



Qualifications and  
Curriculum Authority

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# Diploma level 1 modelling

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# Contents

Introduction.....	3
The consultation .....	3
Executive summary .....	4
The recommended model for the Diploma at level 1 .....	4
Principles underpinning learning at level 1 .....	6
1. The Diploma level 1 modelling report .....	8
1.1 Background.....	8
2. Principles underpinning the level 1 Diploma .....	8
2.1 Context for the principles .....	8
3. Rationale for principles underpinning the level 1 Diploma .....	10
3.1 Principles 1–4 .....	10
3.2 Principles 5–6 .....	11
3.3 Principles 7–9 .....	12
3.4 Principle 10 .....	12
3.5 Principle 11 .....	13
4. The proposed model.....	13
4.1 Analysis of the proposed model .....	14
4.2 Sector-specific commentary on the proposed level 1 Diploma model.....	14
4.3 Rules of combination.....	15
4.4 Commonality .....	15
4.5 Breadth and specificity .....	16
4.6 Learners undertaking the Diploma post-16 .....	16
4.7 Learner choice .....	17
4.8 Titling .....	17
5. Overall summary.....	18
Appendix 1: Diploma level 1 – delivery and learning factors.....	19
Appendix 2: The model – supporting progression from Entry level.....	21
Exemplar curriculum illustrations .....	21
Appendix 3: The model – broad then specialised .....	23
Appendix 4: The proposed model – changing routes.....	24
Appendix 5: Rules of combination .....	26
Flexibility within model to meet learner needs.....	26
Appendix 6: The cohort.....	27
Appendix 7: Consultation participants.....	29

QCA would like to thank Richard Sharples for his contribution to this report.

## Introduction

This report identifies and recommends the adoption of principles and a model for the Diploma at level 1. Before the recommendations were prepared, Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), 14–19 Pathfinders, QCA, work-based learning providers and awarding bodies considered the three models below.

- The first model offers a sector-specific approach in which all principal learning units must be undertaken within the line of learning, and the line of learning defines many of the additional and specialised units.
- The second model offers a generic approach leading to a Diploma not holding a title related to one of the 14 lines of learning. Learners can undertake principal learning from as many other lines as possible.
- The third model offers the learner the opportunity to specialise in a particular sector area or to explore a range of sector areas (see page 6).

The third model was the basis for further development activity through the consultation phase, taking into account stakeholder feedback, and is being recommended here.

## The consultation

Several sources of information have been used in the production of this report:

- desk research, including a literature review of earlier initiatives to improve pre-vocational education across the 14–19 age range
- focus group meetings with representatives of Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs) planning content for the phase 1 lines of learning
- telephone interviews with representatives of DDPs planning for the phase 1 and 2 lines of learning
- focus group meetings with awarding body representatives
- telephone interviews with work-based learning providers working with learners at level 1
- telephone interviews with representatives of Diploma 14–19 Pathfinder projects
- interviews with QCA development teams.

The consultation process highlighted the importance of ensuring that the level 1 Diploma has the flexibility in breadth and specificity required to meet the needs of learners who have not achieved the level expected by the end of key stage 3. Feedback from the consultation indicated a

consensus that the level 1 Diploma should provide, through applied learning, a broad education that includes one or more lines of learning.

## Executive summary

This report recommends that the level 1 Diploma:

1. adheres to the principles for the Diploma at level 1
2. adheres to the model overleaf (page 5), to support portability between lines of learning and flexible progression routes.

Further work to be undertaken:

3. QCA should publish guidance on level 1 for DDPs, awarding bodies and deliverers, including rules on achieving a balance of breadth and specificity in accordance with the level 1 Diploma model. This work should support DDPs to develop level 1 learning for 14- to 16-year-olds and should provide further guidance on the role of work experience<sup>1</sup>, the Diploma project and experiential learning at level 1.

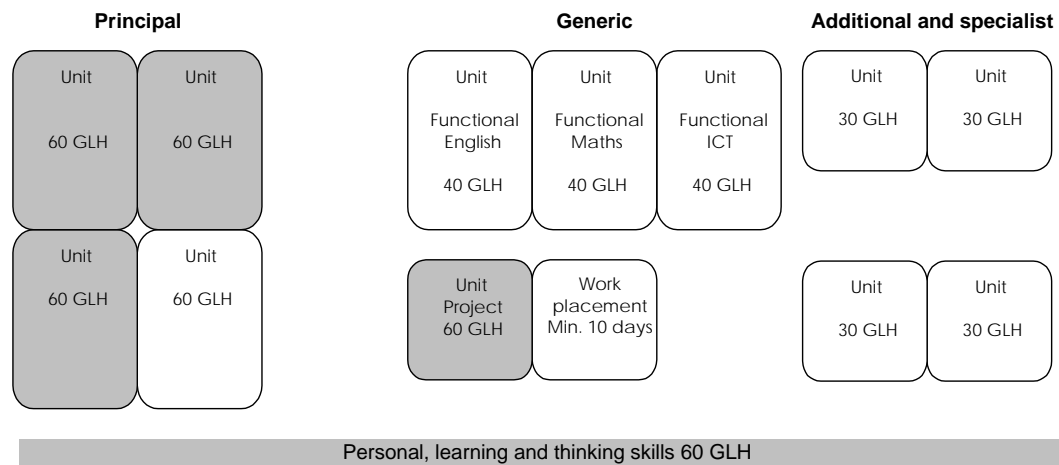
## The recommended model for the Diploma at level 1

The recommended model provides the opportunity for learners to specialise in a particular sector area within their principal learning. Learners can choose to undertake further study within the sector area, or choose units from other lines of learning. Rules of combination will ensure that a significant proportion of the principal learning units and the project is based on a chosen sector (grey shading). This will be reflected in the title of the Diploma.

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<sup>1</sup> Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs) are currently working on these principles and guidance will illustrate this work.

### Recommended model for level 1 Diploma



GLH  
= 600

240

240

120

#### Notes Guided learning hours (GLH)

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Opportunity to take 2 or more lines of learning</li> <li>• Rules of combination ensure meaningful experience in one sector and employer support for the approach</li> <li>• Suited to learners who are undecided, curious or decided</li> <li>• Parity with diplomas at higher levels</li> <li>• Learner motivation</li> <li>• Provides focus for learners at risk of disengagement</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less depth in learner's introduction to the sector</li> <li>• Risk of flexibility not being used in delivery</li> </ul>

There are three important characteristics of the recommended model above.

Firstly, 75 per cent of principal learning and the Diploma project need to be achieved within a specific line of learning in order that a named Diploma title can be claimed (see grey shading).

Secondly, building on the first characteristic, learners can choose to specialise further within the sector area by taking the remaining 25 per cent of principal learning in the same line of learning. Learners can also select related additional and specialist units.

Thirdly, other learners may choose to broaden their studies by choosing to take the remaining 25 per cent of principal learning in another line or lines of learning. Learners can also select additional and specialist units from other lines of learning.

It would follow that each learner would have their own individual programme of study within the Diploma structure.

The model above allows for the Diploma to respond to the needs of learners in offering greater specificity or breadth depending upon their learning needs, career aspirations and level of commitment. The model avoids the risk of committing learners to a high degree of specialisation from an early age. It also ensures that the learning experience is not so disparate that it loses coherence and meaning within the Diploma framework.

The model takes account of the need to preserve the freedom for additional and specialist learning to be used to accumulate credits gained through learning at Entry level and the foundation learning tier (FLT). For learners in compulsory education the additional and specialist learning has an important function in allowing learners to deposit credit gained through relevant study at national curriculum key stage 4.

## **Principles underpinning learning at level 1**

The consultation identified a lack of agreed purposes and principles across the Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), specific to level 1. A series of principles were produced to support the development of the Diploma at level 1. These build from areas of broad agreement between most phase one and phase two DDP representatives. They should be applied at the DDPs planning stage. The principles apply to the whole Diploma and each line of learning must meet all principles.

Level 1 Diplomas should:

1. Motivate, engage and prepare learners for further learning.
2. Support informed decision making about the learners' progression route into employment or further learning beyond level 1.
3. Support learners in making progress towards an agreed progression aim, wherever possible in level 2 learning.
4. Equip learners for a range of progression opportunities and build their capability for successful further learning.
5. Develop transferable skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to one or more lines of learning.
6. Develop up-to-date skills, in meaningful practical environments.
7. Develop additional complementary and/or specialist skills, and knowledge drawn from beyond the line of learning.
8. Facilitate the transfer of credit from other lines of learning at the same level.
9. Facilitate the transfer of credit in literacy and numeracy skills from the Entry levels.
10. Enable, through partnerships, delivery in a variety of settings including schools, the work place, colleges and custodial settings.
11. Develop career awareness and planning skills.

# 1. The Diploma level 1 modelling report

## 1.1 Background

This report is part of the research work to support the development of level 1 Diplomas. Diplomas fall within the 11–19 Reform programme led by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Skills for Business Network (SfBN). They will recognise achievement at levels 1, 2 and 3 from ages 14–19. They will be available in 14 lines of learning<sup>2</sup>. Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), involving sector and awarding bodies, education representatives and other stakeholders, are leading the development of Diploma content in each line of learning. This report makes the following recommendations for the development of level 1 Diplomas.

- Adopt the principles for the Diploma at level 1.
- Adopt the recommended model, to support portability between lines of learning and flexible progression routes.

Work is underway to develop level 1 content for the first 10 lines of learning, the first five of which will be taught from September 2008. They are:

- information and communication technology
- health and social care
- engineering
- creative and media
- construction and the built environment.

The analysis of stakeholder views in this report will contribute to the further development of Diplomas at level 1. Additional information is provided in separate appendices.

## 2. Principles underpinning the level 1 Diploma

### 2.1 Context for the principles

The principles should be applied at the DDP planning stage to the whole Diploma, and each line of learning at level 1 must meet all principles.

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<sup>2</sup> *The specialised Diploma: qualification structure, assessment and grading (QCA/06/2707)*



It is expected that most learners will progress directly to the level 2 Diplomas at the end of key stage 3. A minority of learners will continue to pursue learning at level 1 at the end of key stage 3. Learners can also study level 1 learning at the end of key stage 4. The principles aim to ensure that all learners pursuing their learning through level 1 Diplomas have the opportunity to:

- optimise their learning and achievement through a motivating programme
- develop skills, understanding and knowledge fundamental to their employability
- attain a recognised qualification
- be equipped for a range of progression opportunities in employment, general education, apprenticeship or further Diploma learning, in the same line of learning or other lines<sup>3</sup>
- develop confidence in their ability to succeed in learning
- make progress towards working/learning at level 2 wherever possible.

Advice and guidance, including induction, will inform learner choice. Individual planning will determine the units required to meet the learning needs and fulfil the requirements of the named Diploma. It is also expected that appropriate teaching and learning strategies will be developed to match the needs of learners and support the contextualisation of functional skills and Diploma objectives. A cycle of regular reviews will help learners to reflect on their learning, understand the progress they are making and identify what they might do next to make further progress.

All Diplomas should offer learners the opportunity to demonstrate excellence. Some learners will attain beyond level 1 in some units and many learners will move on to higher level qualifications on completion of their level 1 Diploma.

‘At key stage 4, the educational experience of young people will remain a broad preparation for life as well as work’.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> *The specialised diploma: A report on the development of standards and requirements*, Centre for Education and Industry, 2006

<sup>4</sup> *14–19 Education and skills White Paper (DfES 1268/2005)*

## 3. Rationale for principles underpinning the level 1 Diploma

### 3.1 Principles 1–4

Level 1 Diplomas should:

1. motivate, engage and prepare learners for further learning
2. support informed decision making about the learners' progression route into employment or further learning beyond level 1.
3. support learners in making progress towards an agreed progression aim, wherever possible in level 2 learning
4. equip learners for a range of progression opportunities and build their capability for successful further learning.

These principles focus on the capacity of the qualification to respond to individual learners' needs. The first recognises that some learners may have experienced limited previous success in classroom learning environments and may be at risk of becoming disengaged from learning. Along with principle 3, it acknowledges the role of level 1 learning in motivating and preparing learners for further learning.

The third of these principles highlights the importance of a coherent experience for the learner by requiring progress towards a meaningful next step. During the period of level 1 Diploma study, learners will be encouraged to:

- identify a progression aim
- make choices that lead to a Diploma title, reflecting sector specificity
- build transferable functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills<sup>5</sup>.

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<sup>5</sup> Skill characteristics of skills gaps. *National employer skills survey* (appendix, part 3), LSC, 2003

## 3.2 Principles 5–6

Level 1 Diplomas should be designed to:

5. develop transferable skills, knowledge and understanding relevant to more than one or more lines of learning
6. develop up-to-date skills, in meaningful practical environments.

The fifth principle expects skills, knowledge and understanding to be gained, confirming that knowledge development on its own is not sufficient. It also emphasises the importance of learning in more than one line, particularly for learners who are undecided or too young to make a sustainable career choice.

The sixth principle reinforces the programme's links to the world of work, represented by lines of learning. 'Meaningful practical environments' are those where workplace and professional behaviours are promoted, and learning activities are led by staff with recent and relevant experience. They might include:

- the workplace
- college-based realistic work environments
- workshops in custodial settings.

All learners will undertake a minimum of 10 days work experience during their Diploma programme.

### 3.3 Principles 7–9

Level 1 Diplomas should be designed to:

7. develop additional complementary and/or specialist skills and knowledge drawn from beyond the line of learning
8. facilitate the transfer of credit from other lines of learning at the same level
9. facilitate the transfer of credit in literacy and numeracy skills from the Entry levels

The seventh principle includes an expectation that learners will experience more than a single line of learning. It acknowledges that learners' progression aims often develop during their programme as they take opportunities to explore several lines of learning. This expectation is not about developing a broad range of job-specific skills but rather about developing transferable employability skills.

The eighth and ninth principles define the expectation that promoting progression to higher levels is an important purpose for level 1 Diplomas. Transferring credit from other Diplomas serves two main purposes:

- It motivates learners by supporting their understanding of the progress they have already made and their success in a learning environment.
- It minimises wasted resources by maximising the meaningful use of credits, which prove prior learning and achievement.

### 3.4 Principle 10

Level 1 Diplomas should be designed to:

10. enable, through partnerships, delivery in a variety of settings, including schools, colleges and custodial settings.

This principle acknowledges that qualifications can be studied within partnerships, across the range of likely level 1 learning settings. The range of settings needs to reflect the diversity in the age range of the cohort.

### 3.5 Principle 11

Level 1 Diplomas should be designed to:

11. develop career awareness and planning skills.

This principle goes beyond the information, advice and guidance that would be expected for any learner. It is about providing insight and experience of career opportunities in more than one line of learning. It is about empowering learners through applied learning to make informed career choices, and equipping them to take part in career planning in terms of their employment or further learning beyond level 1.

## 4. The proposed model

The proposed model provides the opportunity for learners to specialise in a particular sector area or choose units from other lines of learning.

This model was the basis for further development activity through stakeholder feedback which called for principles for level 1 Diploma learning. This feedback stipulated:

- removal of the necessity to contextualise all generic learning
- development of a model showing greater interlocking with Entry level as a route to achievement at level 1
- development of exemplar curriculum illustrations.

The main features of the model are as follows.

- Principal learning provides an opportunity to try applied learning in more than one line of learning.
- All Diplomas carry a line of learning in their title.
- Achievement of 75 per cent of principal learning in a particular line entitles a learner to carry the name of the line of learning in their Diploma.
- Learners may choose to undertake more than 75 per cent of learning in a single line, however a proportion greater than 75 per cent cannot be specified in rules of combination.
- The Diploma project is completed in the line of learning claimed in the Diploma title.
- The model supports learner choice and a balance of applied and generic learning.

## 4.1 Analysis of the proposed model

The proposed model provides the opportunity for learners to specialise in a particular sector area within their principal learning. Learners can choose to undertake further study within the sector area, or choose units from other lines of learning. Rules of combination will ensure a significant proportion of the principal learning units and the project are based on a chosen sector (grey shading in diagram on page 5), which will be reflected in the title of the Diploma.

## 4.2 Sector-specific commentary on the proposed level 1 Diploma model

There are considerable areas of agreement across phase 1 and phase 2 DDP representatives in terms of the Diplomas meeting the needs of learners who are 'undecided', 'curious' or 'decided'.

The principles for the Diploma at level 1 seek to build on these areas of agreement. Some representatives, although supportive of the principles, have not yet had the opportunity to fully consult with their stakeholders.

### Summary of support for the proposed model<sup>6</sup>

	Model preference	Other or no clear preference
DDPs – Phase 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ConstructionSkills**</li> <li>• e-skills UK</li> <li>• Skills for Health**</li> <li>• SEMTA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Skillset (model B)</li> </ul>
DDPs – Phase 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• People 1st</li> <li>• LANTRA</li> <li>• Financial Services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve (no clear preference)</li> </ul>
14–19 Pathfinders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Broad support for proposed model.</li> </ul>	

<sup>6</sup> See appendix 6

- 
- |                  |   |
|------------------|---|
| L1 WBL providers | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Support for the importance of flexibility at level 1.</li></ul> |
|------------------|---|
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\*\* Only if 100 per cent principal learning in this line.

Awarding bodies' views and perceptions were recorded within the development process of the Diploma model. Focus group meetings with 23 awarding body representatives (see appendix 7) assessed the feasibility of models. There was clear consensus for the model recommended in this report.

### 4.3 Rules of combination

An entitlement to claim a line of learning when 75 per cent of principal learning has been achieved in a particular line provides coherence between the sector title and content. It also retains some flexibility within principal learning to support learner choice and accommodates an emerging preference during the programme.

The proposed model identifies the extent to which rules of combination can specify the principal and additional and specialist learning. These rules ensure consistency across the lines of learning and support the use and transfer of credit. They create the capacity for the model to meet learner needs and respond to DDP concerns.

Some DDPs are new to level 1 learning for 14- to 16-year-olds and would like further guidance on the role of work experience, the Diploma project and experiential learning.

All lines of learning offer the potential to build on the interests and long-term aspirations of learners, to motivate their learning at level 1 and support progression to level 2.

### 4.4 Commonality

A common model:

- aids the process of decision making for learners
- makes it easier for learners to accumulate and use credits within the level 1 Diploma
- enables learners to incorporate units from the level below and above to support or stretch their learning.

## 4.5 Breadth and specificity

14–19 Pathfinder representatives stressed the importance of breadth at level 1:

‘Its overriding objective must be to prepare learners for level 2 at the end of level 1. It’s about progression readiness’.<sup>7</sup>

Pathfinder representatives support flexible study and learner choice inherent in the principles of the proposed model. However, Pathfinder representatives expressed concern that timetabling models be explored further, particularly the capacity for delivering levels 1 and 2.

Several Pathfinder representatives (Cumbria, Islington, Durham, Gateshead, Southwark and Wolverhampton) made contributions to support and enhance the proposed model.

These included:

- the need for greater recognition that some learners will choose to move into employment without training, before entering level 2 learning
- increased linkage between the level 1 Diploma and the foundation learning tier
- avoiding a ‘scattergun’ approach to choice through guidance and support. Guidance and support should also recognise that some learners will want to complement advice by trying applied learning in more than one line.

## 4.6 Learners undertaking the Diploma post-16

Learners undertaking the Diploma post-16 will have the opportunity to pursue a more focused programme, as national curriculum key stage 4 requirements no longer apply.

Additional and specialist learning might then be used to pursue learning in specific sectors within a line of learning. This might be particularly appropriate for learners considering an apprenticeship on completion of their level 1 Diploma<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>7</sup> Islington Pathfinder interview, 8 June 2006

<sup>8</sup> Equally, a learner may also work with an employer pre-16 with a view to undertaking an apprenticeship on completion of the level 1. Pre-16 national curriculum requirements make it more likely that the additional and specialist learning will be used to capture credit gained within the national curriculum.



## 4.7 Learner choice

The DfES has identified respect for learner choice as one of five principles for the organisation of provision for young people<sup>9</sup>. A Pathfinder representative identified the need for a single qualification that is appropriate for use with learners at different stages of development.

'A qualification that can build a bridge into a sector area but retain the flexibility to maintain learner motivation when they change their mind – and to accredit experiences even when they do not promote sector-specific skills.'<sup>10</sup>

The development of clusters of lines of learning, for example construction and engineering, across which a learner could sample learning, has some appeal in its simplicity. However, there is significant evidence that learners at level 1 often want to sample learning in unconnected areas such as catering and construction.

Based on the experience of earlier programmes it is not unreasonable to expect that many learners may want to sample learning in two to three lines over a two-year period. The additional and specialist strand of the Diploma and the principal strand of the Diploma could provide this opportunity.

## 4.8 Titling

A Diploma carrying a line of learning in its title should be based on a significant proportion of learning from this line, but should also permit significant flexibility for learners to sample learning in other lines and to move between lines.

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<sup>9</sup> *A vision for 14–19 in London: Pan-London 14–19 learner offer consultation* (DfES 1135/2004)

<sup>10</sup> Gateshead Pathfinder response, 7 June 2006

## 5. Overall summary

This report recommends that the level 1 Diploma:

- adheres to the principles for the Diploma at level 1
- adheres to the model on page 5, to support portability between lines of learning and flexible progression routes.

Further work to be undertaken:

- QCA should publish guidance on level 1 for DDPs, awarding bodies and deliverers, including rules of combination on balance of breadth and specificity within the level 1 Diploma, in accordance with the model. This work should support DDPs to develop level 1 learning for 14- to 16- year-olds and should provide further guidance on the role of work experience, the Diploma project and experiential learning at level 1.
- QCA should commission modelling of an appropriate experiential learning cycle within a level 1 Diploma context.
- QCA should commission modelling/illustrations of how the Diploma might be delivered over a one- or two-year programme.
- QCA should commission modelling/illustrations recognising the value of Entry level qualifications in motivating learners to progress to level 1 in the development of functional English and mathematics.
- QCA should encourage the contextualisation of generic learning, where possible.

## Appendix 1: Diploma level 1 – delivery and learning factors

1. The foundation learning tier (FLT) is currently under development. An important part of the development of the ‘framework’ is the intention to make qualifications at Entry level and level 1 easier to understand and use. It will also help to make the qualification more flexible and responsive to the needs of individuals and sectors<sup>11</sup>. The FLT will provide opportunities for learners to accumulate achievements over a wide range of provision, over time and in instalments.

The FLT will have an important role to play for adult learners and, additionally, is likely to provide a pool of units from which level 1 Diploma learners might draw additional and specialist learning units in areas such as social skills and independent living. These units will be available at Entry level, to provide stepping stones towards level 1 achievement, and engage learners who find GCSEs demotivating<sup>12</sup>.

2. The term ‘learning difficulties and disabilities’ covers a wide range of conditions that impact on the learner’s ability to understand, learn and remember new things, and generalise learning to new situations. The Learning and Skills Act (2000) defines a person as having a learning difficulty if they have significantly greater difficulty in learning than the majority of people their age. A learner has a disability if their condition hinders or prevents them from using facilities generally provided by institutions providing post-16 education and training.

The severity of these conditions will vary considerably. During the year 2003/4 over 579,000 learners funded by the Learning and Skills Council (LSC)<sup>13</sup> self-declared a learning difficulty and/or disability. This represents approximately 11 per cent of LSC full-time equivalent learners. The largest group was in the general further education sector rather than specialist colleges. The level 1 Diploma will provide a high status qualification for many learners with learning difficulties and disabilities. It can begin to address the unsatisfactory situation of

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<sup>11</sup> *A framework for achievement: Recognising qualifications and skills in the 21<sup>st</sup> century* (QCA/04/1460)

<sup>12</sup> *14–19 curriculum and qualifications reform: Final report of the working group on 14–19 reform* (p.53), DfES, 2004

<sup>13</sup> LSC-funded learners 16–19 and 19+

one in five learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities participating in provision classed as 'unknown'<sup>14</sup>.

3. 'Fully functional skills' in English and mathematics are defined as GCSE grade C or higher. At this level, learners are able to select and use their skills confidently in a variety of situations.

The *14–19 Education and Skills* White Paper proposed an increased emphasis on helping learners achieve these fully functioning skills, especially where they have not reached the expected level at age 14. Work is being undertaken to describe clearly what is meant by 'functional skills' and to apply this to different types of qualifications, including GCSEs, Skills for Life and Key Skills qualifications.

4. Learners from some minority ethnic groups are less likely than the year 11 cohort as a whole to achieve a level 2 qualification at age 16<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> *Through inclusion to excellence: The report of the steering group for the strategic review of the LSCs planning and funding of provision for learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities across the post-16 learning sector*, LSC, 2005

<sup>15</sup> *Social trends 36*, HMSO, 2006

## Appendix 2: The model – supporting progression from Entry level

A flexible model could be delivered through a specific approach that allows learners to sample different lines of learning through principal and additional and specialist learning during the first third of the programme, and before selecting a line of learning at the start of the second third of the programme.

Another generic programme could allow learners to sample different lines of learning through a greater proportion of principal learning and additional and specialist learning, to give a title to their Diploma, before selecting a line of learning at the start of the final third of the programme.

Some lines of learning, through rules of combination, would require selection earlier than others. Some of the advantages of this approach is that:

12. all learners would have the opportunity to pursue learning based on their needs
13. all learners would have a Diploma carrying a title that reflected a significant proportion of their principal learning
14. learners would be encouraged to undertake a broader programme unless they were clearly committed to a particular line of learning from an early stage.

### Exemplar curriculum illustrations

Exemplar curriculum illustrations show that the flexibility of the model might enable the needs of learners, delivery partners and the 14 sector areas to be met. Four illustrations are shown below and additional illustrations will be developed at a later stage.

Recognising achievement at Entry level, as a route to level 1, is possible within the model. A learner with a 'spiky' profile can be supported to work towards level 1 achievement in functional skills and within the model be stretched, through a level 2 unit.

**Illustration 1**

	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year
Principal learning	120	120 including a L2 unit
Generic learning	60	60
Additional and specialist learning	30 – E3 numeracy 30 – E3 literacy	60 – National curriculum learning
Diploma project		60
Work experience		Minimum 10 days
Personal, learning and thinking skills		60
<b>600 guided learning hours</b>		

## Appendix 3: The model – broad then specialised

Pursuing early preferences for the Diploma title is possible within the recommended model. A learner can explore three lines of learning within their principal learning yet undertake the majority of their learning in their preferred line.

### *Illustration 2*

	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year
Principal learning	30 – Exploring line of learning ‘W’	
	30 – Exploring line of learning ‘X’	120 – In line of learning ‘Y’ to gain Diploma title
	60 – In line of learning ‘Y’ to gain Diploma title	
Generic learning	60	60
Additional and specialist learning	30 – National curriculum learning	60 – National curriculum learning
	30 – Additional and specialist learning	
Diploma project		60
Work experience		Minimum 10 days
Personal, learning and thinking skills		60
<b>600 guided learning hours</b>		

## **Appendix 4: The proposed model – changing routes**

Starting a subject or programme and coming to realise it is not the right programme is relatively common in the 14–19 phase.

A learner exhibiting a strong preference at the beginning of the Diploma might realise that the line of learning is not the right one for them. Alternatively, their teacher may identify that the level of the Diploma is inappropriate.

Although not planning to undertake two lines of learning at the beginning of year 10, the proposed model makes it possible for the learner to change the emphasis of principal learning towards the end of year 10, by making use of achieved credit, and claim a titled Diploma.

The illustration shows how the model has the flexibility to accumulate credit, maintain coherence in line of learning titling and motivate the learning to continue learning at level 2.

Under existing arrangements, it is unlikely that this learner would have been prepared to start level 2 learning at the end of year 11.



**Illustration 3**

	1 <sup>st</sup> year	2 <sup>nd</sup> year
Principal learning	30 – Line of learning 'X' at level 2	
	30 – Line of learning 'X' at level 1	120 – line of learning 'Y' at level 1
	60 – Line of learning 'Y' at level 1	
Generic learning	60	60
Additional and specialist learning	60	60
Diploma project		60
Work experience		Minimum 10 days
Personal, learning and thinking skills		60
<b>600 guided learning hours</b>		

## Appendix 5: Rules of combination

The table below shows how rules of combination create the flexibility within the proposed model to respond to learner needs for a broader or more focused Diploma.

### Flexibility within model to meet learner needs

#### Illustration 4

	Broad		Focused	
Breakdown of Diploma strands	Limit on rules of combination	Possible through learner need/choice	Limit on rules of combination	Possible through learner need/choice
Principal learning 240 GLH	25% of principal learning can be used for applied learning in other lines	25%	75% entitles learner to the line of learning in their diploma title	100% learner could choose to undertake further principal learning in a line
Generic learning 240 GLH	Requirement for the Diploma project to be in the line claimed in the Diploma title	Functional skills and ICT could be contextualised in other lines of learning	Requirement for the Diploma project to be in the line claimed in the Diploma title	Functional skills and ICT could be contextualised in line of learning
Additional and specialist learning 120 GLH	Requirement to be left open to accommodate key stage 4 learning and Entry level learning as a route to level 1 achievement	100% used for national curriculum learning and/or exploring other lines of learning	Requirement to be left open to accommodate key stage 4 learning and Entry level learning as a route to level 1 achievement	Approximately 25% might be used to explore specialisation in the line of learning
		600 – (180 + 30) = 490 GLH general learning		600 – 90 = 510 GLH focused/ contextualised learning

## Appendix 6: The cohort

The characteristics of learners who are likely to undertake the level 1 Diploma is not yet well defined within DDP proposals. The extent to which the existing DDP proposals reflect the size, scope and needs of this cohort is difficult to determine at the time of writing this report (July 2006).

The report has started to characterise the potential cohort for a level 1 Diploma. The policy context is to improve the UK's low participation at age 17, which at 76 per cent, is among the lowest in Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries<sup>16</sup>.

Approximately 610,000 learners are eligible for key stage 3 assessment each year. Assessment takes place before learners move into key stage 4. Based on 2004/5 data, by the end of key stage 3 approximately one quarter of learners (total cohort size 552,000) have not reached level 5, the level they are expected to achieve<sup>17</sup> in English (26 per cent), mathematics (26 per cent) and science (30 per cent).

Girls (81 per cent) are more likely than boys (67 per cent) to reach level 5 in English GCSE. Of 55,478 learners who achieved an average key stage 3 level of 3 or below in 2002, the majority of them (98 per cent) did not gain any level 2 qualifications<sup>18</sup>. Of these, approximately 34,000 gained one or more level 1 qualification<sup>19</sup>. A small proportion gained one GCSE grade A\*–C.

Secondary school results are improving. Over 53 per cent of learners achieve 5 or more A\*–C grade GCSEs, being qualified at level 2<sup>20</sup>. Over 45 per cent of learners leave school without a full level 2 equivalent. It is likely that a significant number of these learners aged 14–16 will undertake the level 1 Diploma. In addition a smaller number of learners aged 16–19 are likely to undertake the level 1 Diploma.

The LSC, OfSTED and the Adult Learning Inspectorate have all emphasised the need to improve retention and achievement rates in level 1 and level 2 learning.

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<sup>16</sup> *Social trends 36*, HMSO, 2006

<sup>17</sup> *National curriculum assessment at key stage 3 and key stage 2 to key stage 3 value added for young people in England 2004/2005 (Revised)* (DfES SFR12/2006)

<sup>18</sup> 'Qualified to level 2' is defined as five or more GCSEs grade A\*–C

<sup>19</sup> National Assessment Agency (NAA) data

<sup>20</sup> *14–19 Education and skills white paper* (DfES 1268/2005)

Research undertaken by LSDA<sup>21</sup> has identified that learners at foundation (level 1) and intermediate (level 2) levels are more likely to be affected by factors such as low academic self-esteem, very individual learning styles and social deprivation, compared with advanced level learners.

Secondly, learners at levels 1 and 2 are very diverse. This group is more likely than others to include learners who have missed some schooling through illness, or have behavioural issues, or have English language learning needs, or are learners with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Level 1 Diplomas that offer choice, supported by advice and guidance, develop basic skills and have the flexibility to meet the needs of learners with learning difficulties. The Diploma has been identified as an appropriate vehicle for supporting the learning of young adults with more complex needs<sup>22</sup>.

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<sup>21</sup> Martinez, P, *Raising achievement at levels 1 and 2*, LSDA, 2002

<sup>22</sup> *Transitions: Young adults with complex needs*, Social Exclusion Unit, ODPM, 2005

## Appendix 7: Consultation participants

### Phase 1 DDPs

Nick Gooderson	ConstructionSkills
Tony Cusack	ConstructionSkills
Sharon Ensor	Skills for Health
Karen Langston	Skillset
Eleanor Byram	e-skills UK
Paul Turnbull	SEMTA
Belinda Lee	SEMTA
Dawn Allen	Cogent

### Phase 2 DDPs

Heather Taylor	Financial Services
Martin Callow	LANTRA
Jeff Carter	People 1st
Derek Jones	Improve

### QCA

Deborah Dent	Diploma team
Tony Haines	Diploma team
Teresa Bergin	Diploma team
Kate Madelin	Diploma team
Yvonne Onyeka	Diploma team
Ruth Perry	Framework and Skills team
Jeremy Curtis	Diploma team
Katie Deith	Diploma team
Sandra Stalker	11–19 Reform team
Penny Silvester	11–19 Reform team
Dylan White	Framework and Skills team

### Awarding bodies

Adele Williams	Accreditation Syndicate for Education and Training (ASET)
Cathryn Atkinson	Awarding Body Consortium – ABC Awards

Brian Metland	Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
Carol Slinger	Chartered Institute of Environmental Health (CIEH)
Caroline Hughes	Edexcel
Dave Brockington	ASDAN
Dolores Fergus	Institute of Revenues Rating and Valuation (IRRV)
Dr Richard Burton	The Royal Society for the Promotion of Health
Eleanor Gale	Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE)
Glyn Jones	Trinity College London (and Guildhall examinations)
Heather Mole	Vocational Training Charitable Trust (VTCT)
Jacqueline Ferguson	Royal Academy of Dance
Laura Holland	Education Development International (EDI)
Leda Tchiripora	Trinity College London
Malcolm Fain	The Assessment and Qualifications Alliance (AQA)
Malcolm Pearson	Construction Industry Training Board (CITB)
Malcolm Trotter	International Association of Book-Keepers (IAB)
Mara Bogdanovic	Oxford Cambridge and RSA (OCR)
Michelle DeBrett-Watson	British Institute of Inn Keeping Awarding Body (BIIB)
Samina Khan	Edexcel
Steve Causer	British Computer Society (BCS)
Val Richardson	Northern Council for Further Education (NCFE)
Judith Norrington	City & Guilds

### 14–19 Pathfinders

Terry O'Regan	Southwark
John Price	Wolverhampton
Terry Wood	Cumbria
Henry Edwards	Gateshead
Trevor Dunn	Durham
Jonathan Swift	Islington

### WBL providers

Alison Mounsey	Michael John Training Liverpool (Grade 1 E2E provider)
Sheila Mallon	Employment Regeneration Partnership (Grade 1 E2E provider)