdraws a work placement opportunity?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>A system for tracking and recording personal, learning and thinking skills as part of principal learning and project has been put in place.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is achievement of PLTS tracked?</li> <li>• Are teaching and assessment staff aware of their responsibilities?</li> </ul>			



## How ready is your centre?

Completely

Partly

Not at all

### All students have been registered with Diploma awarding bodies on the *Diploma aggregation service*.

- Did your centre know which Diploma awarding bodies to register students with?
- Is there evidence that you registered students with a Diploma awarding body (or bodies)?

### Prior achievement applications have been submitted to component awarding bodies.

- Is someone in your centre responsible for identifying students with prior achievements and making applications?
- Is prior achievement clearly identified on the *Diploma learner study plan*?
- Did they have access to information about how to make claims, what achievements are recognised, and the processes and deadlines involved?
- Is there evidence that applications have been made and are they being tracked with the component awarding body?

## Actions to be taken




Getting ready for the Diploma: the essential guide for the exams office is being updated with more case studies and additional guidance on communication.

# New year's resolutions

January – February 2010



## What's required?

The following tasks should have been completed in January and February, preferably ahead of component awarding body deadlines:

- exam entries should have been made for the March series for functional skills, principal learning and ASL
- exams entries should have been made for the summer exam series for principal learning, project, functional skills and ASL
- assessment marks and the associated moderation samples should have been submitted for both principal learning and project for January series
- *Diploma aggregation service* learner accounts should have been checked to ensure November series unit results are present.

## How do you do it?

### Exams entries

Your exams policy should tell you which centre is responsible for which exams entries. Usually entries for Diploma qualifications are made by the centre where assessment takes place, but check, as arrangements may be different in your consortium. Everyone should be aware of their responsibilities and of deadlines for submitting entries. A tracking mechanism should be in place, so you know which entries have been made, when and by whom, and can follow up missing entries immediately.

*Diploma learner study plans* will provide you with unit assessment dates and locations to enable you to plan ahead. Share information to ensure that the right entries are made by the right centres at the right time. Also, consider the best format for sharing, and how you check data is accurate, whether it's secure, and when it's required.

You should have already agreed these arrangements with colleagues. As ever, having effective working relationships should make this process easier.

### Assessment marks and moderation samples

All teaching, assessment and administrative staff must be aware of the regulations and deadlines for entering internally assessed marks for principal learning and projects. This could involve providing guidance to heads of departments on how to complete forms correctly, or how to carry out internal standardisation and assessment.

Teaching and assessment staff must be aware of submission dates for internally marked assessments and moderation samples for both principal learning and projects, and understand the implications of not meeting these deadlines. It may be helpful to have a method in place for alerting staff to upcoming deadlines, and contingency plans for when deadlines are missed. Make sure you know who's responsible for the collation of moderator samples, and that they understand their responsibilities and the timescales involved.

### Confirm November series unit results are present


To ensure students who are expected to achieve their Diploma in the summer are on track, use the *Diploma aggregation service* to view and download November results

## New year’s resolutions (January – February 2010)

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to indicate how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

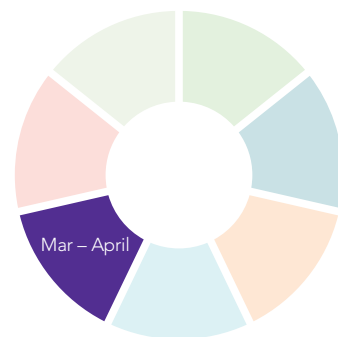
How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Submission of controlled assessment marks and dispatch of moderation samples for principal learning and project.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has someone been identified as being responsible for this task in your centre?</li> <li>• Is your centre aware of deadlines for submitting marks?</li> <li>• Is there a consistent and collaborative approach to collating moderation samples across your consortium?</li> <li>• Is there evidence that you submitted marks and that ULNs were used to identify Diploma students?</li> <li>• Is there a process for resolving cases of missing marks or moderation samples? Is it just for your centre or across the consortium?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Making entries for the March series of exams (where required).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there agreement about which centres in the consortium were responsible for which entries?</li> <li>• Is there a process for checking if the correct entries had been made by the correct centre?</li> <li>• Have entry deadlines been communicated to the relevant staff and was there a process for checking deadlines were met?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Making entries for the summer exam series.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there agreement in your centre about which centres in your consortium are responsible for which entries?</li> <li>• Have entry deadlines been communicated to relevant staff and is there a process for ensuring deadlines are met?</li> <li>• Is there a process for handling missing marks and late entries?</li> </ul>			

**Actions to be taken**


 Look out for the new ULN Service for schools being launched by the DCSF in March.

# Housekeeping

March – April 2010



## What's required?

March and April are your last chance to make sure everything's been done so students are on track to receive their Diploma in 2010. You need to:

- check that all January series unit results are present in learner accounts in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- check deadlines for entries for level 3 principal learning and extended project qualification for the June series
- check principal learning, project and ASL entries have been made by the assessment centre, by the summer deadline
- check cash-in codes have been entered for each full qualification; where this is required by the component awarding body
- check deadlines for applications for access arrangements for June 2010 series (except modified question papers)
- make entries for each principal learning unit, projects and ASL for the summer series
- set intention to claim in the *Diploma aggregation service* for students completing this summer
- check that prior achievement applications have been made to component awarding bodies
- run and check the *Diploma aggregation service centre completion status report*.

## How do you do it?

The tasks above require collaborative working to ensure responsibilities are understood, tasks are completed and deadlines are met. Colleagues will have many other priorities competing for their attention and may not understand how important this information is to Diploma awarding. To get this information your communications with colleagues should be sent out in a timescale that allows a reasonable amount of time to gather information before it is required. You should also:

- explain briefly the information you need, why you need it, when you need it and the potential consequences if it is not made available in time
- stress that you understand how busy colleagues are and how much you appreciate their help
- ask for a response confirming that they will be able to supply this information before the deadline.

You may find it helpful to use the box below to write down your own ideas on achieving cooperation from colleagues

### Achieving cooperation – your ideas

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If you do not get a response from colleagues, contact them again and stress why this is important and that deadlines are getting closer. You may also want to make your manager (or a senior leader responsible for Diploma administration) aware of any problems so you can work together on how to resolve them.

You also need to make sure the students who are expected to achieve their Diploma this summer are on track to do so. Use the *Diploma aggregation service* to view and download results for students. This can help you in prompting a component awarding body for actual results where there appears to be a delay in receiving them into learner accounts.

You'll need to produce and check each student's completion status, using the *Diploma aggregation service completion status report*. Any discrepancies must be resolved as a matter of urgency. You may need to contact other centres in your consortium to check that entries were submitted correctly, or component awarding bodies to find out why results are missing or don't have the expected grade. You may also want to check there are no outstanding prior achievement claims for the student, and follow these up directly with the designated component awarding body.

Use the *Retrieve student account info* or *Extract student account details* options in the *Diploma aggregation service* to check that an intention to claim has been set for those students planning to achieve their Diploma award in the summer.

## Housekeeping (March – April 2010)

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to indicate how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

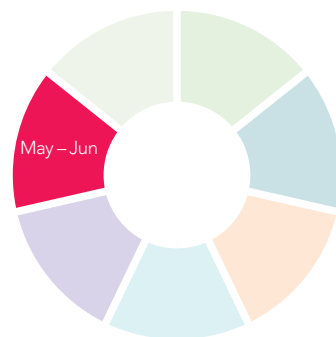
How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>January series unit results should be present in learner accounts on the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i>.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there evidence that January series results have been posted?</li> <li>• Is there a process to follow if results are missing?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Principal learning, project and ASL entries should have been made by assessment centre (for summer deadline).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there evidence that these entries have been made by the assessment centre?</li> <li>• Is there a process for resolving instances of missing or incorrect entries?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Cash-in codes have been entered for each full qualification, where required by the component awarding body.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is your centre aware of cash-in deadlines?</li> <li>• Is there a process for identifying which entries should be accompanied by cash-in codes and ensuring the correct code is used?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Deadlines have been met for applications for access arrangements for June 2010 series (except modified question papers).</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a process for communicating details of access arrangements required to other centres in your consortium?</li> <li>• Is there a means of checking whether applications are made by the appropriate deadlines?</li> <li>• Is there a system for following up outstanding applications?</li> </ul>			





# On your marks

May – June 2010



## What's required?

In May and June all marks and associated moderation samples must be submitted to awarding bodies, and component results and achievements recorded in learner accounts. If your students want to claim their award as soon as they can, you need to set an intention to claim. This will automatically trigger a claim to the Diploma awarding body, and save you having to go into each learner account and claim each individual Diploma during the summer results period.

Key tasks for this period are as follows:

- submit project marks
- complete summer internal standardisation and assessment
- check the deadline for principal learning internal assessment marks submission
- take account of the different results dates in August 2010, if you have level 3 students taking level 2 functional skills
- submit controlled assessment marks and dispatch moderation samples for principal learning and project (for the summer series)
- check prior achievement claimed is showing in learner accounts in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure work experience is recorded in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure all personal, learning and thinking skills assessment is complete and recorded in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure intentions to claim are set in the *Diploma aggregation service*
- ensure you have information on how you can make manual claims for the Diploma on behalf of students and how students can improve their Diploma grades.

## How do you do it?

The exams office will most probably have responsibility for ensuring colleagues are aware of:

- deadlines for entering marks for internally assessed units
- what is expected of them in terms of marking, moderation and supply of moderation samples.

You need to ensure internally assessed marks are supplied to you in time so they can be input into a database, or used to complete the marking submission forms that accompany awarding body moderation sample materials. This may involve a tracking mechanism allowing you to monitor and communicate approaching deadlines and late or missing marks.

This is a very busy period and pressures on colleagues' time can be enormous. Remaining calm and professional will help diffuse tensions or difficulties. Keep communicating with colleagues in the same cordial tone, acknowledge that there are many calls on their time but focus on the actions that need to be taken to achieve the positive outcome (successful Diploma awarding for students) you all desire.

You may find it helpful to use the box below to write down your own ideas on resolving potential communication problems.

**Resolving potential communication problems – your ideas**

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Check your students are on target to achieve their award. Use the *Diploma aggregation service Find student account* option (advanced search options) to make sure that work experience and PLTS have been recorded for all students. If these are missing, follow it up directly with those responsible. Your students can't get their Diploma without completing this and having the achievement recorded in their learner account.

Also, check there are no outstanding prior achievement claims, and that requested results have been posted to the learner accounts.

You can set intentions to claim for students using the *Managing multiple student accounts – set ITCs for a Diploma with a DAB* option on the *Diploma aggregation service*. Follow the guidelines set out in the *Diploma aggregation service reference guide for centres*, and download and print out a list of those students for whom you've set the intention to claim, using the *Find student account* option (advanced search options).

## On your marks (May – June 2010)

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to indicate how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Submission of controlled assessment marks and dispatch of moderation samples for principal learning and projects (summer series).</b></p> <p>Are there processes and systems for ensuring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• deadlines for submitting internally assessed marks are communicated to relevant staff?</li> <li>• progress in submitting marks/samples is tracked?</li> <li>• assessment staff are aware of the information they need to supply so marks/samples can be submitted?</li> <li>• copies of these marks are recorded and stored?</li> <li>• assessment staff complete marking correctly?</li> <li>• internal standardisation is carried out before marks are submitted?</li> <li>• assessment staff have the correct information to dispatch marks/samples?</li> <li>• assessment staff check marks entered don't exceed maximum available, and candidates either have a mark entered, or are recorded as absent?</li> <li>• there is evidence that marks have been submitted?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Check prior achievement claimed shows in learner accounts in the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i>.</b></p> <p>Are there processes and systems for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• identifying which results should be posted as prior achievements to learner accounts and checking whether they are correct?</li> <li>• dealing with situations where the component awarding body doesn't respond to a claim for prior achievement?</li> <li>• resolving discrepancies if the result posted isn't the one you expect?</li> <li>• letting relevant parties in your centre know the outcome?</li> </ul>			

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Recording of work experience and PLTS assessment in the Diploma aggregation service.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has the person responsible for collecting and recording this information in the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i> been identified?</li> <li>• Is there a process for collecting this information?</li> <li>• Is there evidence that this information has been recorded in the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i>?</li> <li>• Is there a process to correct the situation if this information has not been recorded as expected?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Setting intentions to claim.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure intentions to claim are set as appropriate in the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i>.</li> <li>• Is there a process for identifying the students who need to have an intention to claim set on their learner account?</li> <li>• Has the person responsible for doing this been identified?</li> <li>• Is there a process to ensure there is evidence that intentions to claim have been set?</li> </ul>			

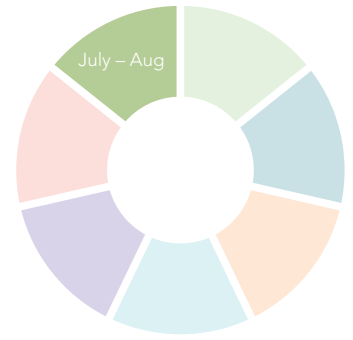
## Actions to be taken




- > Watch out for Release 4 of the *Diploma aggregation service*.
- > GCSE results days are a little earlier in 2010. A levels and principal learning level 3 results will be published on 19 August. GCSEs and principal learning levels 1–2 and project results will be released on 24 August. The first opportunity for most students to claim their Diploma will be after they get their principal learning result. Advanced Diploma students may get the majority of their component results on 19 August, but will have to wait for their level 2 functional skills result on 24 August before getting their Diploma.
- > More information has been included in the learner account. The new history screens (added to the *Diploma aggregation service* in November 2009 as part of Release 3.4) show the background to the student's Diploma grade and PLTS and work experience status.

# Summer holidays

July – August 2010



## What's required?

To ensure students receive their qualification results and actual Diploma award on time you'll need to make sure of the following:

- › marks for vocational courses have been submitted in time to ensure that the qualification is awarded by the end of July for inclusion in Diploma awarding
- › claims have been made for on-demand qualifications, to ensure they're there to be aggregated at the same time as principal learning and project results
- › the Diploma completion report is downloaded from the *Diploma aggregation service* on results day, listing all students who achieved their Diploma award.

## How do you do it?

Your role is to make sure everyone knows about the regulations and deadlines for entering internally assessed marks, and what's expected of them in terms of marking, moderation and supply of moderation samples. You'll need to make sure vocational marks are supplied to you in good time for the qualification to be awarded before the end of the month, so it can be included in the Diploma award.

Using the *Retrieve student account info – View the reports* menu options in the *Diploma aggregation service*, follow the guidelines for centres on how to print the *Diploma completion report*, which lists all students who have achieved their Diploma in your centre, and their associated grade.

You may need to brief students on how they can upgrade from a Progression Diploma to an Advanced Diploma. You may also need to submit manual Diploma claims using the *Diploma aggregation service*.

In both cases ensure that you know how to make the relevant changes in the *Diploma aggregation service* or are aware of who would be responsible for making these changes.

## Summer holidays (July – August 2010)

Consider the questions associated with each task, before ticking a column to indicate how ready (or not) your centre is for Diploma awarding in summer 2010.

How ready is your centre?	Completely	Partly	Not at all
<p><b>Marks for students taking vocational courses must be submitted in time so the qualification can be included in Diploma awarding.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does your centre have a process for communicating deadlines for submitting internally assessed marks, tracking progress and recording/storing copies of work submitted?</li> <li>• Is there a way to check assessment staff are completing internally assessed marking accurately?</li> <li>• Will your centre be carrying out internal standardisation before internally assessed marks are submitted?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Claims must be made for on-demand qualifications so they can be included with Diplomas issued at the same time as principal learning and project results in August.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Do you have processes to ensure all vocational ASL marks are posted in the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i> in time for summer awarding?</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Downloading results for all students using the <i>Diploma progress statement</i> from the <i>Diploma aggregation service</i> on results day.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has responsibility for generating this report been assigned?</li> <li>• Has a distribution list been identified?</li> <li>• Is there a process for resolving any errors in the report?</li> </ul>			

### Actions to be taken




- After aggregation, all Diploma results (including U results) will be available to view on the Diploma awarding body's secure extranet site, as well as in the learner account.
- A *Diploma progress statement* (DPS) will be available on results day for any learner who does not achieve the relevant standard to claim a Diploma. Centres can download the DPS from the *Diploma aggregation service*, print it out and give it to the learner. The statement will show a list of the elements of the Diploma that the learner has achieved to date and can be used to provide them with information, advice and guidance about their progression.
- Further guidance on how to support students who do not achieve a Diploma will be available in the Diploma administration area of the QCDA website.



# Further information and resources

## From QCDA

The Diploma online tools and resources mentioned in this workbook, and more general information on the Diploma can be downloaded from the QCDA website ([www.qcda.gov.uk/diploma](http://www.qcda.gov.uk/diploma))

### Online tools

*Diploma validator* ([www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomavalidator](http://www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomavalidator))

*Diploma aggregation service* ([www.diplomaaggregationservice.org/DAS](http://www.diplomaaggregationservice.org/DAS))

*QCDA Consortium exams policy generator* ([www.qcda.gov.uk/cepg](http://www.qcda.gov.uk/cepg))

*Key dates calendar* ([www.qcda.gov.uk/onlinetools](http://www.qcda.gov.uk/onlinetools))

### Other Diploma resources

(all downloadable from [www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomaresources](http://www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomaresources))

*Administering the Diploma: the essential guide for the exams office*

*Getting ready for the Diploma: the essential guide for the exams office*

*Diploma learner study plan – blank template*

*Prior achievement form*

*Work experience completion form*

*PLTS completion form*

*Diploma ready reckoner*

*Quick guide to the Diploma aggregation service*

### QCDA Diploma aggregation service Helpdesk

0300 100 0100

## Resources and information from other organisations

### Department of Children, Schools and Families

*Nuts and bolts guide: Leading Diploma administration* (download from [www.diploma-support.org](http://www.diploma-support.org))

### Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP)

*Learner registration service* (access via [www.miap.gov.uk](http://www.miap.gov.uk))

MIAP helpdesk 0845 602 2589

### Ofqual

*Awarding bodies offering Diploma or Diploma components* [www.ofqual.gov.uk](http://www.ofqual.gov.uk)

### National database of accredited qualifications

*Diploma catalogues* (download from [www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk](http://www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk))

### Awarding bodies

Diploma administration information and guidance is also available from awarding body websites, including:

Edexcel – [www.edexcel.com](http://www.edexcel.com)

OCR – [www.ocr.org.uk](http://www.ocr.org.uk)

AQA/City and Guilds Diploma website – [www.diplomainfo.org.uk](http://www.diplomainfo.org.uk)

EDI – [www.ediplc.com](http://www.ediplc.com)

VTCT – [www.vtct.org.uk](http://www.vtct.org.uk)



## About this publication

### Who is it for?

This publication is for exams office staff who are delivering the Diploma.

### What is it about

It provides a checklist and timetable of the essential tasks that happen during the yearly cycle of Diploma administration and practical advice on effective collaborative working with colleagues.

### Related publications

*Getting ready for the Diploma: the essential guide for the exams office*  
*Administering the Diploma: The essential guide for the exams office*

### For more copies

Email: [orderline@qcda.gov.uk](mailto:orderline@qcda.gov.uk)  
or download from [www.qcda.gov.uk](http://www.qcda.gov.uk)  
Reference QCDA/10/4746

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