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1. The Diplomas in context

1. Our aim is to make this the best place in the world where children and young people can grow up and learn.
2. To realise this ambition, we must have a world class system of 14-19 education that builds on excellent foundations and gives every young person the opportunities, challenge and support to fulfil their potential and achieve the knowledge and skills that will qualify them for success in life.
3. If we are to achieve this aim, we need to give every 14-19 year old a new entitlement to mastery of the basics; to better and more engaging curriculum choices; to highly-valued qualifications that recognise their talents and ensure they are learning the things they need to learn; and to more stretching routes that enable progression.
4. There are three key elements of reform:
 - **Raising attainment now**, getting young people to stay in learning, getting them on the right courses, keeping them there and helping them to achieve;
 - **Designing new curriculum and qualifications** so that more young people are motivated and engaged, and so that what they learn is a better preparation for life; and
 - Creating the **local delivery infrastructure** (workforce, providers, facilities, local partnerships, funding arrangements) capable of delivering the curriculum and qualifications entitlement.
5. The reforms will give young people the opportunity to choose the right mix of learning; that which motivates, interests and challenges them, and which gives them the knowledge, skills and attitude they need to succeed in education, work and life. Although, more young people are now gaining higher qualifications, there is still room for improvement. The reforms are integral to our vision for education of the future – with greater choice and relevance for all learners participating to at least 18.
6. The Diploma is a new qualification that combines theory and practice to equip students with the skills, knowledge and experience they need for success at college, university and at work. The Diploma will cover 17 subjects, including Creative and Media, Manufacturing and Product Design, Engineering, IT, Retail Business and Humanities. All Diplomas will require a student to achieve a minimum standard in English, maths and ICT, complete a project and do a minimum of 10 days work experience.
7. The duties regarding the Diploma entitlement will come into force in 2013, subject to the laying of the necessary legislation. LAs, head teachers and governing bodies of maintained schools will be required to ensure Key Stage 4 learners have access to the first 14 Diploma lines. The equivalent duty for 16-18 learners will be to ensure that they have access to all 17 Diploma lines.

8. The Diploma will provide students with an integrated programme of study made up of different courses and awards. Foundation and Higher Diploma students can go on to study for the next level of Diploma, take a different type of qualification such as a GCSE, A level or apprenticeship, or go on to a job with training. An Advanced Diploma can lead on to university or into a career. The Diploma will help students make decisions about their future direction without closing down options.
9. The Diplomas have been designed in collaboration with Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs), led by employers, and including education professionals and higher education institutions. The DDPs have made sure that the content of the qualifications meets the needs of employers and higher education.

10. The Diplomas are being introduced as follows:

Phase 1 - the first five Diplomas will be taught for the first time from September 2008 – Construction and the Built Environment; Creative and Media; Engineering; Information Technology; and Society, Health and Development.

Phase 2 - five more Diplomas will be taught from September 2009 – Business, Administration and Finance; Environmental and Land-based Studies; Hair and Beauty Studies; Hospitality; and Manufacturing and Product Design.

Phase 3 - September 2010 will see the introduction of a further four Diplomas – Public Services; Retail Business; Sport and Active Leisure; and Travel and Tourism.

11. Further details and specifications for the Diplomas above can be found through the following links:

- Business, Administration and Finance
www.baf-diploma.org.uk/
- Construction and Built Environment
www.cbdiploma.co.uk/
- Creative and Media
www.skillset.org/qualifications/diploma/
- Engineering
www.engineeringdiploma.com/
- Environmental and Land-based Studies
www.diplomaelbs.co.uk/
- Hair and Beauty Studies
www.habia.org/news.asp?PT_ID=227&strPageHistory=cat
- Hospitality –
www.people1st.co.uk/14-19-diplomas/
- Information Technology
www.e-skills.com/diploma/
- Manufacturing and Product Design –
www.manufacturingdiploma.co.uk/

- Public services
www.publicservicesdiploma.co.uk
- Retail Business
www.skillsmartretail.com/categories.php?pages_id=30
- Society, Health and Development
www.skillsforhealth.org.uk/diploma/
- Sport and Active Leisure
www.skillsactive.com/training/qualifications/14to19/sport-and-leisure-diploma
- Travel and Tourism
www.tandtdiploma.co.uk

The final three Diplomas – Humanities; Languages; and Science will be available from September 2011.

2. Delivering the Diplomas

Who should apply to Diploma Gateway 3?

12. The aim is to provide high quality opportunities for young people, so applications are welcomed from groups of institutions (e.g. schools, colleges, work based learning providers, Higher Education institutions and employers) working in partnership (“consortia”) to deliver Diploma lines. Consortia can apply for one or more lines from the fourteen Diplomas available (i.e. the five Phase 1, five Phase 2 or the four new Phase 3 Diplomas), for teaching from September 2010. This is an even greater challenge for consortia than in previous years, with the expansion of lines of learning and the increases in places as we gear up for delivering the entitlement in 2013. We are particularly keen to see through this Gateway how 14-19 Partnerships and consortia are working together to plan for the entitlement.
13. All consortia planning to deliver a Diploma line of learning for the first time need to apply to the Gateway.
14. We are keen for existing single-line consortia to work with others in their area to form expanded consortia providing a wider range of lines collectively. Consortia working across local authority boundaries are also encouraged to make joint applications where it improves the provision for learners. Single institutions wanting to be involved in delivering the Diploma are advised to contact local consortia with a view to joining with them to ensure the most effective delivery for learners. Consortia considering forming to deliver a single line should discuss this with their 14-19 Partnership and other local consortia to work together jointly.
15. The Gateway 3 application process has been shortened for consortia which demonstrated strong collaborative working in previous Gateways and are judged to be in a good position to deliver additional Diplomas. Consortia will have been notified separately if they have been selected for the shortened process. All other consortia must complete a full application.

16. If you are in any doubt as to whether, or how, to apply for Gateway 3 please contact askgateway@dcsf.gsi.gov.uk

Considering readiness to apply

17. The Gateway 3 process continues to set the bar for success high. It is important, therefore, for prospective consortia to assess at an early stage whether they have reasonable prospects of making a successful application. Consortia which used the **Readiness to Apply** tool developed for Gateway 2 found it helpful in gauging how strong their application would prove to be. This tool is available again for Gateway 3 and is designed to support governors and senior managers in their decision-making. It does not need to be submitted with Gateway applications.

Expansion/changes to composition of consortia

Consortia already approved to deliver one or more lines and which are applying to deliver new lines

18. Consortia with approved lines for delivery in 2008 and/or 2009 should note that if there are significant changes to the composition of their consortium they will need to explain the new arrangements in the Consortium Statement at the beginning of the application form and submit Management Information on their planned changes. Examples of significant changes would include where a consortium is expanding to bring in new institutions to deliver principal learning in lines that they have already been approved to deliver, or where a key institution delivering principal learning has left the consortium. In addition, the 14-19 Partnership is required to consider the changes and confirm in Part C of the application form that the arrangements are sensible and robust. This requirement applies to all consortia in this category including those which may have been invited to submit a shortened application.

Consortia which have changed the composition of their consortium but are NOT applying to Gateway 3 to deliver new lines

19. Consortia with lines approved for delivery in 2008 and/or 2009 but which are not applying to deliver new lines should note that if there are significant changes to the composition of their consortium they will need to explain the new arrangements in the Consortium Statement at the beginning of the application form, and submit Management Information on their planned changes. Examples might include where a consortium is expanding to bring in new institutions to deliver principal learning in lines that they have already been approved to deliver, or where a key institution delivering principal learning has left the consortium. In addition, the 14-19 Partnership is required to consider the changes and confirm that the arrangements are sensible and robust. This information will be used to help consortia support partners to scale the support, and provide information to the DCSF on the expansion of consortia expansion.

Consortia mergers

20. Where a consortium has already been approved and plans to deliver only one Diploma line we would strongly encourage them to consider merging with another consortium in the area. Consortia should discuss their plans with their 14-19 Partnership to ensure that they fit with the 14-19 area-wide plan. This is to ensure effective collaborative working, make more effective use of resources and provide a better service for young people.
21. As a result of the Gateway 1 process, which asked for single line applications, single line consortia were developed in some areas and in many instances these represent an artificial separation. Single line consortia sharing, for example, management arrangements and common institutions with other single line consortia in the same locality, are asked to apply as a single consortium from Gateway 3 onwards. If more than one consortium is operating in the same locality, with broadly the same institutions, we would strongly recommend that they consider forming a single consortium and apply for Gateway 3 collectively in order to enable more effective delivery of the Diploma entitlement.
22. Where two or more consortia are merging to form a single, new consortium delivering any number of Diploma lines, they are required to explain the new arrangements in their Consortium Statement. The 14-19 Partnership is also required to support the changes and confirm in Part C of the application that arrangements are sensible and robust.
23. In any instance where consortia are merging they must contact Cambridge Education at diploma.gateway@camb-ed.com to discuss the implications for their Management Information rather than create a new account.

Cross-boundary working

24. We recognise the increasing need for consortia to work across boundaries. We are keen to encourage cross-boundary working to ensure that realistic and effective collaboration arrangements, which are critical to the planning and delivery of the Diploma entitlement, are established and monitored.

Working across local authority boundaries

25. Where a consortium is working with another consortium (or consortia) over a number of local authority boundaries, they should decide between them which local authority will be in the lead for the purpose of application to the Gateway. The lead consortium should make the application on behalf of the other consortia involved providing information on the joint arrangements in the Consortium Statement, explaining in Part A that they plan to offer this line jointly with the other consortia, and completing a full Part B. The other consortia should not complete a full Part B, but refer assessors to the lead application. BOTH/ALL consortia should complete the online Management Information form for the joint lines but including only the information relevant for their individual consortium.

26. The relevant 14-19 Partnership(s) need to confirm that arrangements are sensible and robust. The information contained in Part C of each of the consortia application forms will vary i.e. for the lead consortium it will need to include information on the strength and capacity of the consortium as well as information on how the provision will contribute to the area's strategic plan; for those consortia not in the lead, Part C will need to show how the provision fits into their area's strategic plan.

Working with other consortia

27. Where a consortium wants to offer one or more lines jointly with a neighbouring consortium (or consortia) they should agree which consortium is in the lead. The lead consortium should make the application on behalf of the other consortia involved. They must; provide information on the joint arrangements in the Consortium Statement, explain in Part A that they plan to offer this line jointly with the other consortia, and complete a full Part B. The other consortia should not complete a full Part B, but refer assessors to the lead application. BOTH/ALL consortia should complete the online Management Information form for the joint lines but including only the information relevant for their individual consortium.
28. The relevant 14-19 Partnership(s) need to confirm that arrangements are sensible and robust. The information contained in Part C of each of the consortia application forms will vary i.e. for the lead consortium it will need to include information on the strength and capacity of the consortium as well as information on how the provision will contribute to the area's strategic plan; for those consortia not in the lead, Part C will need to show how the provision fits into their area's strategic plan.

Involving independent schools

29. The Government is actively encouraging independent schools to deliver Diplomas. 14-19 partnerships and consortia are invited to approach and involve independent schools in their Diploma delivery arrangements and in their applications to deliver Diplomas from September 2010 onwards. Independent Schools expressing an interest in delivering the Diploma may be introduced to local consortia to discuss the possibility of working together. Independent schools could have “observer” or “associate” status in 14-19 consortia if they are not ready to deliver Diplomas themselves. “Associate” status would imply working with a consortium towards delivering and implementing the Diploma; “observer” status would imply just finding out more about the practicalities of Diploma delivery.
30. There is no special Government funding for independent schools to deliver Diplomas - independent schools and 14-19 consortia will negotiate local funding arrangements. This includes independent schools making payments to schools and colleges if independent school pupils take part in Diploma learning in maintained schools or colleges; and independent schools charging

maintained schools or the consortium or local authority for use of independent school premises or staff.

Support for consortia

31. Support will be provided to those consortia which pass through the Gateway to ensure they are fully equipped to deliver. This support will include:
 - a comprehensive package of professional development and support;
 - a specific Gateway small support grant; and
 - support for managing change, e.g. face-to-face development conversations and responsive support.
32. The existing programme of Learning Visits, which enable consortia to learn from each other and share best practice, will also continue – details can be found at: www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19
33. Consortia approved to deliver Diplomas in September 2010 will have access to a programme of DCSF-sponsored support for professional development. The support will build on that currently on offer to consortia delivering Diplomas in September 2009. Details of current training and support opportunities can be found at www.diploma-support.com/2009andbeyond/
34. We will also provide support to consortia receiving category 3s and 4s to help them gear up to meeting the entitlement and being successful in future Gateways.
35. We will inform consortia of the full details of support for 2009/10 when we announce the results of Gateway 3 in late March 2009.
36. Consortia delivering Diplomas from 2010 following approval at Gateway 2 or 3 will receive a one-off Gateway support grant in 2009/10 to support Diploma and Functional Skills delivery. The funding will be announced at the same time as the results of Gateway 3. No funding will be distributed via this stream to consortia that are not approved to deliver from 2010. If a consortium receives the Gateway support grant and then defers delivery of a Diploma line to a later year, the consortium will not receive a further Gateway support grant for that line in the year leading up to deferred delivery.

Functional Skills Pilots

37. Functional Skills qualifications are being piloted between 2007 and 2010. From 2010 functional skills will be delivered as part of the KS4 curriculum across all schools. There will be a programme of support to prepare all remaining centres (i.e. those not in the pilot), including Diploma centres, to deliver and assess functional skills in all qualification routes from September 2010.
38. It will not be necessary for centres delivering Diplomas from 2010 to join the Functional Skills Pilot in September 2009 except where centres are intending

to deliver Advanced Diplomas to learners from 2010. Those centres can join the Functional Skills Pilot from September 2009 so that prospective Advanced Diploma learners will be able to take level 2 Functional Skills assessments before starting their Advanced Diploma in 2010. From 2012 onwards the majority of Advanced Diploma learners will already have completed their Functional Skills qualifications either as part of a Higher Diploma or alongside their GCSEs.

39. If you wish to nominate centres to join the pilot from September 2009 you should complete the relevant section of the online Management Information form. Although we will try to accommodate all nominations in the pilot we may have to restrict numbers and decisions will be taken once the outcome of the Gateway is known.

The role of 14-19 Partnerships

40. 14-19 Partnerships take the lead in determining the strategy for 14-19 for a whole area. They have responsibility for agreeing the local vision for 14-19, developing and articulating plans to deliver the full range of 14-19 priorities including the 2013 Diploma entitlement, and supporting Diploma consortia so that they are ready to deliver.
41. 14-19 Partnerships bring together the local authority, the Learning and Skills Council (LSC), employers, higher education institutions, and representatives from schools, colleges, and training and IAG providers, amongst others.

The importance of 14-19 Partnerships in Diploma delivery and Gateway 3

42. The duties regarding the Diploma entitlement will come into force in 2013, subject to the laying of the necessary legislation. LAs, head teachers and governing bodies of maintained schools will be required to ensure Key Stage 4 learners have access to the first 14 Diploma lines. The equivalent duty for 16-18 learners will be to ensure that they have access to all 17 Diploma lines.
43. The Gateway process is critical to developing capacity and ensuring that only those consortia which are able to deliver the highest standards are delivering Diplomas. The Partnership should only support applications from those consortia that it believes will be ready by 2010.
44. We expect there to be significant local variation in 14-19 partnership strategies, most fundamentally in the number of consortia within a Partnership area. The Partnership should consider the best course of action to meet the needs of its learners now and in preparing for the national entitlement in 2013.
45. We also anticipate that, as we draw nearer to 17 line delivery, the level of changes to the configurations of consortia will increase.

Funding

Development funding

46. As with previous rounds of the Gateway limited development funding will be provided to those consortia which are successful in the Gateway process. This will be announced at the same time as the successful consortia in March 2009. Consortia do not need to apply for this funding.

Capital investment

47. In July 2008, around £55 million in capital funding was announced to help local partnerships and consortia create exciting, state of the art showpiece projects across the country to boost teaching of the Diplomas. Consortia can bid for money from the capital funding pot by developing innovative ideas for Diploma exemplar projects which will demonstrate and share excellence in the delivery of the new Diplomas. Further details will be published during Autumn 2008.

3. The Diploma Gateway process

Getting ready to apply

48. We recommend that new consortia should complete the **Readiness to Apply** tool when getting ready to apply for Diploma delivery from September 2010. This will help them decide whether to apply to Gateway 3.

Making an application

49. The application has two essential components: an online Management Information Form which will hold specific factual information about the consortium; and a Word template containing information about the delivery arrangements. These will be available from **3 September 2008** at www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19
50. Both the online Management Information form and the Word template are critical parts of the application. Please make sure that these are completed and that accurate information is provided in both. The Management Information (MI) system is located at <https://gateway.camb-ed.com>. If your consortium applied in Gateway 2, and/or it gained approval to deliver one or more Diploma lines via Gateway 1, it will already have an account, and any information already supplied will be visible. Please use your existing account; do NOT create a new one. If you are in any doubt about your existing account, please contact Cambridge Education (diploma.gateway@camb-ed.com).
51. New consortia will need to create a new account. The system will guide you through the process of doing this, and support is available from Cambridge Education (diploma.gateway@camb-ed.com).

52. To make an application, consortia will need to complete the online Management Information form, attach the Word template, and submit both electronically. This can be done in two stages:
- by 5pm on **29 October 2008**: consortia should complete the online Management Information form so that we can plan the assessment arrangements. The online form can be amended at any time until you submit the full application; and
 - by 5pm on **26 November 2008**: finalise the online Management Information form, attach the Word template and submit according to the instructions on the form. No changes can be made to the application after the Word template has been attached and submitted. Late applications will not be accepted. Please note that hard copy submissions will not be accepted.
53. The Word template is in four sections; Consortium Statement, Part A, Part B and Part C. Consortia must complete the Consortium Statement, Part A and Part B; Part C must be completed by the 14-19 Partnership.
54. The Consortium Statement is the consortium's opportunity to set out their vision for the consortium and any changes to its configuration. All consortia must complete this section of the application.
55. Part A seeks information on collaboration, information, advice and guidance and workforce development.
56. Part B seeks information on delivery arrangements for specific Diploma lines. Further essential guidance on each Part, including individual Diploma lines is available on the DCSF 14-19 Website.
57. 14-19 Partnerships are the critical body for the delivery of the entitlement, and for this reason the 14-19 Partnerships are being asked to expand the information they provide to the Gateway through Part C. They should outline their plan for delivering the entitlement by 2013, including current assumptions on the increase in lines and places available during the next 3 years and up to 2013 if possible, and explain how the applications being made contribute to that plan. In addition, the Partnership should include information on the support it is providing to the consortium to help ensure successful delivery. This information will be used in the panel to provide background context to the application.
58. The information you supply in the application form will be used by the Department in connection with the Diploma programme and for no other purpose. The DCSF will share it with other organisations involved in activities to support the Diploma Programme (including, but not limited to, professional development, delivery of the Diploma, communication events and Diploma evaluation). You must ensure that other consortium members have been informed by the person completing the form of the basis on which the information will be used and that the information may be shared by the DCSF as described in this paragraph. By submitting the form, you agree to the information you provide being used in this way, and you guarantee that such

agreement has also been given, where necessary, by other consortium members on whose behalf you are providing information.

The assessment process

59. When we have received the applications, we will arrange for their assessment against the relevant criteria. Assessment of Part A of the application form will be undertaken by Cambridge Education assessors working on behalf of DCSF; assessment of Part B will be undertaken this year by Cambridge Education according to guidelines developed with the relevant DDP for the Diploma line. Part C is not assessed but provides contextual information to support the application. Government Offices will also draw on local intelligence from a range of sources such as Progress Checks, and local/regional meetings.
60. Assessment will take the form of brief commentaries and a Red/Amber/ Green rating against each of the criteria set out in 'Guidance on completion of the Gateway 3 Application Form'. During February 2009, these will be considered by Regional Panels which will include representatives from DCSF, GOs, the DDPs, the LSC, Higher Education and the National Strategies. The panels will consider the applications in each region and make recommendations to the National Moderation Panel which includes representatives from DCSF and DDPs. Following the national moderation, recommendations will go to DCSF Ministers for approval.
61. As in Gateway 2, applications will be graded into one of four categories:
 - Category 1 – recommended to go through for 2010 delivery with no conditions;
 - Category 2 – recommended to go through for delivery from September 2010 with conditions that will need to be met within three months;
 - Category 3 – not ready for September 2010 but with conditions which, if met, would mean they would be ready for September 2011; and
 - Category 4 – will need to reapply in a subsequent Gateway.
62. The announcement of Gateway 3 results will be made in late March 2009. All consortia will receive detailed feedback on their application at the time of the announcement, and the opportunity to discuss feedback and support arrangements with an adviser during April/May.

Awarding Body approval and Diploma delivery

63. Consortia that receive Category 1 or Category 2 results will be able to go forward to seek Awarding Body approval to deliver the approved Diplomas. This is a separate and independent process, but we have worked with Awarding Bodies in developing the Gateway process and the various support packages so that providers should be well placed to secure approval to deliver the Diplomas.

64. Awarding Bodies are continuing to work with DDPs to develop qualifications to meet the Diploma specifications. The first ten lines have been accredited by QCA. Specifications are available for the first 5 lines and will be on Awarding Body websites in September 08 for the second 5 lines. The third phase of Diplomas will be accredited in June 2009 and specifications will be on Awarding Body sites shortly after.

65. Awarding Bodies will expect those offering Diplomas to be able to demonstrate that they have:

- the necessary provision of workforce and professional development to deliver the Diploma in the context of developing work related skills;
- access to the appropriate resources, equipment and accommodation to deliver their chosen lines of learning; and
- robust mechanisms to assure the quality of delivery and assessment.

Further information is available from the QCA website:

<http://www.qca.org.uk/aboutQCA.aspx>

66. Consortia may wish to publish their Diploma achievements and other results from collaborative working locally to give young people and their parents a richer picture of the local offer.