

Diploma support programme

Preparing practitioners

Practitioner Guide to the Diploma

Delivering the 14–19 education
and skills programme



Quality
Improvement
Agency

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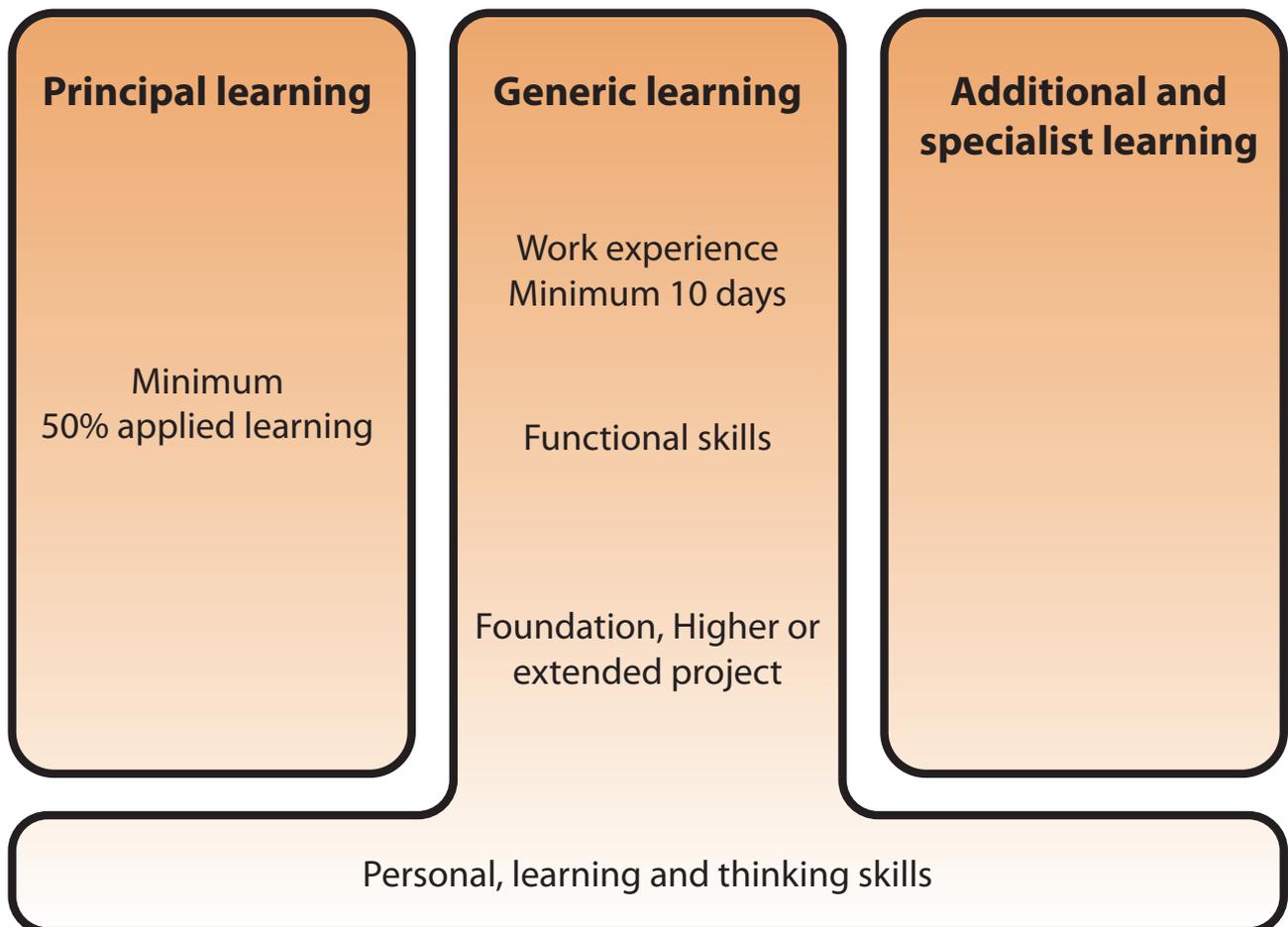
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The structure of the Diploma



What is this resource?

This resource provides essential support and information on the principles that underpin the new Diploma. Whether you are new to the Diploma or have already started planning and development work, you will find something for you here. Covering the common ideas that run throughout the Diploma, this resource is relevant for all lines of learning and levels, and provides a broad-based starting point for your Diploma development.

What does it cover?

Aspects central to the Diploma are:

- ❖ reflective practice
- ❖ assessment
- ❖ working collaboratively
- ❖ generic learning skills and applied learning
- ❖ information, advice and guidance
- ❖ personalised learning.

This resource digs into the heart of these areas, and provides practical approaches and ideas around potential areas of challenge.

What's in it for me?

You can access the information you need to get started and build knowledge of the Diploma. As you develop, take your knowledge further by dipping into more stretching support areas. Reflective activities throughout help you consider where you may need support; you can use these for group exercises working with other practitioners or for yourself as you think best. Examples of practice around problem solving and innovation in planning delivery provide models that you may like to consider in your programme.

Want more support?

If you would like more support:

- ❖ practitioner handbooks will be available in every line of learning – to take your Diploma themes into a line-specific context
- ❖ all resources are available for download at www.diploma-support.org – where you can also find a timeline with key milestones to identify where you are in the process from training to delivery.



Navigating through this guide

At the beginning of each section of this guide there is a rapid topic finder to give you instant access to specific information within that section.

There are several important themes that are addressed within this guide. These each have their own section, but icons in the margins signpost points of cross reference. In addition to the link icons, websites that provide further information and resources are also marked. The icons appear as follows:



1 Introduction

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1 Introduction

The Diploma is innovative and imaginative – designed to provide young people from a wide range of backgrounds with a greater choice of options in their learning programmes. Based on the vision that high-quality learning is as important as the content itself, the Diploma puts the learner at the centre of their learning experience. It is intended to engage learners of all abilities and to introduce them to a range of different employment sectors using applied learning approaches. Therefore, you and your learners will have opportunities to work in a creative framework of knowledge and skills with wide curriculum options.

However, this curriculum is not entirely new: the broad employment areas are covered in each line of learning. So you will be building on a foundation that is already established and effective. What *is* new is the content and approach of the principal learning in all lines, including the requirement for a minimum of 50 per cent applied learning. The combination of component parts and the way these work together is also new and innovative. It offers young people the opportunity for a coherent learning experience throughout the Diploma programme as they develop knowledge and skills for the future.

This resource will give you an extensive overview of the components within the Diploma and how to make the most of them through well-conceptualised pedagogical approaches to delivery. Exciting times for all lie ahead. Read on!

1.1 What are the new Diplomas?

The Diploma is a new 14–19 qualification that brings an innovative approach to learning. It enables learners to gain knowledge, understanding and hands-on experience of sectors they are interested in, while putting new skills into practice.

Created to provide a real alternative to more traditional education and qualifications, Diplomas represent the most important change to the country's education system since the introduction of GCSEs. Diplomas are a fully rounded qualification combining theoretical with practical learning – including functional English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT). The aim is to equip young people with the skills, knowledge and understanding they will need for further or higher education, as well as for their long-term employability.

Why is the Diploma different?

The Diploma was developed by employers, educators and others to help prepare learners for life and work in local and global environments. The Diploma will offer learners excellent opportunities to progress in education and to explore areas of the world around them that they are interested in. These could include health, business, finance and IT.

'There are many changes happening at the moment in the health sector and educational sector. Through the Diploma Development Partnerships, as an employer, we have been able to influence and shape the qualification to ensure that it meets our workforce requirements [and] that the future workforce is equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to become the practitioners needed to deliver high-quality health care. The development of the Diploma has also enabled the relationships and partnerships between education and employers to be built upon and strengthened locally, regionally and nationally. As an employer we are enthusiastic and keen to be involved in the delivery of the new Diplomas.'

Beth Allen, Programme Manager, Healthcare Careers and Skills Academy,
University Hospital of North Staffordshire

The benefits of a Diploma

The Diploma combines theory and classroom learning with practical, hands-on experience. The Diploma learners develop their skills in English, mathematics and ICT, and acquire knowledge and skills about an employment sector, including structured work experience. The Diploma gives young people the skills they need for success in the modern workplace and in life. It brings learning to life in new and exciting ways.

It's a course for 14–19 year olds that provides a unique and balanced blend of skills and knowledge, viewed through the lens of a particular sector- or subject-based line of learning. The Diploma recognises that the world is changing at an incredible pace, so it puts an emphasis not only on the acquisition of knowledge, but on the ability to apply that knowledge in real-world and different situations. These 'application' skills are universal to all walks of life, from further study within higher education to employment.

Teresa Bergin, QCA, 2008

One particular benefit of the Diploma is that of localisation. Through delivering the Diploma components, you and your learners may have opportunities to learn about what's happening in your local environment – for example, during employer engagement, or when using real-life case studies while delivering the principal learning.

Benefits for learners

The Diploma has the following benefits for learners.

- ❖ Although learners will be based at their school or college, they should have the chance to do part of their learning in other schools, colleges or the workplace.
- ❖ Learning about their chosen sector will help them make decisions about their future career.



The Diplomas will give young people a range of employability skills.

- ❖ Learners will acquire transferable skills that any employer, in any sector, will recognise and value.
- ❖ At Advanced level, Diploma learners will have the knowledge, understanding and skills they need to go on to higher education.

Benefits for employers

Businesses today need employees who have transferable, work-relevant skills and knowledge that they are able to apply in a practical way to a range of contexts. The Diploma offers a range of teaching and learning styles, across a variety of different environments. Learning about a chosen subject will help learners make important decisions about their future career. It will enable them to acquire transferable skills that any employer, in any sector, would recognise.

Who will be involved in the delivery of the Diploma?

Diplomas would not normally be delivered by one school or college alone. You will be working with colleagues in a range of institutions which may include:

- ❖ schools
- ❖ colleges
- ❖ training providers.
- ❖ universities
- ❖ employers

Diplomas are a new qualification and their delivery will naturally have an element of regional variation (for example, depending on whether your consortium is urban or rural). These people and organisations will be involved in planning the delivery of the Diploma. A partnership approach is therefore required. Consortia are developing local Diploma partnerships that will consist of schools, colleges and employers.

Consortia are also looking at imaginative and innovative ways of delivering, not taking the traditional 'unit by unit' approach but looking holistically and

horizontally across the content of principal learning. This way learners will understand how themes within the principal learning interact and overlap.

Lines of learning

17 Diploma **lines of learning** will be available by 2011. These lines are being rolled out in four phases over four years.

Lines of learning

The subject areas/disciplines in which Diplomas are offered.

Diploma line of learning	First teaching
Information Technology	September 2008
Society, Health and Development	
Engineering	
Creative and Media	
Construction and the Built Environment	
Environmental and Land-based Studies	September 2009
Manufacturing and Product Design	
Hair and Beauty Studies	
Business, Administration and Finance	
Hospitality	
Public Services	September 2010
Sport and Active Leisure	
Retail Business	
Travel and Tourism	
Humanities	September 2011
Languages	
Science	

Table 1.1: The 17 lines of learning.

How are the Diplomas being developed?

The Diplomas across all four phases are being developed jointly by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF), the UK Commission for Employment and Skills (UKCES) and the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), in consultation with 17 Diploma Development Partnerships. These partnerships are playing a key role in ensuring that each Diploma accurately reflects the needs and demands of the sector it represents, of its employers and of higher education.



The Diplomas will encourage communication between the spheres of education and employment.

1.2 Who is the Diploma for?

Each Diploma will have pathways to accommodate a wide range of aspirations. They are designed to appeal to:

- ❖ the most capable students preparing for demanding university courses
- ❖ students who would engage better with the innovative Diploma approach than with existing provision
- ❖ students preparing for employment or work-based learning.

'Diplomas will take a young person wherever they want to go, whether that is to further and higher education or to the world of work. Above all, Diplomas will help young people of all abilities realise their potential.'

(Adapted from *The Diploma: An Overview of the Qualification*, QCA 2008)

The Diploma is for a wide range of learners who seek to develop skills and understanding in the broad context of the sector involved in their chosen line of learning. It provides a unique opportunity for learners to explore the multitude of activities and interests that fall within a sector, and enables them to develop their generic skills at the same time.

Diplomas challenge stereotypes and are available for all learners, irrespective of disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age and socio-economic background. This fair and equal access enables a diverse range of learners to benefit from the high-quality applied learning that Diplomas provide.

Levels of Diploma

Diplomas in each line of learning are available at three levels:

- ❖ Foundation Diploma at Level 1 (equivalent to five GCSEs at grades D–G)
- ❖ Higher Diploma at Level 2 (equivalent to seven GCSEs at grades A*–C)
- ❖ Progression Diploma at Level 3 (equivalent to 2.5 A-levels)
- ❖ Advanced Diploma at Level 3 (equivalent to 3.5 A-levels).

For the most up to date information on **UCAS** points equivalence for the Progression and Advanced Diplomas, visit the UCAS website (www.ucas.ac.uk).

Extended Diploma

Announced in early 2008, the Extended Diploma will provide extra stretch and challenge for the most capable learners at all Diploma levels. Recognising a wider range of achievement – including compulsory study within key stage 4 – the Extended Diploma will feature an extended core of English and mathematics content, as well as a further block of additional and specialist learning (see 'What are the key components of the Diploma?' on page 9).

Progression Diploma

A Progression Diploma comprises two of the three available components of the Diploma at Level 3: principal learning and generic learning. It does not require the additional and specialist learning component.

Universities and Colleges Admission Services (UCAS)

The UK central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to full-time first degrees. Learners who wish to progress to higher education must apply through the UCAS system.

Qualifications landscape

Learners face a variety of choices (progression routes) after key stage 3 (11–14 years). Figure 1.1 shows how the three levels of Diploma fit into the overall picture.

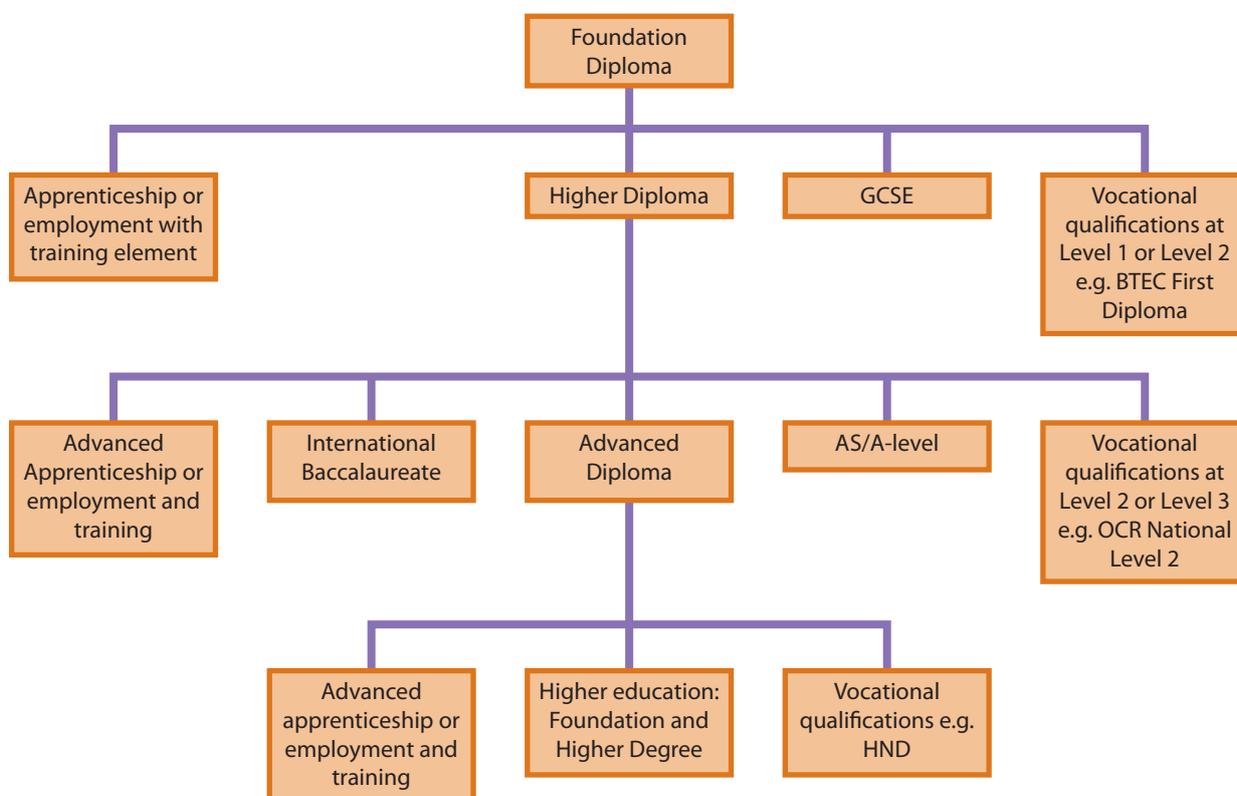


Figure 1.1: How the Diploma fits with other qualifications and progression routes.

It is important that there is a range of rigorous learning options for all those young people progressing from school or college to training, higher/further education or employment. GCSEs and A-levels offer one route and Diplomas will offer another, as well as full-time vocational courses. The progression diagram above sets out pathways through and across different routes, and illustrates how learners can move between routes according to their individual circumstances. Provider institutions offering courses and qualifications set entry requirements which are consistent with Levels 1, 2, 3, 4 and so on as shown above. Additional entry requirements reflecting essential underpinning knowledge and understanding or skill level, which are considered to be necessary to support successful outcomes for the learner, are set out in provider prospectuses and are discussed at interview.

Diplomas will not narrow options. For example:

- ❖ Year 9 learners who choose a Higher Diploma could take an Advanced Diploma at 16, or choose to take A-levels
- ❖ a Year 12 learner could take an Advanced Diploma without having studied a Diploma at a lower level, and then progress to university or employment.

A young person with a Diploma may go on to further education (FE), higher education (HE) or employment with training in a directly relevant area or in a different subject or sector.

Apprenticeships

Work-based training programmes for those who want to develop their future prospects and career. They are open to everyone living in England and not currently in full-time education.

Young Apprenticeships

The Young Apprenticeship programme enables pupils at Key Stage 4 to take vocational qualifications in industry sectors from engineering to health and social care.

Advanced Apprenticeships

A scheme aimed at people aged 16–24, which involves working and training with an employer, and studying for other qualifications with a learning provider. Advanced Apprenticeships lead to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3, as well as key skills and a Technical Certificate.

Learners interested in the options for employment or an **Advanced Apprenticeship** after completing the Advanced Diploma may want to bear in mind, when choosing their additional and specialist learning, that some qualifications on offer will be the same as or very similar to the technical certificate that forms part of the Advanced Apprenticeship. Therefore, qualifications achieved during the Advanced Diploma may lead to swift completion of the Advanced Apprenticeship.

Learners will have choice in the qualifications they can choose. They could, for example, take:

- ❖ Higher Diploma followed by A-levels, a Level 3 vocational course or an Advanced Diploma
- ❖ GCSEs followed by an Advanced Diploma, a Level 3 vocational course or A-levels.

Some learners may include GCSEs and A-levels as part of the additional and specialist learning (see 'What are the key components of the Diploma?' on page 9). Advanced Diplomas will be accepted by colleges and universities, and Higher Diplomas will be accepted for Advanced Apprenticeships. See Figure 1.1 for more information.

Information, advice and guidance



Figures 6.4, 6.5 and 6.6 (pages 221–3) give examples of different routes learners might take at each Diploma level.

1.3 What are the key components of the Diploma?

The Diploma is a new qualification that combines theoretical and practical **principal learning** for its subject area alongside **generic learning** and **additional and specialist learning**. It also provides the opportunity for learners to incorporate other courses of study, such as vocational qualifications, GCSEs and A-levels, as part of the additional and specialist learning (see section 7.2 on pages 245–7). The model is shown in Figure 1.2.

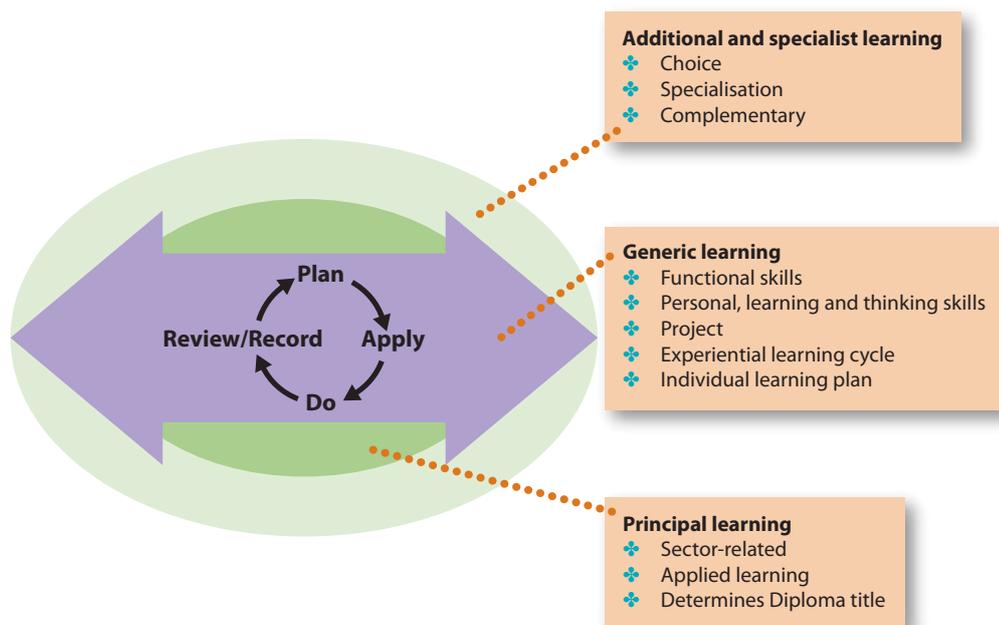


Figure 1.2: The Diploma model.

Foundation, Higher or extended project

The Foundation, Higher or extended project is a key part of the Diploma. It gives learners the opportunity to engage in an investigative piece of work on a subject that really interests them. This enables learners to:

- ❖ develop their ability to learn independently
- ❖ broaden their sector-related understanding.

The Foundation, Higher or extended project is a free-standing qualification (that is, learners can do it without the full Diploma).

Extended project

This is the Level 3 project involving a single piece of work that requires a high degree of:

- ❖ planning
- ❖ preparation
- ❖ research
- ❖ independent working.

Learners will explore in real depth a topic based on their own interests and aspirations. Learners may complete the extended project alongside A-levels or as part of an Advanced or Progression Diploma.

Principal learning

Principal learning is sector-related, predominantly applied in character and consists of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that support progress through the line of learning into the sectors and subjects concerned. Opportunities to develop and apply generic skills are also integrated into principal learning.

Generic learning

Generic learning enables students to develop and apply the skills and knowledge necessary for learning, employment and personal development. The generic learning component of the Diploma is made up of the following constituent parts:

- ❖ functional skills
- ❖ personal, learning and thinking skills
- ❖ a project
- ❖ work experience.

Experiential learning, planning and reviewing play a central role in the Diploma.

Additional and specialist learning

Qualifications that learners choose to include in their Diploma. Additional and specialist learning must provide high-quality breadth and/or depth of curriculum experience, without duplication of principal learning, and be based on a solid evidence base of progression opportunities for learners who want to progress into immediate employment with training, or full-time further and/or higher education.

Work experience

Work experience provides opportunities for learning about skills and personal qualities, careers, roles and structures that exist within a workplace or company. Learners gain insights into and experience of personal responsibilities, competencies, key skills and tasks within a workplace. Where well structured, work experience helps young people understand the functions of different people at work and the range of opportunities within a company. It gives insights into the relevance to working life of subjects and raises awareness of enterprise and entrepreneurial activity.

Work experience

Work experience is a mandatory component of Diplomas, which supports learning through doing. This helps ensure learners gain sound understanding of an area of employment. They will also have the opportunity to develop the generic skills needed for life and work (the functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills discussed below).

The Diploma at each level requires a minimum of ten days' work experience. For example, as part of the Advanced Diploma in Engineering, learners will have the opportunity to study science and could have direct involvement with how science is applied in the workplace through an extended project in a local engineering company. The result will be more engaged and enthusiastic learners who understand the purpose of what they are studying, as they see their newly acquired knowledge and skills in action.

Where possible, work experience should be linked to one or more of the following:

- ❖ the line of learning
- ❖ the Foundation, Higher or extended project topic chosen by the learner
- ❖ the learner's desired progression route.

Work experience supports the development and recognition of:

- ❖ work-related learning
- ❖ sector-related skills
- ❖ general employability and citizenship skills.



Diplomas offer huge potential for applied learning.

It may also provide:

- ❖ evidence of attaining skills and knowledge
- ❖ a stimulus or context for a Foundation, Higher or extended project.

Part-time employment can also contribute to Diploma learning.

Functional skills

Functional skills are practical skills in English, mathematics, and information and communication technology (ICT) that allow learners to work confidently, effectively and independently in life. They are a key part of the Diploma, and learners of whatever age who possess these skills can:

- ❖ participate and progress in education, training and employment
- ❖ develop and secure a broader range of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours to make a positive contribution to the communities in which they live and work.

Functional skills are a key to success: they open doors to learning, life and work. They are a platform on which to build employability skills and the gateway to future well-being and prosperity. We all need them – they make a difference to our lives.

Functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT are integral to the reformed GCSEs, the new Diplomas and Apprenticeships; they are available as stand-alone qualifications for young people and adults. These three functional skills are currently being offered as free-standing qualifications at entry level, Level 1 and Level 2 during the three-year functional skills pilot that began in September 2007.

Progression through the five levels of functional skills (Entry 1, 2, 3 and Levels 1 and 2) is defined by the:

- ❖ complexity of situations and activities
- ❖ technical demand associated with these activities
- ❖ learner's level of familiarity with the task or activity
- ❖ level of independence with which a learner can complete the activity.

English

In the case of English, learners with good functional skills:

- ❖ are confident and capable in speaking, listening, reading and writing
- ❖ are able to communicate effectively, adapting to a range of audiences and contexts
- ❖ can explain information clearly and succinctly in speech and writing
- ❖ can express a point of view reasonably
- ❖ are able to read and write documents on screen
- ❖ are able to read and understand information and instructions, and so act appropriately
- ❖ can make a report and contribute to discussions.

Mathematics

In the case of mathematics, learners with good functional skills:

- ❖ understand a range of mathematical concepts, knowing how and when to use them
- ❖ have the confidence and ability to use mathematics to solve problems within increasingly complex settings
- ❖ can use a range of tools, including ICT, where appropriate.

ICT

Learners with good functional skills in ICT:

- ❖ are confident and capable when using ICT systems and tools to meet a variety of needs in a range of contexts
- ❖ can use ICT to find, select and bring together relevant information and to develop, interpret and exchange information
- ❖ are able to apply ICT safely to enhance their learning and the quality of their work.

The above are general functional skills but each level will have specific requirements within these. For example, at Level 2, functional skills in English require learners to be able to make an oral presentation.



The principal source of information on functional skills is the Functional Skills Support Programme, which you can access at www.lseducation.org.uk/functionalskills. There are links here to resources, pilot schemes and new materials.

Personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)

Personal, learning and thinking skills, together with functional English, mathematics and ICT, cover the areas of competence that are most demanded by employers. Incorporating these skills into the curriculum and qualifications is key to providing learners with a platform for employability and further learning.

There are six personal, learning and thinking skills, and these are:

- ❖ team working
- ❖ independent enquiry
- ❖ self-management
- ❖ reflective learning
- ❖ effective participation
- ❖ creative thinking.

See pages 146–7 for the personal, learning and thinking skills framework. Delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills should be integrated into the principal learning, the project and work experience.



Teamwork – one of the six personal, learning and thinking skills.

Composition of the Diploma at each level

For each level of the Diploma, the following is required:

- ❖ a 'volume', given as the number of **guided learning hours**
- ❖ a 'size' for the three components (principal learning, generic learning, and additional and specialist learning); also given as the number of guided learning hours.

Guided learning hours

The number of hours of teacher-supervised or teacher-directed study time required to teach the qualification or a unit of the qualification.

The following three diagrams (Figure 1.3, Figure 1.4 and Figure 1.5) show the components of the Foundation, Higher and Advanced Diplomas in terms of the numbers of guided learning hours (GLH).

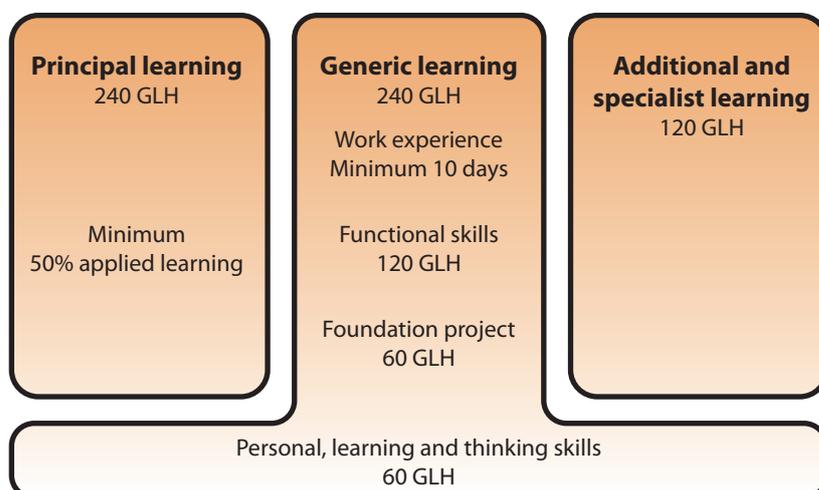


Figure 1.3: Components of the Foundation Diploma: 600 guided learning hours in total.

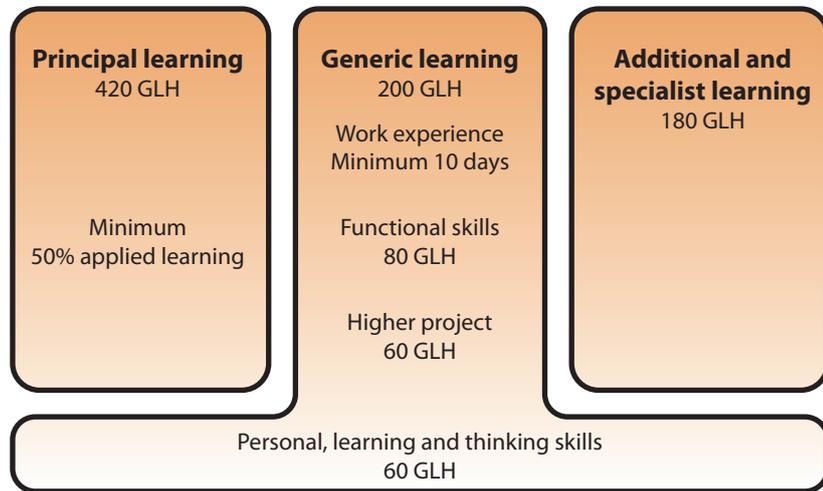


Figure 1.4: Components of the Higher Diploma: 800 guided learning hours in total.

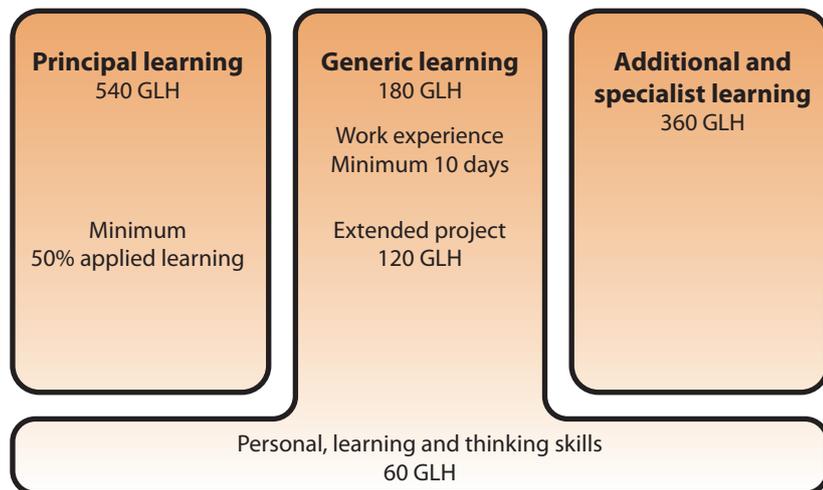


Figure 1.5: Components of the Advanced Diploma: 1080 guided learning hours in total.

2 Reflective practice

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has benefits	23
and change management	40
is important within your consortium	23
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needs good mentoring	41–6
can be carried out through different methods	20–2
is important for personalised learning (see also section 7)	23
needs to be recorded well	32, 51
is not the same as reflection	18
can be shown through the ripples model	37–40
can benefit from sharing good practice	31, 41–6
involves a good deal of theory	26–8, 37–9
involves collaborative working (see also section 4)	29–30

2 Reflective practice

Reflective practice is about the process of thinking about your practice and taking personal responsibility for improving your professional skills. Reflection enables you to review the positive aspects of your own practice in order to build on your successes and to identify areas for improvement or further development. Your engagement with reflective practice is an essential part of your success in the Diploma lines you offer.

2.1 What is reflective practice?

The original definition (Schön, 1983) defined reflective practice as thoughtfully considering your own experiences in applying knowledge to practice. Essentially, reflective practice involves learning from experience.

Reflective practice can help you – as a new practitioner – to identify how to review and improve your own teaching. As an experienced practitioner, you may use reflective practice as an aid to lifelong learning and continuous improvement.

Figure 2.1 suggests what reflective practice is, and is not, within an educational context.

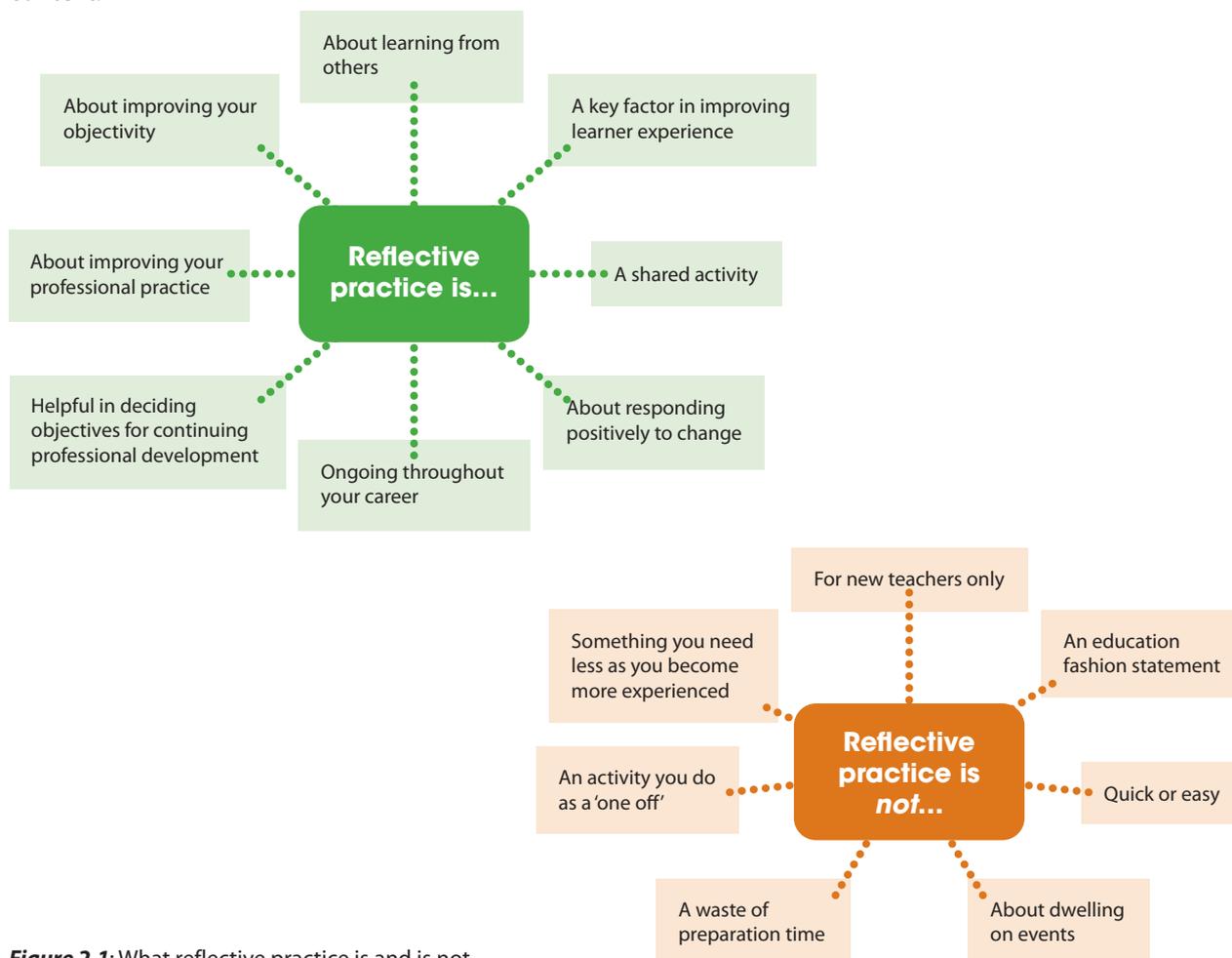


Figure 2.1: What reflective practice is and is not.

It is important to remember that reflection is not the same as reflective practice. Reflective practice is an extension of reflection: while reflection may lead to thinking about an event in great detail and gaining new knowledge, this in itself will not improve your practice – it is only when this new knowledge is directly used to make improvements that reflection becomes reflective practice.

Reflective activity: Definitions

How would you define 'reflection' and 'reflective practice'? Are your definitions similar to the ones below?

What is reflection?

- ❖ 'An activity in which people recapture their experience, think about it, mull it over and evaluate it.' (Boud *et al.*, 1985)
- ❖ 'Through reflection and analysis we strive to understand the experience.' (Osterman and Kottkamp, 1993)

What is reflective practice?

- ❖ 'In its broadest sense, reflective practice involves the critical analysis of everyday working practices to improve competence and promote professional development.' (Clouder, 2000)
- ❖ 'Reflective practice is a mode that links thought and action with reflection. It involves critically analysing one's actions with the goal of improving one's professional practice.' (Kottkamp, 1990)
- ❖ '[Reflective practice is a] genuinely critical, questioning orientation and a deep commitment to the discovery and analysis of positive and negative information concerning the quality and status of a professional's designed action.' (Bright, 1996)

Good practitioners are by definition reflective practitioners – they constantly strive to improve their own practice and help their learners achieve their full potential. This involves a process of challenging and questioning what they do and how they interact with learners, parents and colleagues, and seeking out new ways of working that are innovative and inspirational. A reflective practitioner is better able to deal with challenging situations and a changing curriculum – such as the introduction of the Diplomas – and to assist learners or colleagues facing the same challenges or changes.

If you are a qualified practitioner, you will already be familiar with the reflective process and you will be aware that to provide continuous improvements in your teaching you need to set aside some time to think carefully about what you are doing in your sessions, in order to evaluate your successes and identify areas where you know you can perform better. Using reflective practice to analyse and evaluate your work will help you find new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning, to the benefit of your learners and your organisation, as well as your own professional competence.



Figure 2.2: What does reflective practice mean to you?

Figure 2.2 indicates the most common feelings given by practitioners when considering reflective practice. It can seem a daunting task and it can appear very self-critical, but it can be an incredibly valuable tool when you are implementing large-scale curriculum reforms like those the Diploma brings.

Exemplar: Implementing the Diploma

Milly Johnson is head of citizenship and personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) in a large inner-city academy. After meeting with her head she was pleased to be allocated the responsibility for co-ordinating the Diploma in Society, Health and Development and ensuring it was ready for implementation the following September. This involved attending external meetings and liaising with partner providers, which included two local colleges of further education, three schools, the local authority and three sector-related employers. Her responsibilities also included timetabling, resource development and recruitment of learners.

- ❖ How could Milly use reflective practice to help develop her expertise in this new role?
- ❖ What challenges might she encounter in working collaboratively with other institutions?
- ❖ What challenges might Milly face in co-ordinating the Diploma within her own institution?
- ❖ How could she use reflective practice techniques to overcome or minimise some of these challenges?

Are you already reflecting?

The left-hand column of Table 2.1 explores what you might already do in terms of reflection, while the right-hand column describes how you can turn this reflection into active reflective practice.

What are you already doing?	How can you turn this into reflective practice?
Do you talk over difficult situations that you have encountered, such as a poor lesson or a challenging learner, with a friend or colleague?	Talk over the situation with a friend or colleague and consider carefully how you could change your practice to modify or improve the situation. You could ask your colleague or friend for insight or advice and reflect on whether the strategies that they would use would be useful to you.
Do you think over the events of the day on the way home from work?	Consider what you can learn from a specific event from the day and how you would deal with it next time for a more positive outcome.
Do you undergo regular professional development reviews or appraisals?	Use your professional review to look at your performance over the previous academic year and assess your training and development needs so that you can improve your professional practice in the coming year.
Do you complete evaluations of staff development events and professional conferences or training?	Use your staff development evaluations to reflect on why you attended the training and how you can implement the training in your work. You could record this in a file for continuing professional development.
Do your lesson plans contain space for an end-of-lesson evaluation?	Use your end-of-lesson evaluation to consider how that lesson could be better next time you deliver it.
Do you ask your learners for their feedback at the end of particular sessions or at the end of a unit or module?	Use your learners' feedback to improve your own practice during delivery.
Do you ask colleagues or managers for feedback on your professional performance?	Use this feedback to improve your professional practice.

Table 2.1: Turning reflection into reflective practice.

How does reflective practice work?

Reflective practice enables you to analyse an event and evaluate how a different response might have brought about a different outcome. There are three main ways of doing this:

- ❖ retrospective reflection
- ❖ reflection in action
- ❖ prospective reflection.

Retrospective reflection

Retrospective reflection involves looking back at important events or situations and considering what happened and what you could have done differently to improve the outcome for next time. You can use this information as a tool for understanding what happened and how to develop skills and practice.

This method has the advantage of taking place after the fact, when the emotional impact of a situation has lessened; this might enable you to be more objective about what happened and your part in it. However, retrospective reflection can sometimes lead you to imagine aspects of the event that you did not notice or consider at the time. It is important to be as honest and critical as you can about the situation in order to gain the most benefit and improvement from it.

If you have already worked in partnership on the first Diploma lines (for September 2008), this technique could help you consider what you have learned from the experience in order to continuously improve your own Diploma line and help colleagues prepare for other Diploma lines in the following year.



Practitioners help learners reflect on progress made.

Reflection in action

This is arguably a more dynamic approach to reflection, since it happens while you are in the event or situation itself. It is especially useful with a situation you have not encountered previously, or at least are not familiar with – for example, if you have to teach unfamiliar Diploma lines of learning, assess in different ways, or adapt to meet a specific learner need, such as dyslexia, dyspraxia or Asperger's syndrome, which you have not dealt with before in a professional situation. The action you take in these 'thinking on your feet' situations will depend largely on the knowledge you can apply without notice to a practical situation.

The advantage of this method is that, as you reflect while the situation is still ongoing, it allows you to adjust your practice as the event progresses. Depending on the type of event, you may not have the time, space or clarity to reflect well at that moment, but if you are delivering a Diploma line of learning for the first time, by assessing on an ongoing basis what is working well and what areas need more development, it is possible to make improvements during the academic year.

Prospective reflection

Prospective reflection involves looking at potential situations and considering what you could do to improve your response to them even before they occur. You may have encountered a particular situation in the past and need to plan what you are going to do the next time it arises. Or you may know an unfamiliar situation will arise shortly and, in order to reduce your anxiety and improve your performance, you want to plan how you are going to deal with it. As you become more familiar with the new Diploma you are delivering, this might include an action plan for improving your own learning, speaking to colleagues about their Diploma experiences and using this information to prepare yourself accordingly.

This technique has the advantage of preparing you ahead of time for a potential situation. The disadvantage is that the situation may not be as you envisioned it, meaning you have to implement reflection in action during the event and retrospective reflection after the event.



Exemplar: The three forms of reflective practice

Margaret McKenna was asked by the head of 14–19 education at her college to liaise with another local college to produce a workable timetable for all three levels of the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment. Margaret was new to the construction department and was actually employed as a lecturer in numeracy. She was concerned about her lack of construction knowledge, but had successfully integrated numeracy into the department's normal sessions and worked closely with the construction lecturers; she also felt she had a reasonable overview of the curriculum. She had timetabled extensively in her previous role at the college, so she knew she could do that without too much difficulty.

Margaret was invited to a meeting with the co-ordinator for the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment at the partner college. She had assumed it would be an informal meeting to discuss some of the timetabling issues and set the scene for the real work at a later date. She was horrified when she arrived to find that representatives from three partner schools and one employer were there and ready to cross-timetable during the course of the meeting. She felt completely unprepared and unsure how to respond. The others round the table were all directly involved in delivering construction training to learners and Margaret felt intimidated by their expertise and embarrassed at her own lack of knowledge. She also felt angry that the meeting organiser had not made clear the purpose of the meeting and she felt uncomfortable for the whole time she was there.

Margaret did not think the timetable that they had to agree provisionally at that meeting was suitable from the perspective of her own department. When she returned to her college and gave feedback to her colleagues, it was clear they did not think she had done them or the learners any favours. Margaret was absolutely mortified by the whole process and it took a lot of reflection for her to understand exactly what had happened and why she reacted as she did.

- ❖ Can you identify the challenges Margaret encountered during this event?
- ❖ How could retrospective reflection help her understand what happened?
- ❖ How could reflection in action have helped Margaret respond better to the incident at the time?
- ❖ How could prospective reflection help her plan what she would do the next time a similar event occurred?
- ❖ What new knowledge could Margaret share with others in the same position so that they could learn from her experience?
- ❖ Can you think of a situation when you have struggled professionally? How could the three types of reflection have helped you resolve the issues?

Reflective activity: Your professional practice

Consider your own professional practice.

- ❖ What aspects of reflective practice might be beneficial to you?
- ❖ How can reflective practice help you develop your role as a Diploma practitioner?

Benefits of reflective practice

All three forms of reflection, sometimes used in combination, are very useful in understanding how you can improve both your professional practice and your organisation, to the benefit of learners. The introduction of the new 14–19 reforms and the Diploma is likely to challenge much existing practice; as practitioners adjust to this, reflection is both necessary and inevitable. The benefits of doing so are set out below. You can find more information on the 14–19 strategy at www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19.



Benefits for you

- ❖ It can improve the quality of your work.
- ❖ It enables you to view events objectively.
- ❖ It enables you to transfer what you do well to other similar situations.
- ❖ It improves your professional judgement.
- ❖ It helps you identify your staff development needs.
- ❖ It helps you identify where you can make changes or improvements in what you do.
- ❖ It helps you to plan for the future.
- ❖ It helps you respond more positively to change.
- ❖ You can learn from the experience of others.
- ❖ It makes you a more confident and competent practitioner.
- ❖ You are able to take ownership of your learning.
- ❖ It can show you the difference between what you say you do and what you actually do.

Benefits for learners

- ❖ You will have a better understanding of their reactions.
- ❖ If you help your own learners reflect, you and they can learn together.
- ❖ They may benefit from a more personalised approach to teaching that accommodates their own unique skills and attributes.
- ❖ There will be continuous improvement in the quality of the delivery and assessment they receive.

Benefits for colleagues and the consortium

- ❖ There will be higher levels of shared professional expertise and curriculum planning.
- ❖ Consortium-wide improvements will be seen.
- ❖ Understanding of consortium culture, policies and the educational context will be increased.
- ❖ Fear of external partnerships and collaboration will be reduced.
- ❖ Levels of professional support and communication will be increased.



Barriers to reflective practice

However beneficial reflective practice can be, there are always barriers before, during and after any reflective practice. Some of these barriers are self-imposed, while others originate within an institution. Table 2.2 shows some of the more common barriers and what can be done to overcome them so that you are prepared for the significant changes to the curriculum that the Diploma brings.

Barrier	Strategies to overcome the barrier
Lack of time and space to reflect	<p>Lack of time and space is an ever-present problem in education for practitioners at all stages of the implementation of the 14–19 strategy. Making time for reflective practice is not easy but it is essential to offer the best service to learners and improve your own career path. Some common solutions are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ using the journey to and from your workplace to reflect ❖ using the first 20 minutes after your learners have left for the day while events are still fresh in your mind ❖ jotting down notes in a journal to reflect on when you have time later in the week ❖ talking with a trusted and honest colleague over lunch ❖ a group discussion with several colleagues at the beginning or end of the week.
Negative preconceptions	<p>It is common to find negative preconceptions about reflective practice. This is because it can be a difficult and time-consuming process and it may take a long time to show real results. If you have negative preconceptions, discuss them with colleagues who use reflective practice and see whether their experiences change your opinion. Also consider trying it for yourself for a period of time, such as a term, and see whether you can identify changes to your own practice.</p>
Organisational culture	<p>Some educational establishments are supportive of reflective practice and their senior managers will model reflective behaviour themselves in improving their organisation. Other educational establishments do not value this approach. At the level of the individual practitioner, however, the aim of reflective practice is not about changing the culture of your organisation but about changing your own practice and skills. Do not be put off by a culture which does not embrace this. The collaborative working which is a key aspect of Diploma development and delivery will also mean you work within a variety of cultures in the educational sector, from private training providers to further education colleges and schools, all of which may have a different approach to reflective practice. This means it is important to ensure you reflect independently.</p>

Working collaboratively



continued

Barrier	Strategies to overcome the barrier
Fear	Reflective practice can be an intimidating idea, as it requires a critical, honest and open view of yourself, which can be difficult. Many forms of reflective practice are entirely private: your managers will not see it or judge you on the basis of it. If you find it difficult to be honest with yourself, see whether you can find a trusted and honest colleague who can become your 'critical friend' and help you identify situations or skills which could be improved.
Lack of knowledge and experience on how to reflect	This can be a problem for new and experienced practitioners alike. Although reflective practice is taught for most professional teaching qualifications, you need practice to be able to do it well. You could brush up on some of the theories discussed below and use some of the techniques to practise with. Certain reflective techniques suit some people more than others – see what works for you.
Seeing it as a 'success or failure' approach	You should not see the work you do with learners as either a success or a failure. With reflective practice you can begin to see that even if things did not go so well, you have ample opportunity to improve over the course of your career. If you start to take the reflective view that every situation, no matter how painful, can be learned from, you will have the right mindset to improve.
Scientific background	If you have a science background you might expect reflective practice to have empirical data to support it; you might want to test the hypotheses of research studies which investigate its effectiveness or see some statistical data which take it from being an interesting theory to a scientifically useful investigative tool. Personal change and effectiveness are not something easily measurable in statistical terms – there is, though, a wealth of case study evidence on the effectiveness of reflective practice, based on the views of individual practitioners, which may help you assess how you could use reflective practice. You could examine this evidence as a starting point.
The worry of becoming introspective and anxious about your practice	Reflective practice is a critical process, and looking for an area to develop and improve on can be unsettling. If you approach it with the mindset of actively wanting to improve, rather than dwelling on what did not go so well, you should not have a problem with being anxious. The Diploma represents one of the most significant curriculum shifts in the last 25 years and will mean changes to your professional practice – you can use your reflective skills to consider how you can adapt your practice to suit the requirements of the Diploma lines.
The risk of it becoming a routine without any real thought	Reflective practice should never be done as a simple 'tick box' activity. Real change comes from hard work and determination to improve. It would be better for you to reflect less and do it right than go through the motions every day without thinking about it.

Table 2.2: Barriers to reflective practice and how to overcome them.

In summary, reflective practice:

- ❖ is the process of analysing and evaluating your own practice in order to improve your professional competence
- ❖ involves self-assessment of practice to identify areas for development. This will be essential when you become part of a consortium delivering the Diploma lines of learning as you may have to adapt or change your existing practice. Self-assessment may also be part of your consortium's quality assurance process
- ❖ enables you to transfer learning from one situation to similar future events. Again this will be an extremely useful skill for the Diploma as you may be able to implement and learn from your experiences
- ❖ helps you identify where you need to change or modify your practice in response to what you have learned.

The Gibbs cycle

Gibbs (1988) described a reflective cycle that is often used by education practitioners, which:

- ❖ encourages clear and objective description, analysis and evaluation of your own experience
- ❖ leads you to use this information in considering what you have learned from the experience and what you might do differently if the situation arose again.

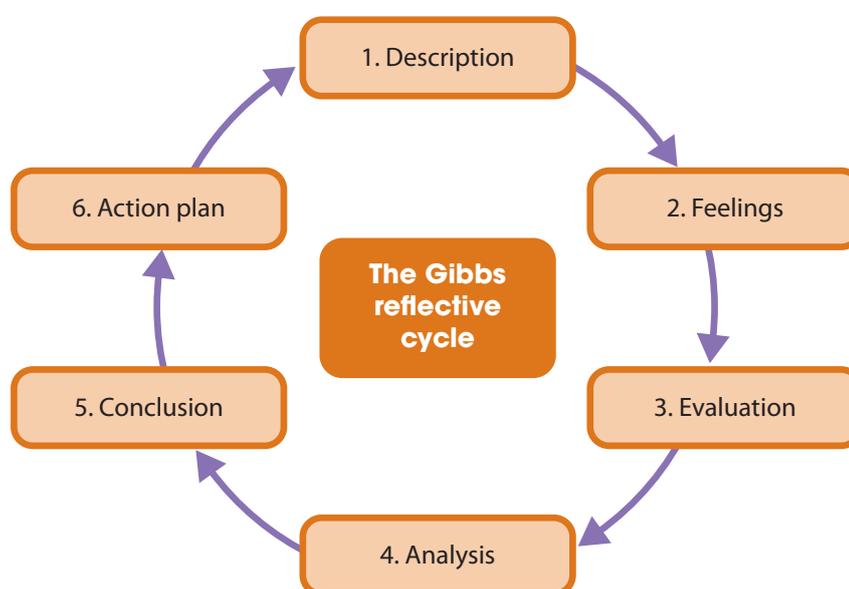


Figure 2.3: The Gibbs cycle.

Using a cycle like the Gibbs cycle may help you significantly when planning, implementing and delivering the Diploma. As with any significant educational changes, there is a learning period which practitioners have to go through to be confident that they are offering the best possible delivery to their learners. The Gibbs cycle can help you focus on Diploma issues, such as evaluation and reflection on processes which might need improvement in your own practice, and it can help you evaluate your current performance with regard to Diploma delivery. The Gibbs cycle follows a series of six stages, as shown in Figure 2.3. These six stages are explained opposite.

1. Description

This stage requires you to describe in detail the event you want to reflect on or learn more about (sometimes called the 'critical incident'). For example, you may like to describe a recent event to engage employers in your Diploma delivery planning. Consider questions such as the following.

- ❖ Where were you?
- ❖ What were you doing?
- ❖ Who else was there?
- ❖ What were they doing?
- ❖ What was the context of the event and what had led up to it?
- ❖ What happened?
- ❖ How did you respond?
- ❖ How did other people respond?
- ❖ What was the end result?

If you consider the event in detail, you may pick up on aspects of the situation you did not consider at the time. These details could have affected your response or the responses of other people and may help you when you consider how you would approach the situation if it arose again.

It is important to reflect on a situation objectively; that is, you need to take a step back and consider what the situation would have looked like to an outside observer. This can be difficult to do if the situation was frightening or distressing in some way, as these emotions can affect the way we perceive events.

2. Feelings

This stage focuses on what you were thinking and feeling at the time of the event. You may want to consider questions such as the following.

- ❖ Why was this event important to you?
- ❖ How were you feeling when it started?
- ❖ What were you thinking about at the start and end of the event?
- ❖ Are you aware of what other people who were involved might have been thinking? In the example of a Diploma employer engagement meeting, were you aware of the thoughts of employers and other colleagues throughout the meeting?

Your emotional state can influence how you act and behave at the time of an event. By considering how you felt, you can examine what impact your emotional state might have had on the event.

3. Evaluation

In this stage of the cycle you should evaluate the event you are reflecting on. Try to make some overall judgements about what happened and consider:

- ❖ what went well (for example, did you give the employer a thorough understanding of their expected role within Diploma delivery?)
- ❖ what did not go well
- ❖ what could have been improved.

4. Analysis

In this stage you take the evaluation one step further and break the event down into its component parts, then analyse each in turn to consider what went well and what did not go well. You may need to ask more detailed questions to follow up the answers at the evaluation stage. For example, if you felt that one thing that did not go so well was getting in touch with employers promptly enough, you might want to consider why this was.

5. Conclusion

In the earlier stages of the cycle you have thoroughly evaluated and analysed your event from a variety of angles and considered objectively what happened and what your emotional response was. You now have a great deal of detailed information on which to base your conclusions. This is a key stage in the cycle, as here you have the opportunity to draw firm conclusions about what you would do differently next time. Using the example already given, how could you make the process of employer engagement more streamlined and more beneficial to both sides?

6. Action plan

In this stage you should imagine yourself in a similar event in the future (for example, with a completely different employer) and make a clear plan of action for how you would deal with it. Any future events would be dealt with in a new reflective cycle.

Reflective activity: The Gibbs cycle

Using Gibbs in your own practice is very straightforward. First, choose your own 'critical incident'. This can be any event that you feel shows a development need or that you struggled to deal with effectively. This may be an issue, such as arranging effective work placements, that has arisen while you have been planning, implementing or delivering the Diploma lines of learning. Use this incident to follow the six stages of the Gibbs cycle. Consider writing down the process so you can follow it through and capture your thoughts (this also allows you to refer back to it at a later date).

- ❖ How straightforward did you find the cycle to use?
- ❖ What did you discover about the incident you had not considered before?
- ❖ Did you identify aspects of your practice you would change if the incident arose again?
- ❖ What could you do to improve your skills as a result of looking at your critical incident?

2.2 Ensuring up-to-date and effective delivery

The new Diploma represents arguably the biggest change to 14–19 education in the last 25 years. Knowing what reflective practice is, and how it can be used in your daily professional life, will enable you to deliver the Diploma within your consortium.

Diplomas move beyond traditional single-site teaching in that they require collaboration between schools, colleges, universities and employers and offer real choice to learners. This may be common practice for some, but for others it may be quite new. The Diplomas will therefore require you to re-examine your current teaching practice and equip yourself to deliver high-quality lines of learning in partnership with other institutions – reflective practice can help you prepare for these changes. What new strategies and resources might be required to deliver the Diploma lines of learning most effectively in your consortium?

In order to use reflective practice to help prepare yourself for the new Diplomas, you first need to know how the Diploma is structured and designed. This will help you consider how to adapt your materials and resources and whether to adjust your teaching practice or style to accommodate Diploma delivery. Figures 1.3, 1.4 and 1.5 in the Introduction section (see pages 13–14) show the components and guided learning hours for each of the three levels of Diploma. Each level has a common structure but with different total hours allocated, to reflect the depth of study and the ability needed to complete the levels. Some aspects of what you currently deliver will be similar to aspects of the delivery of the new Diploma and could be easily transferred; some may require change or adaptation. The following exemplar, from an information technology (IT) teacher at a sixth-form college, demonstrates this.



Working collaboratively



Exemplar: Transferable teaching

Hamish Forbes, a practitioner at a sixth-form college, was told the college would be a partner in the local consortium and would deliver the Diploma in Information Technology. He was worried that the materials he had relied upon to deliver other IT courses would not be sufficient and that he would have trouble integrating all the new components, such as functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills. Hamish was also worried that the principal and additional and specialist learning would not suit his learners at all and that he would struggle to ensure they succeeded.

He has found, happily, he was wrong on all counts. The principal and additional and specialist learning capture the theoretical and practical skills the learners will need to succeed in the IT industry; there is also the bonus of them being better prepared for further and higher education if they choose that route. It was clear from the unit content that the teaching resources he had accumulated over the years were almost entirely transferable and adaptable to the Diploma. The key difference has been that the learners were able to apply their knowledge to practical situations



Generic learning skills



Working collaboratively

continued

in a much more realistic way. He had come into teaching from the IT industry, so he knew how useful this applied aspect was going to be to the learners if they eventually found work in the sector.

It had also been a very positive experience for Hamish to meet his counterparts in other local schools and the local college as part of the consortium. They were able to share good practice and resources, and to support each other as they prepared to teach the Diploma in September for the first time. Hamish needed time for both reflection and consideration to get over his initial concerns, but he now enjoys teaching the Diploma in Information Technology with his consortium colleagues. He has been excited by the possibilities of the Diploma and plans to pass that excitement on to his learners.

- ❖ Do you have concerns about introducing the Diploma in your specialist area?
- ❖ Have you examined the line of learning for your area to see how much of your current teaching materials are transferable?
- ❖ Could you make contacts with your consortium counterparts like Hamish, and offer (and receive) advice and guidance?
- ❖ How could you use reflective practice to review how you will deliver the Diploma?



Information, advice and guidance

There are three main ways you can use reflective practice to ensure you are delivering up-to-date and effective teaching in preparation for the Diploma:

- ❖ self-assessment and peer assessment
- ❖ problem-based learning
- ❖ personal development planning.

Self-assessment and peer assessment

Self-assessment and peer assessment as techniques to use with learners are discussed on pages 67–74. Here the focus is on how they can be used by practitioners in the context of their own reflective practice.

Self-assessment is concerned with making accurate judgements about your own skills and performance in relation to set criteria. It involves examining your own practice with a critical eye and considering what you can do to improve and how you can plan for the next step in your professional development.

Peer assessment relies on the use of a 'critical friend' or trusted set of colleagues with whom you can judge work against mutually agreed assessment criteria.

The advantages of self-assessment are that:

- ❖ it is an ongoing method of reflective practice that you are in control of
- ❖ you decide which areas of your practice to focus on



Assessment

- ❖ it is done at a time that is convenient for you
- ❖ it is likely to increase your confidence
- ❖ it can lead to 'deep' learning rather than surface learning
- ❖ you can instigate positive changes by understanding your own behaviour
- ❖ you can begin to focus your continuing professional development on the training activities that you have recognised you need, rather than on those you are instructed to attend.

The advantages of peer assessment are that:

- ❖ it supports the ideas of reflective practice by promoting mutual support and dialogue with colleagues
- ❖ your peers may be able to identify areas of your practice which need development which you did not
- ❖ you can judge and learn from the performance of others and apply this learning to your own practice
- ❖ support from your colleagues may help you develop more innovative strategies for teaching and learning
- ❖ you can share areas of good practice and learn from the cumulative experience of others and they from you
- ❖ you can get a sense of how effective you are as a practitioner in comparison with others.



A network group meeting is a good opportunity to reflect on and share good practice.

Table 2.3 gives several ways of using self-assessment and peer assessment to prepare yourself for the introduction of the Diplomas.

Type of assessment	Description of technique
Reflective learning logs	An ongoing record used to note critical issues, ideas and reflections, in chronological fashion. Often used on practitioner training courses.
Reflective journals	Records reflective incidents throughout a career. Allows practitioners to review early learning experiences in hindsight.
Reflective essays	A lengthy piece of writing on a 'critical incident'.
Observations	Watching colleagues or having them observe you. This can be a valuable learning experience. Consider having an 'open-door' observation policy with trusted and respected colleagues. This may also contribute to your quality assurance programme.
Professional discussions	Reflective discussion with peers or mentors about a particular event or area for development.
Reflective diaries	A personal diary used to record your learning experiences and feelings.
Reflective portfolios	A portfolio of different types of reflective activity (as above) held together for ease of reflection.

Table 2.3: Ways of self-assessment and peer assessment that will help practitioners prepare for the introduction of the Diplomas.



Exemplar: Peer assessment

One large college of further education has a policy of conducting a formal teaching observation on each member of staff once per year. The results are graded 1–4, in line with Ofsted guidance, and a grade of 3 or below triggers staff development to help the member of staff reach a grade 2 or above.

One of the departmental teams did not feel that the formal observations were a great deal of help to them, however. Receiving feedback on their teaching performance once a year did not seem sufficient to help them maintain their grade 1 status with Ofsted. They therefore decided to have an open-door policy on informal teaching observations within their team. This was facilitated by the fact that they were all colleagues of long standing, who trusted and respected each other's opinions. The team members were all strong in different areas, so it was a perfect opportunity to share good practice. Because they now receive feedback on their performance regularly, they have been able to adjust their practice throughout the year, rather than just once a year.

As these observations are informal and voluntary, the team has very few rules, but those they do have are agreed by all members and are stuck to. The two key rules are that:

- ❖ all feedback should be constructive, aimed at helping a team member to improve
- ❖ the observers should also take something away from each observation that they can use in their own sessions with learners.

In that way, the observations are a genuinely two-way learning process. The team has gained immensely in terms of support, communication and teaching standards.

continued

The informal observations have much more meaning for the team members than the official observations because they feel less punitive and are conducted by people who genuinely care enough to give up their own preparation time to observe a lesson and help each other out.

- ❖ Do you have experience of peer assessment?
- ❖ Could your team implement a voluntary arrangement at your school or college? If not, why not and what could you do about it?
- ❖ Apart from observations, where else could you use peer assessment in your workplace to help you improve?
- ❖ Could you consider a peer assessment process with colleagues from other partners in your Diploma consortium? How would you initiate this?

There is no right or wrong way to introduce self-assessment and peer assessment into your practice, but Table 2.3 provides some guidance on how you could begin.

Problem-based learning

Problem-based learning:

- ❖ is a way of encouraging reflection on a real problem or issue faced by an individual or team of colleagues
- ❖ requires you to research, analyse and evaluate information on the problem, with a view to coming up with a potential solution to manage the situation effectively
- ❖ actively encourages and develops the critical thinking needed for effective reflective practice
- ❖ can be conducted individually, in small teams or in larger groups, as with all reflective techniques
- ❖ can be a very effective tool for ensuring that you and the team you work in is ready for up-to-date and effective teaching of the Diploma at all levels. It is a rare teaching department or individual practitioner who does not have an issue that should be dealt with more effectively; this could be anything from learner behaviour to value-added scores to the introduction of the Diploma
- ❖ is one mechanism for reflecting on how to identify and implement the most suitable strategy to overcome the issue.

The advantages of problem-based learning are that:

- ❖ it offers real solutions to real problems
- ❖ teams and individuals need to rely on their own skills and knowledge to come up with a solution, which in turn generates increased ownership and investment in the success of that solution
- ❖ a variety of approaches to a problem can be explored
- ❖ it supports effective teamwork.

Several methods can be used to approach problem-based learning. However, the most effective approaches tend to involve solution-based discussions: dialogue about the problem and possible ways to resolve it is essential in generating a workable solution. The disadvantage to this is that these discussions may be contentious and wide-ranging. The key is to ensure your discussions are attended by those who have a stake in both the problem and its solution, and to ensure that any dialogue has a clear focus.



Exemplar: Problem-based learning

Media studies had been offered at one school for a number of years, predominantly the GCSE, but also the A-level and the National Certificate in Media (moving image production). The school is now offering the new Diploma in Creative and Media and has had an excellent response from learners and parents in terms of uptake.

However, things did not start out quite so smoothly. The line of learning is quite broad and encompasses a range of disciplines, including audio, visual, fashion design and art. It was clear that the school could not offer learners this full range, and some decisions had to be made about what could and could not be put on.

A full team meeting for the media studies department, chaired by the assistant head, was held to look at what could realistically be offered for the Diploma. This proved difficult, because there were vested interests around the table, and not everyone was thinking about the learners as their first priority. It took a fair bit of reflection and analysis, not to mention research into all the new units, before the staff came up with an honest picture.

They decided that they could offer drama, television and radio production disciplines, but that they would struggle, particularly at Advanced level, to offer fashion design or art. They decided as a team to take what they had discussed to the local consortium to see which of the school's partners could offer those pathways, so that the learners would have a full range of options open to them.

It turned out that the local college of further education had excellent fashion design and art facilities, and the school is now working closely with that college to see how the delivery can be split (for all units, and across Foundation, Higher and Advanced). This will involve another problem-based discussion at a later date.

At the same school, similar problems were encountered with the Diploma in Society, Health and Development, particularly with the community justice aspect of some of the units, and the local college came up trumps again with a community and criminal justice lecturer. The assistant head was surprised to find exactly how much had become available through the consortium partners after investing some time in networking.

- ❖ Could problem-based learning help you and your team prepare for your Diploma line of learning?
- ❖ Have you ever used problem-based learning in the past? What was the outcome?
- ❖ Could problem-based learning work across the different institutions in your consortium? How could you make it an effective learning experience?
- ❖ This assistant head had a very positive experience of using problem-based learning, but what could go wrong if it was not managed effectively? What could you do to put it back on track?

Personal development planning

Personal development planning aims to provide a structure for teaching staff to think about and plan their own professional development. It can be seen as a way to show learning and reflection in an ongoing process of improvement. Personal development planning provides an overall picture of:

- ❖ your capabilities
- ❖ your strengths
- ❖ your interests
- ❖ your areas for future development.

In essence, personal development planning requires you to use your reflective skills to evaluate your current performance and consider what strategies you could use to fill the gaps in your knowledge and practice – in this respect, all the types of reflective practice techniques we have seen are broadly similar. (They should not be seen as isolated from each other: successful individuals and teams use a combination of any or all types of reflection to further their career pathways.)

The advantages of personal development planning are that:

- ❖ you can learn about yourself and what you are doing
- ❖ you can value your achievements and successes
- ❖ you take ownership of where you would like your career to go
- ❖ you can create a strategy for self-improvement
- ❖ it is a central record of what you have learned in your career
- ❖ it can act as a system for organising your thoughts and feelings.

Common methods of personal development planning include:

- ❖ portfolios
- ❖ journals
- ❖ diaries.

The portfolios can also be used to show potential employers your strengths and successes and that you are able to take professional responsibility for your own learning. They could help you prepare for the Diploma by identifying what your professional development needs are and how you can gather the knowledge and skills you need in order to be an effective Diploma practitioner.

You could consider including an analysis of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) as a starting point; a learning log is another good inclusion, as are any critical incident analyses you do with the Gibbs cycle (see Figure 2.3, page 26 and also Table 2.3, page 32).

Conclusion

Reflective practice is about hard work and deep understanding, and leads to improvements. It is not always an easy process, but it is always a worthwhile one. As you commit yourself and your professional practice to the process of

lifelong learning, it will be an invaluable tool in ensuring both you and your learners are ready for the educational challenges that await you. The changes in the 14–19 curriculum that the Diploma will bring will make this more important than ever.



Remember to visit www.diploma-support.org for creative approaches to your continuing personal development, including diagnostic tools and resources such as My Development.

2.3 How can reflective practice aid delivery?

More experienced teachers may have been using reflective practice strategies for some time. In addition to the Gibbs cycle outlined in Figure 2.3 on page 26, there are a variety of techniques you can use as an aid to effective change. These include:

- ❖ Kolb's (1984) learning cycle
- ❖ Schön's (1983) 'reflection in action' and 'reflection on action'
- ❖ Greenaway's (1995) 'plan–do–review'.

You could research these models to discover which ones you would find useful in your reflection. What all the models have in common is that they are cyclical in nature. However, there is an alternative to this – one which can be used by more experienced practitioners who wish to improve the quality of their teaching: Phil Race's 'ripples' approach (Percival *et al.*, 1993).

Race's ripples model

The ripples model is based on the assumption that the best way of learning is by doing. Effective teaching is not about providing information – it is about helping learners to turn information into knowledge. The learners do this by applying the information to a task and receiving feedback from the practitioner on their performance.

Reflective activity: The 'ripples' approach to learning

Race suggests the following task to help practitioners understand how they and their own learners learn:

Think of something you are good at and write down in a few words how you became good at it.

The most common responses are:

- ❖ practice
- ❖ trial and error
- ❖ having a go
- ❖ repetition
- ❖ experimenting.

These are the kinds of activities reflective practitioners should be building into their own development, and also into the experiences they provide for their learners, to maximise their potential for turning information into knowledge.

Race also has a suggestion to help practitioners understand what can go wrong with learning:

Think of something you are not good at, perhaps as the result of a bad learning experience. Write down in a few words what went wrong.

The most common responses are:

- ❖ did not really want to learn it

continued

- ❖ could not see the point
- ❖ bad teaching
- ❖ could not make sense of it.

It is clear from this what practitioners need to do to prevent learners from having a bad experience of learning. They need to:

- ❖ encourage learners (and themselves) to want to learn, by providing practical opportunities and plenty of supportive feedback
- ❖ be clear about why they should learn and what benefits it will have for them
- ❖ ensure that they reflect on their own practice to make sure learners have the best possible learning experience
- ❖ provide learners with adequate time to reflect and digest the information they have applied so they can gain real understanding from it.

How might you apply this approach to build a positive experience for Diploma learners?

More experienced reflective practitioners can use the ripples model to consider how their delivery approach addresses the following questions:

- ❖ How do you enhance your learners' desire to learn?
- ❖ How do you help learners develop ownership of the need to learn?
- ❖ Do you help learners learn by techniques such as practical activities, trial-and-error tasks and repetitive activities?
- ❖ Do you ensure learners receive quick and useful feedback, both from you and from their peers?
- ❖ What activities do you provide where learners can make sense of what they have learned?

As you can see in Figure 2.4, the ripples model is not a cycle: it is a progression, with learning by doing at the centre and true learning and understanding starting from that point and radiating outwards, like ripples on water, encompassing other aspects of learning.

The Diplomas provide ample opportunity to consider and reflect upon your own delivery in terms of the ripples model, as the qualification has a high proportion of applied learning. You will have to develop successful techniques and opportunities for Diploma learners to take the information you provide and apply it to a practical situation or task, so that they can turn the information into knowledge and understanding which will remain with them long after they complete their Diploma.

Generic learning skills



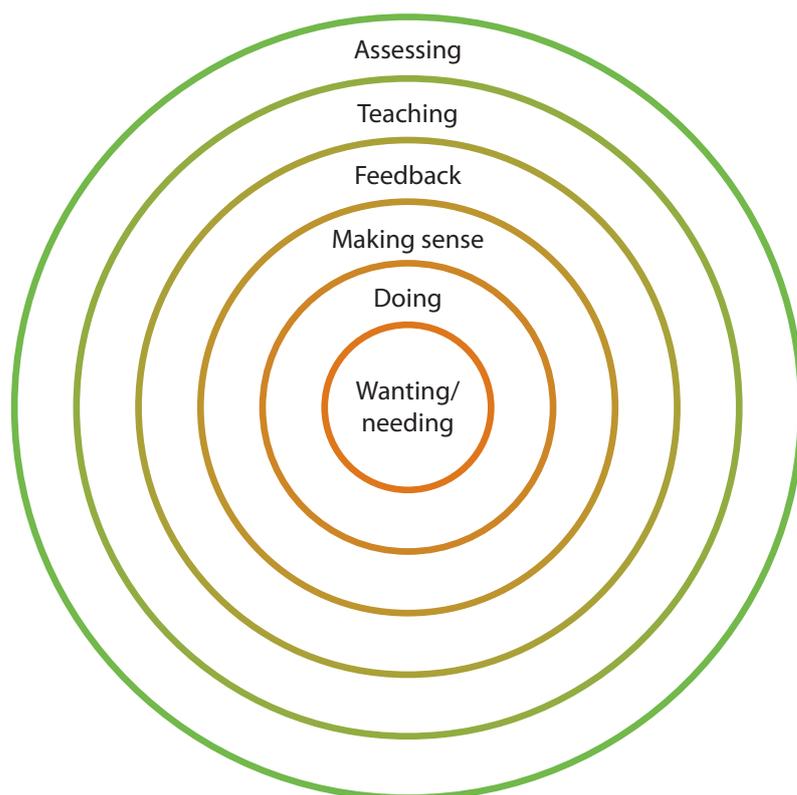


Figure 2.4: The six stages of Race's ripples model.



Exemplar: Engineering

Jacqueline Moss works in the motorcycle engineering section of a large college of further education that is delivering the Diploma in Engineering from 2008 in conjunction with colleagues in the main engineering faculty and partners from schools. They have also been fortunate to have some employers on board, such as the Royal Engineers from the British army.

Jacqueline has responsibility for delivering the health and safety aspect of the Diploma in Engineering at all levels. It is only a small part of the principal learning but if learners do not understand it at a fundamental level they will never be good engineers and they may inadvertently put themselves and others at risk. Jacqueline has found that some of the learners think health and safety is boring – they just want to design and build things – so she has to help them understand the need for what they are about to learn.

Having taught motorcycle engineering for a long time, Jacqueline knows that many engineering concepts have to be taught practically. Giving the learners information on a topic is merely the start of their learning: they need the opportunity to use the information practically on multiple occasions if they are going to retain it. The approach she is taking with the health and safety aspect of the Diploma is therefore a very practical one.

She is planning to allow learners to conduct their own risk assessments on the machinery and on each of the practical tasks they undertake. She will reinforce this by enabling more competent learners, who may have had more practice, to demonstrate this to their peers. She will also reinforce learning by having health and safety as an integrated topic throughout as many of the units as possible, so that it will be delivered holistically and constantly reinforced. Jacqueline would rather they had repetitive, practical activities here and were safe and felt confident about safe working practice when they went into the workplace.

continued

Jacqueline feels that another key aspect is feedback: she takes every opportunity she can to praise good practice, and points out bad practice as soon as she sees it. She has found there is simply no point leaving it until the following week to mention, as the learners have forgotten what they were doing at the time; feedback has to be immediate if they are going to respond and learn from it.

- ❖ Consider the Diploma line of learning you will primarily be involved in. What aspects of the delivery would really benefit from a practical approach? How could you implement that approach?
- ❖ How do you currently supply feedback? Is your feedback immediate or well after the fact? If the latter, what can you do about this?
- ❖ Consider the exemplar above. Can you think of any other strategies Jacqueline could have used to reinforce learning in health and safety?
- ❖ How is she using Race's ripple model?
- ❖ How will you use the ripple model to help you examine your own Diploma preparation and delivery?

Change management

If you are an experienced practitioner, you may have responsibility for curriculum development or direct (line management) responsibility for other teaching staff. Such responsibility may benefit from aspects of reflective practice regarding the introduction of the Diploma.

Educational and curriculum change can be an opportunity for innovation for some staff and they may need only minimal support in adjusting. However, there may also be staff whom you have responsibility for who find the process of change challenging or difficult, and this is where you may need to reflect on how you can assist them in developing their professional practice.

Reflective activity: Implementing change

If you are a manager responsible for implementing change, the key questions to reflect on are the following.

- ❖ How can I understand change?
- ❖ Why should the change be implemented?
- ❖ Who or what should be the subject of change?
- ❖ How can I make change happen?

2.4 Mentoring

If you are a more experienced practitioner, you may be in a position to help those who are new to the Diploma. If you have been involved in preparing for the five Diplomas that are offered in September 2008, you may well be in a strong position to offer advice and support to those practitioners whose specialist Diploma line does not begin until 2009 or 2010. You may be able to share your experience of Diploma development with them and offer guidance on the best ways to work collaboratively and to prepare for a significant curriculum change.



This kind of support is called mentoring. Mentoring can be formal or informal. Which form is chosen will depend on many factors, such as your institutional culture and your position with the organisation and consortium.



Mentoring provides a judgement-free arena in which to discuss and explore personal and professional skills, and career development.

In essence, mentoring:

- ❖ is a way of supporting and encouraging other people to manage their own learning to realise their full personal and professional potential
- ❖ is a partnership between the mentor and the mentee, who will work in a similar environment and may share similar experiences
- ❖ is intended to be a supportive relationship based on mutual trust: it should not be a relationship between a line manager and a practitioner, as the power relationship may interfere with the guidance and support given

❖ should enable the mentor to boost the mentee’s confidence and provide a judgement-free arena in which to discuss and explore personal and professional skills, and career development. Through this process, mentees ought to become more self-aware and increasingly take responsibility for their own progress.

The Diploma offers good opportunities to work as part of a broader team and to get to know new colleagues. As such, you may have access to a much wider network of mentoring support around the Diplomas.

There are, therefore, benefits from the mentoring relationship for both the mentor and the mentee. Figure 2.5 sets out some of these.

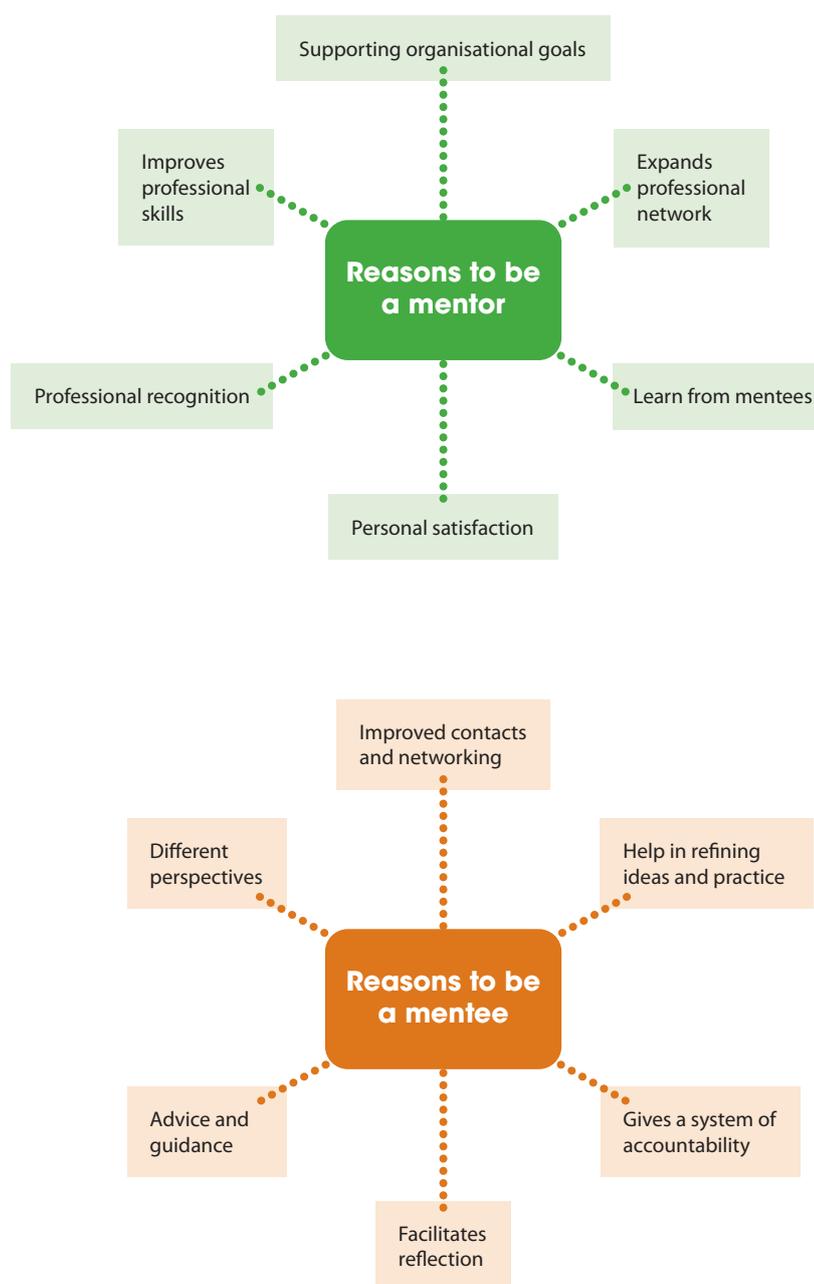


Figure 2.5: Benefits of being a mentor and mentee.

Table 2.4 summarises the many different types of mentoring.

Type	Description
Buddy/ induction	This is an informal type of mentoring usually conducted by someone not that far ahead of the mentee in terms of experience. The buddy shows the new practitioner how things are done, what types of paperwork to use and what types of procedures to follow. It is often done as time permits rather than being scheduled in. If you are an experienced practitioner, consider how you might act as a buddy to a newer practitioner involved in Diploma delivery in your consortium.
Group	This is a more formal type of mentoring, where a mentor has several new or inexperienced mentees who are at about the same level in their career development. The mentor has usually had formal mentor training and regular meetings are scheduled. An advantage to this type of mentoring is that it is likely that the mentees will be experiencing similar problems and will be able to reflect on the experiences of the others as well as their own.
Supervisory	This is when a person in a supervisory capacity mentors those whom he or she supervises. The mentor could be a line manager or a head of department. This is not a popular method of mentoring, since the mentor may find it difficult to balance the time required to be an effective mentor with management duties; also, it is not considered good practice to be mentored by a line manager, as the role of mentor might conflict with the management role, and a line manager may not have the subject specialism to mentor a particular member of staff effectively.
Situational	This is where a less experienced member of staff is given support and guidance on a particular aspect of practice or a particular situation or event. It may develop into a role model or more formal type of mentoring but it can also end after the immediate problem has been resolved. For example, you might give assistance to a less experienced practitioner about how best to work with a learner on their individual learning plan.
Role model	This is what many people consider to be traditional mentoring, where a successful, experienced practitioner supports and guides a less experienced staff member on a similar career path.
Peer	Peer mentoring is a mutually supportive relationship between the mentor and mentee. Colleagues help and support each other with specific issues where one person has a strength, or more generally as a sounding board for innovation or career development. Peer mentors should help each other to achieve their career goals.

Table 2.4: The different types of mentoring.

For mentoring to be successful, certain things are required of both the mentor and the mentee, and these are shown in Table 2.5.

Mentor	Mentee
Is open and honest	Is open and honest
Offers constructive criticism	Accepts constructive criticism
Gives advice	Listens
Spends time	Learns from mistakes
Inspires trust	Tries hard
Encourages independence	Is courageous
Praises	Questions
Is a good role model	Is respectful
Is a patient listener	

Table 2.5: The qualities required of a good mentor and of a good mentee.

There are four stages to the mentoring process and these are explained in Figure 2.6.

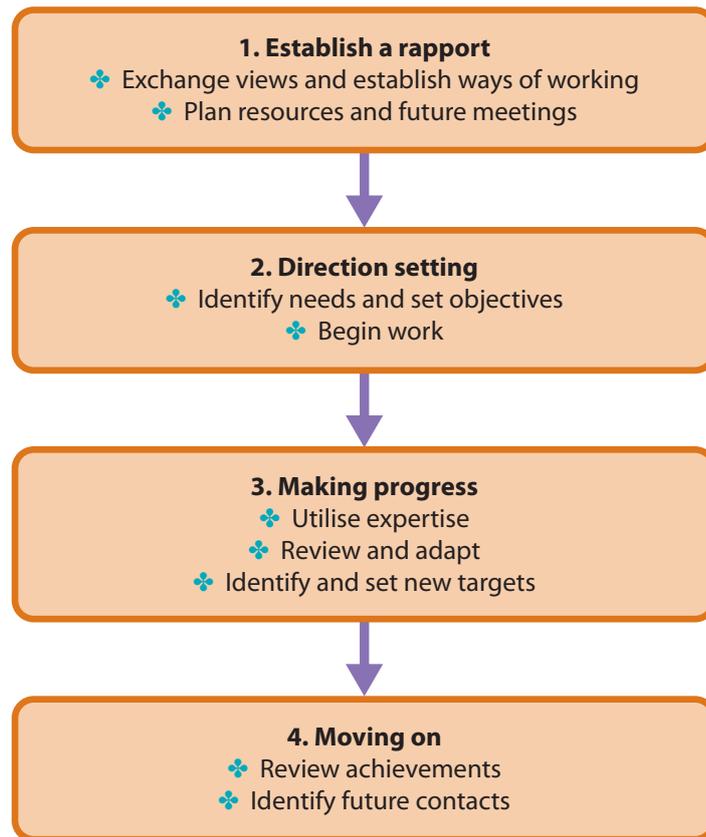


Figure 2.6: The four stages of the mentoring process.



Exemplar: Mentoring

Janice Green works as the head of the IT department at an inner-city academy. The academy has IT specialist status, so Janice and her staff have been heavily involved in the development of the Diploma in Information Technology and have been working across the consortium to ensure they are ready for September. Janice has had to deal with some significant challenges over the last year as they have prepared for the Diploma, such as collaborative working, getting to grips with the assessments and helping parents and learners understand what the Diploma in Information Technology is all about and where it will lead them.

Janice was asked by the deputy head if she would like to take on a mentoring role with two other practitioners: a hair and beauty lecturer at a partner college in the consortium who was preparing for the Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies for September 2009; and a member of the academy's PE staff who had been given responsibility for developing aspects of the Diploma in Sport and Active Leisure, which will begin in 2010.

Janice was hesitant at first, as she did not have time to spare and she was already informally mentoring some of her own staff team with specific areas of their practice. Also, she had never received any formal mentoring training. However, the deputy head agreed both to reallocate some of her workload so she would have a proper schedule of meetings with them, and to send Janice on some mentoring training, so she agreed.

Working collaboratively

Assessment

continued

Some months later Janice was very glad she had agreed to mentor, as she had been able to pass on her knowledge about developing and implementing the Diploma. The mentees were able to learn from, and avoid, the mistakes she had made as they got ready to deliver. The mentees were at different stages in terms of what they were doing, which helped as well, because this meant they were also able to support each other.

The best thing from Janice's point of view was seeing her mentees develop in terms of their confidence and expertise on the Diploma and knowing that her experiences in phase 1 of the Diploma's introduction would improve learner experiences in phases 2 and 3.

- ❖ Have you ever considered mentoring?
- ❖ How could you offer your services? What mechanisms exist in your institution for you to help those who are less experienced?
- ❖ Do you think that receiving some mentoring on the new Diploma could help you prepare for it better? How could you access this, not just in your own institution but across your consortium?

Accessing mentoring

Being able to access mentoring can be a hit-and-miss affair. Some educational organisations have clear and consistent guidelines on mentoring and approach it as a tool to aid classroom improvement; other institutions do not have a co-ordinated approach to mentoring or may not offer it at all. However, if you want to enter into a mentoring relationship either as a mentor or as a mentee, then the first and most obvious way is to approach your line manager or the member of staff with responsibility for continuing professional development and either request to be assigned to a mentor or offer your services as a mentor.

If your institution does not respond to your requests, you could search for an online mentorship programme. There is also the possibility of being mentored by a practitioner external to your organisation.

Difficulties with mentoring

Some of the difficulties with mentoring are as follows:

- ❖ **Complexity:** Mentoring is a very complex arrangement, as it depends very much on the personalities and the skills involved.
- ❖ **Time:** Educational practitioners have a very time-intensive job and often the prospect of finding spare time to help others can appear extremely daunting. One of the ways you can overcome this is to speak with your line manager and arrange to mentor in return for a reduction in your teaching commitments. Another way around the time barrier is to peer mentor with a colleague, because then you will be receiving the support as well as giving it.
- ❖ **Lack of training:** Mentoring is a skill and not everyone will know how to mentor well. Your organisation should be prepared to invest in this by sending

you on a mentor training course, so that you can support other staff to the best of your ability.

- ❖ **Mentor matching:** Sometimes the personalities and approaches of mentors and mentees simply do not match up and they find it difficult to give or receive support. This should not be seen as a failure. Instead, the mentee should be allocated a new mentor and the mentor a new mentee; it is not a reflection on the individuals involved.

Other ways of sharing good practice

There are many ways of sharing good practice apart from direct mentoring. You could consider:

- ❖ uploading your resources to a 'virtual learning environment' so that they can be used by others (virtual learning environments (VLEs) are considered further in section 5.1)
- ❖ using team meetings to disseminate good practice
- ❖ twilight coaching sessions on a particular area of good practice
- ❖ sourcing external speakers from your own consortium
- ❖ a newsletter created for practitioners by practitioners
- ❖ writing case studies that others can use to learn from and reflect upon
- ❖ lunchtime workshops
- ❖ networking with other local schools and colleges, such as area cluster groups
- ❖ co-developing resources with other practitioners
- ❖ creating a blog or 'wiki' which is accessible to other practitioners.

The methods you choose will be based on your skills and the time you have available to disseminate your practice.



Conferences are one way of sharing good practice.

2.5 Continuing professional development

Continuing professional development (CPD) is an ongoing process that:

- ❖ is designed to improve your capabilities
- ❖ should encourage you to manage and determine your own learning
- ❖ usually focuses on the acquisition of skills and abilities that you might not normally develop in your initial training or in your day-to-day teaching responsibilities.

Reflective activity: Continuing professional development

- ❖ What continuing professional development activities have you undertaken this academic year so far?
- ❖ How would you rate their usefulness?
- ❖ How much continuing professional development have you been offered on the Diploma overall or a specific line of learning?

Consider these questions and jot down your thoughts on what Diploma continuing professional development you will need over the next 12 to 18 months as the lines of learning become active.

Education is an exhilarating and stimulating sector in which to work, but in order to maintain professional standards you must keep your knowledge and skills up to date. Your role can change and develop year on year as the curriculum moves on and legislation is applied. Continuing professional development is a requirement for practitioners by the professional bodies who monitor them.

There are benefits of continuing professional development for both you and your organisation. For you, the benefits may be that:

- ❖ it enhances your confidence
- ❖ you gain more professional credibility
- ❖ you can track your growth and progression accurately
- ❖ you may be able to showcase your talents – for example, sharing your experience of applied learning with other colleagues involved in Diploma delivery
- ❖ it can enhance your earning potential
- ❖ you can achieve career goals
- ❖ you can cope positively with change
- ❖ your skill set is continuously updated
- ❖ you will become a better reflective practitioner as you consider gaps in your skills and knowledge
- ❖ training will help you become more focused and efficient
- ❖ you will be better able to help your learners – for example, by building confidence to develop a personalised learning experience for Diploma learners
- ❖ managing your continuing professional development is seen as a strength by employers.

For the educational establishment, continuing professional development:

- ❖ maximises staff potential
- ❖ can be linked to specific educational or business needs
- ❖ links to professional reviews or appraisals
- ❖ allows employees to feel valued by the investment made in them
- ❖ facilitates organisational improvement, such as better results or value-added scores
- ❖ promotes sound working practices and ethics, which will boost public confidence in the institution
- ❖ leads to highly trained staff – an effective marketing tool in an increasingly competitive education marketplace.

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)

Employer-led, independent organisations, each covering a specific sector; there are 25 across the UK. Their four key goals are:

- ❖ to reduce skills gaps and shortages
- ❖ to improve productivity, business and public service performance
- ❖ to increase opportunities to boost the skills and productivity throughout the sector's workforce
- ❖ to improve learning supply, including apprenticeships, higher education and national occupational standards.

The Diplomas are developed by the Diploma Development Partnerships with contribution from the relevant **Sector Skills Councils** and then approved by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the awarding bodies. There are many opportunities for continuing professional development from all these agencies, in addition to the development needs identified by your local consortium. In order to keep up to date, you can regularly check their websites, which have pages relating both to the Diploma in general and to your line of learning in particular. Table 2.6 gives the websites of the Diploma Development Partnerships for each of the lines of learning.

Year	Diploma line of learning	Diploma Development Partnership	Website
2008	Society, Health and Development	Skills for Health	www.skillsforhealth.org.uk
	Engineering	SEMTA	www.semta.org.uk
	Construction and the Built Environment	ConstructionSkills	www.cskills.org
	Creative and Media	Skillset	www.skillset.org
	Information Technology	e-skills	www.e-skills.com
2009	Environmental and Land-based Studies	Lantra	www.lantra.co.uk
	Hair and Beauty Studies	Habia	www.habia.org
	Business, Administration and Finance	FSSC	www.fssc.org.uk
	Manufacturing and Product Design	Improve	www.improveltd.co.uk
	Hospitality	People 1st	www.people1st.co.uk
2010	Public Services	Skills for Justice	www.skillsforjustice.com
	Sport and Active Leisure	SkillsActive	www.skillsactive.com
	Travel and Tourism	GoSkills and People 1st	www.goskills.org www.people1st.co.uk
	Retail Business	SkillsSmart Retail	www.skillsmartretail.com
2011	Languages	GoSkills	www.goskills.org
	Science	SEMTA	www.semta.org.uk
	Humanities	Creative and Cultural Skills	www.ccskills.org.uk

Table 2.6: Websites of the Diploma Development Partnerships.

Types of continuing professional development

There are a number of systems for continuing professional development in most educational establishments. It is usually a practitioner-led activity, and will be particularly important as you introduce the new Diploma, as there are likely to be aspects of the Diploma for which you lack the knowledge or skills to deliver to best effect. How you approach closing these gaps in your knowledge is the essence of continuing professional development.

Further education staff are required to undertake a minimum of 30 hours of continuing professional development.

There is a vast array of activities you can undertake in order to improve your professional practice. Some types are listed in Table 2.7.

Type	Description
Formal training courses	There are many training courses and seminars you can attend in the normal course of your duties, such as child protection training, first aid or interactive whiteboard training. These courses are usually short (perhaps 3–12 hours). There are also specific Diploma training courses, which will help you prepare for the introduction of the Diploma. Visit www.diploma-support.org to find a range of valuable and relevant areas to work through.
Reading relevant books, journals and reports	It is important to keep up to date with current knowledge and best practice in your particular field of expertise. There is no shortage of educational journals and reports to enhance your knowledge and understanding of the sector. You may like to refer to the practitioner handbooks available for each of the first ten lines of learning to take your development further.
In-house training	Your educational establishment may have its own in-house staff development programme.
Research	Research is an essential component of continuing professional development. You may wish to investigate why some schools or colleges get better results than yours does, for example. Research can provide answers and enable you to implement changes to your own practice.
Developing innovative teaching materials and strategies	Continuing professional development is also about ensuring you are offering your learners new and exciting learning opportunities.
Mentoring	As discussed above, mentoring offers significant benefits in terms of professional practice.
Visits to relevant locations	If you are delivering a Diploma line, visiting workplaces can help you to contextualise the learning. This, though, is also an essential aspect of your continuing professional development.
Preparing training and delivery of courses for others	Continuing professional development can also be about how you disseminate knowledge and abilities to others.
Further academic study, such as a Masters degree or PhD	Many school-based staff and those in further education undertake a Masters degree as part of their ongoing development. Masters-level study helps with career progression.

continued

Type	Description
Attending meetings	Meetings are a routine part of education, but they can also be considered aspects of continuing professional development, particularly if you are examining implementation strategies for the new Diploma or developmental issues.
Writing for journals or books	Writing for books and journals in your specialist field is considered a scholarly activity and can form a key aspect of your continuing professional development.
Professional updating in industry	The new Diplomas have a significant amount of applied learning; if you are not familiar with the sector relevant to your line, or your involvement in the sector was some time ago, consider spending a few days refreshing your knowledge in industry.
Work shadowing	Consider spending a few days with a manager or colleague to observe how they apply the principles of best practice. Alternatively, spend a few days shadowing an employee of the sector relevant to your Diploma line so that you can use the information you gain in your delivery to learners.
E-learning courses and distance-learning courses	These are becoming increasingly popular, as many practitioners have to juggle the demands of their profession with the need for a personal and family life. Study is usually at your own pace in your own time. The Diploma also has significant resources you can access online at www.diploma-support.org

Table 2.7: Types of continuing professional development.



Further academic study is just one type of continuing professional development.

There are two key questions you should consider after every continuing professional development activity or opportunity.

- ❖ What can I do now that I could not do before?
- ❖ What did I learn that I did not know before?

Continuing professional development as a professional requirement

Some professional bodies make recording a certain number of hours of continuing professional development a prerequisite for continuing membership. This is true of some teaching and learning regulatory councils, as well as of some subject-specific accrediting bodies. The requirements vary but usually 20–40 hours of continuing professional development per annum is stipulated. It is worth checking with the relevant professional association to ensure you are meeting the minimum requirements.

Keeping a record of your continuing professional development

There are no hard-and-fast rules to keeping and maintaining a file for your continuing professional development, although employers or inspection teams may wish to see some records at some point. There are a variety of ways of recording your continuing professional development, but the most popular method is the log.

The log of continuing professional development is usually in the form of an extended 'fill in the blanks' type of table. This can comprise a series of items such as:

- ❖ dates of continuing professional development activities
- ❖ number of hours spent on each
- ❖ description of each activity
- ❖ what you learned
- ❖ how you applied, are applying or will apply, what you learned
- ❖ what you still need to learn
- ❖ cross-references to your continuing professional development plan or appraisal forms.

You will find online many templates for various logs and forms relating to continuing professional development – check the websites of professional bodies such as the General Teaching Council (www.gtce.org.uk) and the Institute for Learning (www.ifl.ac.uk).



It is also worth having a continuing professional development review at least once a year, preferably before your professional review or appraisal, to reflect on your progress. This will help you set specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and timely (SMART) objectives for the coming year.

Reflective activity: Review of continuing professional development

When conducting your review consider the following questions.

- ❖ What were the three most important things you learned last year and how did you learn them?
- ❖ How have you improved your value to learners and your school/college over the last 12 months?
- ❖ What aspects of your work have been changed by your continuing professional development in the last 12 months?
- ❖ How have you disseminated your learning over the last 12 months?
- ❖ What are the three main priorities for your continuing professional development in the next 12 months?
- ❖ What are the key differences you want to make to your learners and your school/college in the next 12 months?
- ❖ How will you plan to meet your needs for continuing professional development over the next 12 months?
- ❖ When will you next review your needs for professional development?
- ❖ How will you apply this learning to your Diploma preparation?

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3 Assessment and the Diploma

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Section 3: Rapid topic finder

Assessment...	See pages...
includes assessment for learning	57–65
includes assessment of learning	75–9
has several key characteristics	65
may be needed on an ongoing basis	57
is demonstrated here through exemplars	67, 77, 79, 84, 86
facilitates effective feedback	61, 71–2
has several different forms	87–8
is important for generic learning (see also section 5)	83, 85
has a specific grading system for the Diploma	80
requires good information, advice and guidance (see also section 6)	64
takes into account learners' progress at all times	57
has several different methods available	87–8
can involve peer assessment	67–71
fits in with personalised learning (see also section 7)	58
has several important principles	62–4
is important for the project and extended project	83–6
contributes to raising achievement	57–8, 59–60
involves reflection (see also section 2)	58, 59, 71, 72–4, 83
has had much research carried out into it	59–60, 66
can involve self-assessment	64, 67–71, 72–4
requires understanding learners' understanding	67
involves collaborative working (see also section 4)	74, 75–6

3 Assessment and the Diploma

Assessment serves two main purposes within the context of the Diploma.

- ❖ It provides a means of enabling learners to achieve a national qualification. This fits in with 'assessment of learning' strategies.
- ❖ Assessment also helps identify learners' ongoing progress against their own aims and targets as they move through the Diploma. This fits in with 'assessment for learning' strategies.

Within the Diploma units of principal learning and additional and specialist learning will have assessment methods that are familiar to you as well as new approaches such as controlled assessment methods. This section will explore these areas and will highlight other areas surrounding assessment within the Diploma that will help your learners achieve and progress.

Assessment overview

Assessment is an integral part of effective teaching and learning, as it:

- ❖ allows achievement and progress to be recognised and celebrated
- ❖ informs the next steps and priorities of both practitioners and learners
- ❖ is inextricably linked to the curriculum, which provides the content and context of assessment.

Assessment is the means of identifying learners' strengths and their targets for improvement, as well as the action required to secure progress and achievement. In many classroom activities, you will have noticed when learners have grasped a concept, revealed a misconception, improved their skills or made links with previous learning. This may be evident through what the learner says or does or through the work produced.

It is important to distinguish between summative and formative assessment.

- ❖ **Summative assessment** is a final review of learning at the end of a learner's unit or course of study to measure what has been achieved.

❖ **Formative assessment** is a continuous process of review conducted throughout the programme to build up a profile of the individual learner and to monitor and review their progress, so that their performance can inform future learning.

The assessment practices outlined below are already used and are well established in 14–19 teaching. These are readily applied to the Diploma and you will be able to adapt your existing teaching strategies to Diploma delivery.

3.1 'Assessment for learning' and raising achievement

Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning (AfL) means using evidence and feedback to identify where learners are in their learning, what they need to do next and how best to achieve this. It 'promotes deeper learning and the making of connections between contexts and subjects' (*The Diploma and its Pedagogy*, QCA October 2008). In practice, this means:

- ❖ obtaining clear evidence so that an individual can own and drive their own attainment
- ❖ understanding between practitioners and learners on what they need to improve
- ❖ agreement on the steps needed to promote sound learning and progress
- ❖ flexibility of immediate feedback, which you can use to adjust your classroom goals and practice to benefit all learners individually.

Assessment for learning is formative in nature and takes place all the time in the classroom. Within the Diploma context other providers, such as employers, may be involved; with the applied learning nature of this qualification it is not only practitioners who are involved in the learning experience.

Assessment for learning is about using the information gained to improve learning. Figure 3.1 shows this as a cycle.

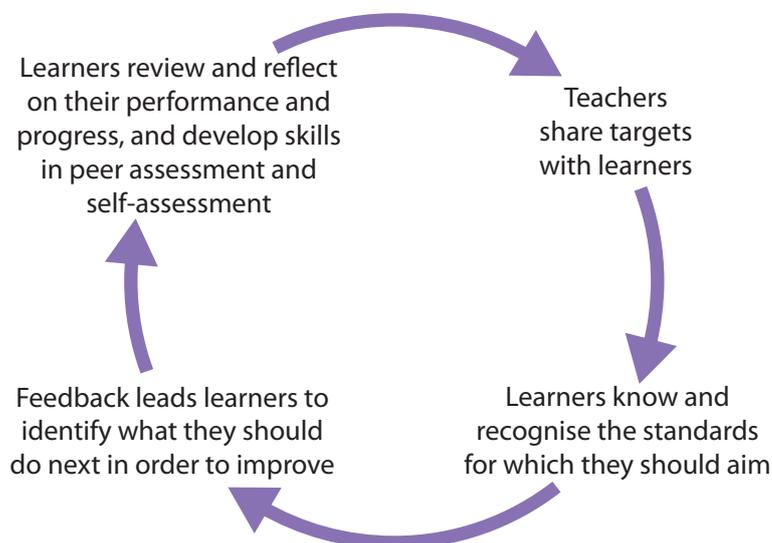


Figure 3.1: The 'assessment for learning' cycle.

Learners should be aware of their own progress, particularly when the learning objectives and success criteria of the lesson have been made clear. This awareness can be strongly reinforced by a positive remark or a constructive comment. Often this affirmation will be from a member of staff or another adult, but can be equally powerful from a peer – for example, in a group discussion of progress in meeting the objectives and success criteria.

Occasionally, young people will demonstrate unexpected progress in their skills and understanding. For example, learners who lack confidence in writing may produce a significantly better piece of report writing or explanation when



Affirmation from a peer can play a large part in a learner's progress.

dealing with content in which they have particular interest and expertise, or those who have learned about coordinates in mathematics might apply their learning when map reading on a field trip. This kind of evidence confirms that they can apply their skills and understanding independently and in real-life contexts. Different kinds of material – for example, presentations, photographic evidence, videos or audio tapes – can be used within projects or course work and practitioners should not always expect essays or text-based material.

Assessment in day-to-day teaching

Much assessment takes place in day-to-day teaching, when learners receive immediate feedback and when you adjust your short-term planning in line with learners' needs. At other times, you might stand back and reflect on the learner's overall performance across a subject or aspect of learning, drawing on a wide range of evidence to help identify the learner's strengths and priorities for improvement.

In most cases, day-to-day assessment will relate to specific aspects of the subject and to the current teaching focus. In your planning, you can anticipate where there will be particularly useful opportunities to assess the understanding of the whole group or of individuals. These can be built into whole-class teaching sessions and plenaries, or into group or individual discussions, where questioning can reveal learners' insights and misconceptions.

Your observations in these everyday situations, whether recorded or not, will affect how future teaching and learning are planned and organised, and will help you adopt a more **personalised** approach to learning.

Personalised learning

Young people are involved in the construction of their own learning, reflecting their individual aspirations and learning habits, and should have the opportunity to explore individual interests. Personalised learning involves taking a highly structured and responsive approach to each learner, in order that all are able to progress, achieve and participate. The learner's own voice is the most powerful gateway to personalising learning.

Research findings

According to the Assessment Reform Group (2002), assessment for learning:

- ❖ is an essential part of teaching and learning
- ❖ involves sharing learning goals and standards with learners
- ❖ involves learners in both peer assessment and self-assessment, which both they and the practitioner then review and reflect on
- ❖ provides feedback, which leads to learners recognising their next steps
- ❖ promotes confidence that every learner can improve.

The principles that underpin assessment for learning for learners evolved from an extensive review conducted by Black and Wiliam (1998):

- ❖ active involvement
- ❖ effective feedback
- ❖ a recognition of the profound influence assessment has on motivation and self-esteem
- ❖ self-assessment and understanding how to improve
- ❖ adjusting teaching to take account of the results of assessment.

Black and Wiliam (1998) concluded that assessment for learning could lead to an improvement in external test results and to the increased likelihood of children becoming lifelong learners.



Learners may use assessment feedback to help them progress.

Assessment for learning is based on the idea that learners will improve most if they understand:

- ❖ the aim of their learning
- ❖ where they are in relation to this aim
- ❖ how they can achieve it.

Research has shown that assessment for learning is one of the most powerful ways of improving learning and raising standards (for further reading, see the resource list at the end of the section). Actively involving all learners in their own learning, providing opportunities for learners to assess themselves and to understand how they are learning and progressing can boost motivation and confidence.

Take it further

The influential booklet 'Inside the Black Box' (Black and Wiliam, 1998) summarised the main findings arising from 250 assessment articles covering nine years of international research. This was followed up by work with 40 teachers in six schools to test out the practical implementation of ideas suggested by the research. This led to a second booklet, 'Working Inside the Black Box' (Black et al. 2002). Both booklets are well known and widely used. The main findings are set out in the second booklet under four headings as follows.

Questioning

- ❖ More effort has to be spent in framing questions that elicit a valuable response.
- ❖ After asking questions, practitioners should allow learners several seconds in which to think, and everyone should be expected to contribute to the discussion.
- ❖ Follow-up activities should be used to extend learners' understanding.
- ❖ The only point of asking questions is to raise issues about which the practitioner needs information or about which the learners need to think.

Feedback through marking

- ❖ Written tasks, alongside oral questioning, should encourage learners to develop and show understanding of the key features of what they have learned.
- ❖ Comments should identify what has been done well and what still needs improvement, and guidance should be given on how to make that improvement.
- ❖ Learners should always have the opportunity to follow up comments. This may be through the use of a learner feedback form as many learners often need to have things written down before entering into a dialogue.
- ❖ To be effective, feedback should cause thinking to take place.

Peer assessment and self-assessment

- ❖ The criteria for evaluating any learning achievements must be transparent to learners, to enable them to have a clear overview of both the aims of their work and what it means to complete it successfully.
- ❖ Learners should be taught the habits and skills of collaboration in peer assessment.
- ❖ Learners should be encouraged to keep in mind the aims of their work and to assess their own progress as they proceed.
- ❖ Peer assessment and self-assessment make unique contributions to the development of learners' learning – they secure aims that cannot be achieved in any other way, such as becoming a more reflective learner and developing confidence in their own judgement.

The formative use of summative tests

- ❖ Learners should be engaged in a reflective review of the work they have done, to enable them to plan their revision effectively.
- ❖ Learners should be encouraged to set questions and mark answers, to help them both to understand the assessment process and to focus on further efforts for improvement.
- ❖ Learners should be encouraged through peer assessment and self-assessment to apply criteria to help them understand how their work can be improved.
- ❖ Summative tests should be, and should be **seen** to be, a positive part of the learning process.

The ten principles of assessment for learning

The findings under the four headings above have informed the QCA guidance on assessment for learning. This guidance describes the principles and characteristics of assessment for learning and provides a general checklist and resources for each subject. It aims to promote consistency and coherence in how assessment for learning is used in the classroom.

1. Assessment for learning should be part of effective planning of teaching and learning

Your planning should provide opportunities for both the learner and you to obtain and use information about progress towards learning goals. It also has to be flexible, so that you can respond to emerging ideas and skills (such as personal, learning and thinking skills). Planning should include strategies to ensure that learners understand the goals they are pursuing and the criteria that will be applied in assessing their work. You should also plan how learners will:

- ❖ receive feedback
- ❖ take part in assessing their learning
- ❖ be helped to make further progress.

2. Assessment for learning should focus on how learners learn

The process of learning has to be in both your own and the learner's mind when assessment is planned and when the evidence is interpreted. Learners should become as aware of the 'how' of their learning as they are of the 'what'. This is particularly relevant on the Foundation, Higher or extended project, as this is about more than the finished work itself – it is also about the learner's journey in their work.

3. Assessment for learning should be recognised as central to classroom practice

Much of what you and learners do in classrooms can be described as assessment. That is, tasks and questions prompt learners to demonstrate their knowledge, understanding and skills. What learners say and do is then observed and interpreted, and judgements are made about how learning can

be improved. These assessment processes are an essential part of everyday classroom practice and involve both you and your learners in reflection, dialogue and decision making.

4. Assessment for learning should be regarded as a key professional skill for practitioners

You need the professional knowledge and skills to undertake the following aspects of assessment for learning:

- ❖ plan for assessment
- ❖ observe learning
- ❖ analyse and interpret evidence of learning
- ❖ give feedback to learners
- ❖ support learners in self-assessment.

You should be supported in developing these skills through initial and continuing professional development.

Some of the above professional development areas could be identified in your appraisals, initial teacher mentoring interviews or if you are to mentor new staff.

5. Assessment for learning should be sensitive and constructive because any assessment has an emotional impact

You should be aware of the impact that comments, marks and grades can have on learners' confidence and enthusiasm and be as constructive as possible in your feedback. Comments that focus on the work rather than the person are more constructive for both learning and motivation.

6. Assessment for learning should take account of the importance of learner motivation

Assessment can provide motivation for learners if the emphasis is on progress and achievement. Comparison with others who have been more successful is unlikely to motivate learners; it can also lead to learners withdrawing from the learning process. Motivation can be preserved and enhanced by assessment methods that:

- ❖ protect the learner's autonomy
- ❖ provide some choice
- ❖ give constructive feedback
- ❖ create opportunity for self-direction.

7. Assessment for learning should promote commitment to learning goals and a shared understanding of the criteria by which they are assessed

For effective learning to take place, learners need to understand what they are trying to achieve – and they should want to achieve it. Understanding and commitment follow when learners take part in deciding goals and identifying criteria for assessing progress. You should:

- ❖ discuss assessment criteria (for example, Foundation, Higher or extended project outcomes) with learners, using terms that they can understand
- ❖ provide examples of how the criteria can be met in practice
- ❖ engage learners in peer assessment and self-assessment.

8. Learners should receive constructive guidance about how to improve

Learners need information and guidance in order to plan the next steps in their learning. You should:

- ❖ pinpoint the learner's strengths and advise on how to develop them
- ❖ be clear and constructive about any weaknesses and how they might be addressed (for example, do they need more support with any of their functional skills?)
- ❖ provide opportunities for learners to improve upon their work.

Many schools and colleges vary in how they communicate information, advice and guidance to learners (look at section 6 for ideas and exemplars).

9. Assessment for learning should develop your learners' capacity for self-assessment so that they can become reflective and self-managing

Independent learners:

- ❖ have the ability to seek out and gain new skills, new knowledge and new understandings
- ❖ are able to engage in self-reflection and to identify the next steps in their learning.

You should equip learners with the desire and the capacity to take charge of their learning by helping them to develop the skills of self-assessment.

10. Assessment for learning should recognise the full range of achievements of all learners

Assessment for learning should be used to enhance all learners' opportunities to learn in all areas of education. It should enable all learners to achieve their best and to have their efforts recognised.

Reflective activity: Assessment for learning

- ❖ Focus on one or two 'key characteristics' from Table 3.1 and identify some strategies to try in a series of lessons.
- ❖ After the first few lessons, discuss with a colleague what went well and what did not.
- ❖ Consider what further support or training might help you test these strategies.

continued		
Characteristics	Examples of teaching strategies in lesson	Impact on learning
Sharing learning objectives with learners	You: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ explain objectives ❖ provide sheet with learning objectives for learners to refer to ❖ question learners to check understanding. 	Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ gain clear understanding of what they are to learn (enabling them to develop the PLTS of self-managing).
Helping learners to know and recognise the standards they are aiming for	You: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ explain criteria for success ❖ model success by providing examples of previous work ❖ tease out, through class discussion, what is good about work presented. 	Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ gain clear understanding of the standards they are aiming for ❖ recognise features of good work.
Involving learners in peer assessment and self-assessment	You: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ provide sheet with criteria for success for learners to refer to ❖ help learners interpret learning outcomes ❖ provide opportunities for discussion so that learners can comment on and improve their work ❖ allow time for learners to reflect on what they have learned. 	Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ assess the progress they have made ❖ identify how they can improve their work ❖ act as critical friends.
Providing feedback that leads to learners recognising their next steps and how to take them	You: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ question learners in groups about their work ❖ provide oral feedback ❖ build on responses to help learners take the next steps in learning ❖ use examples of work in class discussions to highlight the ways that work can be improved. 	Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ see more clearly what they need to do next ❖ are able to discuss next steps with each other (demonstrating the team working PLTS) ❖ learn from each other how to improve their work.
Promoting confidence that every learner can improve	You: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ provide positive and constructive feedback ❖ match learning objectives to needs in order to provide challenges and set appropriate targets ❖ celebrate success. 	Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ remain engaged and on task ❖ gain satisfaction regarding their own progress ❖ have a sense that they can continually improve.
Involving both practitioner and learner in reviewing and reflecting on assessment information	You: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ maintain continuous dialogue about the progress being made ❖ frequently remind learners of learning objectives and criteria for success ❖ balance practitioner assessment with peer assessment and self-assessment ❖ make effective use of plenaries. 	Learners: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ reflect on learning (demonstrating the reflective learners PLTS) ❖ focus on learning objectives and success criteria ❖ measure their own progress and that of their peers ❖ take responsibility for their learning.

Table 3.1: Assessment for learning – key characteristics.



You should equip learners with the desire and the capacity to take charge of their learning.

Research on the impact of formative assessments

The General Teaching Council for England used evidence from 20 quantitative studies to explore the impact of innovative styles of formative assessment on standards (Black and Wiliam, 1998). All of these showed that innovations that included strengthening the practice of formative assessment produced significant, and often substantial, gains in learning. Many of the studies showed that improved formative assessment helped learners who have not achieved their potential and those with learning difficulties more than the rest.

Examples of these innovations included:

- ❖ new ways of enhancing feedback between learners and practitioners
- ❖ actively involving learners in the assessment process
- ❖ helping learners to develop self-assessment skills.

How to maximise the potential for positive impacts of assessment

- ❖ Emphasise the learning function of assessment and why it takes place.
- ❖ Ensure that information yielded by assessment is used to set learner targets and to plan learning, and is part of the process of drawing up individual learning plans, as well as part of organisational planning.
- ❖ Reduce the emphasis on marks and grades.
- ❖ Ensure learners understand that the primary purpose of assessment is their personal improvement.

- ❖ Support teaching staff and other colleagues involved in the delivery of the Diploma by explaining the assessment methods and their purpose, and also ensuring that they understand the need for a unified approach.

Understanding learners' understanding

You should always give learners opportunities to express their understanding. All learners should have the chance to think and to express to you (and others) their ideas on their progress and assessment of their learning.

You should encourage learners to keep learner logs or journals of their progress. These can record what learners did and how they tackled problems. This is also very valuable for you, as logs and journals can give a very clear picture of how learners worked things out, and of what they knew, understood and could do.



Exemplar: A learner's journal for assessment

Anthony is studying for the Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies and his college has provided a matrix document of all the units of the principal learning, along with the assessment criteria for each. This grid-type document allows Anthony to see what each unit requires him to do to pass, which allows him to plan ahead. As he completes each unit and is assessed, he uses his own learner journal as a reflective diary in which to comment on his feelings and understanding of the process.

This information is useful for Anthony in the self-assessment process but also provides teaching staff with an insight into his understanding. It also improves the practitioner–learner dialogue and interaction, which in turn can assist in raising standards and improving educational practice.

Effective peer assessment and self-assessment

Peer and self-assessment are strategies designed to help learners:

- ❖ develop new skills
- ❖ become more critical and evaluative of their own and other learners' work.

Peer assessment occurs where learners are involved in the assessment of the work of other learners. This helps learners develop their personal, learning and thinking skills by having an accurate understanding of what is required in a particular piece of work and using critical and evaluative skills to judge it accurately.

Self-assessment is a process where learners are involved in and are responsible for some aspects of assessing their own pieces of work, competency, skill or stage of development. This helps learners to take more ownership of what they produce and encourages them to be more independent.

Since developing independence and critical skills are key aspects of the Diploma, neither of these forms of assessment should be neglected.

Effective peer assessment and self-assessment depends upon the following.

- ❖ Expected learning outcomes are explicit and transparent to learners.
- ❖ Learners are able to identify when they have met some or all of the success criteria.

- ❖ Learners are taught the skills of collaboration in peer assessment.
- ❖ Learners are able to assess their own progress towards becoming more independent.

This means that to develop these forms of assessment you will need to:

- ❖ train learners over time to assess their own learning and the work of others
- ❖ plan opportunities and time to allow learners to do such assessment
- ❖ frequently and consistently encourage learners' self-reflection on their learning
- ❖ plan peer assessment and self-assessment opportunities within lessons
- ❖ explain the learning objectives and intended outcomes behind each task
- ❖ guide learners towards identifying their next steps.

Reflective activity: Peer assessment and self-assessment

In your department, identify existing and potential opportunities to introduce peer assessment and self-assessment from a component of the Diploma.

- ❖ What opportunities could you plan over the next half term?
- ❖ In what situations could you experiment with a variety of types of peer assessment and self-assessment using some of the techniques outlined above?

Agree a review meeting, which focuses on the gains made in learners' learning.

Select a subject-specific task or activity that enables learners to evaluate their own performance.

- ❖ What criteria for assessment would you need to agree with learners?
- ❖ What principles for how they should assess would you need?

Initially, you could model how you would expect them to do it.

Observe them assessing their work and provide feedback on how well they did it – for example, how they might improve it in the future.

Table 3.2 lists some of the strategies for and benefits of peer assessment and self-assessment.

Reflective activity: Strategies for and benefits of peer assessment and self-assessment

Using Table 3.2 as a prompt, identify the different opportunities for peer assessment and self-assessment that exist within your line of learning, and complete the third column.

Strategies for peer assessment and self-assessment	Key benefit(s)	Example(s) of how it could be used in a lesson
Use anonymous examples of work and ask learners to suggest ways of improving the work to meet the assessment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Learners can identify success and the features that make it a good piece of work ❖ Helps establish shared understanding of standards 	
Ask learners to write their own questions to match specific assessment criteria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Learners clarify the evidence needed to meet different assessment criteria ❖ Helps learners recognise alternative appropriate responses 	
Ask learners to analyse mark schemes and devise their own mark scheme for a specific activity or task	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Learners identify the key elements of an activity or task ❖ Helps learners focus on what they need to do in order to get their achievement recognised 	

Table 3.2: Strategies for and benefits of peer assessment and self-assessment.

Strategies for developing learners' skills in peer assessment and self-assessment

There are many practical strategies used by practitioners to promote the development of peer assessment and self-assessment. A few are presented below.

Learner-led plenary

Traditionally, the plenary of a lesson is a practitioner-led discussion or summary of the lesson; as an alternative you could ask a small group of learners to remind the class of the learning objectives of a lesson. They can lead a discussion to review the progress that all the learners have made and what next steps they need to take. (This strategy assumes that the sharing of learning objectives and intended learning outcomes with learners is already routine.)

Suggested practice: Learner-led plenary

Here are a few suggestions as to how you might go about this.

- ❖ Inform learners that they will sometimes be asked to lead future plenaries but that you will first model how this might be done.
- ❖ Model for learners what they might say and how this can be used to find out what learners have learned and what they need to develop.
- ❖ Inform any group of learners in advance before asking them to help lead a plenary session.
- ❖ In each session where learners are asked to share the lead of a plenary, ensure that their confidence continues to be built upon.
- ❖ Ask learners to discuss briefly in groups whether they agree with any summaries given by the group.
- ❖ Invite learners to offer additional and complementary points.
- ❖ Ensure that learners leading a plenary receive your full, tactful back-up and support.

'Traffic lights'

With this technique, you ask learners to indicate directly on their work to what extent they feel they have achieved the learning objective and how secure they are in their learning. A traffic light system is used:

- ❖ green – achieved, confident (go ahead)
- ❖ amber – some progress, elements of success, some uncertainty (seek advice)
- ❖ red – not achieved, confused (alert practitioner).

This helps you identify early warnings of difficulty and encourages learners to be proactive in seeking help.

'Thumbs up'

This is a quick and informal strategy for you to assess in class how well learners have grasped a new concept or completed a task – learners show thumbs up, sideways or down to indicate their perception of their achievement:

- ❖ thumbs up – confident they have achieved
- ❖ thumbs sideways – some way there, but could achieve more
- ❖ thumbs down – little progress towards achieving.

Self-assessment using generic prompt questions

The use of generic prompt questions helps learners to develop some skill in regularly reviewing their own work as well as the work of others. You can display and use the prompt questions below for learners.

- ❖ What areas of your work do you think could be improved and why?
- ❖ What did you find hardest and where can you get help?

A learning diary

On a regular basis (for example, every third lesson) learners review their own progress in relation to their targets by keeping a diary. In the first instance, you should encourage learners to use questions in order to develop their skills of reviewing their learning in their diaries. Some examples of diary questions include:

- ❖ What did we do in [subject] this week?
- ❖ What have I found out/learned this week?
- ❖ What do I need to focus on next?
- ❖ What have I done well this week?

Learner response partner

Clarke (2003) has some useful suggestions for learners marking with a response partner.

- ❖ The partners should be of roughly the same ability, or just one jump ahead or behind, rather than there being a wide gap.
- ❖ The learners need time to reflect on and check their writing before a response partner sees it.
- ❖ The response partner should begin with a positive comment about the work.
- ❖ The roles of both parties need to be clearly defined.
- ❖ The response partner needs time to take in the learner's work, so it is best for the learner (the author) to read the work out first. This establishes ownership of the piece.
- ❖ Learners need to be trained in the success and improvement process, or whatever is being used, so that they are confident with the steps involved.
- ❖ The two learners should both agree on identifying the part to be changed.
- ❖ The author should make the marks on their work, as a result of the paired discussion.
- ❖ Learners need to be reminded that the focus of their task is the learning intention.
- ❖ The response partner should ask for clarification rather than jump to conclusions.
- ❖ The improvement suggestions can be verbal or written.
- ❖ It would be useful to role-play response partners in front of the class, perhaps showing them a less helpful and more helpful way to approach a piece of work. It could be useful to do this two-thirds of the way through a lesson, so that they can make the improvement, and continue writing with a better understanding of the quality.

Assessment and effective feedback

Providing effective feedback to support assessment and development

Feedback is the means by which you enable learners to 'close the gap' in order to take learning forward and improve their performance. It can be:

- ❖ oral
- ❖ written

- ❖ through demonstration
- ❖ practitioner to learner, learner to learner, or learner to practitioner.

For it to be effective, learners need to respond to the feedback. Effective feedback is about finding the best way of communicating to learners what they have achieved and what they need to work on next. Black and William (1998) suggest that feedback given as rewards or grades enhances 'ego' rather than 'task' involvement, i.e. that the learners compare themselves with others and their image and status, rather than being encouraged to think about the work itself and how to improve it. This focus on ability rather than effort can be damaging to self-esteem. Therefore, feedback on what needs to be done should:

- ❖ encourage all learners to believe that they can improve
- ❖ build on their previous achievement rather than act as a comparison with others.

For assessment to be formative, it is vital that you build in time for improvements to be made. Feedback needs to suggest specific improvements, and effective feedback at regular intervals helps to target learning needs for the future.

It is important to:

- ❖ revisit or give particular emphasis to elements that learners have found difficult
- ❖ give more accessible or more stretching tasks to learners who have found previous material particularly challenging or insufficiently demanding
- ❖ give learners opportunities to apply newly acquired skills (such as PLTS) in different contexts and with a greater degree of independence
- ❖ provide additional support to learners with specific difficulties in order to improve their access to, and understanding of, important skills.

Reflective activity: Feedback

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ How can you ensure that feedback is having an effect on learning?
- ❖ How is feedback monitored for impact?
- ❖ What changes might you need to make to your planning and classroom management to develop peer assessment and self-assessment for the Diploma?

Peer and self-assessment in practice

Skills of self-evaluation are quite sophisticated and learners need support to develop these skills. The development of peer assessment and self-assessment takes planning, time, patience and commitment. By planning and using a range of strategies and by dedicating time to allow learners to reflect on and discuss their learning, you can develop learners' peer and self-assessment skills.

The process of developing self-assessment and peer assessment needs to be tackled in stages. In the early stages, learners need to have the process regularly

modelled for them. It is useful to have examples of work, either from previous learners or written by practitioners, which demonstrate the intended learning outcomes. You can then use these with the whole class – for example, on a whiteboard – to critique the responses and model the approach before asking learners to work on each other's or their own work. It is helpful if you think aloud while critiquing so that your learners develop the necessary language and approach. Once you have demonstrated the process with an anonymous piece of work, your learners can then begin to critique each other's work.

Strategies

To develop peer assessment and self-assessment you will need to:

- ❖ plan peer assessment and self-assessment opportunities in lessons, for example, with 'pair and share' opportunities during class questioning
- ❖ explain the intended learning outcomes behind each task and how they relate to the learning objectives
- ❖ provide learners with clear success criteria that help them assess the quality of their work
- ❖ train learners over time to assess their own work and the work of others and develop an appropriate language
- ❖ frequently and consistently encourage learners to reflect on their learning
- ❖ guide learners to identify their next steps.

Suggested practice: Strategies for peer and self-assessment

- ❖ Encourage learners to listen to other people's responses to questions and presentations made in class, and to ask questions on points that they do not understand.
- ❖ Use examples of work from anonymous learners and ask their peers to suggest possible ways of improving the work and how they would meet the learning outcomes.
- ❖ Ask learners to use the expected outcome to comment on the strengths of each other's work and to identify areas for improvement.
- ❖ Ask learners to mark each other's work but do not give them the answers. Instead, ask them to find the correct answers from available resources.
- ❖ Ask learners to write their own questions on a topic to match the expected learning outcomes and, in addition, to provide answers to others' questions.
- ❖ Ask learners, in groups, to write five questions and, following whole-class discussion, select the two best questions from each group. Then ask learners to answer all the selected questions for homework.
- ❖ Ask learners to analyse mark schemes and devise their own mark scheme for a specified task.
- ❖ Ask learners to decide whether they think an answer is reasonable, whether they can add to the answer, or whether they would have given a different answer.
- ❖ Encourage learners to develop assessment criteria for periodic assessment tasks.
- ❖ Ask learners for their level of confidence about a particular piece of work.

A whole-school/college approach

A whole-school/college approach to developing peer assessment and self-assessment is necessary because it is hard to develop them in isolation. Peer assessment and self-assessment require learners to take increased responsibility for their learning and develop as independent learners. This has fundamental implications for the learning ethos in a school or college.

To successfully develop peer assessment and self-assessment, you need to:

- ❖ have a clear understanding of the progression in the key concepts and skills in a subject
- ❖ be able to help learners understand this progression and help them use success criteria to judge the quality of their work and understand what they need to do to improve it
- ❖ be able to support group discussion and, for example, model challenging but constructive responses, as learners need to develop their confidence and skills in paired and group discussions
- ❖ develop skills in orchestrating whole-class questioning and dialogue that cause learners to reflect on their own learning and support each other's learning.

All of this has implications for continuing professional development, and for the development of a learning culture and climate in a school or college based on collaborative working and mutual support.

You may also wish to involve employers in the feedback process: clear guidance will be necessary so that they understand their role.

Resources

Resources on developing effective approaches to peer and self-assessment form part of the National Strategies whole-school/college and subject-specific training materials on assessment for learning. You can download these from The Standards Site (www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/secondary/keystage3/all/respub/afl_ws).



Reflective activity: Assessment for and assessment of learning

By sharing expectations and targets with learners, assessment *of* learning can contribute to assessment *for* learning. For example, learners can be given the opportunity to:

- ❖ mark, moderate and review test papers
- ❖ review their performance against the test criteria and set personal targets.

Consider other ways that you can use assessment of learning to contribute to assessment for learning.

3.2 Assessment of learning

Assessment of learning is an approach to assessment which grades or marks pieces of work that are finished and submitted by learners at the end of courses or units. This work can include essays, simulations, demonstrations of competence or work products, performance and presentations.

Assessment of learning is summative (see page 55) and is carried out periodically (for example, at the end of a unit, year or key stage). Through this kind of assessment you can judge how well a learner has performed. Outcomes will typically be reported in terms of marks, levels or grades. This method of assessment also allows schools and colleges to track progress towards achievement of a qualification or the learning aim.

Assessment of learning within the Diploma qualification

Since 50 per cent of principal learning is applied, assessment of principal learning should be purposeful and, as far as possible, should be contextualised within a work environment. Personal, learning and thinking skills and functional skills should also be contextualised.

Assessment for the Diploma will meet the five regulatory requirements applied to all assessment in external qualifications and National Curriculum tests:

- ❖ validity
- ❖ reliability
- ❖ comparability of standards
- ❖ minimal bias
- ❖ manageability of assessment.

All awarding bodies must ensure that their assessments are fit for purpose, valid and reliable. Validity in assessment has been defined by QCA as 'the fitness for purpose of an assessment tool or scheme'. In other words, an assessment can be deemed valid if it gives an accurate measurement of whatever it is supposed to measure.

As all principal learning and other qualifications within the Diploma will have both internal and external assessment, a variety of approaches will be used for each (see pages 77 and 79 for exemplars of assessment). The proportion of external assessment may vary between Diploma lines of learning in the Advanced Diploma.

Awarding bodies will set out requirements to support internal assessment through moderation and verification, and there will be rules and checks in place to make sure that learners' work is their own. (See section on controlled assessment on the following page.)

Working collaboratively within your consortium

The new Diploma qualifications represent significant changes to 14–19 education. While the delivery of qualifications has in the past largely involved the learners and staff of a single school or college, Diploma delivery relies on

teamwork, partnership and collaboration within consortia, across centres and with employers. One area where robust and common working practices will be critical is internal assessment.

Ensuring robust standards of internal assessment will be key to ensuring the quality of the Diploma as a qualification. At the outset of Diploma delivery, it is essential that consortia recognise the challenges related to delivering high-quality internal assessment in the context of a consortium. The roles of lead and domain assessors will have an important roles ensuring rigour within assessment processes and outcomes: their roles are described further on page 82.

Internal assessment

Controlled assessment

The Diploma criteria for accreditation require that principal learning qualifications involve internal assessment and that this is controlled, in terms of task setting, taking, marking and moderation. Other qualifications including GCSEs that form part of additional and specialist learning will also be using controlled assessment methods.

The purpose of controlled assessment is:

To ensure public confidence in assessment by making sure:

- ❖ assessment tasks are valid
- ❖ learners' work is authenticated
- ❖ marking is reliable.

To support manageability for:

- ❖ learners
- ❖ centres
- ❖ **CABs.**

To ensure consistency in the assessment demands and standards:

- ❖ between CABs
- ❖ across lines of learning
- ❖ with other qualifications, where relevant.

Awarding bodies will set controls for each assessment so that the overall level of control secures validity and ensures reliability; this also facilitates teachers in authenticating the work confidently. The controls will relate to different aspects of the assessment process which are:

- ❖ task setting
- ❖ taking conditions
- ❖ supervision and feedback
- ❖ submission

Component awarding bodies

The bodies responsible for ensuring that, when a learner has achieved a component of a Diploma, the results are forwarded to the Diploma awarding body to give the learner an overall final grade.

- ❖ marking
- ❖ standardisation
- ❖ moderation.

You may wish to see more guidance on controlled assessment, from your awarding body but also from the National Assessment Agency (www.naa.org.uk) and QCA (www.qca.org.uk).



It is vital that quality assurance on assessment is in place and that suitably qualified members of staff take on the role of managing that quality assurance. Managers must ensure staff are supported and their training needs are met in this respect.

The following exemplar shows an opportunity for internal assessment from the Diploma in Creative and Media, showing the learning outcome and the three mark bands used for assessing the learner's work.



Exemplar: Internal assessment – Foundation Diploma in Creative and Media (Unit 1)

LO1: Be able to apply skills needed by those working in the creative and media sector

Mark band	Descriptors	Marks
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Uses a very narrow range of the most basic techniques, materials or equipment with very little confidence. ❖ Completes straightforward tasks with very limited success. 	0 – 10
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Uses a narrow range of basic techniques, materials or equipment with little confidence. ❖ Completes straightforward tasks with limited success. 	11 – 17
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Uses basic techniques, materials or equipment with some confidence and some sense of purpose. ❖ Completes straightforward tasks to an acceptable standard. 	18 – 25

Setting and marking tasks for internal assessment

Awarding bodies are producing exemplar assignments and case studies to support consortia in ensuring a consistent approach to setting assessment tasks. Consortia will also design their own assessment tasks to reflect their local environment and the applied learning nature of the Diploma. In all cases, consortia should refer to guidance from the relevant awarding body regarding the setting and marking of tasks to assess the achievement of internally assessed units.

Reflective activity: Designing assessment tasks

As a line of learning team, review any exemplar assessment tasks together with the relevant unit specification.

- ❖ What are the key issues for setting assessment tasks in your line of learning?
- ❖ Can exemplar materials be used or adapted to meet the needs of learners in your consortium?
- ❖ How can local employers support learners to produce evidence for assessment?
- ❖ How can assessment objectives be contextualised to make them relevant to your local area?

Internal moderation and standardisation

The applied learning nature of the Diploma gives rise to a strong emphasis on internal assessment, the validity and reliability of which must be assured so that there can be no question about the awarding and reporting of results.

Reflective activity: Staff training for standardisation

Awarding bodies can supply a range of exemplar material with commentaries to explain how they have been marked. In your line of learning team, use exemplar work from relevant existing courses as a base for INSET training to ensure a consistent approach to assessment across the consortium.

External assessment

Some principal learning units of the Diploma and some selected additional and specialist learning qualifications are externally assessed and a variety of approaches will be used. The assessment criteria for each qualification within Diploma qualifications are available on the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ) (see www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/index.aspx). More detailed information (for example, the form of the assessment and approaches to applied learning and assessment) is available within the Diploma qualification specifications published by the awarding bodies.



The following exemplar shows an external assessment question from the Higher Diploma in Society, Health and Development.



Exemplar: External assessment – Higher Diploma in Society, Health and Development (Unit 4)

Discuss how the following might influence an individual's lifestyle.

(a) Socio-economic factors such as employment and education

.....
.....
.....
..... (2)

(b) Physical factors such as the environment

.....
.....
.....
..... (2)

(c) Religion

.....
.....
.....
..... (2)

(d) Culture and beliefs

.....
.....
.....
..... (2)

(Total 8 marks)

3.3 Diploma components and grading

The principal learning within each Diploma comprises a series of units of assessment. The following illustrates how the different elements are combined in the Diploma programme.

- ❖ In the Foundation and Higher Diplomas, principal units are either 30 or 60 guided learning hours (GLH) to a total of 240 GLH for the Foundation Diploma and 420 GLH for the Higher Diploma
- ❖ In the Advanced Diploma, principal learning units are either 30, 60 or 90 guided learning hours to a total of 540 GLH.

The project is a single unit with its own standards and assessment.

Principal learning units form a qualification in its own right, assessed both externally and internally. The extent of external assessment in principal learning is:

- ❖ 30 guided learning hours for the Foundation Diploma
- ❖ 60 guided learning hours for the Higher Diploma
- ❖ 120 or 180 guided learning hours for the Advanced Diploma.

Grading of the Diploma

To achieve the overall Diploma qualification, learners need to achieve all components within the Diploma, including PLTS, functional skills and additional and specialist learning and the project.

The Diploma grade is derived from the aggregate score the learner is awarded for the principal learning units and for the Foundation, Higher or extended project, as appropriate to the level of Diploma.

The Diploma is graded at all levels, and reported in the following way:

- ❖ A*, A, B or ungraded (U) for the Foundation Diploma
- ❖ A*, A, B, C or ungraded (U) for the Higher Diploma
- ❖ A*, A, B, C, D, E or ungraded (U) for the Advanced Diploma.

For further information on how grading of the Diploma works visit the Ofqual website www.ofqual.gov.uk.



The Diploma Aggregation Service

The Diploma Aggregation Service is the administrative system that underpins the awarding of Diplomas. The service has been developed by the QCA in collaboration with the awarding bodies. It will be used by examination centres and awarding bodies involved in Diplomas to share data and record learners' progress towards a Diploma award. Typically, users at examination centres will access the service through a web browser.

How does it work?

The Diploma Aggregation Service will record the Diploma constituent qualification results for each learner, aggregate these, and apply the rules of combination to determine whether sufficient results have been gained for a

Diploma to be claimed. Once a learner achieves a valid set of results, a trial grade will be calculated. The trial grade is verified by the Diploma awarding body.

Results are recorded against a learner account, which is created for each Diploma learner using their unique learner number (ULN). This number is a prerequisite for Diploma learning, as learners may be studying for constituent qualifications in multiple centres, potentially from different awarding bodies, all of which will count towards a single Diploma qualification.

The centre exams officer

The role of your centre exams officer will be a key factor in this process, as you can see from the diagram below. The exams officer will be responsible for allocating ULN and opening the learner accounts and for liaison with Component Awarding Bodies (CAB) and Diploma Awarding Bodies (DAB). Each level of Diploma may involve additional and specialist learning from a variety of awarding bodies. The National Assessment Agency (NAA) offers a significant programme of support to help exams officers familiarise themselves with this new aspect of their role – see www.naa.org.uk for details regarding this training.

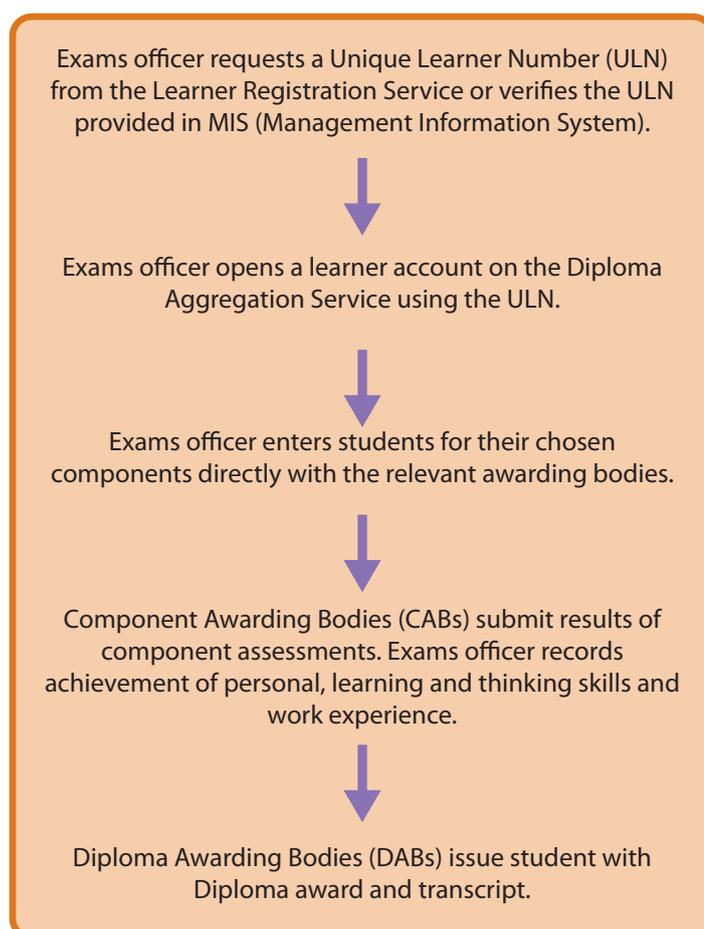


Figure 3.2: The role of your centre exams officer within the process (source: NAA).

Reporting achievement

A Diploma transcript will record and report a learner's achievements of qualifications within the Diploma programme. It also records the achievement

of personal, learning and thinking skills, as well as the completion of work experience. The transcript will be generated by the Diploma awarding body.

Lead and domain assessors: supporting robust quality assurance

Two roles have been identified to help ensure high-quality internal assessment (whatever the size of a consortium and whatever Diploma provision it offers) – the domain assessor and the lead assessor. These two strategic roles, along with the full commitment of consortium management, will serve to underpin standards.

Roles within the consortium for managing assessment

Consortium management

The management team of school, college and other centre staff who manage Diploma delivery and internal assessment across all Diploma programmes offered in a consortium.

Lead assessor

This will be an appropriately qualified/experienced person who has responsibility within a consortium for ensuring consistency in the quality assurance of assessment carried out for the principal learning and project components across all Diploma programmes offered. He or she will work with domain assessors and practitioners while setting up the programme and as the programme develops.

Domain assessor

This person will have a similar profile and role as the lead assessor but within each individual line of learning.

(Delivering the Diploma. A guide to managing internal assessment – NAA)



To find out more, please visit the NAA web pages on Diploma internal assessment at www.naa.org.uk

3.4 The project and extended project

The Foundation, Higher or extended project is a free-standing single-unit qualification that forms part of the generic learning component of the Diploma, and will allow learners to:

- ❖ draw on and integrate learning from each part of their Diploma
- ❖ demonstrate independent learning skills.

You should encourage learners to use and apply appropriate technologies in carrying out their Foundation, Higher or extended project. A project is undertaken for each Diploma line, at every level. It gives learners a chance to create something in an area they are particularly interested in. It can be about any topic that interests them. They will have the opportunity to explore and develop their ideas, and express their creativity. It will also give them the opportunity to demonstrate the skills and knowledge they have learned.

Projects may have a local context to make them more accessible and meaningful to the learner.

Foundation, Higher or extended project topics should:

- ❖ be chosen by the learner. The topic should interest them and capture their imagination. If the learner chooses a topic of personal interest to them, they are much more likely to become enthusiastic and engaged with it, ultimately producing a better-quality project. Projects produced at Foundation, Higher and Advanced level will require different levels of support from you. However, remember that project guidance can be given to learners from a variety of sources including their work placement employer, visiting speakers and other Diploma staff across your institution or even your consortium
- ❖ complement and develop principal learning and/or support individual progression.

The Foundation and Higher projects will provide opportunities for:

- ❖ the development skills of enquiry and independence for the learner
- ❖ exploration of new areas or methods of study
- ❖ demonstration and further development of learning skills
- ❖ working individually or as part of a group
- ❖ **experiential learning**
- ❖ development and application of specialist technical skills
- ❖ presentation of the outcome
- ❖ application of functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills within contexts of the learning.

The following is an example of a learner's voice in setting up a project within the Foundation Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies.

Experiential learning

A process that stresses the central role of experience in learning. Learners reflect on their experience, draw out and articulate lessons learned (generalise), and then apply their learning to new situations or activities. The learner's subjective experience is of critical importance in the learning process. In essence it is learning by doing or learning through an actual experience.



Exemplar: Foundation project brief

Qualification – Foundation Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies

Project title – The qualities needed to work in the Hair and Beauty sector

Learner name – Alex Bond

Practitioner/mentor – Mr Ripley

Introduction to my project

I am going to carry out interviews on three employers to find out what they think are the most important qualities that they expect of their staff. The main things I want to find out are:

- ❖ the skills the staff need
- ❖ the attitudes the staff need.

One of the employers will be in a hair salon, the other one in a beauty salon and the final one in a barber's shop. I also have three more employers selected in case I don't hear back from any of my first three.

First, I am going to send a word-processed letter of introduction to the employers with a stamped addressed envelope, as well as my school email address in case they would prefer to email rather than write. The letter will explain about the project I am doing and ask if I could come and interview them. I would tell them:

- ❖ how long I need (approximately 20 minutes)
- ❖ what I need to know, so they have time to think about it
- ❖ a few dates and times, so they can choose which is convenient for them.

I will use the school Dictaphone to tape the questions and answers. The reason I have chosen this project is so that I can find out exactly what I need in case I decide to go into a hair and beauty career. I hope to also take some photographs of each of the salons and the staff, if I am allowed.

When I have carried out my interviews I will present my results to my class using a PowerPoint® presentation. I will do a short question-and-answer session at the end of the presentation.

Finally, I will write a brief conclusion to say how I think my work went and whether there was anything I could improve.

As evidence, the learner could include:

Evidence of process:

- ❖ a sample of the letter to employers and the replies
- ❖ the name and full contact details of the hair and beauty establishments
- ❖ appointment times and dates of the interviews
- ❖ the list of questions and answers during the interview or the tape of the interview.

Outcome:

- ❖ the PowerPoint® presentation handout
- ❖ the written conclusion.

The extended project

The extended project is similarly a stand-alone, single-unit qualification that forms part of the generic learning component, but it can also be taken as part of an A-level programme of study.

The extended project will provide an opportunity for learners at Advanced level to draw on and integrate learning from each component of their Diploma and to demonstrate independent learning skills. You should encourage learners to use and apply appropriate technologies in carrying out their extended project.

In addition to achieving an appropriate level in the areas listed above, learners will be expected to develop higher-level skills and cognitive abilities.

At Advanced level, the structure and standards are common to all lines of learning. These include criteria for the extended project, whether it is taken as a free-standing qualification or as part of the generic learning of a Diploma.

The extended project also requires the application of functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills.

Assessment of the Foundation, Higher or extended project

Foundation and Higher projects

Foundation Diplomas require achievement of a Foundation project or Higher Project. Higher Diplomas require achievement of a Higher project or an extended project. Foundation and Higher projects are each allocated 60 guided learning hours.

Advanced and Progression Diplomas require achievement of the extended project and allow learners 120 guided learning hours for this.

The Foundation, Higher or extended project qualifications are assessed internally by a practitioner following the guidance and specification of the appropriate awarding body. Where marking for the Foundation, Higher or extended project is carried out by more than one marker in the centre, there must be a process of internal standardisation to ensure that there is consistent application of the criteria laid down in the marking grids.

The following exemplar illustrates the assessment criteria for a Higher project.



Exemplar: Higher project – assessment criteria

Assessment criteria

The learner can:

- ❖ 1.1 Choose a topic
- ❖ 1.2 Identify the intended outcome
- ❖ 1.3 Identify objectives for completion of the project
- ❖ 2.1 Use a range of sources of information
- ❖ 2.2 Select information that is relevant to the task
- ❖ 2.3 Collate information from a range of sources
- ❖ 3.1 Describe what form the project will take and relate it to its intended outcome
- ❖ 3.2 Apply organisational skills to deliver the intended outcome
- ❖ 3.3 Review progress
- ❖ 3.4 Complete the project
- ❖ 4.1 Choose a range of tools, techniques and/or technologies suitable to develop and realise the project
- ❖ 4.2 Use relevant tools, techniques and/or technologies to develop and realise the project
- ❖ 4.3 Work with a group (one other person or more) to provide feedback and relevant input to their project
- ❖ 4.4 Work out how to solve problems that arise and use the lessons learned to help complete the task
- ❖ 5.1 Identify the main conclusions
- ❖ 5.2 Describe what the results of the work on the project show (evaluation and analysis)
- ❖ 5.3 Assess how relevant and successful the project has been
- ❖ 5.4 Present the project in a way that allows it to be understood by others.

Appendix: quick reference to assessment methods

Table 3.3 below lists the various methods of assessment and gives a brief definition of the purpose of each along with a suggestion of where it may fit into the Diploma.

Reflective activity: Methods of assessment for the Diploma

Look at the assessment methods below. As a department, discuss when these different types of assessment could be employed in the delivery of the Diploma in your particular line of learning.

- ❖ Criterion-referenced
- ❖ Formative assessment
- ❖ Diagnostic assessment
- ❖ Learner self-assessment.
- ❖ Peer assessment
- ❖ Summative assessment
- ❖ Evaluative assessment

For example, peer assessment could be used for pairs of learners to evaluate each other's work with reference to the 'Outline/Describe/Explain' differentiation common to many of the awarding bodies across all lines of learning.

Method	Definition/characteristics	Examples of Diploma application
Criterion-referenced assessment	A learner's performance is judged against given criteria (for example, desirable learning outcomes, level descriptions or learning goals).	Learners' work in a particular Diploma unit is assessed against criteria set by the awarding body.
Formative assessment	Formative assessment is a continuous process of review conducted throughout the programme to build up a profile of the individual learner and to monitor and review their progress against targets. Assessing learners so that their performance can inform future learning. National Curriculum practitioner assessment is designed to be formative in nature. It is both integral to the learning process and related to the development of learning.	Learners preparing for internally assessed Diploma units are provided with formative assessment to show them how to move their work to a higher mark band.
Diagnostic assessment	Diagnostic assessment is an evaluation of a learner's skills, strengths and areas for development. It gives a thorough initial indication of which level an individual needs to be placed at within a subject and also which specific areas of work they need to improve on. This more detailed type of assessment may be necessary for learners who are facing particular difficulties.	An assessment of special educational needs may be carried out to identify support needed by a dyslexic learner, for example.

Method	Definition/characteristics	Examples of Diploma application
Self-assessment	Learners evaluate their own work against set criteria to see which of these have been met and to identify areas where further work is required. This involves learners taking increasing responsibility for their own learning. Self-assessment is much more than learners simply marking their own work. In order to improve learning, self-assessment must engage learners with the quality of their work and help them reflect on how to improve it.	Learners carry out a self-evaluation of how they carried out a task on placement and use this to plan for improvement in a future placement.
Peer assessment	Learners work with a peer to evaluate each other's work against set criteria. They identify where the work meets the criteria and identify areas for development. This adds a valuable dimension to learning: the opportunity to talk, discuss, explain and challenge each other may enable learners to achieve beyond what they can learn unaided.	Learners work in pairs to assess each other's work against specific assessment criteria from the course specification. They highlight where their partner has met certain criteria and the measures they need to take in order to meet others.
Summative assessment	The summative assessment is a final review of learning at the end of a learner's course to measure the 'distance travelled'. This is where the assessor identifies what a learner or a group of learners has attained within a given domain, so that these attainments can be reported in a quantitative format.	Any of the Awarding Body assessments for principal learning units will be carried out summatively. Assessment of the project is also an example of summative assessment.
Evaluative assessment	Evaluative assessment is the process of judging the success of a learner or group of learners. This will often involve aggregated summative assessments, so that the effectiveness of a learning programme can be judged.	The test results of a class are evaluated to judge the effectiveness of a particular approach to teaching and learning.

Table 3.3: Forms of assessment.

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4 Collaborative working

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4 Collaborative working

No single establishment will be able to offer learners their entitlement to all 17 Diploma lines of learning without effective and creative collaboration and partnership working. The Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP) has resulted in strong and productive partnerships between schools, colleges and providers of applied learning.

However, for the Diploma to be a success, and to ensure that learners are given every opportunity to achieve, some partnerships may need to be developed further to include a more diverse range of stakeholders. Everyone involved in the education of learners aged 14–19 – whether in a practitioner, support or management role – will feel the impact of the Diplomas. Educationalists, schools, colleges, institutions of higher education, employers, learners, parents and many other stakeholders are facing a huge cultural change, and it is the responsibility of all concerned to ensure the Diploma is a success. That is, that it meets the needs of both young people and the national economy.

This section explores the key issues around collaborative working, including implementing applied learning. Without full and effective collaboration with a wide range of stakeholders, it will be extremely difficult for consortia to ensure that 50 per cent of principal learning is applied. It presents many examples of current and emerging practice, and sets out a problem-solving approach to making this key element of Diploma delivery a reality.

'In designing the Diploma, a new precedent for collaboration between industry, higher education and the wider education community has been set. By matching up the skills needs of particular sectors, the current and future skills needs of the global economy as a whole, and a wider agenda to provide challenging and holistic education to all young people, the Diploma is forging a new path in the design of qualifications for the 21st century.'

Teresa Bergin, QCA, 2008

4.1 Maintaining and promoting partnership working

14–19 Partnership Guidance, produced by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES, 2006) gives an overview of why partnership working is crucial to the future of 14–19 education. This defines a successful 14–19 partnership as one with:

- ❖ a shared sense of ownership
- ❖ strategic leadership and vision
- ❖ clear objectives and organisation
- ❖ recognition of individual strengths
- ❖ access to professional advice – for example, from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF).

Legislation requires all local authorities and learning and skills councils to ensure that there is sufficient provision within their local area. This provision should meet the demand from learners aged 14–19 for access to all the Diploma lines of learning.

Without partnership working, it would be extremely difficult for learner entitlement to become a reality, as it is unlikely that any one institution will be able to offer all 17 lines of learning. Before offering a Diploma, providers must go through the Gateway process, which involves a thorough self-assessment of their readiness to deliver (see ‘Self-evaluation for institutions and consortia’ in section 6.2). To meet all the requirements of the self-assessment and the Gateway panel, providers in a local area need to work together to build capacity and to develop the workforce.

Partnership working for successful delivery of the Diploma: partnerships and consortia

No single institution is likely to have all the facilities and expertise required to deliver the Diploma effectively. To overcome this problem, institutions are expected to collaborate in two ways: in 14–19 partnerships and in consortia.

Schools, colleges and providers of applied learning will need to work together, sharing:

- ❖ staff
- ❖ facilities
- ❖ information.

Most consortia are working to align the timetables of their participating bodies to facilitate partnership working. Such timetabling will also ensure that learners can access parts of their Diploma programmes at institutions other than their ‘home’ institution without disruption to their core curriculum.

14–19 partnerships

What is the difference between a 14–19 partnership and a consortium? In some areas, the answer would be ‘very little’; in others, there may be many differences. While there is some guidance on what constitutes a 14–19 partnership and a consortium, each local area interprets the guidance in a way that reflects local needs. For example, the needs of a large shire county will be very different from those of a small **unitary authority**.

Unitary authority

Unitary authorities cover towns or cities that are large enough to be independent of county or regional administration. Examples include Blackburn and Darwen, Swindon and Thurrock.

In response to the *14–19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan* (DfES, 2005), a commitment was made to set up 14–19 partnerships led by local authorities and the Learning and Skills Council. In most areas, these partnerships extended further, to other senior leaders, representing the major stakeholders within the local area, including:

- ❖ schools
- ❖ colleges
- ❖ providers of applied learning
- ❖ Connexions.

The purpose of a 14–19 partnership is to agree and develop a long-term strategy in terms of implementing the government’s 14–19 education reforms and related initiatives. In particular, it should develop the capacity for provision, including access to the full range of curriculum choices, such as the **Foundation Learning Tier**, general qualifications, Diplomas and Apprenticeships.

Foundation Learning Tier

Reforms to provision at Entry and Level 1, known as the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) will be implemented from September 2008. Clear routes called progression pathways will be available for learners working below Level 2 to enable them to achieve combinations of qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 that will prepare them for Level 2 and beyond. Progression pathways will transform the learning experience and increase opportunities for these learners. It will also enable progression into the Diploma at the appropriate level.

Reflective activity: Experiences of collaboration

Consider the following issues surrounding how you may collaborate with other institutions.

- ❖ What experiences have you or your institution had of collaborative working?
- ❖ What subject networks exist within your local area? Do you take part in them?
- ❖ Have you worked in collaboration with any other subject areas within your institution?
- ❖ Have you ever invited a practitioner from another institution to help you deliver an aspect of your line of learning that is not your specialism?
- ❖ How much work have you done with practitioners from other institutions on the assessment of learner work and/or internal moderation? How can you further develop this work?
- ❖ How often do you invite industry professionals to help deliver aspects of your subject and what types of activities do they participate in?
- ❖ What experiences do you currently have of learners accessing your line of learning from another institution? If none, how can you assist in the development of this type of delivery?
- ❖ Have you had to travel to other institutions in your local area in order to deliver aspects of your specialism? What barriers did you encounter?



Exemplar: Swindon 14–19 Partnership

The Swindon 14–19 Partnership has been highly commended for its collaborative approach, breadth of provision, leadership and management. From 2008, the consortium will be offering Diplomas in Creative and Media, Construction and the Built Environment, and Engineering.

Under Swindon’s delivery model, the Diploma in Creative and Media is delivered by six schools and two colleges, with the lead provider being a specialist performing arts school. The delivery at Foundation and Higher level is designed to ensure learners are able to access provision matched to their strengths, interests and career aspirations. This involves both the schools and the colleges, so that best use is made of the facilities available. The schools deliver all the principal learning, while the colleges support the delivery of one unit. Units are taught on a rotational basis. Schools offer the same unit at the same time, to give learners choice. The rotation ensures that all learners can access the college, and that employer and applied learning opportunities can be maximised. Collaborative planning makes it possible to arrange relevant events for all the learners. At Advanced level, Swindon and New College are planning collaboratively to ensure that the full range of disciplines is offered.

Source: QIA Diploma support programme

How the consortia operate

A consortium is usually made up of those organisations involved in the strategic and (mainly) operational activities relating to Diplomas. These activities include:

- ❖ preparing for and carrying out a self-assessment for application to the Gateway
- ❖ developing a delivery model
- ❖ ensuring appropriate facilities are in place
- ❖ securing employer engagement
- ❖ providing information, advice and guidance through a variety of means
- ❖ promoting the lines of learning to young people and their parents and carers
- ❖ carrying out a training needs analysis on the workforce; ensuring it is deployed effectively and according to expertise
- ❖ developing and maintaining the collaborative nature of Diploma delivery and management
- ❖ developing timetable models
- ❖ developing underpinning systems, protocols and quality assurance mechanisms
- ❖ finding solutions to other logistical issues, such as transport.

The following exemplars show how consortia operate in different areas.



Exemplar: Warrington

Warrington, a unitary authority in Cheshire, has a 14–19 partnership and only one consortium responsible for all Diploma Gateway applications. This arrangement was the model adopted locally for implementing Diplomas within the area. The Warrington 14–19 Partnership has opted for a ‘hub and cluster’ model: the borough has been split into three cluster areas and within each cluster area there will be a hub for a particular Diploma line of learning. For example, in the North Cluster in 2008, Birchwood High School is the hub for the Diploma in Society, Health and Development and will accommodate all those learners opting for this Diploma from within the cluster area. However, along with the hubs in the other two cluster areas, Birchwood High School is, in simple terms, the host for the Diploma line, while the consortium has full responsibility for Diploma management and development. This arrangement allows for the sharing of teaching expertise and presents opportunities for more structured employer engagement in terms of specialist delivery, speakers from industry, assistance with applied learning, work experience and the provision of information, advice and guidance.



Exemplar: Hertfordshire

Hertfordshire is one of the largest 14–19 partnerships in the country and has achieved a high level of success in the Gateway process. Owing to the size of the partnership, the decision was made to establish seven consortia ('Strategic Partnership Groups') to deliver the Diplomas across the county: Bishop's Stortford and Sawbridgeworth; South East Herts; St Albans and Harpenden; Dacorum; Welwyn Hatfield and East Herts; South West Herts; and North Herts.

To support collaborative working and to assist those who have found progressing through the Gateway process more of a challenge than others, the DCSF has set up a 'twinning network' between itself and consortia preparing to deliver the Diplomas and the functional skills pilots. The consortia have volunteered to take part in this initiative, along with volunteers from the DCSF's Working Group on 14–19 Reform. Their aim is to complement the existing **Learning Visits Programme** and contribute to the bank of emerging good practice for all consortia to access, to help them with their own developments.

Levels of collaboration

Collaboration needs to take place beyond the 14–19 partnerships and consortia. There are many other groups within a local area that also need to work more closely with each other than before. However, collaboration should not only take place horizontally (between headteachers, college leaders, directors of the providers of applied learning, and so on). There is just as great a need for collaboration vertically – from the headteacher right through to the classroom support practitioner – to ensure that the needs and concerns of all involved are taken into consideration.

Learning Visits Programme

Learning visits are offered by those consortia considered to be advanced in the process of delivering Diplomas. Other consortia can make a learning visit to a consortium to find out how problems with, say, timetable/curriculum modelling, transport and collaboration have been overcome.

Reflective activity: Questions for 14–19 partnerships and consortia

Consider the following questions relating to your local area.

- ❖ Are individual institutions prepared to 'share' practitioners with other institutions in the local area?
- ❖ Are institutions prepared to work together on workforce planning and agree to replace staff according to the needs of the consortium rather than the institution?
- ❖ Are institutions prepared to provide time to allow practitioners involved in Diploma delivery to work in collaboration with colleagues on planning and development?
- ❖ Are institutions prepared to provide time to allow practitioners to travel between institutions?

Figure 4.1 shows the management structure for the Diploma in Barrow-in-Furness with the:

- ❖ strategic and operational levels of management
- ❖ level of management responsible for co-ordinating and ensuring the connectivity of all strategic and operational management.

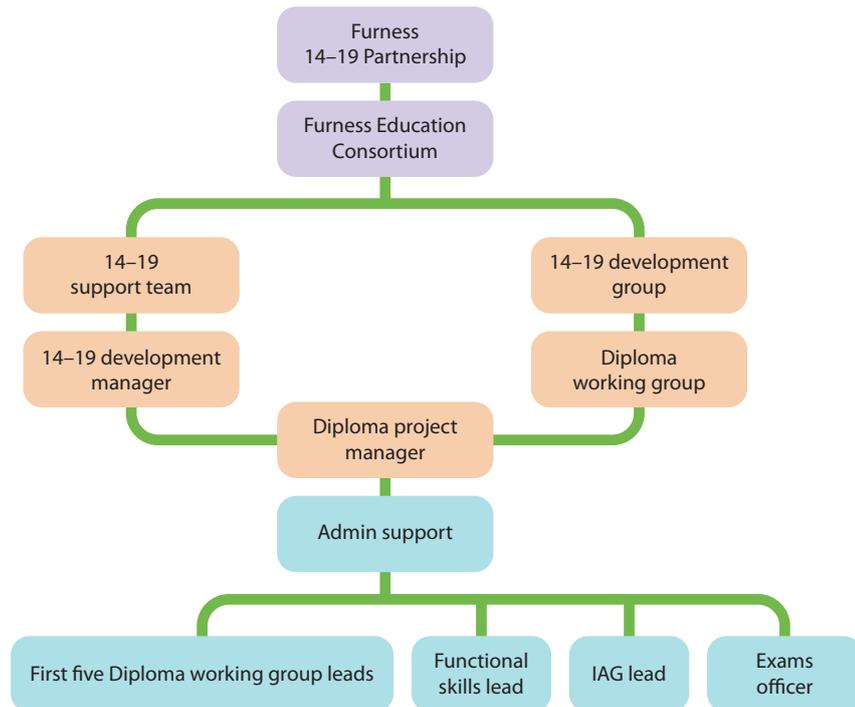


Figure 4.1: Management structure for the Diploma in Barrow-in-Furness. (Source: *Insights from Diploma Pathfinders* (QCA, 2007).)

It cannot be denied that collaboration at the level required for effective delivery and positive outcomes is a real challenge, but tackling this challenge may bring many benefits. For example, help and support for practitioners, as well as opportunities for more professional development and training, will be more readily available.



Team meetings are part of collaborative working.

Management structures

While each 14–19 partnership will develop its own management structure to support collaboration, three structures emerged across the eight Diploma pathfinders (previously 14–19 pathfinders) commissioned by the QCA to explore different aspects of the infrastructure needed to deliver the Diploma. These three common management structures were:

- ❖ a strategic-level group, consisting of senior leaders and including head teachers, principals, directors of providers of work-based learning, and representatives from the local authority, the Learning and Skills Council, Connexions/information, advice and guidance (IAG) provider and, in some areas, universities
- ❖ an operational management group, consisting of members of the senior management team within an institution, including deputy heads (14–19 responsibility), assistant/vice principals (14–19), senior members of staff from providers of work-based learning, local authority 14–19 consultants/providers, Learning and Skills Council area managers, and senior members from Connexions/IAG provider and the local **Education Business Partnership**
- ❖ one or more groups developing the curriculum for a particular Diploma line of learning. Each typically consisted of line-of-learning practitioners who met to develop the delivery side of Diplomas, with representation from other organisations as listed above, and including representation of employers and other sector-related agencies.

Education Business Partnerships

These bodies are known by different names in different areas. Also known as education business link services (EBLS) or business in education partnerships (BEPs), education business partnerships seek to establish sustained links between educational institutions and businesses in each area. There is a national umbrella organisation for them: the National Education Business Partnership Network (NEBPN) (www.nebpn.org).



Exemplar: An operational management team in Wolverhampton

Wolverhampton has a long history of effective collaborative partnerships. A core belief of the Wolverhampton 14–19 Partnership is that the reform agenda can be delivered only through area-wide collaboration at all levels. This vision of promoting collaboration is continually reinforced throughout the work of the Partnership. The Diploma is just one part of the wider aim to develop personalised learning which is accessible to all young people, and to deliver the national entitlement.

A vehicle for the delivery of this vision in Wolverhampton is DEPNET (the Deputies Network), which occupies a central position in the management of collaboration in the city. Membership of DEPNET primarily consists of curriculum deputies from each of the secondary schools, with representation from Wolverhampton College. The work of DEPNET is co-ordinated and supported by the local authority's 14–19 team.

The key feature of DEPNET is that the deputies are empowered to make decisions on behalf of their schools without the need to refer back to their head teacher. DEPNET makes collectively binding decisions, and there is a growing culture of mutual commitment to area-wide agreements about issues like quality and timetabling.

The 14–19 manager for Wolverhampton explains that Wolverhampton is on a journey from elective participation – where schools are concerned with their own interests – to disciplined pluralism, based on collective accountability. The Gateway process and the Education and Inspections Act 2006 have made collaboration crucial. The strategic vision for Wolverhampton is to have a fully collaborative management system developed by 2010 and fully implemented by 2013.

Source: *Insights from Diploma Pathfinders* (QCA, 2007)



Exemplar: Gateshead's learning line development groups

In Gateshead, college departments have been paired with successful departments in secondary schools to form the core of 'learning line development groups'. These groups are responsible for the preparation of Gateway self-assessments and development plans. Each comprises a lead specialist school and representative of the college department relevant to the line of learning, together with support (when required) from a range of other agencies, including Connexions and the Education Business Links Service. Again, the group's work is based on developing and agreeing a set of principles.

Opportunities for collaboration have allayed apprehensions about working together and have shown how a broader curriculum could be offered to learners. The Curriculum Deputy at Whickham School commented: 'Putting practitioners together is very productive and a lot was learned from the first pilot. When the practitioners and college lecturers actually met, they talked about the subject they were interested in professionally and all the suspicions disappeared. They realised they had issues, interests and challenges in common and could work together to solve them. The learning line development groups are providing excellent opportunities for sharing good practice and for staff development... To develop trust and confidence, it is important for learning line development groups to start by sharing existing practice and discussing the needs of their learners and the challenges they are facing. In this way, common understandings develop.'

Source: *Insights from Diploma Pathfinders* (QCA, 2007)

Mapping consortia arrangements

Do you know what arrangements exist within your consortium? Do you know who to contact to find out how to become involved in your local partnership? Each consortium will have its own model of partnership working. Use the activity below to help you build your knowledge of your own consortium's arrangements.

Reflective activity: Consortium/partnership arrangements

There are new developments surrounding Diplomas every day, from both a national and a local perspective. To feel confident in your own Diploma line of learning and to encourage your colleagues to become involved and motivated, it is important that you keep up to date with the latest information. Consider the following questions.

- ❖ Who makes up your local 14–19 partnership?
- ❖ Is your 14–19 partnership referred to as such, or is it known by another name?
- ❖ If the 14–19 partnership group is the strategic body, do you know which group takes on the operational role for implementing the reform programme?
- ❖ Is there an organisational chart that explains the partnership/consortium arrangements?
- ❖ How many consortia exist in your own area and can you name them?
- ❖ Do you know who the consortia lead persons are?
- ❖ How many Diplomas has your consortium been approved for?
- ❖ Do you know where to find up-to-date information on Diploma developments, both nationally and locally?

continued

- ❖ Which groups are responsible for the development of each Diploma line of learning?
- ❖ Who is leading on the functional skills pilot in your local area? (You can find links to information about pilot schemes through the Functional Skills Support Programme at www.lsneducation.org.uk/functionalskills)
- ❖ What does your local area have in place in terms of protocols and underpinning systems for supporting Diploma delivery?
- ❖ Who has responsibility for employer engagement?
- ❖ Who is leading on information, advice and guidance?
- ❖ Do you have a local network of exams officers?

Exams officers

Other groups will also exist across local areas but these will be defined by the approach of each individual consortium. However, one extremely important group needs to be mentioned here: the exams officers group. Exams officers will play a crucial role in collating information from across a range of institutions and ensuring that all of this information is fed into the correct system. An exams officer could be faced with collecting information from a large number of institutions from within the local area and, on occasion, from outside it.

Reflective activity: Your exams officer

It is extremely important that you get to know your exams officer and keep talking to them about the developments within your area. Regular discussions will ensure that you are both working with the same, up-to-date information. Ask yourself the following questions.

- ❖ Who is your exams officer?
- ❖ Has your exams officer undertaken any of the National Assessment Agency training events on the processes involved in Diploma assessment and achievement recording?
- ❖ Does your exams officer regularly meet with other exams officers in your consortium?

Implications of collaborative working for practitioners**Skills needs**

To ensure that learners are receiving specialist skills delivery, consortia are carrying out skills and training needs analysis of staff. Schools and colleges are also taking into consideration the needs of the consortium as well as their individual needs. As staff leave or are promoted into different roles, an opportunity arises to address gaps in the delivery of the Diploma across the consortium and to fill them with the best match. This means that teaching contracts will also begin to change: many will now include the requirement to travel to a number of sites within an authority to deliver a specialism. While this workforce development is in progress, consortia will rely on their links with employers and schools, colleges and universities to ensure that the requirement for delivery by a specialist is being met.

Post-16 learners

Learners who have left statutory secondary education and progressed to a sixth-form (tertiary) college, a college of further education or a provider of applied learning.

Post-16 groups

A number of local authorities are working with their 11–18 schools on how they can collaborate with the tertiary colleges and colleges of further education; for example, in aligning timetables so that learners can access their choice of programmes on more than one site. This approach to post-16 education results in a much wider choice of options for learners.

Experiences of collaborative working

Collaboration has been encouraged for many years now, through initiatives such as the Increased Flexibility Programme and Aimhigher activities. Many different opportunities for collaboration exist at a range of levels. Examples include:

- ❖ learners moving from their 'home' institution to access provision on another site
- ❖ shared delivery across a range of institutions
- ❖ alignment of timetables across an area, to facilitate learners' access to programmes/provision elsewhere
- ❖ shared enrichment activities, which might include applied learning, trips and visits
- ❖ e-learning through the use of a virtual learning environment, video-conferencing, and so on.

You have probably been involved in at least one of the above, and so involved in some form of collaborative delivery for quite some time.



Exemplar: The Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP)

Each local area had their own approach to introducing increased flexibility to their 14–16 learners, the most common approach being that the sixth form and FE colleges would offer applied GCSE and/or other vocational programmes to learners from schools within their area, which would be delivered on the college site by college practitioners.

In Salford, an innovative and strategic approach was applied, considering issues such as capacity and transport in the longer term. The three colleges within Salford – Pendleton College, Eccles Sixth Form College and Salford College (Salford Plait) – worked in partnership to assist the schools across Salford to develop the vocational courses on offer within their own institutions.

Salford already had a model whereby learners from across the city could access vocational programmes such as Engineering, Construction, Hair and Beauty and so on, on one day a week as part of the 14Plus Programme. This type of model has existed in Salford for approximately two decades. Through the introduction of the IFP, Salford Plait decided that a different approach was needed as there were already issues around capacity in some subject areas. This approach also ensured much greater collaborative working between the schools, colleges and work-based learning providers.

The existing Salford Plait was the foundation for the 14–19 Partnership that has been developed since 2004.

continued

In the initial phase, the colleges provided their own subject practitioners, who would go into those schools that accepted the offer for two hours per week, and would 'team teach' with a practitioner from within the schools. Time was also allocated so that the two practitioners could work together on creating a scheme of work, lesson plans and assignments. In this way, the college practitioner was training and developing the school practitioner to be able to plan, deliver and assess the subject in a more vocational and appropriate way.

As more schools took up the offer, subject networks were set up, led by the college practitioners; practitioners would assist each other and would call on the college expertise as and when needed. These networks have since evolved into Diploma development networks which made the process of Diploma Gateway much more straightforward as these networks are built on already firm foundations; they have already developed quality assurance mechanisms and are well prepared to respond to issues such as capacity building, transport and significant employer engagement.

What skills and attributes do you need to work in partnership?

In developing collaborative provision, you are embracing real change in educational thinking. For some practitioners, this change will be quite refreshing; for others, it may take some getting used to. For practitioners involved in the delivery of the Diploma, an ability to work in partnership is crucial. You may be required to teach in locations other than those you are used to. You may be asked to work closely with a visiting lecturer from a university or college or with representatives from industry.

The reflective activity below will help you determine whether you are ready to work in partnership.

Reflective activity: Checklist for partnership working

Think about the following questions:

- ❖ Are you prepared to trust colleagues from other institutions?
- ❖ Can you respect others and the contributions they make?
- ❖ Can you accept a majority decision that conflicts with your own wishes?
- ❖ Can you tackle difficulties head on in order to resolve them swiftly and effectively?
- ❖ Are you flexible yet focused?
- ❖ Are you prepared to act as an ambassador for collaboration?
- ❖ Can you remain positive when problems arise?
- ❖ Do you want to be part of a successful partnership?

If you answer 'yes' to all or most of these questions, your local partnership will be very pleased to welcome you on board. If your answers are mainly 'no' or 'not sure', it is likely that you are feeling daunted – quite understandably – by the huge changes you will need to make to your usual way of working. Not everyone can adapt to such major changes so quickly, and many people need time to reflect on all the information

continued

provided before making gradual changes to their routine. Many areas have been cautious in their Diploma Gateway applications, so there will be plenty of opportunities to become involved in the future, after the first tranche of Diplomas.

If you feel that you are neither ‘yes’ nor ‘no’, you could consider a small involvement if your own institution is looking at the possibilities for future Gateway applications.

Effective members of partnerships usually have a combination of the personal skills and attributes shown in Table 4.1 (although, of course, not everyone will have them all: every individual has strengths and limitations). You may want to look through this list and reflect on which combination of personal skills and attributes you possess, and how you can contribute to a partnership group.

Skills/attributes	Why they may be of value to you in delivering the Diploma
Practitioner can: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ solve problems ❖ be creative ❖ be innovative ❖ be inspiring. 	The Diploma requires new ways of delivery in different and appropriate environments. Learners need to be excited by their line of learning and you will need to use a range of delivery and assessment methods.
Practitioner is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ a good communicator ❖ able to negotiate and influence ❖ a good facilitator ❖ able to motivate others ❖ able to work with a wide range of people and at different levels of management. 	Some practitioners can be quite territorial and may strongly defend their way of doing things. Working in partnership is about being able to share your own good practice with others and to benefit from theirs. There will be times when suggestions and proposals are made that not everyone agrees with – not necessarily because they aren’t good, but because of the effect they will have on individuals and/or institutions. Possessing the skills and attributes opposite means that, as a member of a partnership group, you can help others to see the benefits and can help present proposals in a positive light. As a member of a partnership, you may also be asked to take proposals to your senior management, to your peers and even present to other groups.
Practitioner wants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ to keep knowledge of new developments up to date ❖ to succeed ❖ learners to succeed. 	To make informed contributions as a member of a partnership, it is essential to keep up to date with the latest developments in Diploma implementation. Partnerships will be successful only if, as their members, you retain a positive outlook and have your own desire to succeed. Most important of all is the commitment to ensuring learner success.

Table 4.1: Personal skills and attributes of practitioners who are effective members of their Diploma consortium.

Take it further

Effective collaborative and partnership practice is key to ensuring successful delivery and outcomes. The QCA has outlined the characteristics of effective collaboration on its website (www.qca.org.uk). The characteristics are a good checklist for any collaborative working group to use to ensure that it is effective.



The following reflective activity can be used to check your current understanding of your own consortium/partnership/collaborative group.

Checklist for effective collaborative practice

A shared vision

- ❖ Is there an organisation chart for your 14–19 partnership that clearly shows how it is structured and where responsibility for aspects of the reform lies?
- ❖ Is there a vision statement endorsed by all the members of the partnership, and is it easily accessible for all to see?
- ❖ Are the aims and objectives and the desired outcomes of the partnership understood and agreed by all its members?

Joint strategic planning

- ❖ Are the senior leaders from all the partner organisations fully involved in guiding and shaping all aspects of partnership work, and aware of operational activities?
- ❖ Do senior leaders review, agree and have an opportunity to amend protocols, service-level agreements, partnership agreements and other working arrangements?

Appointment of co-ordinators

- ❖ Do you have a co-ordinator or a director who has been appointed to manage the partnership arrangements and draw all parties/developments together?

Appropriate staffing

- ❖ Have the partnership members made a commitment to ensuring that all staff involved in collaborative activities are committed, willing and enthusiastic?
- ❖ Are staff who will be involved in the delivery of the Diplomas appropriately qualified, experienced and prepared to work across boundaries, subject areas and organisations?

Joint working

- ❖ Has the partnership made a commitment to allowing staff the time and resources required to implement the Diplomas (for example, in terms of taking part in joint planning, development activities, training and travel to partner organisations)?

Efficient communication systems

- ❖ Are the communication systems within your partnership quick, efficient and regular?

Evidence-based development

- ❖ Are all developments within the partnership regularly monitored, reviewed and evaluated, and are the outcomes then used to inform future decisions and to facilitate improvements?

Source: www.qca.org.uk

It is important to review your partnership's collaborative practice regularly. Each Diploma line of learning introduced will bring new and quite often unique challenges, simply because of the nature of the subject and the location (for example, with Environmental and Land-based Studies, owing to the range in content and a need to access specific facilities, learners may have to travel across boundaries). You will need to ensure that accessibility issues are considered and dealt with wherever possible. Partnerships will need to be prepared to change and evolve, accepting that good work already carried out is only the foundation on which more work will need to take place.

4.2 Shared team teaching within and across different sectors

For practitioners of vocational and/or applied subjects and those who have joined the teaching profession direct from industry, it has always been a challenge to deliver aspects of a specification of which they have had no previous experience. Take the example of a practitioner who delivers the Diploma in Travel and Tourism who has joined the teaching profession having spent most of their time in the industry based in an office and dealing with operational aspects of airline management. This practitioner may find the business elements of the Diploma easy to deliver, and may be able to provide 'real' scenarios to engage learners. Delivering units of study such as 'Overseas resort operations' or 'Tourism in rural areas' may not come so easily, and the practitioner may need help in the form of visiting speakers and visits to organisations.

Awarding bodies have always stipulated that, to deliver vocational or applied qualifications, practitioners need to have had professional experience within the sector. Now, because of the nature of the Diplomas, the requirement is that specialists should be involved in delivery.

This approach provides you, as a specialist practitioner, with more opportunities to:

- ❖ teach what you know best
- ❖ concentrate on developing your specialism further
- ❖ feel more confident that you are providing your learners with the right knowledge and skills
- ❖ work and plan with other specialists in the sector area.

Vocational ties and continuing professional development

To be able to teach young people about a specific industry sector, you need to have up-to-date, relevant professional experience. It will not be acceptable for the geography practitioner to teach customer services to learners taking the Diploma in Travel and Tourism, or for the food technology practitioner to deliver course material on community justice to those taking the Diploma in Society, Health and Development. The Diploma requires that a specialist practitioner be matched to specialist knowledge areas. However, there will be occasions when it may be best to seek help directly from an employer or a parent with occupational experience who could come in as a guest speaker, or be involved in a project (see section 6, pages 224–5).

A range of opportunities for continuing professional development is now available to support existing staff who have limited industrial experience, or staff who have not kept their occupational skills up to date. For example, the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT) is working in partnership under QIA to deliver training under the banner of the Diploma support programme, Phase 2.



Collaborative delivery: teacher and guest speaker.

Through listening to feedback from the practitioners who attended the training in the first year, for 2008/09, the Diploma support programme is offering generic training and development as well as a much more bespoke package for local areas. This is to account for the fact that consortia are often at different stages of implementation. In addition, awarding bodies will be providing a range of training packages for practitioners including training opportunities on:

- ❖ assessment methods
- ❖ principal learning
- ❖ functional skills
- ❖ the Foundation, Higher or extended project.

Canterbury Christ Church University delivers an online distance-learning programme (a short course that is currently free) for those involved in the delivery of the Diplomas in 2008 and 2009: *Occupational Currency for Practitioners of Diplomas*. For further information, visit www.canterbury.ac.uk. The Sector Skills Councils are also sources of support and development activity. Table 2.6 (see page 48) provides contact details for the Sector Skills Councils.





Bicester Community College, Cooper School and motorsport employers

Diploma will put pupils in fast lane

By Maggie Hartford

School students in north Oxfordshire will soon have the chance to leave their classrooms for one day a week and train in the motorsport industry.

A new college building in Bicester will offer a new Diploma in Engineering from September to learners aged 14–19.

It is a joint venture with local motorsport employers – including Honda Racing, Prodrive, Force India and Bicester-based Pankl – Bicester Community College and Cooper School.

Gosford Hill in Kidlington, Lord Williams in Thame, Wheatley Park and St Birinus in Didcot will also offer the course.

A £250,000 extension will be built at the Oxford and Cherwell Valley College (OCVC) Performance Engineering Centre on Telford Road after the college won a national bidding process to pilot the Diploma.

Programme manager Andy Thomas said: 'Learners will spend one day a week at college, but we will also send staff to the schools.'

Engineering is one of five subjects being offered under the initiative, which is part of the Government's drive to improve young people's skills and keep them in education or training until 18.

The Diplomas will blend job skills such as team-working and problem-solving with English, mathematics and IT. Learners will also complete a Foundation, Higher or extended project and do 10 days' work experience.

College principal Sally Dicketts said: 'This is a great opportunity to be part of the fastest and most exciting industry on earth. The new Diploma will deliver world-class skills in an area where there is currently a major UK skills shortage.'

She added: 'This will provide young people in the area with an alternative to other types of further education. It could fast-track them into careers in motorsport, aerospace or general engineering.'

Bicester is in the heart of the so-called Motorsports Valley, which stretches into Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire, with the Silverstone Formula 1 track and many Grand Prix teams based nearby.

Source: *Oxford Mail*, 10 April 2008

Delivery approach

Again, it is extremely unlikely that any one institution will have teaching staff with the necessary skills and experience to cover every aspect of a specific line of learning. Therefore, a shared approach to delivery across a consortium is essential.

Networks for each specific line of learning will need to work together to identify what expertise exists within the consortium (and perhaps across consortia) and where there may be gaps. By developing a collaborative scheme of work, practitioners can be allocated to the delivery according to their specialism; this will often mean that they have to travel to another institution.



Exemplar: Shared delivery

The following exchange was recorded between a local authority 14–19 consultant and a practitioner newly engaged in delivering the Diploma in Society, Health and Development within a consortium.

Consultant: 'What have been the benefits of working with colleagues collaboratively on shared delivery?'

Practitioner: 'The contacts have been invaluable, as they have made the work 'real' for the learners. The visit to Westy Residential Home really made the learners aware of the needs of the elderly residents as well as highlighting how dementia is dealt with. Just looking around the facilities – the lifting devices, the special baths, the use of colours, and so on – was something none of them had experienced before. The school nurse helped provide the training for CPR (cardiopulmonary resuscitation); this meant two of us were available to give advice and help.'

Consultant: 'What recommendations would you make to any practitioners starting out on the collaborative process?'

Practitioner: 'Make sure you have someone to take the lead. Organisation is everything. Don't try to work in isolation – it is too much!'

Working together with other practitioners, you can identify and develop an agreed model for work experience and applied learning by pooling your employer links and identifying where further employer engagement is needed. You can also identify opportunities for:

- ❖ industrial visits
- ❖ applied learning
- ❖ incorporating assessment opportunities for personal, learning and thinking skills and functional skills (see section 5.2)
- ❖ producing a calendar of events to take place in support of Diploma delivery.

Collaboration for assessment

By working together with others in your own consortium, you will be able to develop support mechanisms to ensure confidence in the delivery, quality and outcomes of each programme. The National Assessment Association (NAA) and awarding bodies have recommended that each consortium appoints a 'lead assessor' and 'domain assessors' to ensure the required quality standards are met.

- ❖ The lead assessor will quality-assure internal assessment processes across all levels of all Diplomas being delivered by the consortium, to ensure consistency in all assessment processes. The lead assessor will be responsible for ensuring that the domain assessors are working to the same set of quality assurance procedures and protocols.
- ❖ The domain assessors will ensure that all internal assessments for a Diploma line of learning are fit for purpose and that they have been assessed at the appropriate standard required by the awarding bodies. The domain assessors will be responsible for ensuring that all those delivering the specific line of learning are working together in a consistent way and to a set standard.

Assessment





Learners respond well to practitioners introducing new technology into their delivery.

Use of technology

A great deal of technology is available to you to facilitate shared team teaching and to ensure the best quality of provision for learners, regardless of their location. Learners respond well to new technology – after all, they are continually updating their knowledge through the latest gadgets to hit the high street. It is important that practitioners make themselves aware of what is available and make use of the technology that will best serve their purposes. Some examples of e-learning technologies that practitioners can use in their delivery, and particularly in team teaching, are considered below.

Virtual learning environment

A virtual learning environment (VLE) is a computer system that helps you with the management of educational courses for your learners; it often involves elements of distance learning. The concept of a virtual learning environment is

not new – the first was documented as long ago as 1728 – but the technology is of course far more advanced today. Examples of current systems include Moodle (Modular Object-Oriented Dynamic Learning Environment), EduX, Digital Brain, and Learnwise. (See section 5.4, pages 173–5 for more on virtual learning environments and an exemplar of Moodle in use.)



Becta

The government's lead agency for information and communication technology (ICT) in education.

Becta provides an outline of what a virtual learning environment can do for an organisation (see <http://partners.becta.org.uk>). It states that they offer some or all of the following features:

- ❖ communication (for example, email, bulletin boards and chat rooms)
- ❖ collaboration (for example, online forums, intranets, electronic diaries and calendars)
- ❖ tools for the creation of online content and courses
- ❖ online assessment and marking
- ❖ integration with school management information systems
- ❖ access to curriculum resources
- ❖ learner access to content and communications beyond the school.

Video-conferencing

A video-conference is a two-way video and audio transmission linking two or more sites. The technology can be quite basic (for example, a simple webcam and microphone system attached to a PC for one-to-one communication), or can be quite a complex system, which needs to be installed by professionals and can be used for larger group activity.

Podcasting

Podcasting is another popular technology that allows learners and practitioners to access resources at a time to suit them. Podcasts can be both audio and video, with learners able not only to access and download materials, but also to create their own.

Reflective activity: Build your knowledge

How IT literate are you?

- ❖ Within your own delivery do you use:
 - ◆ smart boards/interactive whiteboards
 - ◆ CD ROMs/DVD learning resources
 - ◆ PowerPoint®
 - ◆ video-conferencing
 - ◆ a virtual learning environment
 - ◆ e-portfolios?
- ❖ If you answer 'no' to any of the above, is this because the resources are not available in your organisation?
- ❖ Have you ever seen these technologies in use in a classroom environment? If not, do you know of other subject areas that do use them, and could you arrange to have a demonstration by a colleague?
- ❖ If they are available, do you need training on them?

Principles behind joint planning

The following two exemplars illustrate how joint planning has been successfully applied in rural areas. Joint planning is particularly pertinent to rural areas because they are more reliant on the use of mobile units, access to virtual learning environments, video-conferencing and so on, in order to ensure that delivery is carried out by specialist staff with industry experience. For instance, where there is a shortage of industry experience/specialism, delivery may need to be made to a number of institutions at a time via technology such as video-conferencing.



Exemplar: Cumbria 14–19 Pathfinder

What was the issue?

Cumbria is the second biggest county in England and has a huge diversity of need. The Cumbria 14–19 Pathfinder was challenged by rural issues, including low population densities, limited access to local provision, and problems recruiting staff with high-level vocational experience and skills. It was generally accepted that no single provider could meet all local learning needs and there was a long history of limited collaboration, particularly in the urban areas. In addition, there were concerns about the quality of some local provision.

What were the barriers?

Making improvements to learning provision in a rural area involved overcoming both practical and developmental barriers. The former included dealing with transport difficulties and developing alternative ways to access learning. The latter included building confidence between local providers; for example, some head teachers were unduly sceptical about the quality of vocational education offered at colleges of further education.

What was the solution?

The county was divided into five area strategic management groups or learning zones, to enable flexible approaches to meet specific local priorities. The Pathfinder included: all 43 secondary schools; four general colleges of further education; one sixth-form college; two institutions of higher education (both with significant provision for further education); and around 40 providers of work-based learning.

A county-wide online database of 14–19 learning opportunities and progression routes was constructed to help plan provision. The database also provided information, advice and guidance for learners and their parents. A paper-based common area prospectus is to be produced based on the database, applicable to all five areas in the county.

An 'Area Strategic Planning Model and Concordat' was devised and implemented to promote and guide the collaborative activity. To address resistance to the proposed changes, a programme of development seminars was designed to promote cultural change and successful collaboration. These seminars were set up in partnership with Manchester University Centre for Educational Leadership.

Partnership working encouraged local schools to broaden their vocational education options by building on existing specialisms and by implementing new schemes to increase access to high-quality vocational learning opportunities. For example, in one area, the Pathfinder supported the employment of a peripatetic chef to address key skills shortages in the hospitality and catering industry (a major employment sector in Cumbria). The model was developed with Kendal College, which is a centre of vocational excellence (CoVE) in hospitality and catering in the South Lakes Learning Zone.

continued

The peripatetic chef was well qualified and worked with learners in schools, reducing their need to travel. As part of the school-based work promoting the catering industry, the peripatetic chef established a Junior Chef Club. Learners were kitted out with aprons, hats and catering knives and taught catering skills.

What was the outcome?

Cumbria's Pathfinder achieved outcomes in terms of both strategic management processes and improved vocational education. The collaborative working arrangements were formalised into the Cumbria Model for Area-Based Strategic Planning of 14–19 Provision, which has been adopted by Cumbria County Council and constitutes a joint plan for 14–19 provision for the local education authority and the local learning and skills council. The successful delivery of the peripatetic chef model demonstrated the value of collaboration to local providers. The model convinced head teachers to work with local colleagues to improve vocational education. Following the success of the peripatetic chef, a peripatetic lecturer in travel and tourism was appointed to provide high-quality vocational education in Cumbrian schools. The Junior Chef Club was oversubscribed, leading to an additional two clubs being set up. The model as a whole was expanded to operate across all five areas of the county.



Exemplar: Hampshire's vocational provision

In Hampshire, mobile units equipped with vocational facilities (for example, a mobile hairdressing salon) gave learners in a rural area access to vocational provision. While some travel was required of learners, it was not excessive and could be shared between partner schools – the units were based at different schools at different times.

Hampshire established local skills centres to improve vocational provision locally in the two pathfinder partnerships (East and South West Hampshire) and to minimise travelling by young people. In East Hampshire, a catering facility was developed by converting a home economics room in one of the partnership schools, with advice on facilities and equipment from a college of further education. All schools within the partnership had access to the facility. In the South West partnership, the skills centres were not located in any of the partner institutions, but were managed by a group which included partner representatives. One, located on an industrial estate, provided facilities for courses in construction, hair and beauty, and information and communication technology. Another, based at an outdoor activity centre, provided both tourism and education facilities and, as a working farm, offered learners opportunities to access a range of learning experiences. The courses were provided in collaboration with local companies and colleges, and were made available to local schools in a prospectus published in January 2004. Around 160 learners began vocational courses in September 2004, and more started in September 2005.

Source: www.dcsf.gov.uk

Take it further

The real benefit of collaborative delivery is that you are not working in isolation: a support mechanism is being developed to help and guide the whole process. Collaborative delivery can only aid more successful outcomes for the learner and increase confidence and motivation for the practitioner through collaboratively developing:

- ❖ schemes of work
- ❖ lesson planning
- ❖ enrichment/enterprise activities
- ❖ assessment methods.

The distribution of practitioners across consortia according to their expertise will also be beneficial to both learners and practitioners.

The increased confidence and motivation for the practitioner are already evident in a small group of practitioners delivering the Diploma in Society, Health and Development in Warrington. This group has developed their schemes of work, and provided a calendar of supportive/work-related activity accessible to all Diploma learners. They already know which areas each will deliver, as well as where and when. Each member of this group has also enrolled on Canterbury Christ Church University's Occupational Currency for Practitioners of Diplomas (OCPD) – but rather than each member working toward this qualification in isolation, the group arranges regular get-togethers to work through the materials, developing a culture of support and encouragement.

Reflective activity: Who can teach what for the Diploma?

Assess yourself and your colleagues to identify who has the knowledge, skills and experience to deliver the Diploma effectively.

If you are delivering Diploma lines of learning that are already available, use the awarding body specifications. For those lines still in development, use the QCA learning statements, also available from the Diploma Development Partnerships.

For each Diploma line of learning, and for each level, make a list of the specialist knowledge and experience required for the delivery of the content. Using this list, can you identify current practitioners who can deliver each area? Then ask:

- ❖ Do you have gaps?
- ❖ How will you fill them?
- ❖ How can you plan across your consortium for holistic rather than 'unit by unit' delivery?

4.3 Support systems

Guidance on additional and specialist learning

Additional and specialist learning is discussed in Section 3 of this resource. In brief, additional and specialist learning has been introduced to support learner choice and to allow for progression to a wide range of further learning and employment within a coherent programme. It also provides opportunities for meeting learners' particular needs, deepening and broadening their learning. For more information on additional and specialist learning and specific examples of possible combinations, see pages 220–3.

During the first phase of Diplomas, it may be difficult for consortia to provide all Diploma learners with a wide selection of additional and specialist learning. However, as more Diploma lines are introduced to the local area the opportunities will increase, as long as consortia members work collaboratively to identify and develop the additional and specialist learning necessary to support the needs of the Diploma learners, rather than the needs of the Diploma providers.

Sources of further information on additional and specialist information for each Diploma line of learning

The National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ) holds the details of the **Diploma catalogues** for each Diploma line of learning at each level (see www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk). The Diploma catalogue is an essential tool when planning the delivery of the Diploma, as it provides you with the information on which qualifications can be delivered as part of the additional and specialist learning. Note that some combinations will not be allowed because of the overlap in their content (see Figure 4.2).



Diploma catalogue

Accessed via the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ), the catalogue identifies the combinations of qualifications that are allowed as part of a Diploma package and those that are 'barred' due to the overlap in content.

The challenge of additional and specialist learning will be apparent in the first few years of Diploma delivery, particularly in terms of personalising the Diploma to each learner. The range of opportunities that can be viewed on the NDAQ website may not be available for learners. It is quite likely that, in many areas, the main providers of the Diplomas in a consortium will have to decide exactly what those on a particular line of learning will study for additional and specialist learning, rather than providing the full range. As more Diplomas are phased into each local area and more institutions become involved, the range of choices will broaden, allowing for a more personalised approach to learning.

Qualification Title	Type	Level	Diploma Guided Learning Hours	Learning Type	Barring Classification Code	Age Range In England
EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Information Technology (Specialist) (500/3971/4)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	CM	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Society Health and Development (500/3973/8)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	PA1	16–18, 18+, 19+
EDEXCEL Level 1 BTEC Extended Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment (500/3936/2)	VRQ	1	180	Additional	TA	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Construction and the Built Environment (Craft) (500/3887/4)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	TA	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Engineering (Applied Science) (500/3892/8)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	RA14	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Engineering (Automotive) (500/3881/3)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	XR1	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
EDEXCEL Level 2 BTEC Extended Certificate in Engineering (Specialist) (500/3907/6)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	XA1	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
IMIAL Level 1 Award in Automotive Pre-Vocational Learning (500/3573/3)	VRQ	1	180	Additional	XR1	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
Edexcel Level 2 BTEC Certificate in Travel and Tourism Services (500/3371/2)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	NK	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+
NCFE Level 2 Extended Certificate in Music Business (500/3130/2)	VRQ	2	180	Additional	LK3	Pre 16, 16–18, 18+, 19+

Figure 4.2: A page from the qualifications listing from the NDAQ website (www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk) a, showing the 'barring classification code'. Qualifications with the same code cannot be combined by learners seeking to obtain a Diploma. Here, for example, a learner could only choose one of the two qualifications coded TA.

Below are some of the guidelines applicable to additional and specialist learning.

- ❖ Guided learning hours (GLH) are the number of hours that learners should be taught or supervised or have directed study time for each qualification. The minimum required GLH for additional and specialist learning are 120, 180 and 360 hours for Foundation, Higher and Advanced levels respectively.
- ❖ Learners must achieve a valid combination of qualifications from additional and specialist learning which in total is equal to or exceeds the minimum GLH at each level.

Pre-16 learners

Learners who are still engaged in compulsory education.

- ❖ Additional and specialist learning must be at the level of the Diploma or above.
- ❖ Not all additional and specialist learning qualifications are suitable for **pre-16 learners** (the NDAQ identifies age suitability).
- ❖ Where a GCSE is taken within additional and specialist learning in the Higher Diploma, a grade of A*–C must be achieved if it is to count as additional and specialist learning.
- ❖ Account must be taken of the barring classification code, as two qualifications with the same barring classification cannot be used to count towards the 180 guided learning hours. This is detailed on the NDAQ website, as shown in Figure 4.2.

Multi-sites and transport

For many Diploma learners, access to their chosen Diploma line will be via another organisation, or a number of organisations. For example, in some areas, learners studying the Diploma in Engineering:

- ❖ will travel to a specialist skills centre to take part in practical and applied learning
- ❖ may spend time on site with an employer to observe working practices
- ❖ may also spend time in their own school undertaking theoretical study.

Transporting learners to these different locations is proving to be a challenge for most, if not all, consortia. Every 14–19 partnership will be working in line with Every Child Matters (see section 6, pages 262–3) and its five outcomes:

- ❖ stay safe
- ❖ be healthy
- ❖ enjoy and achieve
- ❖ make a positive contribution
- ❖ achieve economic well-being.

Introducing a timetable that involves full days of Diploma delivery on one site, without the need to travel from one site to another part-way through the day, is one way of meeting the challenges and makes tracking learners' whereabouts easier.

Cost will also be a consideration when making local decisions on which institution is going to host a Diploma line of learning.



Exemplar: Salford 14Plus programmes

Salford has a long history of providing vocational programmes to learners aged 14–16. Every week, for one whole day, learners from across the whole of Salford would travel from home to one of three colleges and a vocational skills centre to access their vocational learning. Learners were expected to make their own way there and back, with assistance being given only where there was a specific individual need or financial hardship.

While learners undertaking a two-week block work experience placement would complain about having to travel more than a mile or two from their front door, there were few complaints about having to travel to college for one day each week in order to access a vocational programme. This is because 14Plus programmes have been part and parcel of Salford tradition, going back two generations.



Colleges and schools may be able to arrange shared transport systems.



Exemplar: North Tyneside transport brokerage system

North Tyneside 14–19 Partnership had developed a successful post-16 collaborative arrangement, which was originally offered on an individual, ad hoc basis. However, this proved costly and inadequate. Better access and provision were needed to improve retention rates.

The aim of the 14–19 Partnership was to plan and implement a transport brokerage system to address the needs of learners attending schools in the north-western, semi-rural areas of North Tyneside.

continued

Through a community transport feasibility study carried out in 2003/04, the Partnership found that many vehicles were standing idle at institutions around the borough. A successful bid to the Learning and Skills Council for funding allowed the Partnership to appoint a development officer, who devised a brokerage scheme. Through the audit of council and school vehicle stock, a database of available vehicles was established. The appointee had experience of this type of work and a working knowledge of Trapeze, an electronic management system used by transport companies.

The result of this work was that the many minibuses that had been sitting idle on school car parks on many days of the week were put to good use in transporting learners from site to site.

Learner management systems

Learner management systems – sometimes coupled with the local virtual learning environments (VLE) – are software tools designed to manage information across a range of providers and the local area. Learner management systems were traditionally used for keeping records and producing management reports. These systems have now progressed significantly and will play an important role in collaborative practice across consortia.

A learner management system may be a bespoke system created for an individual institution, or a system designed to link all of the institutions within an area, including the local authority. Learner management systems include:

- ❖ those used and accessed by just one institution
- ❖ those used and accessed by all the institutions within a consortium
- ❖ those used nationally by the Diploma awarding bodies, the **component awarding bodies** and the exams officers.

A typical learner management system will offer:

- ❖ self-assessment quizzes that can be scored automatically
- ❖ teaching materials and resources, from individual exercises to whole units of study
- ❖ administrative information, such as the location of sessions
- ❖ a 'notice-board' facility
- ❖ production of documentation and statistics for management purposes
- ❖ learner registration and tracking facilities
- ❖ links to external agencies
- ❖ information on formal assessment procedures
- ❖ electronic communication support, including email and chat rooms.

Component awarding bodies

The bodies responsible for ensuring that, when a learner has achieved a component of a Diploma, the results are forwarded to the Diploma aggregation service to give the learner an overall final grade.



Exemplar: Southwark Guarantee

Southwark Guarantee (www.southwarkguarantee.com) is the education administration portal (learner management system) used by the 14–19 Partnership in Southwark to manage mobility, curriculum choice, learner tracking and an online area-wide prospectus. The site was developed in response to the following practical problems arising from the delivery of off-site provision in the borough:

- ❖ tracking the whereabouts, attendance and progress of learners studying in more than one institution
- ❖ providing learner information, advice and guidance about progression pathways within sector areas.

Services are provided by Southwark Guarantee in three key areas, contributing to the success and expansion of the borough's off-site provision:

- ❖ practitioner/provider tools for managing off-site provision, including online attendance registers, incident alerts, protocol document storage and reports
- ❖ a personal development e-portfolio offering learners skills assessment, a progress file and an individual learning plan
- ❖ an area-wide prospectus, 'Plan Your Route', which includes a course planner.

Source: www.qca.org.uk

National learner management systems

Management of Information Across Partners (MIAP) is the organisation responsible for issuing the unique learner number (ULN) to each learner. This number means that all records of an individual's learning can be stored in one place, where they are available for learners (and others, with the learner's permission) to view.

Diploma aggregation service

Because the Diploma is a composite qualification, the Diploma aggregation service, a Diploma results management service, has been set up to support delivery of Diplomas and to provide learner accounts indexed by the unique learner number. The system will be responsible for collating component qualification results so that they can be aggregated to produce a final Diploma award with an appropriate grade (see section 3.3 on pages 80–2).

Other management systems

An online prospectus is a web-based system that provides information on all the learning opportunities available for learners aged 14–19 within a range of organisations. Every local area will have developed an online prospectus specific to local needs. In some cases, the prospectus will be linked to other



Assessment

learner management systems, such as Fast Tomato, Interactive Careers Guidance and Education for Teenagers and the online application system – the latest development being introduced across the country.

The rationale for a 14–19 online prospectus is that it will:

- ❖ widen choice for young learners by making the local learning market transparent and allowing them to make informed choices about what is best for them
- ❖ provide independent, impartial and high-quality information on options to young people, their parents and advisers
- ❖ provide an excellent means of updating, reviewing and progressively enhancing the relevance and effectiveness of the local offering to young people
- ❖ show how partnerships of schools, colleges and training providers will deliver the Diplomas
- ❖ help to encourage participation in post-16 education.

An online application system is being introduced along with **the September Guarantee**. The September Guarantee is a requirement for all local areas to ensure that all learners leaving secondary education have been offered a place to keep them in learning beyond the age of 16. The local 14–19 partnership is responsible for collecting the information and acting on it. The best way of collating data and ensuring that timely intervention can take place is to introduce the online application system, which will record all applications and offers made, and the information will be quickly available. This will help to target those learners who have not made any applications.

The September Guarantee

The guarantee that, by the end of September in any year, an offer of a place in learning will be made to all young people completing compulsory education. The guarantee was implemented nationally in 2007 and is being extended to 17-year-olds in 2008 to give those who enrol on one-year or short courses, or who leave the activity they chose when leaving school, further opportunities to engage in learning.

Take it further

Curriculum timetabling has probably been one of the biggest challenges for many members of consortia applying through the Gateway process. Changing or aligning timetables has been a major barrier to many schools implementing the Diplomas. However there is guidance given via the Design for Success section of the QCA website www.qca.org.uk/qca_13949.aspx.



Aligned timetabling can allow learners from different centres to come together in new ways.

In some areas, 14–19 partnerships have agreed to introduce an aligned timetable for one day or one and a half days of the week; other areas are committing a full two days for Diploma delivery. In some cases, consortia have gone through the Gateway with only one or two Diplomas and, therefore, only small numbers of learners will be moving to another institution for delivery. In these cases, schools have made the decision not to change their timetables at all, which suggests that learners will have to play ‘catch up’ when they are back in their ‘home’ school.

School lessons generally last around 50 minutes. Introducing partially aligned timetables has involved having more double lessons and restricts the teaching of core subjects to three days of the week. Practitioners may be worried that learners will lose concentration beyond the 50 minutes they are used to. However, in practice practitioners are reporting that having more time to deliver is allowing the introduction of more creative activities and driving new and innovative approaches to teaching and learning. Furthermore, in order to be

successful in future studies and future employment, young people need to be able to sustain their concentration beyond 50 minutes.

The learner should experience the Diploma as a coherent programme of study. Functional skills, personal, learning and thinking skills, additional and specialist learning and work experience should not be seen as a discrete set of learning experiences.

If delivery time is reduced, teaching and learning fails to recognise the integrated nature of Diploma learning. The ambition of the Diploma will not be recognised.

When devising the curriculum model and the local approach to delivery, the five themes of Every Child Matters should be given every consideration.

- ❖ *Stay safe.* Who will be responsible for learners' safety when they are travelling from one institution to another part-way through the day?
- ❖ *Be healthy.* If a learner is travelling during the lunch break, who is monitoring whether the learner has enough time for lunch and is indeed eating lunch?
- ❖ *Enjoy and achieve.* If a school has not aligned its timetable because it has only small numbers accessing Diploma lines, and the learner is missing part of the core curriculum – how is this being managed?
- ❖ *Make a positive contribution.* If learners are not given enough time in terms of guided learning hours for a Diploma, will their experience be a positive one?
- ❖ *Achieve economic well-being.* If the approach to the Diploma is not holistic and does not allow enough opportunities for learners to apply the skills and knowledge required, how can learners achieve their outcomes?

4.4 Quality assurance across partnerships

Implementation plans

Clear implementation plans are the key to consortium coherence. In response to Gateway 2 the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) now requires each successful consortium to produce an implementation plan, which will outline:

- ❖ what work has to be done
- ❖ when it will be done by
- ❖ who will be taking responsibility for each task.

This implementation plan will also include the consortium's plans for timetable development and for continuing professional development for each successful line of learning, as well as an outline of the quality assurance mechanisms that will be put in place in readiness to deliver.

Quality assurance will need to be consistent across all Diploma lines of learning and will need to consist of generic processes as well as Diploma line-specific processes. This is why it is imperative that all partners within the consortium assist in the development and agreement of such processes. Quality assurance will include processes such as service level agreements between providers and the schools and colleges accessing delivery; financial agreements for the cost of delivery and the monitoring of delivery, for example observations and moderation.

If these implementation plans are to be effective, they need the full co-operation and ownership of every member of the consortium and the 14–19 partnership.

Recommended measures

There will undoubtedly be barriers to working collaboratively, such as the location of providers, lack of previous collaborative working and the competitive nature of institutions. Through the Gateway self-assessment process, the introduction of the lead and domain assessor roles and the introduction of virtual learning environments and learner management systems (see above), many of these barriers can be overcome. It is important that every consortium has in place the systems and guidelines to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of their responsibilities for safeguarding learners, staff and the organisations involved. In addition, it needs to be made clear to learning providers, learners and their parents or carers what is expected. These systems and guidelines will include:

- ❖ financial agreements
- ❖ service-level agreements
- ❖ parent/carer permissions (relating to photography, travel, leaving site during lunch breaks and so on)
- ❖ learner contracts.

The good news is that many 14–19 partnerships already have well-developed systems and protocols in place and are happy to share them with other areas. For example, the Wolverhampton 14–19 team has developed its own manual, created from researching best practice around the country (see the following exemplar).

While it is a good idea to use what is already available, no matter which material you choose to adopt, it will need to be amended to meet your own local needs, and will also have to be regularly updated.



Exemplar: The Wolverhampton manual

Wolverhampton City Council's *14–19 Underpinning Systems Manual* is designed to support the provision of education and training in collaborative partnership across the 14–19 sector. The chief aim is to safeguard learners who are working away from their main learning base, with another provider or on placement with an employer. The manual, which is regularly updated, documents such important areas as health and safety and child protection. The documentation also provides safeguards for the parents of learners and the institutions working in partnership and has been assembled from national best practice and guidance. The manual:

- ❖ provides a comprehensive set of protocols and guidance covering the issues arising from collaborative provision
- ❖ contains a checklist for each issue, to allow comparison with national best practice
- ❖ allows for standard practice across the learning community
- ❖ promotes high-quality organisation of provision.

Source: www.wolverhampton-engage.net

A Diploma consortium that is open and transparent with regard to its funding streams and that is prepared to put the needs of the whole consortium above the needs of an individual institution – and, indeed, the needs of individual learners above the needs of an institution – is a partnership that engenders a culture of trust and support. This culture will encourage its members to share their knowledge, expertise, facilities and resources.

Personalised learning



Personalisation

Personalised learning and teaching involve taking a highly structured and responsive approach to each learner in order that all are able to achieve and participate. Personalised learning is a concept which is quite often misunderstood or misinterpreted. For some educationalists, personalised learning equates to those learners who are not engaged with the school curriculum needing to be sent elsewhere for an 'alternative' programme. A great deal of work on personalisation is being carried out around the country through projects such as the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme (see section 5.2, pages 164–5), with some areas about to embark on the Foundation Learning Tier pilot. Both programmes focus on ensuring that learners are successfully engaged in learning appropriate to their individual

needs. There is a lot to be learned from the programmes being developed, with the emphasis on re-engaging learners, particularly onto Diploma programmes.

However, personalised learning is applicable to all learners. A key tool for ensuring that personalisation is taking place is the individual learning plan (see section 7.3 on page 252). This document identifies the needs and wants of the individual and sets out a clear plan of how these needs and wants are to be met by the learner's home school/college and other external providers. The ability to share individual learner plans with whichever institutions the learner attends, through the use of a virtual learning environment or local management system, will be crucial in ensuring personalisation.

Take it further

A great deal of work has already been carried out on producing materials, systems and resources to enable the quality assurance of collaborative programmes, developed largely from experiences of working on the Increased Flexibility Programme. However, the levels of collaboration now being introduced mean these systems will need to be regularly reviewed and amended.

There are many web-based solutions that make the whole quality assurance process easier. However, consortia need to be cautious about purchasing such packages without having a clear and structured long-term plan of their likely needs. Schools and colleges have existing systems in place (such as schools information management systems, or SIMs) and it is essential that any e-solutions company can offer systems that can 'read and feed' to the systems that are already in place. As consortia will be at different stages, a company should also have the capacity to develop the system to meet the individual needs of a particular consortium, rather than offering 'one size fits all'.

Reflective activity: Good quality assurance systems

Think about the systems in your partnership and consider the following questions.

- ❖ Do you have a clear long-term implementation plan that is accessible to all members of the consortium and other stakeholders?
- ❖ While all members of a consortium may have expressed verbal commitment to the local implementation plan, have all members signed a service-level agreement outlining the roles and responsibilities of all concerned?
- ❖ Does an organisational chart exist showing named persons and their responsibilities (for example, Diploma line lead personnel)?
- ❖ Does the consortium have a comprehensive set of policies and procedures relating to collaborative delivery (such as the Wolverhampton manual described in the exemplar on page 126) and does everyone involved in collaborative delivery have access to this?
- ❖ Who monitors whether policies and procedures are followed effectively?
- ❖ If you are working with organisations other than schools or colleges (for example, specialist skills centres or providers of work-based learning), who is responsible for ensuring the quality of their delivery – and are they approved by the Learning and Skills Council?
- ❖ Who will have responsibility for the co-ordination of learner movement from one institution or organisation to another?
- ❖ Is there a clear plan of continuing professional development for all staff involved, including senior management?
- ❖ Is there an agreement between all members of the consortium that replacing staff will involve collaborative discussion and agreement to ensure that gaps in expertise are taken into account?
- ❖ Who will take responsibility for carrying out observations of teaching, and how will these be reported?
- ❖ Have clear communication channels been agreed and made known to all members of the consortium?
- ❖ Have the members of your consortium made an agreement on what key information is shared about their learners (for example, emergency contact details or whether a learner has specific learning needs)?
- ❖ Who has been nominated as the awarding body quality nominee?
- ❖ What systems and people are in place for internal verification and moderation?
- ❖ Who will be carrying out internal verification on learner assessment to ensure that assessors have awarded an appropriate grade?

4.5 Opportunities to collaborate for enterprise

Through enterprise education, you will enable young people to:

- ❖ respond to change
- ❖ be creative in their ideas
- ❖ make their ideas a reality
- ❖ feel that they are able to take risks
- ❖ understand the consequences linked to them.

Enterprise encourages an understanding of business and economics, as well as personal finances. Enterprise is an important element of applied learning.

Many schools currently offer enterprise education as a stand-alone activity. However, enterprise should be a naturally occurring element within Diploma delivery, owing to the nature and purpose of the qualification, as it is about preparing young people for the world of work. In specific instances Diploma topics will naturally be related to enterprise activities, such as Unit 4, 'Designing and developing products for manufacture', in the Higher Diploma in Manufacturing and Product Design.

If a consortium has more than one institution offering the same Diploma line of learning, or if neighbouring consortia have the same Diplomas on offer, collaborative working can provide learners with more and better opportunities to work with:

- ❖ others of their own age
- ❖ representatives from industry
- ❖ other partners.

This will also enable consortia to make the best use of employer contacts.

For information on enterprise skills see section 5.7 (page 196).

Take it further

In every Diploma, there will be opportunities for you to encourage learners to take part in enterprise activities and to keep practising their enterprise skills. This will help to ensure that the Diploma is challenging, exciting and fun.

By introducing enterprise activities at regular intervals throughout the Diploma delivery, opportunities for practising other skills also arise, including functional English, mathematics and ICT, and the personal, learning and thinking skills. Employers will be attracted to this particularly meaningful engagement and will be able to provide up-to-date and relevant information, advice and guidance.

Relating enterprise activities to specific topics in the Diploma will:

- ❖ make the subject matter much more meaningful
- ❖ help learners to develop a much better understanding of the world of business.

There are already many resources and support networks to assist with enterprise education, the most valuable currently being the Schools' Enterprise Education Network (S'EEN). S'EEN is a network of 300 secondary schools including special schools, academies and hubs representing each of the specialisms (www.enterpriseinschools.org.uk).



Reflective activity: Enterprise education

Consider enterprise education in your institution.

- ❖ Do any of the schools in your area have business and enterprise as their specialism?
- ❖ Are you aware of which school in your cluster is the enterprise hub?
- ❖ Have you attended any sessions of continuing professional development for enterprise education within your own teaching?
- ❖ Does your school or college offer breakfast meetings for employers which involve input from learners?
- ❖ How is enterprise education currently delivered within your institution (for example, in-house or bought in from external providers)?
- ❖ How often do learners have the opportunity to take part in enterprise activities?
- ❖ Can you identify within your own current teaching where you could introduce enterprise activities?

4.6 Opportunities to collaborate for applied learning

At the start of this section, collaboration was highlighted as a significant means of ensuring that learners were given every opportunity to apply their skills and knowledge in a range of settings and on a number of occasions. This section provides further explanation and examples of how learning can be applied in stimulating and engaging environments and ways.

Applied learning has been defined by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) as follows:

'Applied learning is the practical application of theory that allows learners the opportunity to actively engage with the curriculum they are studying. Applied learning takes place within different contexts and environments, allowing learners the opportunity to interact with a range of people outside of the classroom.'

QCA, www.qca.org.uk

Applied learning, the subject of section 5.6 (see page 185), makes up at least 50 per cent of the principal learning in each Diploma. Much of the learning should therefore take place outside of the classroom, in work-related environments, and include real or simulated tasks. Remember that you will need to ensure that all learner needs are taken into account.

Through applied learning, you will encourage learners:

- ❖ to interact with professionals by having the opportunity to engage with employers from different organisations, through classroom delivery, conference activities, enterprise challenges and applied learning/experience
- ❖ to carry out real-life investigations and make active enquiries, possibly through the extended project, on a theme related to the Diploma line of learning, which requires the learner to work independently
- ❖ to learn through doing, by taking part in practical activities and carrying out activities more than once, to ensure that the knowledge and the skill have had the chance to become embedded
- ❖ to interact with others through group work – an important aspect of any work environment is the ability to work in teams, for support and encouragement and for effective use of available skills
- ❖ to learn in different environments, by visiting local institutions that offer a range of different subject-related facilities.

Importantly, applied learning also allows learners to link their understanding and learning activities to job roles. For example, the Higher Diploma in Engineering, Unit 3, 'Engineering applications of computers', requires learners to use computer-based systems to solve an engineering problem. Learners will be taught how to use computer-based systems and will be given tasks to solve. The task may relate to a real organisation where learners spend time with employees whose role is to work on these types of system.

Reflective activity: Applied learning

Consider how you deliver applied learning.

- ❖ How often do your learners have the opportunity to engage with organisations related to your line of learning?
- ❖ Are learners encouraged to take part in activities in these organisations or businesses?
- ❖ Are opportunities for assessment provided in real or realistic working environment?
- ❖ How often do employers come into your organisation to work with learners?
- ❖ Are these employers engaged in assessment activities?
- ❖ Are your assessment activities guided, developed and supported by employers?

One of the main purposes of the Diploma is to bring learning to life by combining theoretical study with practical activities. Learners can expect to spend time in a classroom but also in real or simulated work environments. They will have the opportunity to witness and, on occasions, take part in the activity that develops the theoretical knowledge. Through the opportunities provided to put theory into practice, the Diploma will encourage young people to be creative and innovative and to take risks.

Within your own consortium, your Diploma line development group will probably have already started to consider its own approach to applied learning, tailored to local circumstances. It is important to remember that the approach to delivering Diplomas should be a holistic one. For example, functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills should not be delivered separately, but should be applied within all aspects of the Diploma (see section 5.2).

'Applied learning is an increasingly important part of the curriculum and a key part of our 14–19 reforms. There is good evidence that it helps deliver better results for young people. It enriches their experience, and helps them to develop and relate what they learn to their future working lives. It offers employers an opportunity both to contribute directly to young people's education and training, and to develop the attitudes and capabilities of the future workforce. It enables practitioners to support young people and to widen their own continuing professional development. Done well, everybody wins.'

Jim Knight, Minister for Schools and Learners

Work experience

Applied learning is a crucial part of the Diploma delivery. Work experience will complement this: according to the QCA (see www.qca.org.uk), the Diploma requires learners to undertake a minimum of ten days' work experience. Where possible, this should be linked to one or more of the following:



- ❖ the line of learning
- ❖ the Foundation, Higher or extended project topic chosen by the learner
- ❖ the desired progression route.

This work experience will:

- ❖ support the development and recognition of applied learning
- ❖ develop sector-related skills, when undertaken in a relevant setting
- ❖ develop general employability and citizenship skills.

It may also:

- ❖ provide evidence of attainment
- ❖ provide a stimulus or context for a Foundation, Higher or extended project.

Part-time employment can also be used to contribute to Diploma learning.

Continuing to send learners out on a two-week block of work experience, as traditionally done in schools, usually during Year 10 and sometimes in Year 11, may not provide learners with the best possible opportunities for understanding how the world of work operates in the context of Diploma studies. A good model of applied learning/work experience for the Diploma is one that delves deeper into what it is that learners really need to know about their Diploma sector and how they should experience it for themselves.

The best approach would be to provide a mix of the many elements that make up applied learning (see Figure 4.3) over a period of time, rather than in a single two-week block. There may in fact be opportunities for learners to have extended time with an employer beyond the ten-day requirement, stretched over the period of Diploma study: two years for the Foundation and Higher Diplomas and two years for the Advanced.

Each consortium will have its own approach to work experience, and this will largely be determined by:

- ❖ its approach to the delivery
- ❖ the location of the delivery
- ❖ the opportunities that exist within that location.

Employer engagement

How do you provide learners with opportunities to experience real work environments? Local businesses are a very rich source of material for learners to enable them to engage in the real world of business. To do so, it is essential that each consortium develops excellent relationships with employers within the local area and beyond.

Trident

An organisation that supports young people in preparing for life outside the classroom, through improving employability and enterprise skills. Trident is now a part of the awarding body Edexcel.

Young Enterprise UK

An organisation formed in the early 1960s to assist young people in the development of skills and knowledge required for setting up and running their own businesses. Activities include project work, voluntary work and team building.

Reflective activity: Engaging employers

Think about your current links with employers.

- ❖ Which employers do you currently engage with to support your line of learning?
- ❖ What other activities do these employers currently engage in besides offering a work placement?
- ❖ Who is your main point of contact at each of these organisations?
- ❖ Do you know what their job title is?
- ❖ Do you know what their job role is?
- ❖ Do you know how much time they have been allocated to assist with employer/school/college engagements?
- ❖ Have you ever spent a day with this employer to find out just how relevant their daily practices are to your area of teaching?
- ❖ Have you ever taken your line-of-learning specification to the employers you link with to show them what the learners have to know and experience, and to see how they can assist with the delivery?
- ❖ Do you make all of the contact with the employers you work with, or do you use an external agency such as your local education–business partnership, **Trident**, **Young Enterprise UK** and so on?

You need to work in partnership with every other practitioner delivering on the Diploma to map:

- ❖ which experiences would be relevant
- ❖ when they should take place
- ❖ where they should take place.

To ensure the co-operation of local employers, it is important that the approach to them is a co-ordinated one: nothing is more frustrating to an employer than to be contacted by a host of different schools and colleges making requests for their time. Examples of good practice in relation to applied learning show that employers respond much more positively when there is a co-ordinated and structured approach on behalf of all the institutions in a local area, rather than by individual schools and colleges.



Exemplar: Grove School, Market Drayton, Shropshire

Grove School is an 11–18 community comprehensive school, with 1,100 learners. The school has language college status. It has a long tradition of educational links with the local community and businesses in the area, and has worked to strengthen these since gaining its specialist status. The introduction of the new applied GCSE was seen as an opportunity to develop a coherent and co-ordinated programme of applied learning and to extend links with local businesses.

When the GCSE in applied ICT (double award) was introduced, from the three studied units it was evident that Unit 2, 'ICT in organisations', provided clear opportunities for learners to undertake extensive primary research, and that direct links with a substantial business were required. The focus of the research was to produce an investigation looking into an organisation's ICT purposes and to report on how the ICT system used met the identified needs of the organisation.

The school already had well-established links with Muller Dairy (the largest local employer) and the response to a request for help with this project was positive. Muller's management staff were briefed on the project requirements and became involved in planning the work and activities from the outset. This partnership was vital: thorough planning was crucial to ensure the learning objectives were set and understood and that work-based activities could be programmed effectively.

The management at Muller recognised the potential for their own staff development. Non-management staff were asked to prepare materials and presentations for the learners with regard to their own areas of work. This created opportunities for staff to review, reflect on and evaluate their own job roles. Learners also provided brief, written feedback for each visit, to allow Muller to evaluate their contribution at each stage.

The project was planned to run for seven weeks, beginning with a session at school by Muller staff on the company's background and health and safety. Clear aims and learning outcomes were identified, and the learners were treated to a product sampling session.

Six further sessions were based around two-hour visits to Muller, each with a clear, specific focus. The role of ICT in sales, purchasing, finance, logistics, production and administration was addressed, along with an overview of the integration of ICT throughout the business. Learners could see a range of activities in the work environment, could observe Muller employees using the systems, and collected data relating to the role and use of ICT in each area of the business.

The class was divided into two groups, each working in a different area each week. This made it possible to develop learner-centred activities, but also increased demands on the staff (both school and Muller staff). Extra staffing and transport costs were subsidised by the Increased Flexibility Programme through a school partnership with North Shropshire College.

A variety of teaching resources were prepared, including support evidence provided by Muller. Learners could use the primary and secondary sources to prepare their portfolios, and so gained a greater understanding of the role and use of ICT in business.

The following were the key requirements for the project:

- ❖ a positive and supportive response from the participating business
- ❖ clear learning objectives
- ❖ adequate planning time

continued

- ❖ appropriate group sizes, with adequate staff
- ❖ awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace
- ❖ awareness of the need for funding to cover extra staffing and transport
- ❖ visits out of school timed to minimise the negative impact on the school timetable for other subjects and with consideration for business constraints.

The benefits of the project were that it:

- ❖ increased learners' knowledge and understanding of the ICT sector through investigation of the role and use of technology in business
- ❖ provided opportunities for applied learning and primary research
- ❖ developed an interesting, relevant model for course delivery which improved learner motivation
- ❖ enhanced and strengthened school–business community links
- ❖ aided staff development.

Source: Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (www.schoolsnetwork.org.uk)

Engaging with employers is a time-consuming activity and requires patience and empathy. Ideally, the individuals with this responsibility will have great negotiation and selling skills, and a good understanding of the private business sector. Before you pick up the telephone to make any requests, you should know exactly what it is that you want from the employer and you should be able to suggest to them the benefits of giving up their time and resources to meet your requests. Where possible, also check that you are not duplicating a request that another institution may have made.



Exemplar: Warrington Borough Council 14–19 Team Learning Initiative For Employability

Through a successful bid for European Social Funding co-matched by the Learning and Skills Council in 2007, Warrington Borough Council has been running a pilot project called Learning Initiative for Employability (LIFE II). The purpose of LIFE II was to pilot a work experience programme specifically for the Diplomas, which would not carry the current burden of health and safety vetting individual organisations for individual learners.

The pilot has been carried out with over 120 learners in Year 9, who took part in a five-week project (one day per week). Groups of 12 to 15 learners visited organisations specific to the Diploma they will study in 2008/09 and heard from staff about their responsibilities, the purpose of the organisation, and so on. Learners were given opportunities to take part in activities and to go out on site, where and when appropriate.

Learners worked both individually and in groups and made presentations of their findings to the employers, their headteacher or heads of year, parents and carers. They also became ambassadors for the Diploma line, taking their presentation material back into school, where it was installed on their virtual environment, or presented in other careers activities.

In terms of employer engagement, this pilot has seen some excellent results, because:

- ❖ the employer is provided with an outline of the learning outcomes required from the programme
- ❖ every effort is made by the project team to support the employer and to take the employer's needs into consideration
- ❖ each member of the project team has worked in both education and in business
- ❖ the employer is working with a group of learners accompanied by a member of the project team, so not all the checks needed for an individual work placement are required
- ❖ all the learners on the programme have 'applied' to take part, and are genuinely interested and motivated.

'Prior to this project commencing, the dialogue with employers tended to be largely one way – from the school/college to the employer. Due to the success of this project, we can now say that the employers are ringing us, asking us when our next programme will take place, or that they have had ideas of their own to make the experience even more exciting for the learners.'

Sarah Barlow, LIFE II Project Consultant

While this pilot was intended purely as an applied learning/work experience model for the Diploma, the benefits for Year 9 have been clear. The programme is a valuable source of information, advice and guidance for those learners who are not sure whether a particular area – or even the Diploma – is the right choice for them. By taking part, they can make more informed decisions, and are well prepared for going back into their schools and providing their peers with an account of their experiences.

Warrington local authority's 14–19 team and the Diploma line leads within the consortium will continue to develop this programme into a minimum ten-day model. It will implement the LIFE II programme for the Diploma in Society, Health and Development in partnership with the NHS Skills Academy in 2008. There are also plans to run the programme for Year 8 and Year 9 as a source of information, advice and guidance.

Source: www.warrington.gov.uk

If the Diploma is to be the answer to future skills shortages, and if it is to reduce the numbers of young people not in education, employment or training (NEET), every opportunity to provide learners with applied learning and work experience activities is essential. In addition, in order for learners to be attracted to the Diploma at the outset, it will have to demonstrate that taking a Diploma is a more exciting, creative and innovative approach to preparing them for future employment than the more traditional route.



Exemplar: Trash

This stage production of the Cinderella story was the result of a collaborative project undertaken by young people in Years 8 and 9 from secondary schools across Warrington to work on writing, choreographing and staging the show. The students took part in various three-day workshops to focus on each area of the performance, such as script writing, costume design, dance, drama, music and publicity. The whole project took six weeks to develop and was supported by the Creative and Media Sector Development Network brought together by Warrington Borough Council. *Trash* was one of the first major events that the Network had undertaken.

Maureen Kelly, 14–19 Manager/Consultant at the Council, said:

'Trash was our way of introducing learners to the many different elements of the Diploma in Creative and Media and ensuring that they received appropriate information, advice and guidance required to make informed decisions when it came to Year 9 options. The most amazing outcome of the whole process was that a large group of learners, along with their practitioners, gathered together from all of the secondary schools, came together, worked together and by the end of the performance had a genuine desire to continue working together in this way in the future.'

Source: www.warrington.gov.uk

Take it further

Learners enjoy rich, varied learning environments. The opportunity to interact with someone new is also motivating for many. Applied learning allows you to think more creatively about the way a topic is delivered.

It is not always easy to take learners into new environments, and you may need to rely on existing facilities and the use of role play and simulation to give learners an opportunity to put their skills into practice. With creativity in their approach, consortia can ensure that enough opportunities exist for learners to apply knowledge and skills on a regular basis.



Exemplar: Eccles Sixth Form College

A lecturer in travel and tourism at Eccles Sixth Form College commented as follows on one element of applied learning:

'I always looked forward to delivering the human resources unit, as this was my industry background prior to becoming a lecturer. However, when explaining to my students that this was the topic we were going to study next, looks of absolute horror would appear on their faces. This horror would soon evaporate when they started to learn about employment law and the rights of employees – including those of part-time students! All of a sudden, these sessions became a hotbed of debate and discussion as they started to apply their new-found knowledge to their own circumstances. It was immensely satisfying to see these young people suddenly becoming far more confident and able to tackle the many issues they were facing in their own part-time employment, and to see the satisfaction on their faces when they were able to challenge their employers when they felt they were being taken advantage of.'

An example of real creativity and innovation is the Liverpool approach to the Diploma in Information Technology. The Liverpool consortia have bought an industrial unit on an industrial estate where the Diploma will be delivered. The idea is that those involved will be working in a real workplace, with the learners seeking opportunities from local charities and other organisations to create some IT solutions to fit the needs of the businesses. The Liverpool approach was made possible through a successful bid for capital funding in Gateway 1. Other consortia will also be thinking of these approaches.

If you ensure that tasks are carried out in a work context, learners will:

- ❖ develop an understanding of why they need certain skills and/or knowledge
- ❖ be more receptive to the learning process.

This approach is even more successful if the task has been set in collaboration with an employer who is involved at various stages of the programme.

For example, in Unit 1 of the Higher Diploma in Creative and Media (Edexcel), 1.4, 'Be able to create a guide to the creative and media scene in a chosen region', there are opportunities to work with the local arts centre or theatre to produce marketing materials. Knowing that their work is likely to be mass produced and distributed is a huge incentive for learners. It encourages them to work hard and take a real pride in what they are doing.

Employers are key to applied learning, but it is not always possible to engage with employers for every single task to be carried out. Responsibility for creating the right opportunities for applying learning will fall to you. You will need to keep your own skills and knowledge relevant through regularly updating your occupational competency. Spending time with employers and with other subject practitioners to explore possibilities and gain further knowledge will be a huge help in ensuring that applied learning within the Diploma is effective, stimulating and motivating for all learners.

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5 Generic learning

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Section 5: Rapid topic finder



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5 Generic learning

This section introduces the concept of generic learning skills and looks at how they are applied within principal learning, as well as their relevance to employability. The generic skills – functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills – play a crucial role in successful learning, work and life, and will be developed through the sector-specific principal learning component of the Diploma. The section emphasises the importance of work experience and the Foundation, Higher or extended project, and develops these ideas with a range of practical examples.

5.1 Skills for lifelong learning and employment

Young people are increasingly concerned with the role of education in occupational success, wanting to see the relevance of education to their future lives. Sector-specific applied learning activities and tasks meet the needs of a wide range of learners, whether they intend to progress to university, work or training. Within the Diploma, generic skills consist of:

- ❖ personal, learning and thinking skills
- ❖ functional skills.

The framework for personal, learning and thinking skills emphasises the importance of acquiring and improving skills that enable young people to:

- ❖ cope with social, economic and technological change
- ❖ become more effective learners, who can continue to learn
- ❖ enjoy and achieve in all aspects of their lives.

Personal, learning and thinking skills enable young people to become:

- ❖ successful learners who enjoy learning, make progress and achieve
- ❖ confident individuals who are able to live safe, healthy and fulfilling lives
- ❖ responsible citizens who make a positive contribution to society.

Functional skills (English, mathematics and ICT) enable an individual to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and at work. Achievement of all three functional skills at the appropriate level is a requirement for gaining a Diploma. For the Foundation Diploma, the learner will have to achieve Level 1 in the functional skills. For the Higher and Advanced Diplomas, they will have to achieve Level 2. See page 156 for more on functional skills.

5.2 Generic skills

Personal, learning and thinking skills

The framework for personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) encompasses six groups of personal qualities, which include:

- ❖ independent enquirers
- ❖ creative thinkers
- ❖ reflective learners
- ❖ team workers
- ❖ self-managers
- ❖ effective participators.

Table 5.1 summarises these six skills. It is these skills that will enable young people to enter work and adult life as confident and capable individuals.

Skill	Focus statement	Outcome statements: abilities of young people represented by the skill
Independent enquirers	Young people process and evaluate information in their investigations, planning what to do and how to go about it. They take informed and well-reasoned decisions, recognising that others have different beliefs and attitudes.	IE1 Identify questions to answer and problems to resolve. IE2 Plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions. IE3 Explore issues from different perspectives. IE4 Analyse and evaluate information. IE5 Consider how circumstances, beliefs and feelings influence decisions. IE6 Support conclusions with reasoned arguments and evidence.
Creative thinkers	Young people think creatively by generating and exploring ideas, making original connections. They try different ways to tackle a problem, working with others to find imaginative solutions and outcomes that are of value.	CT1 Generate ideas and explore possibilities. CT2 Ask questions and extend their thinking. CT3 Connect ideas and experiences in inventive ways. CT4 Question their own and others' assumptions. CT5 Try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through. CT6 Adapt ideas as circumstances change.
Reflective learners	Young people evaluate their strengths and limitations, setting themselves realistic goals with criteria for success. They monitor their own performance and progress, inviting feedback from others and making changes to further their learning.	RL1 Assess themselves and others and identify opportunities and achievements. RL2 Set goals with success criteria. RL3 Review progress and act on outcomes. RL4 Invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism. RL5 Evaluate experiences and learning. RL6 Communicate their learning.

continued

Skill	Focus statement	Outcome statements: abilities of young people represented by the skill
Team workers	Young people work confidently with others, adapting to different contexts and taking responsibility for their own part. They listen to and take account of different views. They form collaborative relationships, resolving issues to reach agreed outcomes.	TW1 Collaborate with others towards common goals. TW2 Reach agreements and manage discussions. TW3 Adapt behaviour for different situations. TW4 Show fairness and consideration to others. TW5 Take responsibility, showing confidence in themselves and their contribution. TW6 Provide constructive support and feedback for others.
Self-managers	Young people organise themselves, showing personal responsibility, initiative, creativity and enterprise with a commitment to learning and self-improvement. They actively embrace change, responding positively to new priorities, coping with challenges and looking for opportunities.	SM1 Seek out challenges or new responsibilities and show flexibility. SM2 Work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment, perseverance. SM3 Organise time and resources. SM4 Anticipate, take and manage risks. SM5 Deal with pressure. SM6 Respond positively to change. SM7 Manage their emotions and build and maintain relationships.
Effective participators	Young people actively engage with issues that affect them and those around them. They play a full part in the life of their school, college, workplace or wider community by taking responsible action to bring improvements for others as well as themselves.	EP1 Discuss issues of concern and seek resolutions. EP2 Present a persuasive case for action. EP3 Propose practical ways forward, breaking down tasks into manageable steps. EP4 Identify benefits for themselves and others. EP5 Try to influence others. EP6 Act as an advocate for views that may be different to their own.

Table 5.1: Focus and content of each of the six personal, learning and thinking skills.

Table 5.2, on pages 148–50, gives examples of tasks you can set learners to develop their personal, learning and thinking skills. They are divided into individual lines of learning to give you ideas for incorporating personal, learning and thinking skills into the holistic delivery of your line.

Diploma line of learning	Independent enquirers	Creative thinkers	Reflective learners	Team workers	Self-managers	Effective participants
Construction and the Built Environment	Find out about a range of common building defects.	Investigate alternative materials suitable for a design project.	Evaluate different quality-assurance and project-monitoring processes.	Describe how multi-disciplinary teams work together to achieve a design solution.	Use hand tools and equipment safely to carry out simple practical craft activities.	Contribute to a group presentation about ways of conserving natural resources and recycling waste in the creation of the built environment.
Creative and Media	Explore the diverse range of design disciplines in which graphic design can be applied.	Use new and emergent technologies to link theory to practice.	Consider how well creative and media products meet the needs of the intended audience.	Communicate ideas and collaborate on idea development.	Understand how time management supports a production or performance.	Express a personal opinion in response to a play.
Engineering	Find technical data to meet particular specifications and find out how to solve specific mathematical problems on their own.	Find new and innovative solutions to given engineering problems.	Evaluate how a team worked in solving an engineering problem and reflect on the way the team worked together; consider how team members contributed to the solution – and what could have been done differently to encourage better team collaboration.	Work in small or large teams to solve engineering problems.	Manage own work, setting targets and monitoring ability to achieve stated outcomes in timescales, and modify work plans to take into account changing circumstances.	Make effective contributions to teams to enable engineering goals to be met, and work independently to achieve agreed engineering outcomes within given deadlines.

Table 5.2: Examples of tasks that would promote the personal, learning and thinking skills in different Diploma lines of learning.

continued

Diploma line of learning	Independent enquirers	Creative thinkers	Reflective learners	Team workers	Self-managers	Effective participants
Information Technology	Identify and describe a range of ways in which technology helps businesses to achieve their objectives.	Solve problems originating from a defined need in a creative way, having modelled and tried alternative solutions.	Seek and act upon feedback on a multimedia product from a target audience.	Work as individuals and as part of a team to develop simulated or mini-enterprise activities.	Explain how to balance competitive pressures in an ICT project.	Propose practical steps for implementing a technology-based project plan.
Society, Health and Development	Carry out research into the social and economic factors that can influence the health and well-being of individuals and communities.	Explore ideas that challenge current practice in the sector, for example, ASBOs or the nutritional basis of school dinners.	Assess the impact of their own actions when working alone or with others and put it in the context of the wider community and the wider world.	Understand the impact of multidisciplinary and multi-agency working within the care pathway of one individual.	Describe strategies for working safely and preventing the spread of infection and disease.	Work with local community groups to explore further the way they can influence thinking, policy and progress within the community.
Environmental and Land-based Studies	Investigate the influence of weather on the environment.	Demonstrate how people and businesses could use, interact with and affect the environment on a local and global scale.	Discuss potential effects of climate change on plant and animal species, communities and habitats.	Describe the importance of effective teamwork and clear communication in an environmental and land-based job.	Select, transport, use, store and maintain appropriate tools, materials, equipment and/or machinery.	Plan and execute an appropriate active intervention programme.
Hair and Beauty Studies	Investigate the range of industries in the hair and beauty sector and the services they offer.	Conduct a survey on the impressions given by appearance and image.	Demonstrate professional practice and adaptation of behaviour through use of appropriate body language.	Co-operate and work with others to deliver an effective hair or beauty service.	Use safe working practices and follow procedures for hand and nail care.	Demonstrate the capability to work with established policies, procedures and systems in a hair or beauty setting.

continued

Table 5.2 (cont.): Examples of tasks that would promote the personal, learning and thinking skills in different Diploma lines of learning.

Diploma line of learning	Independent enquirers	Creative thinkers	Reflective learners	Team workers	Self-managers	Effective participants
Business, Administration and Finance	Research the market demand for a product or service.	Suggest innovative ways to promote a product or service.	Set goals with success criteria, review progress, invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism.	Work in a group to produce a business start-up and implementation plan.	Investigate the advantages and risks associated with different financial products and services and use this information to decide on the most effective ways to spend and to save.	Sell the idea for a product or service to a panel.
Manufacturing and Product Design	Find out how social, political and economic factors influence the design and development of a manufactured product.	Produce a design specification in response to a simple client brief.	Review the impact of new developments in materials and processes on the design and development of sustainable products.	Demonstrate good health and safety practice in relation to themselves and others in the workplace.	Perform laboratory activities, including sampling, preparing, cleaning, safe storage and disposal of materials and equipment for testing activities.	Contribute to discussions about the manufacturing industry, using appropriate terminology to identify improvements in a particular area.
Hospitality	Investigate the importance of the hospitality industry to the UK economy in terms of revenue, employment and the community.	Prepare a basic but healthy menu to meet customer expectations.	Discuss the range of methods and procedures by which hospitality organisations deliver good customer service.	Demonstrate the importance of effective communication with colleagues and customers when working in a hospitality establishment.	Produce and interpret marketing plans for hospitality establishments.	Develop, implement and evaluate relevant customer-care policies to improve customer service.

Table 5.2 (cont.): Examples of tasks that would promote the personal, learning and thinking skills in different Diploma lines of learning.



Exemplar: Teaching and learning strategies for personal, learning and thinking skills

The importance of developing skills that enable individuals to improve the quality of their learning, work and performance has long been on the educational agenda and is now firmly embedded within the 14–19 agenda.

By encouraging learners to develop personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) you will be guiding them through a process that will enable them to:

- ❖ develop a range of generically transferable skills
- ❖ increase their self-confidence and their ability to work with greater independence
- ❖ reflect on their own learning and performance
- ❖ enhance their levels of achievement in other areas of work.

You will be providing learners with some of the competencies and attributes needed for effective participation in employment, further and higher learning, and adult life. You will be broadening their curriculum and actually providing them with the opportunity to evidence skills acquisition. You will be guiding them to take responsibility for their own learning.

Independent enquirers

Learners will need different levels of support to gradually become more independent enquirers and learners. They should be encouraged to undertake research tasks on their own (for example in learning centres or ICT classrooms), but may initially need to work closely with someone (for instance, a practitioner or peer).

Some suggested activities could include:

- ❖ confirming short-term targets and planning how they will be met
- ❖ following their plan to meet targets and improve their performance
- ❖ reviewing their progress and achievements
- ❖ critically reflecting on their performance
- ❖ taking increasing responsibility for managing their own learning.

Initial engaging tasks like a library 'treasure hunt' can be developed into more challenging assignment research using books and the Internet.

Creative thinkers

You will need to introduce learners to different methods of meeting challenges in new and creative ways. You should encourage them to use these methods to deal with individual and group tasks. Some examples could include:

- ❖ thought showers
- ❖ mind maps
- ❖ pros and cons
- ❖ timelines
- ❖ what if...?

You could give learners the opportunity to address a particular task or problem as an individual, and then let each person in the group summarise how they dealt with the task. This would allow learners to consider a wide variety of different approaches and encourage creative ideas.

continued

Reflective learners

Learning to reflect is central to the development of personal, learning and thinking skills and learners should be encouraged to take time to develop this skill. Reflecting critically on one's own experience involves thinking about how particular skills and knowledge were used, and what might have worked better. Learners should be encouraged to ask themselves questions like the following.

- ❖ What went well, what could have gone better?
- ❖ What don't I know about which might help me do this task better next time?
- ❖ What would have happened if I had tried it another way?
- ❖ What new skills and abilities do I need to develop?

Learners could apply this skill to a school-based task, such as a test or piece of coursework, or a work-based task related to work experience or placement.

Team workers

Most learners will have experience of team working on some setting and a starting point could be to ask learners to share how their work team is organised during team games, while on work experience or within part-time jobs. They can then reflect upon roles and responsibilities within teams. One suggested activity could be to type up the steps that need to be taken to complete a task in the form of a list. Cut up the list and ask groups of students to put them in an order that will work. Ask them, 'Are there any stages missing?' Compare the outcome from each group: 'Are they different? Why?'

Games can be a valuable way of developing team-working skills and all the lines of learning have relevant team-working challenges that could be applied to the teaching of PLTS.

Self-managers

You should encourage learners to take responsibility for themselves and their own learning. Show learners how to assess their own performance; to be aware of how their behaviour affects others; what is happening in a group; and why people behave the way they do. Many learners will initially require support to develop this skill, but from the start of the programme all learners could be encouraged to:

- ❖ be punctual
- ❖ meet deadlines
- ❖ consider the implications of their actions
- ❖ manage their school work/social life balance.

This can be done by observation, discussion, goal setting and reflection.

For example, a learner may identify that they could improve their ability to meet deadlines. Initially they could observe others whose ability in this area is well developed. They could have discussions with peers and teachers to identify the benefits of meeting deadlines more effectively. They could set specific goals and devise strategies for meeting these goals. Finally, they could review and reflect upon their progress and evaluate the effects of improving their performance in this area.

continued

Effective participators

Participating effectively is a key to many of the other PLTS and learners should be encouraged to recognise and record their contribution to a range of individual and group activities. Some activities could centre on issues such as:

- ❖ the difference between being assertive rather than aggressive
- ❖ understanding of rights and responsibilities
- ❖ empathy
- ❖ valuing other people's differences
- ❖ resolving conflict
- ❖ making a contribution.

For example, skills of effective participation could be developed by role-playing typical scenarios from a relevant workplace setting. Learners could undertake a short course in conflict resolution and reflect upon how they could use this in a working environment. Learners could be encouraged to take part in a community activity, either individually or in small groups, and then produce a short presentation to show how their contribution has had a positive effect.



Learners can develop their personal, learning and thinking skills by working within their local community.

The effective development of personal, learning and thinking skills depends upon opportunities to learn, practise and apply skills in different contexts. It also needs to be supported by constructive feedback from a range of individuals (self, peer or partner, as well as external feedback, all covered in section 4). Developing and integrating personal, learning and thinking skills through the

Diploma's principal learning, Foundation, Higher or extended project and work experience and, where appropriate, additional and specialist learning makes the skills more meaningful to learners.

For learners to understand the importance of these skills, and be able to apply them effectively, you will need to make their sector relevance and personal relevance explicit as part of the teaching and learning process. Learners need time for 'skills talk' to identify, record and validate their skills, and to develop the language to describe them.

Recording personal, learning and thinking skills

Planning and review are an important process within the Diploma, and 60 guided learning hours are allocated for this purpose. These should incorporate the development and recording of personal, learning and thinking skills.

A focus statement (see second column of Table 5.1, pages 146–7) sums up the range of skills and qualities. This is accompanied by a set of outcome statements (see third column of Table 5.1), which show the skills, behaviours and personal qualities that learners will master. As learners progress, they will be able to demonstrate an increasing number of these abilities and manage their own skills development.

The following principles have emerged for the recording of personal, learning and thinking skills.

- ❖ The primary purpose of recording should be to inform and support skill recognition and development.
- ❖ The recording process should be relevant and meaningful to the learner, and owned by the learner.
- ❖ Recording should be part of the Diploma planning and review process, to aid reflection on personal, learning and thinking skills, recognise progress and achievements, and to inform discussions on ways to develop these skills further.
- ❖ The form and frequency of the recording of these skills should be manageable for learners and practitioners, and take account of other systems in place within the consortium delivering the Diploma.
- ❖ Access to and use of the record of personal, learning and thinking skills should be determined by the learner.
- ❖ The skills-recording process and output of that recording should be subject to monitoring and evaluation, to ensure that quality is maintained and provision is inclusive for all learners.

Recording skills should allow learners both to take ownership of their own skills development and to reflect on a wide variety of learning experiences to identify the skills that they are acquiring or developing. This is illustrated in the following exemplar.



Exemplar: Log-books for recording personal, learning and thinking skills

Valley School has introduced log-books for the recording of personal, learning and thinking skills. Learners in Year 10 can record activities, both inside and outside school, in which they have developed their skills (see Figure 5.1).

A series of lessons were devised to introduce learners to each of the personal, learning and thinking skills. These activities included team-working projects and research activities, at the end of which learners made entries into their log-books to show how they had acquired new skills or built upon existing ones. These log-books accompany the learners throughout their course and are regularly incorporated into starter and plenary activities.

In addition, learners are encouraged to identify skills development in other subject areas and outside school – for example, in sporting, musical, employment or community activities.

Date	How was I a team worker?
10/10/08	Took part in a group discussion to make a list of important needs that people have
13/10/08	As a member of a small group we delivered a presentation about the different meanings of health
17/10/08	Worked with a group of my friends to assess each other's coursework

Figure 5.1: What a page from a log-book, in which learners record their personal, learning and thinking skills, might look like.

Consortia should take flexible approaches to the recording of personal, learning and thinking skills, and the above is just one example.

Reflective activity: Recording personal, learning and thinking skills

Think about an area of current provision within your Diploma line of learning and devise an activity which would give learners the opportunity to develop at least one of the outcome statements for the personal, learning and thinking skills (see Table 5.1, pages 146–7) that could be recorded in a personal, learning and thinking skills log-book.

Embedding functional skills

As indicated above, functional skills are the elements of English, mathematics and ICT. They are a part of the generic learning component of the Diplomas (see Figure 5.2). These skills are seen as vital to the personal development of all learners aged 14 and above. The term 'functional' means they provide learners with the skills and abilities they need to take an active and responsible role in:

- ❖ their communities
- ❖ their everyday life
- ❖ the workplace
- ❖ educational settings.

Functional skills enable people to:

- ❖ apply their knowledge and understanding to everyday life
- ❖ engage competently and confidently with others
- ❖ solve problems in both familiar and, at Level 2, unfamiliar situations
- ❖ develop personally and professionally as positive citizens who can actively contribute to society.

Currently the functional skills are in a three-year pilot with draft standards. National roll-out is from September 2010, when they will be functional skills as a stand-alone qualification.



The draft functional skills standards are downloadable from www.qca.org.uk/functionalskills, or available free from QCA (order ref: QCA/07/3472).



The full PDF versions of the Functional Skills Support Programme publications to support teaching and learning in English, mathematics and ICT, as well as materials to support managing functional skills, can be found on the QIA Excellence Gateway at <http://excellence.qia.org.uk/functionalskills>

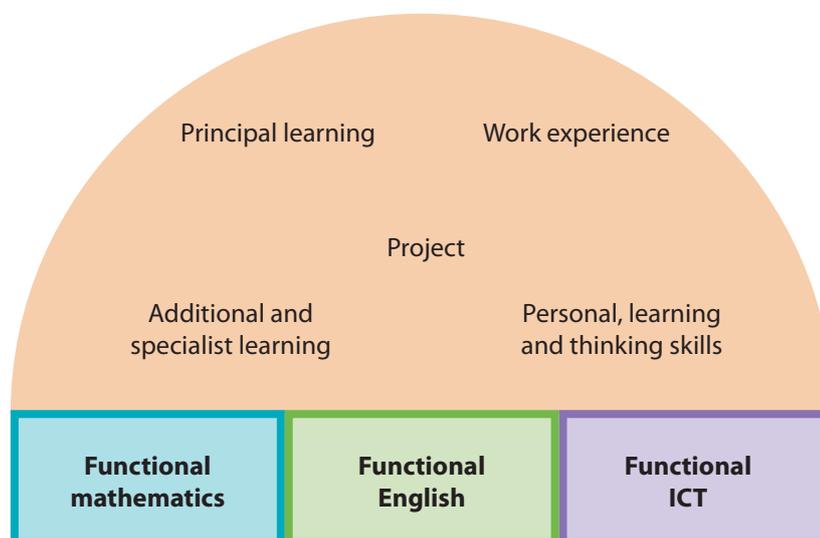


Figure 5.2: Functional skills form a foundation for the other components of the Diploma.

For employers, functional skills will help to ensure that employees are able to apply fundamental problem-solving skills in work situations, thereby improving their effectiveness and productivity.

Competency in English, mathematics and ICT will also help learners progress through to higher education and will give them a greater capacity for independent learning.

The three sets of skills are detailed below.

English

Functional English requires learners to be able to communicate in ways that make them effective and involved as citizens, to operate purposefully and confidently and to convey their ideas and opinions clearly in a wide range of contexts. Functional skills for English include:

- ❖ speaking and listening
 - ❖ speaking
 - ❖ discussions
 - ❖ listening
 - ❖ non-verbal communication
- ❖ reading
 - ❖ improving reading skills
 - ❖ applying reading skills
- ❖ writing
 - ❖ audience and purpose
 - ❖ types of document
 - ❖ checking written work
 - ❖ writing skills.

Mathematics

Functional mathematics requires learners to be able to use mathematics in ways that make them effective and involved as citizens, to operate confidently in life and to work in a wide range of contexts. Functional mathematics focuses on process skills to enable learners to:

- ❖ understand a situation
- ❖ choose an approach to tackle the problem
- ❖ formulate a model using mathematics
- ❖ use mathematics to provide answers
- ❖ interpret and check results
- ❖ evaluate the model and approach
- ❖ explain the analysis and results
- ❖ apply and adapt this experience in other situations as they arise.

As stated in the draft functional skills standards, process skills are wider than just the problem-solving process. The problem-solving process includes:

- ❖ asking questions
- ❖ adapting questions to other contexts
- ❖ looking for the mathematics
- ❖ judging what is the same and what is different
- ❖ justifying decisions
- ❖ classifying, ordering and sorting
- ❖ analysing solutions.

ICT

Functional ICT requires learners to be able to use technology in ways that make them effective and involved as citizens, to operate confidently in life and to work in a wide range of contexts. These skills will enable learners to use technology as a tool to solve problems. Becoming functional in ICT includes:

- ❖ recognising situations in which ICT can make a positive contribution
- ❖ applying ICT skills appropriately to a range of tasks and problems
- ❖ reflecting on the role that ICT has played in handling situations
- ❖ becoming increasingly independent in learning and in the application of skills and knowledge.

Delivery

The holistic delivery of these skills within the Diploma curriculum is driving the need for innovative strategies of delivery. All young people should achieve mastery of the basics needed for life and work. This mastery has a particular impact on the delivery of functional skills and the strategies used to support learners. Practitioners delivering functional skills need to take into account that:

- ❖ these skills are about application, and so embedding them in real tasks – either in work or in everyday life – is essential
- ❖ the development of these skills is reliant upon their mastery, so opportunities for practice are important
- ❖ learning should focus on the individual learner's needs, so individual learning plans and personalisation of the curriculum are crucial
- ❖ these are skills fundamental to life.

Figure 5.3 presents an example of how functional skills could be applied in an assessed task for the Diploma in Hospitality.

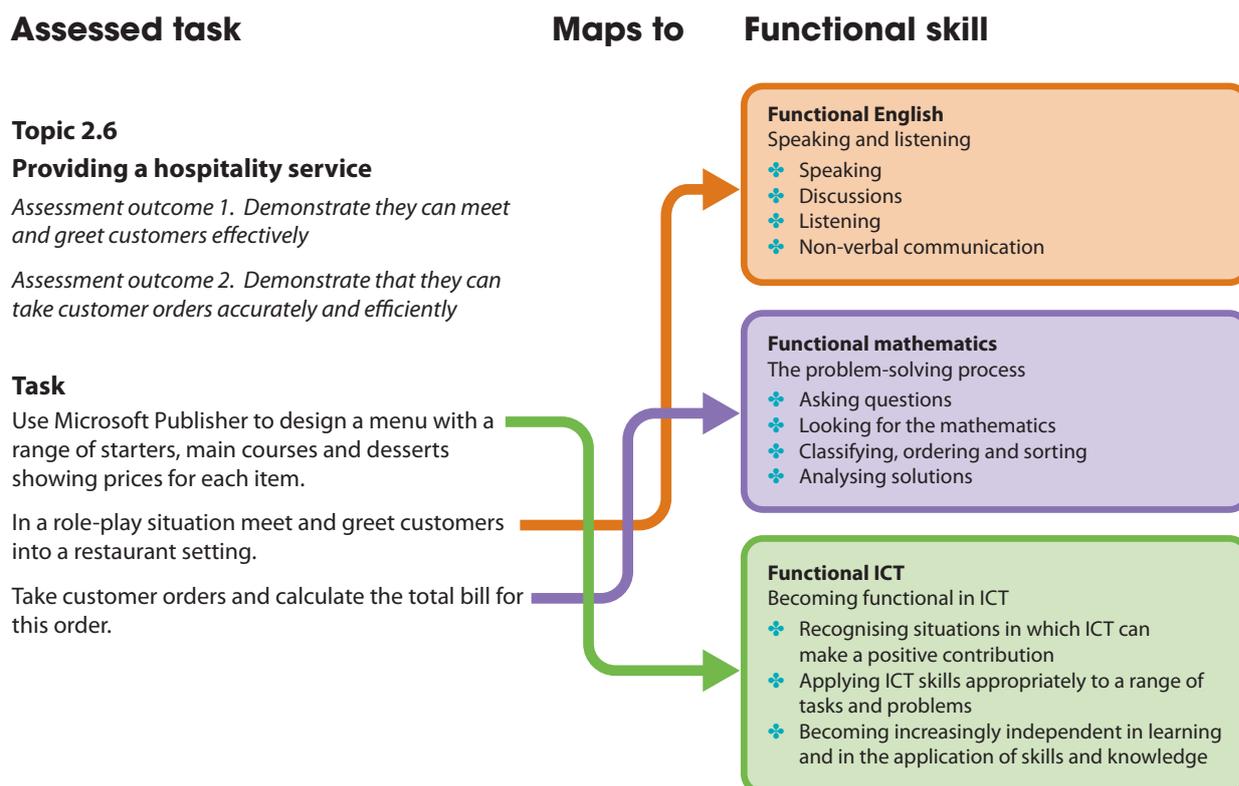


Figure 5.3: Example of how functional skills could be applied in delivery of the Diploma in Hospitality.

Reflective activity: Functional skills

Think about the principal learning from your own line of learning.

- ❖ What areas (in terms of the assessment outcomes, as shown in the exemplar) lend themselves to embedding functional skills?

You may find it helpful to complete this activity in partnership with your functional skills practitioner(s). Remember that you can also access information on functional skills from the Functional Skills Support Programme at www.lsneducation.org.uk/functionalskills



Embedding functional skills and integrating personal, learning and thinking skills

Embedding functional skills and integrating personal, learning and thinking skills means that we ensure that learners are developing and applying these skills as part and parcel of their Diploma studies. Over the last year, training has been provided for English, mathematics and ICT practitioners for the new standards. Diploma practitioners and the English, mathematics and ICT departments will need to work closely to ensure that the skills they are developing are being exercised and applied within the principal learning, additional and specialist learning, work experience and, where appropriate, the Foundation, Higher or extended project. Through this approach, the intended holistic nature of the Diploma will be assured.



Learners can extract functional skills within a real work situation.

Personal, learning and thinking skills are skills which are being developed in most lessons within the curriculum already; the difference with Diplomas is that the development and the ability to apply/master these skills has to be acknowledged, otherwise a learner cannot be awarded their Diploma.

For some consortia, the temptation might be to run distinct and discrete sessions for both the functional skills and the personal, learning and thinking skills, with the functional skills being delivered by the English, mathematics and ICT practitioners and with no link to the principal learning. However, using this approach, there is no way of providing evidence that the learner has mastered a skill and has been able to apply it to the world of work.



Exemplar: Edexcel – Diploma in Engineering (Higher) – Unit 2

LO4: Be able to prepare and submit a final design solution

Learners will need to be able to prepare and submit a final design solution, design documents (such as flow charts, circuit diagrams, general arrangement and detailed engineering drawings prepared by hand or by using a commercial CAD system), a written report (containing a design log and mathematical and scientific calculations), and a written or oral presentation (making use of models, PowerPoint® and simulation using computer software).

Looking at the learning outcome from the Edexcel Diploma in Engineering opposite, it is clear that the learner will need certain functional mathematical skills to undertake this task, such as making accurate drawings using precise measurements, scientific calculations, flow charts and so on.

In order to embed the functional skills in mathematics, the Engineering practitioner will need to ensure that learners are given the opportunity to practise and apply these skills a number of times during the study of this unit. This could be approached initially through a whole-class task, followed by smaller group work, leading to individual and independent application to ensure each learner's mastery of the skill(s) being assessed.

Close collaboration between Engineering practitioners and the English department may be beneficial to ensuring that all the skills are being addressed and at an appropriate level. The English department may need to be involved in the assessment of learner application, particularly if the Engineering practitioner does not feel confident about their own skills. This may be a common issue and should be considered within each centre's continuing professional development (CPD) programme. Within a college, practitioners may wish to liaise with their key skills co-ordinator delivering communication skills, or with the adult literacy staff.



When writing schemes of work and lesson plans, it will be important to ensure that opportunities to apply functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills are identified and that opportunities to apply each skill are apparent a number of times throughout delivery. The reasons for this are:

- ❖ the ability to apply skills once will not be enough as a learner needs to show mastery of the skill which can only be evidenced after a number of consistently successful applications
- ❖ in terms of quality assurance, the ticking of boxes against a list of criteria will not on its own be proof of mastery.

You will need to consider carefully the methods used to capture evidence that learners have had enough opportunities to master the required skills, particularly the personal, learning and thinking skills, which do not have any formal assessment linked with them but can make the difference between achieving a Diploma or not.

Reflective activity: Functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills

- ❖ Which members of staff within your organisation have undertaken functional skills training?

mathematics: _____

English: _____

ICT: _____

- ❖ Who do you know in your consortium who is experienced in embedding skills and could provide you with some examples of this from within their subject area?
- ❖ How familiar are you with the functional skills standards?
- ❖ How familiar are you with the personal, learning and thinking skills standards?



The functional skills standards can be obtained from the QCA website – www.qca.org.uk/qca_6066.aspx

The personal, learning and thinking skills standards can be obtained from the QCA website – www.qca.org.uk/qca_5866.aspx

- ❖ How confident are you in developing a holistic model of delivery for functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills?

Take it further

'So what are these generic, transferable skills? It's what employers and higher education tell us they need from young people... the ability to work in teams to solve problems. The skills of project-based research, development and presentation. The fundamental ability to work alongside other professionals, in a professional environment. A mastery of the basics of working with numbers, words and technology. These are the transferable skills that infuse all aspects of Diploma learning.'

Teresa Bergin, QCA, 2008

Reflective activity: Generic skills

The importance of personal, learning and thinking skills and functional skills at the very heart of the Diploma has been described as a cultural change in the way that practitioners apply generic skills within principal learning.

- ❖ Based on what you now understand about generic skills, how will you ensure that learners embrace this change?

Applying generic skills

Your challenge is to develop innovative ways of applying generic skills within the principal learning so that these skills are developed in a sector-specific and applied way.

Design a task for your line of learning that will not only meet an assessment outcome from the line of learning, but will also allow learners the opportunity to develop one of the personal, learning and thinking skills.

The exemplar below shows how this has been done within the Diploma in Society, Health and Development.

You will need to be creative when designing assignments for your learners so that they are allowed the opportunity to acquire and develop personal, learning and thinking skills. Some examples follow of how generic learning skills can be applied to different lines of learning and be recorded to demonstrate achievement.

Exemplar: Integrating personal, learning and thinking skills within the Diploma in Society, Health and Development

Like many of the Diplomas, Society, Health and Development has units at all three levels that explore effective communication within the relevant sector. While providing assessment opportunities for learners, you could also provide them with the opportunity to acquire or develop as well as record personal, learning and thinking skills in the following ways.

Topic 2.3: Communication and information sharing

Effective communication and information sharing are vital to the sectors covered by this Diploma. The learning outcomes contained within this theme are particular to the requirements of communication and information sharing in health, social care, community justice and the children's workforce. They



continued

cover the range of individuals with whom communication will be necessary, as well as the different contexts of communication.

- ❖ Examine methods of communicating with individuals of all ages.
- ❖ Describe situations that have an impact on communication and how they can be handled effectively.
- ❖ Identify the similarities and differences in accepted terminology within different sectors, with different groups of people.
- ❖ Describe recording and reporting arrangements in a range of settings.
- ❖ Describe how the confidentiality and security of records is maintained.
- ❖ Consider the risks involved in information sharing and how these can be minimised.

Applying personal, learning and thinking skills

- ❖ Learners can become more independent enquirers by researching methods of communication and information-sharing protocols.
- ❖ Learners can become more effective team workers by taking part in communication skills role plays and simulations.
- ❖ Learners can become more creative thinkers by making recommendations for the improvement of recording procedures and resolving conflict.
- ❖ Learners can become more effective participators by taking an active role in role plays and simulations.
- ❖ Learners can become better reflective thinkers by evaluating recording and reporting procedures.
- ❖ Learners can become more effective self-managers by keeping up-to-date records.

Recent guidance from QCA mentions the Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN) Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE) qualification as one helpful means of recording, developing and tracking the personal, learning and thinking skills in the Diploma. The Certificate of Personal Effectiveness offered by ASDAN at levels 1, 2 and 3 has three units that are linked to the wider key skills. Learners and practitioners are supported by documentation, including a suite of 'plan', 'review' and 'do' sheets that help to structure a process of reflection and articulation. This is just one example of a helpful route through recording personal, learning and thinking skills.

This is taken up in the following exemplar.



Exemplar: ASDAN and the delivery and recording of personal, learning and thinking skills

Staff at Bedminster Down Technology School, in Bristol, have been delivering ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) qualifications to record generic learning skills as part of the 14–16 Engagement Programme. This is a personalised programme for those key stage 4 learners most at risk of disengagement.

continued

The 'wider key skills' being developed within the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme also fit the framework of the Diploma personal, learning and thinking skills (see DCSF and ASDAN 2007). Indeed, outside the structure of the Diploma, the personal, learning and thinking skills have their closest qualification outcomes represented in the 'wider key skills', and these have provided an obvious route for recording learners' achievement in these generic, transferable skills. The wider key skills standards of 'improving own learning and performance', 'working with others' and 'problem solving' cover many of the personal, learning and thinking skills and can themselves be used for skill development purposes; they are also available as separate qualifications. Table 5.3 maps the Diploma personal, learning and thinking skills to the wider key skills.

Personal, learning and thinking skills/wider key skills are the skills that are consistently described by employers as those which best equip young people to take an active and effective role when entering the workplace, and are skills which are no less important for learners moving on to further or higher education.

You can find more details about how ASDAN qualifications can support the delivery and recording of personal, learning and thinking skills at www.specialistschools.org.uk/uploads/documents/PLTS%20Generic%20Seminar%20presentation%20-%20Marius%20Frank%20%20ASDAN_839.doc



Personal, learning and thinking skills	Wider key skills
Independent enquirers	Problem solving; Improving own learning and performance; Working with others
Creative thinkers	Problem solving
Reflective learners	Improving own learning and performance
Team workers	Working with others
Self-managers	Improving own learning and performance; Working with others; Problem solving
Effective participators	Problem solving; Working with others (depending on context)

Table 5.3: How the Diploma personal, learning and thinking skills map to the wider key skills of the Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme. Source: DCSF and ASDAN (2007).

Reflective activity: Recording personal, learning and thinking skills

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ How can your learners be introduced to personal, learning and thinking skills and the value of recording these skills?
- ❖ How can your learners be encouraged to develop an understanding of their role, and that of others, in the recording process?
- ❖ How can they become familiar with the recording process and tools?
- ❖ How can the ongoing development needs of your learners be identified and addressed to support effective recording and the use of records?

Integrating generic learning in different lines of learning

Three further, longer exemplars follow to illustrate the variety of opportunities for integrating generic learning skills in different lines of learning. In each instance where these opportunities have been devised, the functional skills (FS) and personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS) are flagged in square brackets in the text, and then summarised in the tables following each study. The PLTS are specified to show each individual skill in the group. A key to these skills is given in the tables (for example, IE1 = independent enquirer, 'Identify questions to answer and problems to resolve').



Exemplar: Generic and applied learning in the Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance

Amjit is studying for a Foundation Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance. For his work experience he is working for an independent financial advisory group. He has been asked to compare and contrast products and services in five local banks. He has visited the banks and spoken to staff about their current and savings accounts [FS: English; PLTS: IE1] and collected literature and promotional material [PLTS: IE2, SM3].

After reading the information [FS: English 1.2] Amjit prepared a spreadsheet [FS: ICT] showing the features and benefits of the accounts [PLTS: IE4, IE6]. To analyse the different accounts further, he calculated the interest on £1,000 deposited in each account for three months [FS: mathematics]. Having analysed and summarised the results, Amjit discussed them at a meeting and identified the account that in his opinion offered the best value [PLTS: EP5].

Functional skills	
English Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reading: read and understand a range of texts ❖ Speaking and listening: take full part in formal and informal discussions and exchanges
Mathematics Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems, drawing simple conclusions and giving explanations
ICT Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use ICT systems: interact with and use ICT systems independently to meet needs. Manage information storage ❖ Develop, present and communicate information: enter, develop and format information to suit its meaning and purpose, including numbers. Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience

Personal, learning and thinking skills	
Independent enquirers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Identify questions to answer and problems to resolve (IE1) ❖ Plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions (IE2) ❖ Analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value (IE4) ❖ Support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence (IE6)
Self-managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Organise time and resources, prioritising actions (SM3)
Effective participators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Try to influence others, negotiating and balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions (EP5)

This activity provided the following opportunities:

- ❖ learning through doing
- ❖ interaction with professionals
- ❖ real-life investigations and active enquiry.



Exemplar: Generic learning in the Diploma in Manufacturing and Product Design

Bill is studying for a Foundation Diploma in Manufacturing and Product Design. As part of an assignment on the importance of product costings, Bill's class was given an overview of a commercial company, as well as numerous documents relating to the company's finances [FS: English; PLTS: IE1].

Working with three other learners in his class, Bill discussed and agreed the most important information required to calculate the cost of materials and labour in designing and manufacturing a product. The learners also worked out what information they would need to decide on the product's price and estimate its sales per month [FS: mathematics; PLTS: TW1, TW2].

Bill and his team presented their findings to their teacher using a spreadsheet with clear headings. Finally, they identified where the company could potentially make savings [FS: ICT; PLTS: CT1].

Functional skills

English Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reading: read and understand a range of texts ❖ Speaking and listening: take full part in formal and informal discussions/exchanges
Mathematics Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Interpret and communicate solutions to practical problems, drawing simple conclusions and giving explanations
ICT Level 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use ICT systems: interact with and use ICT systems independently to meet needs. Manage information storage ❖ Develop, present and communicate information: enter, develop and format information to suit its meaning and purpose, including numbers. Present information in ways that are fit for purpose and audience

Personal, learning and thinking skills

Independent enquirers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Identify questions to answer and problems to resolve (IE1)
Creative thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Generate ideas and explore possibilities (CT1)
Team workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Collaborate with others to work towards common goals (TW1) ❖ Reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results (TW2)

This activity provided the following opportunities:

- ❖ learning through doing
- ❖ interaction with other learners through group work.



Exemplar: Generic learning in the Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies

Nichola is studying for an Advanced Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies. For her extended project she decided to plan and run a hair and beauty show.

Nichola worked with a range of people to develop her ideas for the show into a workable proposal [PLTS: IE3, IE4, CT1, CT2, RL2].

She then researched a theme for the event and designed a 'mood board' showing the image details. Next she allocated a budget, identified the resources required and decided on the best marketing strategy to ensure that the event was publicised at the right level. She then worked with others to run the show successfully [FS: mathematics, ICT; PLTS: IE2, CT1, CT5, CT6, TW1, TW2, TW6, SM2, SM3].

As part of her extended project submission, Nichola had presented her ideas and findings from the planning stage to her teacher, local employers and fellow learners. She took note of the feedback from these presentations before finalising her plans for the show [FS: English, ICT; PLTS: IE6, RL3, RL4, EP2, EP3, EP4].

Functional skills	
English Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Writing: write documents, including extended writing pieces, communicating information, ideas and opinions effectively and persuasively ❖ Speaking and listening: make a range of contributions to discussions and make effective presentations in a wide range of contexts
Mathematics Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Analysing: processing and using mathematics
ICT Level 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Use ICT systems: select, interact with and use ICT systems independently for a complex task to meet a variety of needs. Use ICT to effectively plan work and evaluate the effectiveness of the ICT system used. Manage information storage to enable effective retrieval ❖ Develop, present and communicate information: enter, develop and format information independently to suit its meaning and purpose, including text and tables, images and/or numbers

Personal, learning and thinking skills	
Independent enquirers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Plan and carry out research, appreciating the consequences of decisions (IE2) ❖ Explore issues, events or problems from different perspectives (IE3) ❖ Analyse and evaluate information, judging its relevance and value (IE4) ❖ Support conclusions, using reasoned arguments and evidence (IE6)
Creative thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Generate ideas and explore possibilities (CT1) ❖ Ask questions to extend their thinking (CT2) ❖ Try out alternatives or new solutions and follow ideas through (CT5) ❖ Adapt ideas as circumstances change (CT6)
Reflective thinkers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Set goals with success criteria for their development and work (RL2) ❖ Review progress, acting on the outcomes (RL3) ❖ Invite feedback and deal positively with praise, setbacks and criticism (RL4)
Team workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Collaborate with others to work towards common goals (TW1) ❖ Reach agreements, managing discussions to achieve results (TW2) ❖ Provide constructive support and feedback to others (TW6)
Self-managers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Work towards goals, showing initiative, commitment and perseverance (SM2) ❖ Organise time and resources, prioritising actions (SM3)
Effective participators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Present a persuasive case for action (EP2) ❖ Propose practical ways forward, breaking these down into manageable steps (EP3) ❖ Identify improvements that would benefit others as well as themselves (EP4)

This activity provided the following opportunities:

- ❖ linking understanding and learning activities to job roles
- ❖ interaction with professionals
- ❖ real-life investigations and active enquiry.



Embedding functional skills into the curriculum: communication skills in the retail environment.

Reflective activity: Integrating generic skills into an assessment task

Look at the course specification for your line of learning and think of an assessment task that your learners could undertake.

- ❖ How could functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills be integrated into the task?

This activity would be best planned in partnership with Diploma and functional skills practitioners. In order to complete this competently it will be necessary to refer to the draft functional skills standards (www.qca.org.uk/functionalskills) as well as the Diploma units. The Functional Skills Support Programme (www.lseducation.org.uk/functionalskills) is your main source of information on functional skills; you can find links here to resources, pilot schemes and new materials.



5.3 Developing a range of study skills

As a Diploma practitioner, you will need to develop a wide range of innovative and collaborative curriculum delivery methods. Learners at all three levels should likewise be encouraged to develop a broad range of study skills to help them meet the various methods of assessment used in the Diploma. These are shown in Figure 5.4.

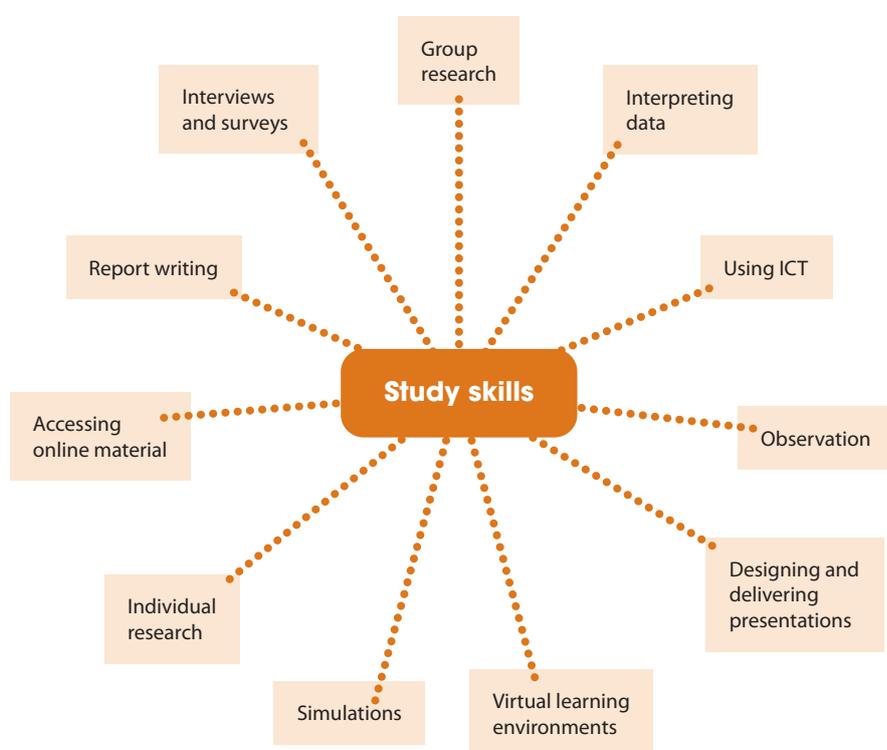


Figure 5.4: The study skills required of learners.

5.4 Accessing resources

Vocational learning resources and facilities

Curriculum developments over the last decade have expanded schools' capacity to deliver applied and experiential learning experiences. The capacity for vocational learning has been built up by the opportunity to participate in programmes such as:

- ❖ GNVQ (General National Vocational Qualification)
- ❖ applied GCSE and A-level programmes
- ❖ suite of BTEC qualifications
- ❖ suite of OCR National qualifications
- ❖ the wide range of City & Guilds qualifications now available for the 14–19 learners
- ❖ various ASDAN awards
- ❖ the Increased Flexibility Programme (IFP)
- ❖ Young Apprenticeship.

In Cumbria there are issues emerging around physical resource capacity. One of the ways in which the local authority is seeking to build capacity is in the development of 14–19 skills centres. Three areas of Cumbria are actively pursuing the development of such centres. In Eden Valley, the rural spread means there will need to be a distributed network of centres.

In Carlisle, plans to create a jointly managed 14–19 skills centre on the campus of the further education college are at an advanced stage. The centre is expected to be fully open by September 2009. In Furness, a construction and multi-skill



You can employ technology to engage your learners in independent study.

centre is being developed through a joint enterprise with a work-based learning provider, the further education college and partner schools. The launch is set for September 2008, with 25 learners initially accessing the centre for one day per week.



Exemplar: Sharing Resources

Through the self-assessment for the Gateway process, schools and colleges are required to carry out an audit of the facilities that exist within their consortia in order to meet the needs of Diploma delivery. It is essential that this audit is extremely thorough and includes those centres that may not, in the early stages, be directly involved in Diploma delivery. An example of this thorough audit exists in Warrington where two schools will be the hubs for the Diploma in Engineering at Foundation and Higher level for all learners across Warrington.

While these two schools have some good engineering facilities, they do not cover the full range required for the Diploma. Neither school has electrical engineering facilities and to install these into both centres would involve major capital spend, which is not available within the consortia at this time.

Priestley Sixth-Form College, which delivers primarily academic programmes of study, does however have an electrical engineering studio which is used by those students who are studying AS electronics. The facilities within this studio were part funded through Learning and Skills Council Local Initiative Development Funding with a view to ensuring that there were enough facilities that could be shared between the college and those schools delivering the Diploma in Engineering.

In addition to promoting efficiency in the use of facilities, sharing can have other virtues. For example, the capital bid allocated for the Diploma in Society, Health and Development in York is being used for two mobile resources, in the form of converted buses. These will supply specialist provision for the Diploma in Society, Health and Development specialist pathway. The intention is to make the spaces provided as flexible as possible. Initial plans are for one area to be equipped to simulate patient rehabilitation, a second area as a multi-use clinic and another area as a mini-court facility. The buses will move between delivery institutions, where groups of learners will be timetabled on to them. When not in use for Diploma learners, they will be available to local employers and universities, which could secure reciprocal support from these two stakeholders.

Virtual learning environments

During the pilots, all Diploma pathfinders were making or planning to make substantial investment in both bespoke and self-developed ICT systems to support Diploma implementation. The majority of these were still in their infancy and many were directed to information, advice and guidance (see



**Information, advice
and guidance**



section 6), and constructing individual learning programmes. All were also considering a range of virtual learning environments. Some of these were already well developed – a virtual learning environment and a webcam were being used to support delivery of the GCSE in Food Technology in Cumbria.

The following exemplar is an account from the e-learning development manager for the Cumbria 14–19 Strategic Partnership. It explains how Moodle, a virtual learning environment, has been developed to produce a vital component in delivering the 14–19 entitlement in Cumbria, and shows how consortia can adopt a problem-solving approach to the challenges posed by scarcity of resources.



Exemplar: Moodle development in Cumbria

Part of the brief for a 14–19 pathfinder in Cumbria, a mainly rural county, was to explore the potential of virtual learning environments. The consortium's initial experiences, in autumn 2004, were not good. The small group of highly motivated practitioners were dismayed by the gap between marketing hype and the reality of the virtual learning environment they tested, which proved difficult and awkward to use.

The group next tried the open source Moodle virtual learning environment – a product they had initially ruled out because of concerns about training and support. However, they needed little help with a product that worked as well as Moodle. Exposure to a difficult-to-use virtual learning environment gave them an improved appreciation of the benefits of this one.

Two and a half years later, most schools, all colleges and some work-based learning providers in Cumbria are Moodle users and there are plans to extend use with some higher-education partners. The unity of approach helps make partnership working for Diploma delivery feel achievable. Hosting and training for schools are managed by the regional broadband consortium, Cumbria and Lancashire Education Online (CLEO). Using a virtual learning environment is now the norm. 'Learners expect to find assignments and the resources they need to complete them on Moodle,' said one ICT co-ordinator. 'Training for staff has been the key. Once they were shown how to use Moodle they quickly saw the value of it.'

One of the early adopters, now director of e-learning in another Cumbrian school, noted that Moodle has injected new life into teaching, and he sees that extending to Diploma delivery: 'There's potential for a double benefit here; the Diploma promises to pump new life into a moribund curriculum and we've already found using Moodle makes learning a more exciting, engaging experience... Learners from other schools regularly spend a day a week at the school. Because they have access to our Moodle there's no dead time between sessions – relationships can be maintained virtually throughout the week. It's easy to keep in touch and deal with queries or problems as they arise. We've discovered social learning is not just jargon; in the time we've been using Moodle a new ethos has emerged, leading to a shift in relationships. The idea of being the guide by the side rather than the sage on the stage appeals to many teachers, and having a virtual learning environment in place enables that to become a reality.'

As well as hosting Moodle for all schools, the CLEO has provided subject network sites for each Diploma line of learning. These professional development communities bring together all those who will be working to deliver the Diploma, enabling staff from schools, colleges, work-based learning providers and employers to keep in touch and access the latest resources. They build on relationships already formed through subject networks.

continued

The manager of the 14–16 Increased Flexibility Programme at the Lakes College in West Cumbria has extensive experience of managing school–college links and has helped to promote virtual subject networks: ‘As most schools and all Cumbrian colleges now use Moodle it’s also good to have subject-based sites. I can be sure anything I post to a discussion forum reaches all in the network. It’s a way to keep everyone in the loop and I can see who’s looked at what. Once people see it as a place to go for information it takes on a life of its own.’

Another advantage is that Moodle is open source. ‘An important factor for the local authority is having the ability to develop and manage any virtual learning environment so it meets our schools’ needs,’ says the county’s school improvement officer with responsibility for ICT. ‘We’ve been able to influence the development of Moodle and shape it in a way that would not have been possible with a commercial product. That flexibility is what is going to be needed to implement Diplomas.’

The online Diploma support programme

You can access the Diploma support programme online by visiting www.diploma-support.org (see Figure 5.5). This website brings together all the elements of the Diploma support programme in a structured and practical way.



You can use the site to book onto core and specialist training workshops. In addition, a number of features are being gradually added. These will give you access to a personalised planning tool, a suite of development activities, blogs and forums, online case studies and interactive work placements.



Figure 5.5: Home page of www.diploma-support.org

The communities are particularly powerful in allowing you to network with others in the same line of learning, sharing experiences, discussing issues, collaborating and supporting each other. The site is designed to enable conversations between practitioners and build communities among those delivering the Diploma.

As well as offering a range of tools and support, the site will showcase best practice as professionals develop their own ways of delivering the Diploma. It will act as a repository for:

- ❖ interesting materials and examples of emerging practice from partners, practitioners and consortia
- ❖ generic and subject-specific support materials, including practitioner handbooks.

The website is changing constantly with news stories, updated content and new tools and features. You can also subscribe to various 'e-bulletins' to help keep you up to date.



Reflective activity: Online communities

www.diploma-support.org includes online forums that reflect the real-world line of learning networks that have been set up to enable consortia – particularly line leads, managers and practitioners – to share skills, knowledge and understanding on Diploma delivery issues.

- ❖ Have you engaged with your regional line of learning network?

To get a national picture of your line of learning, visit the national communities section. These online communities are organised and maintained by the National Diploma Line Lead (NDLL).

- ❖ Do you know who your NDLL is?
- ❖ Have you checked out the national community for your line of learning?

The Communities section of diploma-support.org also allows you to set up a forum for your consortium where members of the delivery team can share ideas, practice and experiences.

- ❖ Could your consortium make use of this feature?

5.5 The citizenship agenda

Citizenship and Diplomas

It is a government aspiration, expressed in the *14–19 Education and Skills White Paper* (DfES, 2005), that ‘everyone leaving education is equipped to be an informed, responsible, active citizen’. Citizenship education is an important part of the development of young people. It enables them to:

- ❖ learn about their rights and responsibilities
- ❖ understand how society works
- ❖ develop knowledge and understanding of social and political issues.

It prepares them for dealing with the challenges they face in work and life.

Through citizenship education, young people can take action on issues of concern to themselves and play an active part in the democratic process and society. Young people are encouraged to express their views, to have a voice and make a difference to their communities and organisations, and to reflect on what they have learned.

The Quality Improvement Agency (QIA) Post-16 Citizenship Support Programme, has produced a pack for practitioners and learners highlighting the aspects of citizenship that can be incorporated into the first five Diploma lines of learning (LSN/QIA, 2008). It lists the ten QCA learning objectives for citizenship (QCA, 2004), as follows.

- ❖ Demonstrate knowledge and understanding about citizenship issues.
- ❖ Show understanding of key citizenship concepts.
- ❖ Consider the social, moral and ethical issues applying to a particular situation.
- ❖ Analyse sources of information, identify bias and draw conclusions.
- ❖ Demonstrate understanding of respect for diversity and challenge prejudice and discrimination.
- ❖ Discuss and debate citizenship issues.
- ❖ Express and justify a personal opinion to others.
- ❖ Represent a point of view on behalf of others.
- ❖ Demonstrate skills of negotiation and participation in community-based activities.
- ❖ Exercise responsible action towards and on behalf of others.

Reflective activity: Citizenship in Diploma delivery

The following questions you could ask yourself may be helpful in considering how best to involve citizenship within Diploma delivery and further strengthen or build on existing good practice.

- ❖ What are the needs and characteristics of the learners in my school/ college?
- ❖ What are the learners already learning about citizenship?
- ❖ What already works well and meets my school's or college's priorities?
- ❖ How can my school or college build on what it is already doing?
- ❖ What needs can be changed or added to?
- ❖ Who can help?

Pre-16 agenda

The report of the Advisory Group on Education for Citizenship (1998) identified three interrelated components that should run through all education for citizenship:

- ❖ social and moral responsibility
- ❖ community involvement
- ❖ political literacy (being effective in public life).

The Diploma is about developing learners who can contribute to the world of work, and employers expect that this will be on all levels, including moral, social and political responsibilities.

Post-16 agenda



The guidance from the QCA on post-16 citizenship (see www.qca.org.uk) states that all young people should have opportunities in their curriculum to:

- ❖ identify, investigate and think critically about citizenship issues, problems or events of concern to them
- ❖ decide on and take part in follow-up action where appropriate
- ❖ reflect on, recognise and review their citizenship learning.

There are many opportunities for the development of citizenship learning within the Diploma curriculum framework.

- ❖ GCSE, AS and A-level citizenship qualifications can form part of the Diploma's additional and specialist learning.
- ❖ The personal, learning and thinking skill 'Effective participator', which is integrated in principal learning, involves the same skills as active citizenship.
- ❖ Work experience is an excellent opportunity to explore the rights and responsibilities of employees and employers.

- ❖ The Foundation, Higher or extended project (see section 3.1, pages 83–6) can be chosen to develop citizenship skills and knowledge with the opportunities it provides for researching issues of concern, and the development of ideas, products and services that benefit the local community over time.

Specific examples of how the post-16 citizenship agenda could be implemented within the first five lines of learning for the Diploma are given below.

Construction and the Built Environment

It is important to engage Diploma learners in debate on topical issues of concern to young people, especially environmental concerns and sustainability. The link between design of buildings and community cohesion, and the influence of democratic processes on planning, are key processes. The principles of sustainability, the consequences of not being sustainable and the contributions that individuals can make to sustainability should be included in Diploma teaching.

The other main area of citizenship content is the rights and responsibilities of employees and employers, including an understanding of equality and diversity. Other approaches include typical citizenship ‘active learning’ approaches, such as debates on controversial issues and allowing learners to put forward ideas and to challenge the ideas of others.

Creative and Media

Highlighting topical issues, such as the role of the media in influencing public opinion and in holding those in power to account, is one way of bringing citizenship into the Diploma in Creative and Media. The specifications of the awarding body include the potential for studying campaigns organised by political parties and pressure groups.

The opportunity for learners to develop a local campaign on an issue of their choosing is the strongest overlap with active citizenship. Key citizenship concepts include identity and diversity, and key processes include exploring citizenship through reflection and collaboration.

Engineering

The Diploma in Engineering stresses the importance of engineering to global environmental concerns – for example, the potential for ‘clean’ energy and renewable technologies and how active citizens can protect the environment for future generations. The key theme of ‘engineering and the future’ includes topics such as:

- ❖ recycling and safe disposal of engineered products
- ❖ equalities and disabilities
- ❖ consumer protection and intellectual property
- ❖ corporate social responsibility.

Another theme explores how engineering is shaped by political factors.

Work experience can be used to develop an understanding of rights and responsibilities at work. Learners taking the Advanced Diploma should have the

chance to consider actions to minimise carbon footprints. The extended project can be based on a business or social enterprise venture.

Information Technology

Learners taking the Diploma in Information Technology can explore the use of ICT and the Internet in communicating ideas, influencing public opinion and campaigning on issues of concern. They should be able to describe how ICT has enabled individuals and organisations to succeed in the global community. This could include an understanding of how charities, pressure groups and political parties have used the Internet to communicate their messages. Learners can explore the impact of ICT on the nature of identity and community. The extended project could be on the social and moral impact of mobile technology on children and young people.

Society, Health and Development

This Diploma covers four sectors: health, community justice, social care, and children and young people. Key themes include an understanding of rights, diversity, equality, culture and belief systems. Learners can investigate the profile of diversity in their own community. They will also need to understand the structure of the criminal justice system and measures to reduce the impact of crime and disorder on communities. They should explore the different patterns of antisocial and offending behaviour.

Key processes of this Diploma also overlap with those of active citizenship – for example, taking informed and responsible action, and knowing the legal and ethical framework.

Reflective activity: Citizenship in Diploma tasks and activities

Consider the following questions when devising any activity with learners to incorporate citizenship into the Diploma.

- ❖ What is an issue of concern to learners?
- ❖ What are the main questions about the issue?
- ❖ What citizenship skills and knowledge are involved?
- ❖ What citizenship actions are appropriate to this issue, and how will you assess and manage any associated risks?
- ❖ What activities would develop citizenship learning?
- ❖ How would this make a difference to this issue?

Take it further

Citizenship, combined with personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE), is another way into delivery of the Diploma's personal, learning and thinking skills (Figure 5.6).

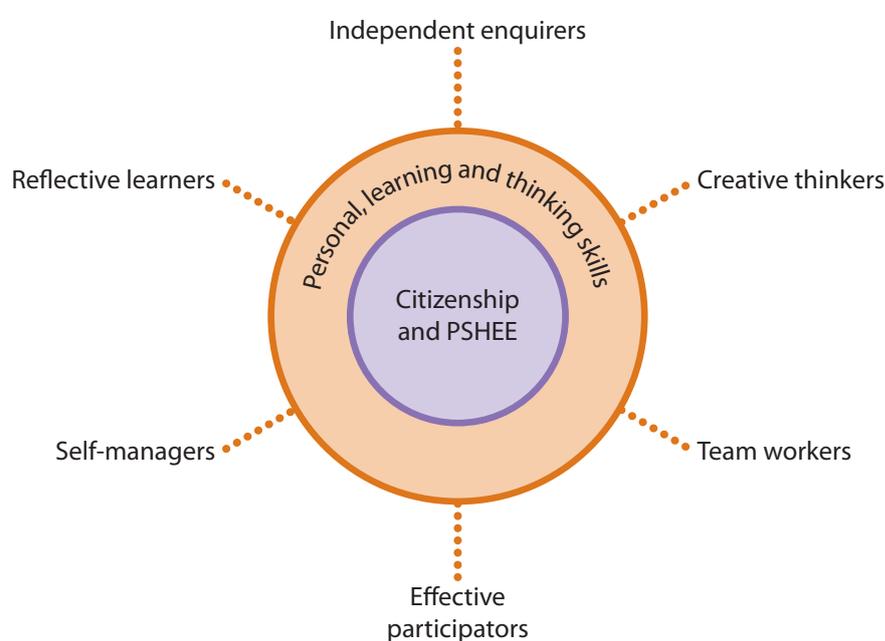


Figure 5.6: The personal, learning and thinking skills fit around personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) and citizenship.

Citizenship and personal, learning and thinking skills

The aims of the curriculum are that young people should become:

- ❖ successful learners
- ❖ confident individuals
- ❖ responsible citizens.

The development of personal, learning and thinking skills is essential to meet these aims. These skills have considerable impact on young people's ability to enter work and adult life as confident and capable individuals who can make a positive contribution. The citizenship programme of study provides opportunities to plan sequences of work, learning outcomes and teaching approaches to ensure that personal, learning and thinking skills are integral to subject teaching and learning. This can be achieved in the following ways, for each of these groups of skills.

Independent enquirers

Citizenship provides opportunities for learners to plan and undertake research, and these will develop their critical thinking and enquiry. Learners:

- ❖ investigate many different kinds of issues and problems that affect individuals, groups and communities in society
- ❖ consider information from a wide range of sources and judge its relevance and value in the light of the issues they explore

- ❖ use imagination to consider and explore issues, problems and events from different perspectives
- ❖ learn toleration and respect for opinions and ideas across a range of cultures and traditions that are different from their own
- ❖ explore how ideas, experiences and values can be similar, with common threads, or different, sometimes leading to tension or conflict
- ❖ use and interpret different media and ICT as part of their research but also as a medium through which to communicate their ideas and findings to others.

Creative thinkers

Learners develop their ideas and understanding of key concepts by identifying and posing questions as they explore issues and challenge assumptions.

Learners:

- ❖ use different research methods to investigate issues and problems, and generate ideas and possibilities as they plan and try out courses of action
- ❖ learn to adapt ideas and plans as circumstances change
- ❖ make connections between concepts, ideas, viewpoints and actions in a range of contexts.
- ❖ communicate their ideas and learning in imaginative and relevant ways for different audiences.

Team workers

Citizenship offers opportunities for working in different groups in a range of community contexts. Learners can develop their understanding of rights, fairness and justice as they formulate a legitimate response to a situation or event – for example, where rights have been infringed. Learners:

- ❖ work together to formulate, plan and put into practice courses of action to address issues of concern and achieve common goals
- ❖ work co-operatively with others to try to have influence, make change or resist unwanted change in order to address political and social issues and problems affecting individuals and communities
- ❖ take on and try out different roles and responsibilities in groups, listening to and taking account of different views and showing fairness and consideration to others.

Effective participators

Regular participation in different forms of individual and collective action provides learners with opportunities to work, and have a voice, in different communities. Citizenship provides a rich arena in which to debate contested and controversial issues, ideas, problems and events, and to take action with others, balancing diverse views to reach workable solutions. Learners:

- ❖ actively engage with issues that affect them and others

- ❖ identify improvements that would benefit others and learn how to negotiate and present a persuasive case for action
- ❖ represent others by speaking out or taking action on their behalf, sometimes acting as an advocate for views and beliefs that may differ from their own.

Self-managers

As learners work on citizenship tasks, they plan activities to make effective use of time and resources. Learners:

- ❖ learn to negotiate and anticipate change, assess and manage risks
- ❖ show enterprise in looking for and meeting new challenges, working flexibly, co-operatively and responsibly
- ❖ organise themselves in carrying out investigations, seeking advice and support from appropriate sources.

Reflective learners

In citizenship education, learners:

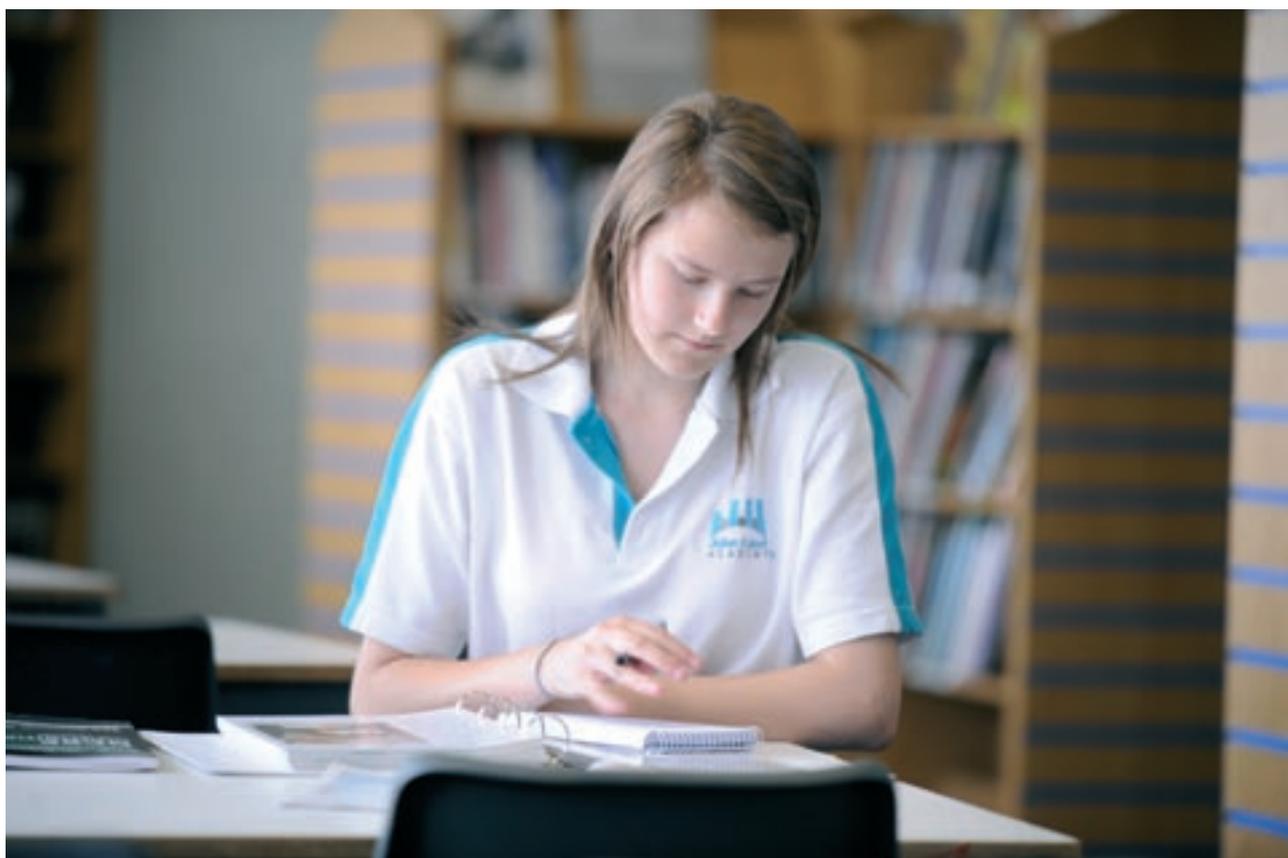
- ❖ question, think through and interpret different ideas, opinions, assumptions, values and beliefs, including those they do not agree with
- ❖ are able to make judgements about the extent to which decisions, actions and opinions reflect the values of democracy, freedom, justice, fairness and equality before the law
- ❖ reflect on their participation and responsible citizenship action
- ❖ consider the progress they have made in achieving their aims and goals
- ❖ evaluate what they have learned from the intended and unintended consequences of action, and the contributions of others, as well as themselves.

Integrating personal, learning and thinking skills through citizenship

With thoughtful planning, a range of personal, learning and thinking skills can be integrated in any citizenship work. For example, learners might be asked to prepare a group presentation on an issue of concern to them of local importance over several lessons. This would involve learners:

- ❖ deciding on a format and approach to the presentation and dividing up roles (team workers, self-managers)
- ❖ researching the issues (independent enquirers)
- ❖ anticipating objections or questions and taking steps to have answers ready (creative thinkers)
- ❖ discussing different ways of presenting the information for maximum effect (team workers, self-managers, creative thinkers)

- ❖ taking responsibility for preparing different aspects of the presentation and then giving constructive feedback to others in the group (effective participators, team workers, reflective learners)
- ❖ delivering the presentation and answering questions (team workers, creative thinkers)
- ❖ evaluating their performance, taking account of feedback from peers and practitioners, and setting targets to improve (reflective learners).



Citizenship work can integrate a range of personal, learning and thinking skills.

5.6 Applied skills

Applied learning

Applied learning is at the heart of all the Diplomas. Learning is through doing, and is firmly (50 per cent minimum in principal learning) based around applied learning in the chosen sector. Applied learning means that learners will be given the opportunity to acquire knowledge and skills through tasks and contexts that have many of the characteristics of real work.

Applied learning:

- ❖ is the practical application of theory that allows learners the opportunity to actively engage with the curriculum they are studying
- ❖ is relevant and meaningful to learners as it allows for learning within different contexts and environments
- ❖ allows the learner to interact with practitioners, other learners and individuals from outside the classroom.

Applied learning encourages:

- ❖ linking understanding and learning activities to real work skills
- ❖ interaction with professionals
- ❖ real-life investigations and active enquiry
- ❖ learning through doing
- ❖ interaction with other learners through group work
- ❖ learning in different environments.



Exemplar: Benefits of applied learning for learners

At a mixed business and enterprise specialist school, young people participated in a website design project with support from a local enterprise agency and a college of further education. The project offered an opportunity for learners to gain an insight into the business world while using their technical and ICT expertise and their creativity. Learners worked with the college to experience the day-to-day working lives of ICT specialists and met the webmaster, who explained the factors to take into account when designing a website. A school-based training session, led by staff from the college, introduced them to the software they would be using.

Working in pairs, the learners contacted their clients (local companies) to arrange a business meeting. They continued to meet regularly throughout the year to review progress. Weekly update meetings were held for learners, a business studies practitioner and an ICT technician to discuss

continued

the work. At the end of the year learners, clients, teaching staff and ICT support staff met to view the completed websites. As well as providing the learners with feedback from their clients, this was an opportunity for clients to view websites produced for other local companies.

Learners showed great commitment and enterprise throughout this project. They gained confidence through interacting with clients and had the opportunity to exercise their social and communication skills. The project has proved so successful that there is a waiting list of clients.

Employability

Diplomas require applied learning that reflects the depth of the sector for each line of learning and embraces the range of employment possibilities across each sector. Learners are made aware of the variety of employment opportunities available to workers in these sectors and the progression routes within these careers.

According to the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), employability can be defined as 'a set of attributes, skills and knowledge that all labour market participants should possess to ensure they have the capability of being effective in the workplace – to the benefit of themselves, their employer and the wider economy'.

It goes on to state that the competencies which make up employability are:

- ❖ self-management
- ❖ team working
- ❖ problem solving
- ❖ application of ICT
- ❖ communication and literacy
- ❖ application of numeracy
- ❖ business and customer awareness.

Of central importance is said to be a positive attitude. The overlap with the generic skills (both functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills) of the Diploma is evident.

Reflective activity: Employability skills

Reflect upon the CBI's list of employability skills above.

- ❖ What activities, both inside and outside your school or college, could you design within your line of learning to encourage the development of these skills?
- ❖ How could you give learners the opportunity to develop the skills that employers want in a sector-specific way as part of Diploma delivery?

The Learning Skills Network listed 14 employability skills in its survey research on what employers thought important in young people (Martin *et al.*, 2008).

These were:

- ❖ communication skills
- ❖ team-working skills
- ❖ problem-solving skills
- ❖ literacy skills
- ❖ numeracy skills
- ❖ general information technology skills
- ❖ timekeeping
- ❖ business awareness
- ❖ customer care skills
- ❖ personal presentation
- ❖ enthusiasm/commitment
- ❖ enterprising
- ❖ vocational job-specific skills
- ❖ advanced vocational job-specific skills.

Generic employability skills are important because employers require flexibility, initiative and the ability to undertake many different tasks. While there is no one definitive list of the most important generic employability skills, those that commonly appear are as follows:

- ❖ people-related skills – such as communication, interpersonal skills, influencing skills, negotiation skills, team-working skills, customer service skills and leadership skills
- ❖ conceptualised/thinking skills – such as managing information, problem solving, planning and organising skills, thinking innovatively and creatively, reflective skills
- ❖ personal skills and attributes – such as being flexible, motivated, reliable and able to manage own time
- ❖ skills related to the business world – such as innovation skills, enterprise skills, commercial awareness and business awareness
- ❖ skills related to the community – such as citizenship skills.

Good practice in delivering training in these generic employability skills includes the provision of a large variety of experiences and learning strategies. You need to be able to:

- ❖ communicate to learners the importance of generic skills in the workplace
- ❖ help learners acquire such generic skills
- ❖ ensure that they are then capable of transferring those skills to new contexts.



Learners can develop their communication skills on work experience in the community.

The generic work-related component of the Diploma

Within the Diploma, learning goes far beyond conventional 'work experience', and extends to enterprise skills and employability skills. All young people need work-related learning as an essential part of full preparation for an adult life in which they will contribute to the country's economic well-being. Table 5.4 gives some examples of how this can be done in the context of Diploma delivery.

Learning about work and enterprise is only one aspect of work-related learning. Some basic economic understanding is essential for all citizens. All young people need to understand how the economy functions, including the role of business and financial services. Many of the skills valuable for both higher education and future employment can be developed through work-related activities. Work experience and enterprise schemes, with their focus on social and personal skills, offer opportunities to stretch all learners.

Activity	Skills development opportunities
Learners prepare for and take part in a mock interview with a local business person, in which they will reflect on and articulate their employability.	Recognise, develop and apply their skills for enterprise and employability.
Learners spend half a day in a local voluntary or community organisation to look at leadership skills and how volunteers are organised. In debriefing sessions, learners discuss the roles and responsibilities of the people they have met.	Use their experience to extend their understanding of work.
Learners discuss several employment tribunal cases involving equal opportunities. Some of the situations are used in role play to explore varying perspectives. A trade union visitor acts as an adviser.	Learn about working roles and conditions, and rights and responsibilities in the workplace.
Learners visit a careers fair and find out which exhibitors have employment opportunities locally and nationally.	Develop awareness of the extent and diversity of local and national employment opportunities.
Learners investigate the employment opportunities available in the relevant sector and identify those that match their interests and abilities.	Relate their own abilities, attributes and achievements to career intentions and make informed choices based on an understanding of the alternatives.
Learners work with a car mechanic in a functional mathematics lessons to investigate the capacity and power of an engine.	Undertake tasks and activities set in work contexts.
Personnel from a local bank work with learners to help them understand how pay slips are made up.	Learn from contact with personnel from different employment sectors.
An artist in residence works with learners to design and make wooden sculptures for school grounds.	Learn from contact with personnel from different employment sectors.
Learners visit a local skills training centre and take part in activities to develop work-related skills in workshop and office settings.	Learn from experience (direct or indirect) of working practices and environments.

Table 5.4: Examples of activities that support work-related learning, enterprise skills and employability skills.

Enterprise skills

Enterprise education consists of **enterprise capability**, supported by financial capability and economic and business understanding.

Enterprise capability

The ability to handle uncertainty and respond positively to change, to create and implement new ideas and ways of doing things, to make reasonable risk/reward assessments and act upon them in one's personal and working life. It can be described as: innovation, risk management, a 'can do' attitude and the drive to make ideas happen.



Exemplar: Enterprise skills within the Diploma in Hospitality

A group of learners taking a course on hospitality organised to spend a day with a leading national crisp manufacturer. They were taken on a tour of the production line and given a short presentation on the marketing of crisps. When they returned to school the class was set the challenge of producing ideas for a new range of flavoured crisps and new packaging to reflect the latest trends.

Working in small groups, they researched possible new flavours, conducted a survey of friends and relatives to find out their likes and dislikes, and then made a decision on which flavours to promote and the reason for their decision. They made examples of the packaging before giving a presentation on their product range, describing the new flavours and why they were a good buy. Each presentation received feedback from the rest of the class on the 'product' and how well they had sold it.



Enterprise education can be carried out in a variety of settings.

Working collaboratively



Health and safety in practice

Work experience has operated for many years with collaboration between employers, schools and colleges, and the document *Safeguarding Children and Safer Recruitment in Education* (DfES, 2006) outlines procedures for young people in work placements. Young people have generally undertaken work experience

for one week; however, longer-term placements are now becoming more common – for example:

- ❖ the Young Apprenticeship scheme runs for two years, with learners having to complete a minimum of 50 days on placement
- ❖ the Diplomas require a minimum of 10 days' work experience.

Children and young adults are more vulnerable to abuse or harm in these situations and currently the law requires that, where a learner is on a placement for more than 15 days, the staff working with the learner must be checked and cleared with the Criminal Records Bureau (DfES, 2006).

Good practice in action

There are many examples of good practice from partnerships across different sectors. Two examples are:

- ❖ the Staffordshire Partnership: www.staffpart.org.uk/workexp_employers.htm
- ❖ the Cheshire and Warrington Safe Learner Group: www.cheshire.gov.uk/educationandlearning (enter 'Safe Learner Group' in the search box).



Take it further

Personalised learning



For the Diploma to succeed and meet its aim of providing young people with more personalised learning, a new vision is required of what forms of teaching and learning are needed. Young people will need authentic opportunities for applied and practical learning. This raises the questions of:

- ❖ what applied and practical learning means
- ❖ what makes such learning authentic
- ❖ how these opportunities can be arranged.

Prioritising employer engagement

The success of the Diploma and what will make it different from previous qualifications is the focus on employer engagement. The process of developing applied and practical learning opportunities has to be well structured to ensure engagement with employers in the delivery of the desired curriculum outcomes. Employer engagement should be a priority for educational institutions and consortia, even though other issues may seem more pressing. The success of the Diploma is dependent upon the success of employer engagement strategies. The development of such strategies will require considerable effort and commitment.

Increasing employer engagement

There is already a high expectation that employers should engage with education, for example, through work experience and the Young Apprenticeship programmes. This engagement will need to increase to meet the requirements of all learners. Furthermore, increasing engagement is not just a question of recruiting more employers. Continuing professional development should be provided for practitioners to bring their knowledge and skills up to an industry standard for their Diploma line.



Exemplar: Nottingham Employer Engagement Partnerships

A long history of working with employers in Nottingham has been built upon by the Nottingham City consortium to support the delivery of the Diplomas. Originally formed as the Vocational Implementation and Planning Groups, the Employer Engagement Partnerships have evolved to support the first five lines of learning across the city. These partnerships have been co-ordinated by Nottinghamshire Education Business Alliance to allow local employers to become involved in supporting delivery of the curriculum and providing placements for work experience.

The Employer Engagement Partnerships are currently meeting with teaching staff to identify learning outcomes that lend themselves to sector-applied learning. They are also building up a database which links learning outcomes to local employers and is searchable by postcode to allow schools and colleges to access employers in the local area. The Employer Engagement Partnerships have also supported recruitment events and parents' evenings.

Experiential learning

Experiential learning is central to developing work-related skills. Experiential learning theory describes learning as a process whereby knowledge is created through the transformation of experience. Unsurprisingly, it emphasises the central role of experience in learning. Learning is identified and consolidated by reflecting on and interpreting an experience. The benefits of experiential learning are that learning is often retained over a longer period, as opposed to recall after a short time without real understanding.

The process of experiential learning has been described as a four-stage learning cycle (as Figure 5.7 shows).

- ❖ Stage 1: **Experience:** Learners participate in an activity.
- ❖ Stage 2: **Reflection:** Learners discuss the activity to articulate what happened.
- ❖ Stage 3: **Generalisation:** Learners draw out the lessons from their reflection.
- ❖ Stage 4: **Application:** Learners apply the lessons learned in new situations or activities.

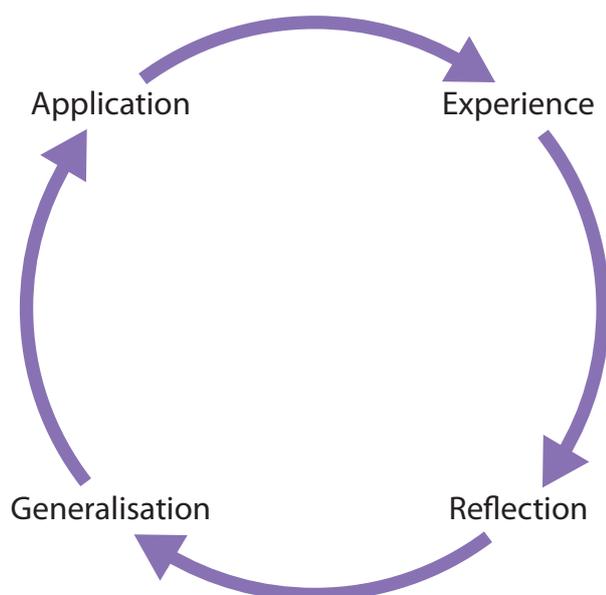


Figure 5.7: The four-stage cycle of experiential learning.

Work-based learning/work experience: setting up learners to succeed

In designing a work-experience programme, you should consider how learning can be maximised during both the placement and the debriefing stage. Careful planning and appropriate briefing can structure learning during the placement to take into account the four stages of the experiential learning cycle, as follows.

- ❖ Stage 1 describes some typical experiences that learners have on work experience.
- ❖ Stage 2 lists several ways in which learners can be encouraged to reflect on their experience.
- ❖ Stage 3 moves beyond reflection to identifying learning outcomes.
- ❖ Stage 4 identifies the ways in which learners can apply their learning during the placement itself.

Stage	Tasks
1: Experience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Health and safety briefing. ❖ Induction. ❖ Work-shadowing a co-worker. ❖ Attending meetings. ❖ Talking on the telephone. ❖ Interviewing a co-worker or manager. ❖ Talking to customers. ❖ Using equipment. ❖ Working in a team.
2: Reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Recording what happens and feelings about each day in a diary or workbook. ❖ Discussing each day's work with co-worker or supervisor. ❖ Answering reflective questions in a workbook.
3: Generalisation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Writing longer, more analytical pieces in a workbook. ❖ Summarising what has been learned. ❖ Learners being asked to criticise their own work and sum up good and bad points. ❖ Learners demonstrating and describing a practical skill they have acquired.
4: Application	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Using practical skills (having reflected and learned from previous use). ❖ Using personal and social skills developed during the placement with customers and co-workers. ❖ Presenting a report on work organisation to their supervisor.

Table 5.5: Tasks involved at each stage of the experiential learning cycle.

Equality and diversity

Diplomas are designed to challenge stereotypes and are open to all learners, irrespective of disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion and belief, age and socio-economic background.

The principal learning and all associated tasks of assessment, awarding and appeal take into consideration the needs of all potential learners. Any later need to make reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities should therefore be minimised. This includes the design of information and communication hardware and software, and the formatting of communication in hard copy or online.

Reasonable adjustments for learners with disabilities must be offered where these are still needed. Reasonable adjustments should reflect the learner's

usual methods of working and not invalidate the competency standard of the assessment requirements. This adjustment may take the form of greater levels of learning support, using specialist helpers and enhanced supervision to ensure that learners can perform tasks safely in a practical environment and allowing more time for assessment if appropriate. In addition, extra time spent learning the function and purposes of any tools and equipment, guidance from those assisting and/or teaching the selection of tools, coupled with familiarisation with the practical environment would be beneficial.

Where learners are required to use equipment, machinery, measuring devices and tools, they may be adapted to allow use by all learners, for example, by the use of digital displays or audio equipment.

Learners with disabilities may need extra safety systems in place when working with machinery, tools, animals and plants. This could take the form of enhanced labelling for dangerous/toxic substances and extra protection and supervision while handling animals.

5.7 Enterprise skills

Enterprise is part of each Diploma line of learning. Enterprise learning requires an environment where learners are expected to take personal responsibility for their own actions. They are given sufficient autonomy to tackle relevant problems or issues, which involves an element of uncertainty about final outcomes as well as reward for their successful resolution.

To drive the implementation of an enterprise culture within a Diploma curriculum some of the following recommendations have been put forward.

- ❖ Establish a clear definition of enterprise education among practitioners, learners and stakeholders.
- ❖ Identify the learning outcomes learners are expected to gain from enterprise activities in terms of their knowledge, understanding, skills and attributes.
- ❖ Recognise that enterprise learning has implications for teaching and learning styles in terms of setting learners more open-ended problems, encouraging them to take more responsibility for their actions, and giving them greater autonomy in taking decisions.
- ❖ Develop effective methods of assessing enterprise learning.
- ❖ Ensure that robust systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the development of enterprise learning.

Enterprise education can:

- ❖ help raise aspirations and develop valuable skills for both higher education and employment
- ❖ challenge the most able learners
- ❖ enhance a range of curriculum subjects
- ❖ drive up standards as part of the school improvement agenda.

Learners should take personal responsibility for their own actions through an enterprise process that involves four stages.

- ❖ Stage 1 – tackling a problem or need. Learners generate ideas through discussion to reach a common understanding of what is required to resolve the problem or meet the need.
- ❖ Stage 2 – planning the project or activity. This involves breaking down tasks, organising resources, deploying team members and allocating responsibilities.
- ❖ Stage 3 – implementing the plan. Learners have to solve problems and monitor progress.
- ❖ Stage 4 – evaluating the processes. This involves reviewing activities and final outcomes, reflecting on lessons learned and assessing the skills, attitudes, qualities and understanding acquired.



Exemplar: Enterprise learning within the Diploma in Environmental and Land-Based Studies

An enterprise pathfinder project, in a high school in Hertfordshire, targeted Year 10 vocational education learners. The school was soon successful in enabling the mixed group to participate in a horticultural enterprise project, linked to a course accredited by a local college of further education. The project was given a high priority by the senior management team, shown through the leadership of the project by the deputy head teacher.

The aims of the project were to:

- ❖ develop entrepreneurial skills
- ❖ create links with community partners
- ❖ open up vocational routes into further education
- ❖ produce resources to share with other schools
- ❖ publicise success.

An outside training provider delivered a three-day inset course on 'Nurturing the Entrepreneurial Spirit'. This helped staff plan and develop a number of small-scale vocational enterprise projects and create a choice of learning opportunities. The first venture produced bulb and plant bowls for sale.

With enterprise pathfinder money, the project expanded. In time, the group was cultivating school garden areas, planting trees, landscaping, and growing flowers and vegetables. The link with the college led to the accreditation of learners' learning, as NVQ Level 1 in Land-based Studies.



Enterprise learning can take place in any setting.



Exemplar: Enterprise education

The approach of an 11–18 community college in the Midlands to enterprise education is influenced strongly by its community, which has high levels of deprivation and few employment or enterprise opportunities. The focus is to develop enterprise skills (problem solving, working with others, decision making, creativity and risk taking) as well as foundation key skills (communication, numeracy and ICT capability) which will develop progressively from Years 7 to 13. These are applied through active involvement in social enterprise and mini-enterprise projects and engagement with business partners in the community.

The pathfinder project focused its first year on developing this programme in Year 10. This was done across the different design and technology subjects, with preparation for the required skills being done through weekly tutor lessons. Assessment was undertaken through the use of the 'Enterprise Index', an interactive computer system, which established the baseline of skills and competencies, and through accreditation of the activities using key skill 'working with others' (Level 1).

Enterprise education is recognised as an essential part of all aspects of the curriculum and therefore is led by whole-school and department managers. It is a core component of the school improvement plan, and development work is led through one of four whole-school task groups, composed of representatives from all school departments.

'Economic well-being and financial capability' and personal, learning and thinking skills

The economic well-being and financial capability programme of study within the new key stage 4 curriculum for personal, social, health and economic education (PSHEE) provides opportunities to plan sequences of work, learning outcomes and teaching approaches to ensure that personal, learning and thinking skills form an integral part of subject teaching and learning.

Economic well-being and financial capability is being introduced to ensure that learners are prepared for and can deal appropriately with managing their finances from the moment they start work, even if this is on a part-time basis while continuing in further or higher education. This initiative is in response to the increase in consumer debt which is likely to continue to increase and become more of an issue for learners in the future who will face problems like large student loans and big mortgages.

Many schools and colleges have already been tackling this issue in advance of the statutory requirement and have invited representatives from organisations such as banks, building societies, the Citizens Advice Bureau and so on, to assist in the delivery of this programme. The Personal Finance Education Group (pfeg) is an education charitable organisation and its website (www.pfeg.org) provides a good deal of help and assistance.



Through the assistance of these organisations, learners can develop and practise mastery of personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS), ensuring that not only are these skills being developed within the Diploma line, but in other areas of study too. Lessons learned through both the PLTS and economic well-being and financial capability studies can be directly linked and applied to a learner's Diploma line.

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6 Information, advice and guidance

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6 Information, advice and guidance

This section provides an overview of your role in giving information, advice and guidance (IAG), and considers how you can build this into your own practice. Information, advice and guidance are extremely important to the success of the new 14–19 education reforms and the Diploma. Learners and practitioners need to get to grips with:

- ❖ increased curriculum flexibility
- ❖ an expansion in progression routes
- ❖ an emphasis on personalised learning.

All of this will mean more choice for learners and more information to be provided by academic and support staff.

The information and advice should help young people to make the right choices for their future, based on their personal skills, abilities and aspirations; the guidance should help them to understand what they need to do next to achieve their personal and career goals.

6.1 Information, advice and guidance for learners



The Diploma aims to present young people with a much broader and more personalised range of learning opportunities than was previously available. For instance, learners will access Diploma programmes from more than one education provider. Schools, colleges, private training providers and local businesses have come together to form partnerships and consortia; these will eventually offer up to 17 different lines of learning, each of which is highly customisable, with:

- ❖ personal, learning and thinking skills
- ❖ functional skills
- ❖ a Foundation, Higher or extended project
- ❖ additional and specialist learning.

This wide choice means that learners need timely, clear and impartial **information, advice and guidance** on what they can study and where it is available. Table 6.1 suggests the wider benefits of providing such a service to learners. Good-quality information, advice and guidance can raise young people's aspirations and help them make informed decisions about education, employment and training opportunities, as well as about wider issues, such as lifestyle choices.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG)

Information

Accurate, objective, up-to-date facts and data about personal and lifestyle issues, learning and career opportunities, and progression routes and choices, as well as about where to find further help and advice.

Advice

Activities that help young people to gather, understand and interpret information and apply it to their own situation.

Guidance

Impartial specialist support that helps young people to understand themselves and their needs, confront barriers, resolve conflicts, develop new perspectives and make progress towards their goals.

Beneficiary	Benefits
Society as a whole	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Reduces unemployment, re-offending and exclusion ❖ Avoids having a national skills gap forcing jobs overseas ❖ Workforce with knowledge and productive skills matching the best in the world
Organisations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ More chance of recruiting individuals with the right skill-set ❖ Recruits will be interested and ambitious in the sector ❖ Less money spent on re-advertising jobs and on retraining staff
Young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The right information is given at the right time ❖ Increases understanding of opportunities and career options ❖ Less chance of making ill-informed decisions

Table 6.1: The benefits of providing good information, advice and guidance to young people.

The provision of information, advice and guidance can be seen as a pyramid (Figure 6.1).

- ❖ Information – the basic requirement for information – about the services on offer and how to access them, and the range of opportunities in learning, work and leisure on offer to learners.
- ❖ The second level requires practitioner input – support for learners to help them understand the information and the choices available to them, and help to interpret this in relation to their own aims, abilities and values.
- ❖ The third level of guidance requires specialist practitioner input from an IAG specialist adviser – help learners manage more complex decisions, or chosen routes that require more support and expert knowledge.

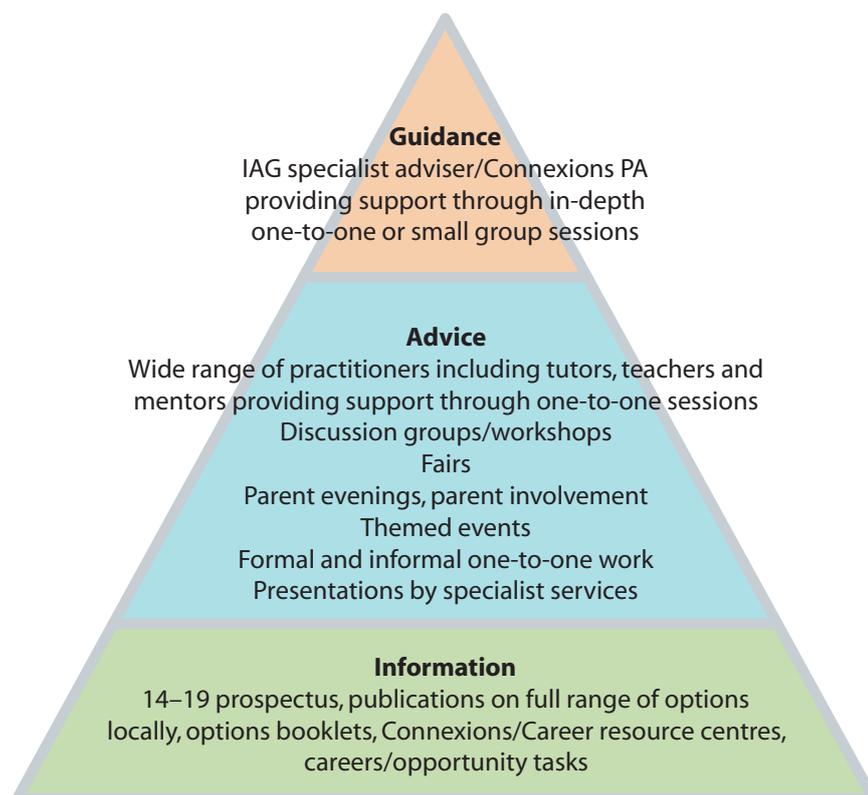


Figure 6.1: The provision of appropriate information, advice and guidance.

What national guidance and requirements apply to information, advice and guidance?

Local authorities have responsibility for commissioning and managing the provision of information, advice and guidance. To ensure a high-quality service is available to all young people, the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) issued a set of 12 quality standards (see DCSF, 2007). In summary, these standards are:

- 1** Young people are informed about how information, advice and guidance services can help them and how to access the services they need.
- 2** Young people receive the information, advice and guidance on personal well-being and financial capability that they need.
- 3** Young people have the information they need to make well-informed and realistic decisions about learning and career options.
- 4** Young people have the advice and guidance that they need to make well-informed and realistic decisions about learning and careers.
- 5** Information, advice and guidance services promote equality of opportunity, celebrate diversity and challenge stereotypes.
- 6** Young people (reflecting the make-up of their communities) are engaged in the design, delivery and evaluation of information, advice and guidance provision.
- 7** Parents and carers know how information, advice and guidance services can help their children and know how these services are accessed.
- 8** The providers of information, advice and guidance understand their roles and responsibilities.
- 9** Programmes of career and personal development for young people are planned and provided collaboratively.
- 10** Staff providing information, advice and guidance are appropriately qualified, work to relevant professional standards and receive continuing professional development.
- 11** Information, advice and guidance services are regularly and systematically monitored, reviewed and evaluated, and actions are taken to improve services in response to the findings.
- 12** Processes for commissioning impartial information, advice and guidance services are effective and result in services that meet the needs of parents/ carers and young people.

This will have a significant effect on how Diploma consortium partners will deliver information, advice and guidance, and the responsibilities they must assume.

Schools

Schools are expected to provide learning activities that support young people's career and personal development. They have a legal duty to:

- ❖ promote young people's well-being
- ❖ provide a planned programme of curriculum activities for work-related learning at key stage 4, and careers education, sex and relationships education and drugs education for children aged 11–16
- ❖ provide comprehensive, up-to-date information on learning and career opportunities to young people in a location that is accessible for all
- ❖ make available impartial advice and guidance for young people, differentiated to meet their individual needs – this may be provided by a range of people, from within and outside a school
- ❖ give external providers of information, advice and guidance (for example, IAG specialist services, Connexions services) relevant information to help them in their work with young people (for example, learner achievements and destinations) to ensure that individuals receive appropriate advice, guidance and support
- ❖ adhere to information-sharing and information-safeguarding protocols to ensure that young people receive an effective information, advice and guidance service while feeling and remaining safe
- ❖ comply with equality legislation and related codes of practice (for example, the ethnicity, disability and gender equality duties).

Colleges of further education

Colleges are expected to provide learning activities that support young people's career and personal development. They have a legal duty to:

- ❖ provide comprehensive, up-to-date information on learning and career opportunities to young people in a location that is accessible for all
- ❖ make available impartial advice and guidance for young people, differentiated to meet their individual needs – this may be provided by a range of people from within and outside the college
- ❖ adhere to information-sharing and information-safeguarding protocols to ensure that young people receive an effective information, advice and guidance service while feeling and remaining safe
- ❖ comply with equality legislation and related codes of practice (for example, the ethnicity, disability and gender equality duties).

Providers of work-based learning

Providers of work-based learning are expected to support young people's personal and career development. In most cases this will be through a young person's core programme (for example, through activities that enable young people to explore opportunities, develop their job-seeking and employability skills and exercise their social responsibility).

Providers must comply with equality legislation and related codes of practice (for example, the ethnicity, disability and gender equality duties). When contributing to information, advice and guidance activities involving other agencies (for example, IAG specialist services, Connexions services, specialist organisations and employers) they must adhere to information-sharing and information-safeguarding protocols to ensure that young people receive an effective service while feeling and remaining safe, which meets the government's Every Child Matters agenda:

- ❖ be healthy
- ❖ stay safe
- ❖ enjoy and achieve
- ❖ make a positive contribution
- ❖ achieve economic well-being.

6.2 Effective information, advice and guidance

The Diplomas are designed to enable learners to move confidently forwards with their career aspirations. The provision of information, advice and guidance is therefore integrated in each of the Diploma lines of learning; furthermore, the additional and specialist learning, the Foundation, Higher or extended project and the work experience component of the Diplomas allow learners to pursue information about their potential career journey and locate appropriate information to help them at every stage. It is therefore essential that you are able to access and share best practice in the provision of information, advice and guidance and ensure that all learners are given clear and impartial advice to help them choose the right career path.

- ❖ 'Pupils are entitled to receive the most objective advice possible on their future education and career options, and careers guidance and staff in schools must be fully aware of the different options available in order to allow pupils to make the most appropriate choices.' (House of Commons Education and Skills Select Committee, 2005, page 5)
- ❖ 'Accurate and timely information, advice and guidance are going to be critical to the success of the new 14–19 agenda in further education. Learners who decide to study with us deserve the best possible information on their present options and their future career choices.' (Debra Gray, Programme Area Manager – Public Services, Dearne Valley College, Barnsley consortium partner)

The Diplomas bring a new set of choices to learners and it is extremely important that you do not allow your own preferences and personal attitudes to influence the advice you give them.



Exemplar: Careers guidance

Ying Li had been head of year in a large academy for three years and she was expected to be able to provide clear and objective advice and guidance to all of the learners in her year. The job was not just about knowing what courses were available where, and what they involved: it was also about getting to know her learners and helping them get where they want to be. She was careful not to express her own personal preferences and wishes.

This was brought home to her in her first year of management, when she had had a meeting with a learner called Phil who, despite being on track for nine GCSEs at grades A–C, did not want to go on to do A-levels. His parents were distraught at the thought of him leaving education and Ying was really keen for him to stay on at sixth form too, because his academic potential was so high.

However, she became aware that people were putting pressure on Phil to do the traditional thing because, in fact, they did not know any better. It was only after she had a heart-to-heart talk with him after school, without his parents, that she realised everyone was pushing him away from education by trying to set his future out for him. The two of them looked at other things that he might enjoy and be able to make a career out of and he finally chose an information technology (IT) course at the local

continued

college. Ying Li shortly afterwards bumped into Phil's parents and they told her that he had just been accepted at university to do game design.

This was a hard lesson for her: she had nearly pushed a learner out of the education system by assuming she knew what was best for him. If he had done A-levels, as his parents and Ying Li had wanted, he might well have become disillusioned with education and dropped out. She now always makes a point of listening to learners and helping them decide objectively what is best for them, whether it is A-levels, vocational study, apprenticeships or a Diploma. She never assumes she knows best.

- ❖ How objective is your advice to learners?
- ❖ Are you aware of all the options available to them?
- ❖ How would you find out what types of courses were available to your learners?
- ❖ How would you ensure learners were making the right choices for them, rather than doing what is expected of them?



Practitioners should provide impartial advice to all learners.

Good practice in information, advice and guidance

The provision of clear and objective information, advice and guidance is not as straightforward as it seems. As you can see from the exemplar above, practitioners' personal prejudices and preferences can influence the advice they give. You should consider carefully whether you are able to provide impartial advice to all learners, regardless of their gender, ethnic background or sexuality. The principles of equality and diversity are important throughout your contact with learners, but they are especially important here, where they can influence

decisions which learners may have to live with for a long time. Good practice should centre on the following key points.

- ❖ *Raising aspirations* – setting high expectations for all individuals, regardless of their educational, social or ethnic background.
- ❖ *Meeting individual needs* – overcoming the barriers to learning that each individual experiences.
- ❖ *Taking account of the views of young people* – individually and collectively listening to the choices that young people want to make.
- ❖ *Inclusion* – keeping young people in mainstream education and training and preventing them from moving to the margins of their community, where anti-social behaviour, unemployment and long-term disaffection can become problems for the whole of society.
- ❖ *Partnership* – agencies and organisations such as schools and colleges collaborating to achieve more for young people, parents and communities than if they work in isolation.
- ❖ *Community involvement and neighbourhood renewal* – through the involvement of community mentors and through personal advisers brokering access to local welfare, health, arts, sports and guidance networks.
- ❖ *Extending opportunity and equality of opportunity* – raising participation and achievement levels for all young people, influencing the availability, suitability and quality of provision, and raising awareness of opportunities available to all, regardless of ethnicity, gender, sexuality or social background.
- ❖ *Evidence-based practice* – ensuring that new interventions are based on rigorous research and evaluation of what works.



Exemplar: Hertfordshire's Learning Disability Partnership Board

Hertfordshire's Learning Disability Partnership Board has a 'Moving On' transition steering group, based at Oaklands College in St Albans. The steering group is led by college learners with disabilities aged 16–21. They work with a variety of partners to improve transition planning and opportunities for themselves and other young people with disabilities. They discuss and debate issues such as:

- ❖ advocacy services
- ❖ social workers and referral systems
- ❖ health action plans
- ❖ independent living
- ❖ work opportunities
- ❖ travel
- ❖ financial support.

The work of these learners has had a significant impact on the provision of support services. For example, in the group the issue was raised about how health professionals communicated with young

continued

people with disabilities. As a result, one young person worked with community nurses to develop advice for general practitioners and hospital services on how best to support young people with learning disabilities. Another example concerned the arrangements for independent living – young people expressed a desire to live with friends and/or people of a similar age. The adult care services restructured its provision in response to this.

Young people with disabilities are able to steer aspects of information, advice and guidance for other young people in similar circumstances. Their expertise and experience are acknowledged and valued, and they are able to gain confidence and build their own skills in addition to helping others.

- ❖ How could you involve learners with disabilities in your provision of information, advice and guidance?
- ❖ How do you currently advise learners with disabilities?
- ❖ Are you aware of what the Diplomas may mean for them?
- ❖ How could you work collaboratively (as in the example above) to support your learners? Which agencies could you involve and why would you choose them?
- ❖ Do you need some additional training on providing information, advice and guidance to learners with disabilities or special needs? If so, where can you access this training?

It is important to remember that Diplomas are open to all learners, irrespective of disability, gender, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religion/belief, age and socio-economic background. All learners are assessed by means of internal and external assessment, differentiating only on the basis of candidates' abilities to meet the assessment requirements. There should be no disability which would prevent a learner from accessing these qualifications. In addition, Diplomas are designed to challenge stereotypes and are not gender biased. The principal learning and all associated tasks of assessment, awarding and appeal take into consideration the needs of all potential learners. This ensures that there are no barriers to learning.



Exemplar: Good practice in challenging stereotypes

Work experience is a key element in career decision making. National research shows that gendered work experience placements reinforce gender-stereotyped career choices; gender-stereotyped career choices in turn contribute to the pay and opportunity gap for young women. In south and west Yorkshire the response to these research findings has been the 'Wider Horizons' model, to increase the number of girls doing work placements within the science, engineering, construction and technology sectors. Two types of placement were developed within the Wider Horizons model.

First, in 'enhanced placements', girls who chose business administration placements in south Yorkshire received an offer of an enhanced placement. This allowed them both to work in an office of an organisation within the science, engineering, construction and technology sectors and to investigate some of the sector-related craft, technical and professional roles within the organisation.

Second, with 'non-traditional placements', girls who expressed an interest in sector-related careers in west Yorkshire undertook placements with supportive employers who could help them to explore their

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career ideas. On both types of placement, the girls spent time with a female role model in an occupation within the science, engineering, construction and technology sectors, and used a placement workbook to help them explore a range of sector-related careers. Some girls have given a PowerPoint® presentation to their peers about their placement and the lessons they learned – which helped to spread the messages more widely.

The model has:

- ❖ helped to overcome the lack of work placements for girls within the science, engineering, construction and technology sectors in south Yorkshire
- ❖ successfully challenged and changed girls' perceptions of sector-related careers, and encouraged them to consider such careers
- ❖ raised girls' aspirations and introduced them to new progression routes
- ❖ been successful in engaging employers.

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ What do you currently do to change gender perceptions of careers in your institution?
- ❖ When you give information, advice and guidance to your learners, do you ever challenge their, or your own, gender perceptions?
- ❖ Could you adapt the model to work for you and your organisation?
- ❖ How could you adapt the models to deal with issues such as ethnicity or sexuality?

Sources of information

Providing learners with clear, up-to-date and objective advice on a full range of options can seem daunting. However, there is a range of sources of information you can access to make your advice as accurate as possible. Firstly, consider asking your peers and colleagues for advice: the provision of information, advice and guidance is not a solo activity – it should be as collaborative as possible. You should also be aware that there are many opportunities for continuing professional development open to you if you feel that your skills in this area need some improvement; your line manager or mentor ought to be able to guide you on this. Some useful websites are listed below:

Working collaboratively



- ❖ www.everychildmatters.gov.uk
- ❖ www.connexions.gov.uk
- ❖ www.wearev.com (volunteering for young people)
- ❖ www.yjb.gov.uk (for information on young people's rights in particular)
- ❖ www.dwp.gov.uk
- ❖ www.adviceguide.org.uk
- ❖ www.cegnet.co.uk
- ❖ www.iagworkforce.co.uk
- ❖ www.diploma-support.org
- ❖ www.dcsf.gov.uk

Take it further

The principles developed by the DCSF (see www.iagworkforce.co.uk) for providing information, advice and guidance are:



- ❖ be impartial – independent of any vested interests
- ❖ keep it confidential – within legal requirements
- ❖ focus on young people's needs
- ❖ ensure the process is owned by young people
- ❖ be supportive of equality of opportunity
- ❖ ensure both the information to be provided and the process are understood by all young people
- ❖ ensure the service is accessible to all young people.

Reflective activity: Institutional support

To gauge how effective your consortium's arrangements for providing information, advice and guidance are, you could consider certain points suggested by VT Careers Management, which holds the contract for the national Careers Education Support Programme and which has also developed the website www.iagworkforce.co.uk on behalf of the DCSF.

- ❖ Does your consortium have an agreement/plan for information, advice and guidance activities to support Diploma implementation?
- ❖ Does this agreement/plan reflect the principles listed above?
- ❖ Is this agreement/plan accessible to all stakeholders?
- ❖ What systems/arrangements are in place to ensure that these principles guide further development of provision and practice?



The principles for providing information, advice and guidance are supportive of equality of opportunity.

Strategies for the provision of information, advice and guidance

Certain strategies can be applied to ensure effective and high-quality provision of information, advice and guidance. The following is a checklist for your consortium to see how many of these strategies are in place, or could be introduced.

Reflective practice



- A clear and shared vision is outlined in a simple but memorable vision statement.
- Individual learning plans, which can be paper-based or electronic, are a progression tool used to record:
 - progress
 - plans
 - experiences
 - achievements
 - future goals and aspirations
 - identification of choices such as subjects, enrichment activities, work experience
 - data to support smooth transition to the post-16 phase of learning.
- Enough time is allocated to the development of individual learning plans and other careers-related activities so that learners understand the importance of the activity and take ownership of the process.
- Opportunities are provided for practitioners to undertake training in the effective use of individual learning plans so that there is an understanding that these plans should be an integral part of a learner's journey and should be regularly visited (see section 2, page 43).
- There are clear guidelines on how individual learning plans should be used so that there is consistency across the consortium and practitioners are confident in their use.
- Protocols are in place across the consortium to address access to and transfer of learner information. Learners need to be able to have remote access to their individual learning plans and, similarly, the plans need to be available to them as they make the transition from key stage 4 to post-16 education.
- Individual learning plans (and time for their development) need to be introduced to learners from Year 8, or at the latest Year 9, to allow them to develop an appropriate mind-set in relation to recording, reviewing, planning and so on.
- An effective online prospectus needs to be developed (and maintained), to provide learners, their parents/carers and practitioners with accurate information as to what programmes of study are available within the local area for learners aged 14–19. Programmes can be offered by schools, colleges, providers of work-based learning, specialist training centres and so on. An example is shown in Figure 6.2.

The screenshot shows the 'Way:ahead' website for Cheshire & Warrington. At the top, there's a search bar and a navigation menu. The main heading is 'Careers & Jobs'. On the left, there's a 'Quick Course Search' form with dropdowns for 'What I'd like to do', 'Where I'd like to go', and 'All Providers', plus a 'Keyword(s)' field and a 'Submit Search' button. The central 'In This Section' area lists several topics with blue arrow icons: 'Where will the jobs of the future be?', 'How do I become a *P*? (Hairdresser? Astronaut? Builder?)', 'Apprenticeships', 'Current Local Vacancies', 'Young Workers Employment Rights', 'Help in Finding and Applying for a Job', 'Have you thought about voluntary work?', and 'Education Business Plus'. To the right, there's a 'Customize Site' section with four variations (01, 02, 03, 04) and a cartoon character. The footer includes copyright information for 2006.

Figure 6.2: An online prospectus, taken from www.wayahead.uk.com

Reflective activity: Individual learning plans

Apply the following questions first to your own organisation, then to build your knowledge, and then to your consortium.

- ❖ Are individual learning plans used within your organisation/consortium, and if so are they paper-based or electronic?
- ❖ Are individual learning plans integrated with careers education and other information, advice and guidance activities?
- ❖ Are learners encouraged to use their individual learning plans outside the classroom?
- ❖ Have staff received training in the use and development of individual learning plans?
- ❖ What are the current strengths in the approach to using individual learning plans?
- ❖ What improvements need to be made in the use of individual learning plans?



Exemplar: Disseminating information about choices at 14+ and 16+ to non-careers practitioners

A collaborative approach, the 'Informing Choices' project, has been taken to the dissemination of information about choices at 14+ and 16+ to non-careers practitioners by Connexions Suffolk, Aimhigher Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and Suffolk Learning Skills Council.

Objectives

The Informing Choices project has three main objectives, which are to:

- ❖ raise awareness among school staff of the increasingly diverse range of opportunities and qualifications in the 14–19 phase, including work-based learning routes
- ❖ deliver three key messages about progression for young learners – the importance of impartial guidance, the parity of esteem between progression routes, and the flexibility of higher education routes
- ❖ raise the profile of the agencies providing careers guidance and other information, advice and guidance to young learners.

Reasons for improving

The two main reasons for improving were to:

- ❖ communicate a consistent and coherent message from all partners delivering the Suffolk 14–19 strategy
- ❖ raise awareness of the benefits of collaborative working within the 14–19 phase.

Action

Collaborative working is a cornerstone of the successful implementation of Suffolk's 14–19 strategy. From its inception there has been a close working partnership between the local learning and skills council, Connexions and the local authority. To meet the above objectives, an ambitious target was set in the summer of 2005 to take an 'Informing Choices' road-show to all 38 upper and high schools in the county by the end of 2006. Since then, representatives from these agencies, and the newly formed Aimhigher Suffolk, have been delivering joint information and training sessions to school staff across the county.

Initially, the Informing Choices sessions were offered only to careers and personal, social and health education co-ordinators, heads of year and pastoral heads. Each session consisted of a short presentation and a follow-up activity. The presentation covered:

- ❖ the implications of the 14–19 developments in Suffolk and nationally, and their impact on young people and schools
- ❖ an outline of possible progression routes at key transition points

continued

- ❖ sources of support for learners, practitioners and parents
- ❖ the rationale for, and importance of, impartial guidance.

The follow-up activity covered the national qualifications framework, levels of progression and the diversity of courses offered to young people. As the team grew in confidence and the positive feedback spread, the size and breadth of the groups increased, culminating with presentations and workshops to schools' entire teaching and support staff. As a result, the size of the team increased from two or three to ten in order to support the activities.

Outcomes

The main outcomes of the project were:

- ❖ a road-show delivered to around 12 schools and over 400 practitioners during the course of two terms
- ❖ improved knowledge and understanding of careers information and progression routes among school staff
- ❖ increased awareness in schools of the agencies involved and of Suffolk's 14–19 strategy in general
- ❖ an 'Informing Choices' presentation for parents and carers – a new adaptation of the road-show successfully delivered by a multi-agency team as part of academic review days, learning conferences and options evenings
- ❖ a greater understanding of the benefits of collaborative working by all the agencies and by schools.

Source: www.iagworkforce.co.uk

Consortia will need to have an evolving process for activities on information, advice and guidance, with a need to review the outcomes of any activity constantly. This is to ensure that quality provision is sustained and also to take into account that each year the set of local circumstances will change, dependent on the number of Diploma lines on offer, changes to partnership structures and consortia arrangements. A long-term plan will be crucial, but there will be an understanding that this plan may have to be adapted to suit local needs.

Reflective activity: Effective practice?

Consider the following questions.

- ❖ Is your consortium (or 14–19 partnership) taking a collaborative approach to implementing an excellent programme of activities on information, advice and guidance?
- ❖ Is there a written strategy or statement of how your consortium intends to implement these activities?
- ❖ Does your consortium have training and development activities planned? If so, will they be accessible to all Diploma practitioners and other members of the consortium?
- ❖ Do you and your colleagues understand your own responsibility for keeping up to date in your own knowledge of industry, employment opportunities and further and higher education progression routes?

Additional and specialist learning (ASL)

While it is important for you to have a good understanding of the different qualifications that would support or complement your own subject area, it is even more important to have a good knowledge of the combinations allowed in terms of a Diploma line of learning and the additional and specialist learning. ASL is discussed in more detail in section 7.2 (pages 245–7).

Working collaboratively



Self-evaluation for institutions and consortia

Self-evaluation or self-assessment is part and parcel of 14–19 implementation. For example, self-assessment has to be carried out by all consortia as part of the Gateway quality assurance process and the 14–19 progress check (self-evaluation) has to be carried out by each local authority. High-quality information, advice and guidance are crucial to the success of the Diploma and therefore ensuring regular evaluation/assessment is essential, as it is vital to the Diploma Gateway, and is also the starting point for all Ofsted inspections.

The 12 DCSF (2007) quality standards outlined in section 6.1 (see page 205) are the benchmark for the level of provision of information, advice and guidance services that consortia must provide in each Diploma line of learning. Within a consortium it is useful to map the activities of each institution against the standards and against the provision of the other institutions within the consortium, to ensure consistency and to fill any gaps that may be identified. To be effective, a self-evaluation requires clear evidence and records of the outcomes of the evaluation; this documentation must be kept up to date. This type of self-evaluation by consortia should be part of a continual cycle of self-improvement, as shown in Figure 6.3.



Figure 6.3: The cycle of self-evaluation and self-improvement. Source: Quality Standards for Young People's Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) – User Guide (www.cegnet.co.uk).

Reflective activity: Self-evaluation

You could ask yourself the following questions.

- ❖ Does my consortium have in place a system which supports the effective self-evaluation of its provision of information, advice and guidance?
- ❖ Do all stakeholders in the 14–19 partnership contribute to and participate in this activity?
- ❖ How do I know that effective self-evaluation does take place?
- ❖ Do I know where to access the evidence that confirms that effective self-evaluation does take place?
- ❖ Do I feel that improvements could be made to the current self-evaluation practices? If so, do I know whom to contact in order to offer my suggestions?

6.3 Guidance on careers options

Progression routes

Personalised learning



The Diploma offers a flexible and innovative approach to learning. This means that learners will be more able to customise and personalise their education than ever before. While this is a significant advantage to learners, it does present some challenges to practitioners and careers support staff, who will have to advise them on their range of options. The following exemplars illustrate the kind of dilemmas you may encounter.



You can make clear the wide potential offered by the Diploma when discussing careers options with learners.



Exemplar: Iqbal Khan

Iqbal has approached you for guidance on what he should do after he leaves school this summer. He is an able learner and is currently on track to achieve ten GCSEs at grades A*–C. Iqbal is highly IT literate and he has expressed an interest in working in the IT industry, preferably in the field of game design. You know from your previous teaching of Iqbal that he is equally capable of academic and applied learning; he is also a motivated self-starter and extremely ambitious. He is very keen to go to university after he has completed his Level 3 studies.

- ❖ What are Iqbal's options?
- ❖ What combinations does the new Diploma allow Iqbal to make?
- ❖ What factors in Iqbal's decision making would you help him to identify in choosing what would be the best route to university for him?

Iqbal's options

There are a variety of options that Iqbal has under the new 14–19 pathways. He could take a traditional A-level route, an Apprenticeship route or a full-time vocational course or the Diploma route. The flexibility of the new framework also allows for a combination of these routes, as it is designed to allow learners to personalise the qualifications they seek to achieve.

One Advanced Diploma route for Iqbal is outlined in Figure 6.4. Iqbal's course of study might take him to several of the consortium partners within a given week of study. For example, he could do the principal learning at the local college of further education, while coming back to the school sixth form for his extended project and to a local business for some of his additional and specialised learning. This approach ensures learners receive the best-quality teaching from consortium experts.

<p>Principal learning (540 GLH) Two possible options:</p> <p>(a) Advanced Diploma in Information Technology</p> <p>(b) Advanced Diploma in Creative and Media</p> <p><i>Creative and Media principal learning</i> (90 GLH each):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capture 2. Show 3. Interaction 4. Commission 5. Evaluation 6. Investigation <p><i>IT principal learning</i> (60–90 GLH each):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The potential of technology 2. Understanding organisations 3. Professional development 4. Creating technology solutions 5. Multimedia and digital projects 6. Making projects successful 7. Managing technology systems 	<p>Extended Project (120 GLH) Production of an interactive numeracy game designed to help Year 3 children to learn their times tables</p>	<p>Additional and specialist learning (360 GLH) Choices might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ A-level in graphic design or ❖ A-level computing or ❖ OCR Level 3 Diploma in iMedia plus another 60 GLH qualification.
	<p>Work experience (10 days) Two weeks spent as a junior intern at an education software design company</p>	
	<p>Plus... functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills (60 GLH)</p>	



BA Computer Games Design

Figure 6.4: Iqbal's Diploma route at Level 3 – 1080 guided learning hours (GLH).



Exemplar: Katie Summers

Katie, who is in Year 9, wants to undertake a new Higher Diploma at Level 2 alongside the National Curriculum. She has made this decision as she thinks the new Diplomas will be more interesting and varied than GCSEs and she likes to learn in different ways. Katie wants to be a police officer and has not really considered university as an option at this stage.

- ❖ What options does Katie have?
- ❖ How could you help Katie to do the research to find out how she can best equip herself to be a police officer?
- ❖ What are Katie's options when she finishes her Higher Diploma?

Katie's options

A Higher Diploma route for Katie is outlined in Figure 6.5.

<p>Principal learning (420 GLH) Two possible options: (a) Higher Diploma in Society, Health and Development (b) Higher Diploma in Public Services</p> <p><i>(Katie chooses Society, Health and Development)</i></p> <p><i>Principal learning:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Principles, values and personal development 2. Working together and communicating 3. Safeguarding and protecting individuals 4. Growth, development and healthy living 5. Needs and preferences 6. Anti-social and offending behaviour 7. Supporting children and young people 8. Patient-centred health 9. The social model of disability 	<p>Extended Project (60 GLH) Development of a crime reduction strategy to reduce thefts on school premises</p> <hr/> <p>Work experience (10 days) Two weeks spent as a youth worker in an activity club supported by local public services</p> <hr/> <p>Plus... functional skills (80 GLH) and personal, learning and thinking skills (60 GLH)</p>	<p>Additional and specialist learning (180 GLH) Choices might include: ❖ BTEC First certificate in public services or ❖ GCSE psychology plus NCFE Level 2 certificate in conflict management.</p>
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Progression to one of the following:
Advanced Diploma in Society, Health and Development
Advanced Diploma in Public Services

Figure 6.5: Higher Diploma progression route for Katie at Level 2 – 800 guided learning hours (GLH).



Exemplar: Alicia Leung

Alicia's family has a long history in the building industry and they run their own construction and architectural company. Alicia is very keen to follow in her father's and grandfather's footsteps and at some point in the future take her place in the family business. As a result, Alicia, in a pre-16 decision, has decided that a package of GCSEs are not the best option for her, since she already knows exactly what she wants to do with her life – she would prefer to get started on her construction and business training as soon as possible. She is also aware that at some point in the future she will have to undertake some business management courses and wants a Diploma route that is flexible enough to allow for this. Alicia is a practical learner and prefers applied learning.

- ❖ What could be of particular interest to Alicia from the range of Diploma options?
- ❖ How could Alicia personalise her course of study to give her the best chance of success in the construction industry?
- ❖ Alicia is studying for her Diploma at Foundation level. What could she do at Level 2 and 3 that would equip her for a university or foundation degree?

Alicia's options

One possible progression route for Alicia is outlined in Figure 6.6.

<p>Principal learning (240 GLH) Alicia chooses the Foundation Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment</p> <p><i>Principal learning:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Design and the built environment: design influences 2. Design and the built environment: applying design principles 3. Create the built environment: using tools 4. Create the built environment: methods and materials 5. Value and use of the built environment 6. Maintenance of the built environment 	<p>Project (60 GLH) Designed and built a scale model of a new housing estate</p> <hr/> <p>Work experience (10 days) Three weeks spent with a local building contractor</p> <hr/> <p>Plus... functional skills (120 GLH) and personal, learning and thinking skills (60 GLH)</p>	<p>Additional and specialist learning (120 GLH) Choices might include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ NCFE Level 2 certificate in occupational health and safety <p>or</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Level 1 BTEC in Construction and the Built Environment plus ILM Level 2 certificate in team leading.
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Progression to one of the following:
Higher Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment
Higher Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance

Figure 6.6: Alicia's Foundation Diploma route at Level 1 – 600 guided learning hours (GLH).

As you can see from the exemplars, the Diploma offers a personalised, applied route into further study or employment with training. It can be equivalent to A-levels or GCSEs and is entirely acceptable as a prerequisite for university entrance. Diplomas cover a wide range of employment sectors and each Diploma can be tailored by learners, through their choice of optional units, additional and specialised learning, work experience and a Foundation, Higher or extended project of their topic choice. This means that a Diploma in Society, Health and Development, for instance, could be the right choice for diverse career choices such as police officers, occupational therapists, nurses and court service staff. The Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment could accommodate architects, city planners, health and safety officers, and so on.

Involving sector representatives

It is important when you are providing information, advice and guidance to learners at any stage of their educational journey that, where possible, you ensure they see sector-specific representatives. This is not such a problem in colleges of further education, where many lecturers have dual professions (that is, as well as being fully qualified practitioners they are also industry representatives, having worked in the specific sector themselves), for example:

- ❖ police officers as public service lecturers
- ❖ former nurses delivering the Diploma in Society, Health and Development
- ❖ former travel representatives acting as lecturers for the Diploma in Travel and Tourism.

However, some vocational lecturers may have been in education for many years and their sector-specific knowledge may be in need of updating.

You should ensure that your consortium has a list of visiting speakers or project supervisors whom you can ask to provide additional information, advice and guidance to learners. There are advantages and disadvantages to every career choice and it is best for learners to hear about these from people who do the job on a daily basis. Making contact with sector representatives may also increase your chances of securing suitable sector-specific work placements for your learners.

If you do not have a list of local sector representatives, there are many places which could guide you on developing your own network.

- ❖ Firstly, speak with people at the Sector Skills Council(s) for your line of learning: they may be able to provide you with some ideas and contacts.
- ❖ Secondly, ask your consortium's partner organisations and your IAG specialist service if they have a list which you can build upon, to the benefit of the whole consortium.
- ❖ Lastly, do not be afraid to speak with the learners themselves: they may have family members or parents who are employed in a Diploma sector and who would be only too happy to offer sector-specific advice and guidance.

Where you use a representative from a sector-specific area as a visiting speaker, it is important that both you and your learners gain the most from the experience as possible, since your speaker is likely to be busy and will perhaps make only one or two visits each academic year. Learners could do some primary research before the employer visit so they can draw up a list of key questions to ask, but also so that they have gathered their own information about the particular sector or visitor.



Exemplar: Staying professionally updated

Evan Williams has been delivering the BTEC Health and Social Care Diplomas for the last four years and is now looking forward to the introduction of the Diploma in Society, Health and Development, as he has been chosen to co-ordinate its delivery at his college. He was a nurse for 25 years before he left the National Health Service (NHS) to take up teaching, so feels that he has a deep understanding of the health care aspect of the curriculum.

Last year he asked an old colleague to come in and speak to the learners about her role as a midwife. It quickly became apparent to Evan that the NHS has changed significantly even in just the four years he has been teaching. The learners asked the midwife questions Evan could not have answered and she was able to provide them with up-to-date information which helped them complete their assignment work.

Evan made a point of spending some time with his guest to ensure he was up to speed with the latest developments in nursing. It made him reassess how often he updated himself professionally and also made him reflect that however long you have spent in any vocational sector, if you are going to give the best advice to your learners, you have a responsibility to ensure the information you are providing them with is accurate and current. Evan is planning to have more visiting speakers for the Diploma course and plans to allow some time to professionally update himself with each of them. In addition, Evan will be working with colleagues from the justice sector, children's workforce development council and social care. Together they will be able to share information about up-to-date practice and sector-specific issues.

- ❖ How often do you update yourself professionally?
- ❖ How accurate is your knowledge of the labour market and professional standards in careers other than teaching?
- ❖ Where could you find additional information on opportunities for professional updating?
- ❖ What do you think are the benefits of visiting speakers for learners?

Labour market information

You will also need to provide your learners with accurate and up-to-date labour market information if you are going to advise them appropriately. The labour market changes over time; for example, there is less traditional heavy industry in the UK than there was 30 years ago, whereas the service sector has seen a rapid expansion in opportunities.



The UK Statistics Authority website (www.statistics.gov.uk), formerly the Office of National Statistics, carries detailed information about the UK labour market which is updated every quarter. It also gives access to regional labour markets, which may be of particular interest to you if your geographical area is dominated by just a few employment sectors or if your learners are unlikely to search for jobs nationally. The following exemplar shows the type of information which is readily available for you to use with your learners.



Exemplar: Labour market statistics

Below are five key points from Nasima Begum's study, *Employment by industry and occupation: an analysis of the distribution of employment and characteristics of people in the main industry and occupation groups* (Begum, 2004).

- ❖ Employment in the UK was found to be fairly evenly spread among the different occupation groups. When the distribution was examined by industry group, the two largest groups (public administration, education and health; and distribution, hotels and restaurants) were shown to employ almost half of all people in employment.
- ❖ Sales and customer service occupations had the largest proportion of young people in employment.
- ❖ Professional occupations had the largest proportion of people educated to degree level or equivalent. People working in the elementary occupations were most likely to have no qualifications.
- ❖ Working over 45 hours a week was most common for managers and senior officials. Those in the agriculture and fishing industry were more likely to be working over 45 hours than those in other industries.
- ❖ Earnings for men were highest in the occupational groups 'managers' and 'senior officials', and female earnings were highest in the professional occupations. The highest pay rates for both men and women were in financial intermediation; the lowest rates for both men and women were in the same sector, namely hotels and restaurants.

The headline points of reports like this from the UK Statistics Authority will enable you to keep up to date with the changing nature of employment. The reports also include informative graphs and charts like the ones shown in Figure 6.7, which could be used not only by you to inform your learners, but also by your learners to make informed choices on industries which pay more or in which people tend to work longer hours.

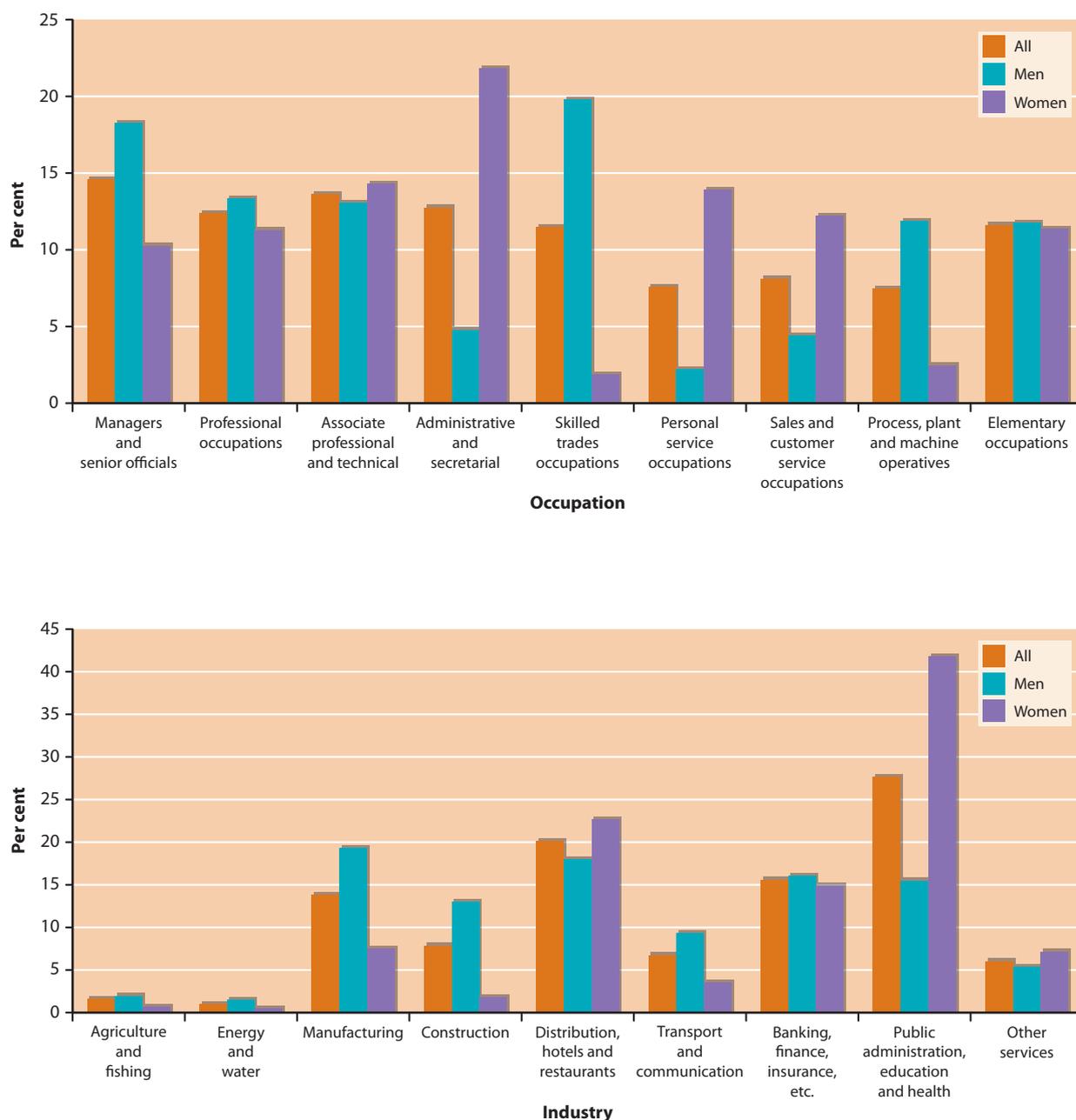


Figure 6.7: Proportions of people in employment by occupation and industry, UK, winter 2003, not seasonally adjusted. Source: Labour Force Survey (Begum 2004).

Information, advice and guidance is an ever-changing field. The Diplomas bring with them the need to be especially aware of changing options and opportunities for your learners. As they cover 17 lines of learning, this is not an easy task. However, with the right sources of information and a supportive consortium, your learners should have the benefit of high standards of information, advice and guidance and you should have the benefit of shared responsibility for their delivery.

Take it further

Building on your own competence and confidence

Training and development opportunities for all practitioners in relation to information, advice and guidance are becoming much more easily accessible owing to the implementation of Diplomas. Consortia are being tasked with ensuring that their members have an understanding that information, advice and guidance are the responsibility of all those who take part in Diploma delivery and not just that of the careers teacher or the Connexions/IAG staff.

Working collaboratively



Through collaborative working in subject practitioner groups, the opportunities to develop up-to-date and relevant information resources about a sector become far more manageable, as, through a co-ordinated approach to employer engagement, enterprise activities and consortium-wide challenge events/conferences, access to the knowledge required becomes much easier.

Exemplar: Professional development – tutoring for transition



In 2004–05, Connexions Northumberland, in partnership with the Northumberland 14+ Network and the high schools in the county, developed an innovative tutor training programme, funded by the local Learning and Skills Council, to help build the guidance capacity in schools. 'Lead tutors' from each of the high schools were invited to participate in an eight-day programme which aimed to:

- ❖ equip tutors with the knowledge and skills to help young people make informed choices
- ❖ support lead tutors to train their own tutor teams in schools
- ❖ develop the capacity of schools to advise young people.

Participants were assessed and successful completion of the practical assignments resulted in 20 masters-level credits from Northumbria University.

The tutor training programme won a National Career Award and is now being implemented and adapted by several other Connexions partnerships, with support provided from Connexions Northumberland in the form of 'train the trainer' events.

Source: Specialist Schools and Academies Trust www.schoolsnetwork.org.uk

The Sector Skills Councils will be an invaluable source of information, advice and guidance (see Table 2.6, page 48 for details) and you should keep checking to see what events they are planning in support of the Diplomas. By developing a relationship with your local or regional co-ordinator you can remain up to date with what is happening in your appropriate sector.

Organisations to assist in personal development

If you have very little or no previous industrial experience, you should take every opportunity to develop skills and knowledge. Even if you do have previous industrial experience, it is still essential to regularly update skills and knowledge to ensure that you are providing all learners with excellent and consistent information, advice and guidance.

Universities

Institutions of higher education are offering opportunities for assisting with:

- ❖ occupational competency
- ❖ progression routes
- ❖ general staff development.

These institutions may have extensive employer databases, which they are usually prepared to share with subject networks, and this can provide opportunities for direct working with employers. Many lecturers are also still working in their sector and are therefore working with school and college practitioners as mentors, sharing their knowledge and expertise.

Colleges

Some college lecturers are also still employed within their sector or, owing to the subjects they teach, are required to undertake regular occupational development, and are therefore well placed to provide valuable information, advice and guidance for both learners and practitioners.

Community links

Within most local areas there will be a wide range of organisations, particularly within the voluntary sector, which can assist in providing opportunities for both learners and practitioners to find out more about the different ways of working, learning and progressing in a wide range of diverse agencies.

Your own governors will usually be able to provide access to a diverse set of organisations. Presenting the needs of a consortium to the local chairs of governors means that they can then encourage their own governors to get involved with Diploma developments and, in particular, assist practitioners with the updating of their own skills and knowledge.



Exemplar: Board of governors' assistance in employer engagement

A sixth-form college in north-west England was having some problems in ensuring that the quality standards required by an awarding body were being met in a particular vocational area, largely because the majority of staff in the department had very little or no experience within the industry. This meant that many of the activities being undertaken by the learners were not vocationally relevant.

The matter was discussed at a meeting of the board of governors. It turned out that one of the governors was employed both by a local university and also within the industry (on a part-time basis). The governor in question offered to spend time within the department to develop an action plan, which included the staff undertaking vocational development. The governor was also able to suggest organisations that might be able to help.

While there was some initial resistance to this 'intrusion', over a period of time the staff in question were able to see the benefits of having a pair of fresh and vocationally-experienced eyes to help identify problems and how they could be addressed. Staff soon found that there were real benefits to engaging with a number of organisations and asking them to assist in the classroom, as this meant that they did not have to do so much research to make up for their own lack of vocational knowledge.

Education Business Partnerships

Education Business Partnerships provide practitioner placement activities. Through these activities, you can develop your knowledge of employment opportunities, skills requirements, progression routes and so on, which can then be utilised within your delivery. Traditionally, these placements have tended to be for one day, which allows for only the 'broad brush' approach, rather than in-depth research.

Many Education Business Partnerships, seeking to include more bespoke packages, are working directly with Diploma line of learning networks to identify the individual needs of the practitioners involved. For example, a practitioner who will be involved in the delivery of the Diploma in Engineering may have a background working in engineering, but in a specific area, such as mechanical engineering. In order to be able to deliver the learning outcomes of unit 1 of the Higher Diploma in Engineering, 'Exploring the Engineering World', this practitioner would benefit from spending time with a range of engineering organisations in order to build knowledge and collect resources.

Employers

Many institutions will have existing links with industry and may already be working with organisations on personal development. For practitioners in schools, these links with industry may not be as advanced and therefore, through collaboration within a subject network, these links can be shared and opportunities put in place for effective dissemination.

Many schools have business breakfast meetings with local employers. If this takes place in your area, find out which employers attend. What might they be able to offer by way of assistance in providing information, advice and guidance to both yourself and learners?

Connexions/IAG specialist service

The Connexions service, or IAG specialist provider commissioned by the local authority, is the main provider of information, advice and guidance to learners aged 14–19 and plays an important role within any consortium providing Diplomas. The service advises on such matters as the information, advice and guidance standards and will provide information on the different activities taking place across the local area. A Connexions personal adviser or IAG specialist adviser can provide you with help and support on information, advice and guidance.

Aimhigher

Aimhigher is a national programme aimed at widening participation in higher education, especially by under-represented groups of young people. Most of the activities organised by Aimhigher take place at a regional and area level, which allows for them to be tailored to the needs of the locality. The range of activities is extremely broad and encompasses:

- ❖ organising events such as taster days, challenges, summer schools and mentoring opportunities aimed at raising the aspirations and attainment of those young people who have the potential to progress to higher education
- ❖ providing information, advice and guidance to the potential applicants for higher education, as well as their parents/carers and their practitioners
- ❖ encouraging young people already in the workplace to take up full-time, part-time or distance-learning opportunities
- ❖ working with training providers and employers to encourage young people to progress on to programmes of higher education.

Reflective activity: Links to assist in professional development

For each of the roles listed below, make a note of the name of the person responsible, as well as their contact details (email address and telephone number).

- ❖ Who leads your subject area network group?
- ❖ Which institution of higher education do you currently have links with and who is your subject contact?
- ❖ Who do you work with on subject developments within your local college of further education?
- ❖ What links do you have within your local community – for example, voluntary organisations? (Try to list at least three such links.)
- ❖ Who is your clerk to the governors for your institution?
- ❖ Who is the chair of governors?
- ❖ Who is your work-related learning (WRL) co-ordinator?
- ❖ Who is the link your WRL co-ordinator has with the local Education Business Partnership?
- ❖ If your institution holds business breakfasts for local business and community representatives, who co-ordinates these meetings?
- ❖ Who is your link to the local Connexions/IAG specialist service?

Regional development agencies

Government-sponsored public bodies that aim to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in the English regions. There are nine agencies in England: East Midlands Development Agency; East of England Development Agency; London Development Agency; One North East; Northwest Regional Development Agency; South West of England Development Agency; South East England Development Agency; Advantage West Midlands; and Yorkshire Forward. See www.nwda.co.uk/who-we-are/role-of-rdas.aspx



Gateway 2

The 2007/08 application process carried out by each consortium seeking approval to offer Diplomas in 2009. (Gateway 1 was the 2006/07 application process carried out by each consortium seeking approval to offer Diplomas in 2008.)

Other organisations that can assist consortia

There are also other organisations that will be able to assist consortia on developments within the labour market from a local, regional, national and even international perspective.

The Economic and Social Data Service can provide data such as the International Labour Organisation's Key Indicators of the Labour Market. This information can be accessed by practitioners within further education and higher education institutions only (see www.esds.ac.uk).

The University of Warwick has developed the National Guidance Research Forum (NGRF) website and the Warwick Institute for Employment Research is responsible for the Labour Market Information (LMI) Future Trends pages. For those with responsibility for providing up-to-date and appropriate information, advice and guidance, this site is extremely useful, as it covers a wide range of sectors and also includes learning modules for practitioners (see www.guidance-research.org/future-trends).

Other agencies, such as the local chamber of commerce, job centre, the local authority's economic development unit, the Sector Skills Councils and **regional development agencies** will also be able to provide information on projected skills shortages for local and regional areas.

Professional development opportunities specific to particular Diploma lines of learning

Every consortium that has been successful in **Gateway 2** has been tasked with producing an implementation plan and a training needs analysis for each successful line of learning, so that the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT), the Centre for Excellence in Leadership (CEL) and the National College for School Leadership (NCSL) can provide a much more bespoke training and development package for a local area. This will include addressing training and development needs in relation to information, advice and guidance. Consortia can also book the Diploma road-show run by the DCSF, which works with local industries to provide learners with information, advice and guidance on specific Diploma lines, using state-of-the-art and high-tech resources.



Exemplar: Salford pupils to get mediacity:uk career taster

A Salford school is one of only four in the country to host a new hi-tech road-show that has given learners a taste of what a career at mediacity:uk might be like. The Swinton High School was chosen by the government to host an event for the new Diploma in Creative and Media, offered in 13 Salford schools and colleges. As part of the road-show, large inflatable pods and mood lighting will help learners to learn about the Diploma and the two industries, giving them an idea of what a career at mediacity:uk at Salford Quays might involve.

Salford is one of 63 areas in the country to offer the Diploma, which is designed to give learners transferable skills to use in the industry – a big bonus for employers.

The road-show is being held for learners in Year 9 and, if they like what they see, they will be able to study the Diploma as a GCSE equivalent in Years 10 and 11. In Salford the BBC will help to support the Diploma, which will look at topics such as media, art, radio, product design and music.

Louise Mills, project co-ordinator for the Diploma at the school, said: 'We're looking forward to seeing what the Diploma has to offer and the learners are very keen to take part in activities to find out more about the industries. The road-show is an excellent way to grab the attention of young people in an innovative way and it will help them to decide if they'd like a career in the business.'

Source: www.salford.gov.uk

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7 Personalised learning

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Section 7: Rapid topic finder

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7 Personalised learning

Personalised learning means 'Meeting more of the educational needs of more of the learners more fully than ever before' (Hargreaves, 2004). The new Diplomas are designed to offer young people more choice and personalisation of their learning and this section equips you with the knowledge to ensure this happens. This section:

- ❖ shows how personalised learning links into a bigger educational agenda by making the system fit the learner's needs, rather than fitting the learner into the system
- ❖ explains the components of personalised learning and how it leads to higher achievement and attainment because it allows learners to explore their individual interests
- ❖ provides practical examples and reflective activities, plus examples of individual learning plans and effective mentoring and pastoral support.

7.1 What is personalised learning?

Personalised learning and teaching involve taking a highly structured and responsive approach to each learner, in order that all are able to progress, achieve and participate. This requires strengthening links between learning and teaching, by engaging learners – and their parents or guardians – as partners in learning. The learner's own voice is the most powerful gateway to personalising learning.

Reflective activity: Personalisation

You may like to ask yourself the following questions:

- ❖ What do I do already to ensure learning is personalised and tailored around each learner?
- ❖ What more can I do?
- ❖ How will the Diplomas enable me to make learning more personalised?

Personalised learning is not a new initiative. Many schools and practitioners have successfully tailored curriculum and teaching methods to meet the needs of learners for many years. A great deal of work is currently being carried out around the country on personalisation through projects such as the **Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme**. What is new is the drive to put the best practices

Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme

This initiative offers a motivating and engaging route for 14- to 16-year-olds who are finding it difficult to progress within the current curriculum and who may be disaffected and disengaged with the programmes available within school.

in place across all schools and colleges. All learners, no matter what their entry point, benefit from a personalised learning programme. The Diploma, as an innovative and learner-centred qualification, will give greater opportunities for learners to be actively involved in their learning, with the practitioner working as an enabler in the process.

If education is to become more personalised, then the views of learners must be heard. However, incorporating the 'learner voice' is not just about changing outcomes or finding solutions to existing problems; it is about allowing and equipping learners with the skills to have a direct influence on their education. Personalising learning is a process, not a product. It is something that should be discovered and developed in schools and colleges.

This requires significant changes to the culture of education and the relationships between learners and the learning environment (including any workplaces they attend). More specifically, it requires a willingness to listen to the views of learners. Learners need support to become actively involved in decisions about their education and there must be appropriate ways for them to do so. It can be a challenge, but it is one that is well worth meeting. Learner-owned decisions are much more likely to lead to successful completion of learning and progression.

7.2 How personalised learning raises standards

The 'nine gateways' model

The Specialist Schools and Academies Trust (SSAT), in partnership with Professor David Hargreaves, has looked at what is meant by personalising learning and what it might look like in practice (visit www.ssat-inet.net and click on 'Personalising learning' in the quick links box on the right of the page). The work resulted in the 'nine gateways' model (which you can also find through the link above). Each gateway is a route by which schools, colleges or other providers may successfully explore how to personalise learning, and builds upon and extends what they are already doing to make learning personalised. The nine gateways are:

- ❖ curriculum
- ❖ advice and guidance
- ❖ assessment for learning
- ❖ learning to learn
- ❖ design and organisation of the educational establishment
- ❖ workforce development
- ❖ new technologies
- ❖ mentoring and coaching
- ❖ learner voice.

There are many possible gateways into the process of personalising learning, so why these nine?

- ❖ Each theme is applicable to every school, college and learning environment: it is an aspect of teaching and learning that is inescapable, although different schools and colleges will emphasise different elements.
- ❖ Each is already part of current professional practice to some degree, but each requires strong leadership if progress is to be made.
- ❖ Each is potentially a way of enhancing learner motivation and commitment to learning, which is essential to raising achievement.

The 'deeps'

The interactions and links between the gateways are complex and this led to a reassessment of the gateways model and the development of the 'four deeps':

- ❖ deep learning
- ❖ deep experience
- ❖ deep support
- ❖ deep leadership.

The relationships between the four deeps and the nine gateways are indicated in Figure 7.1.



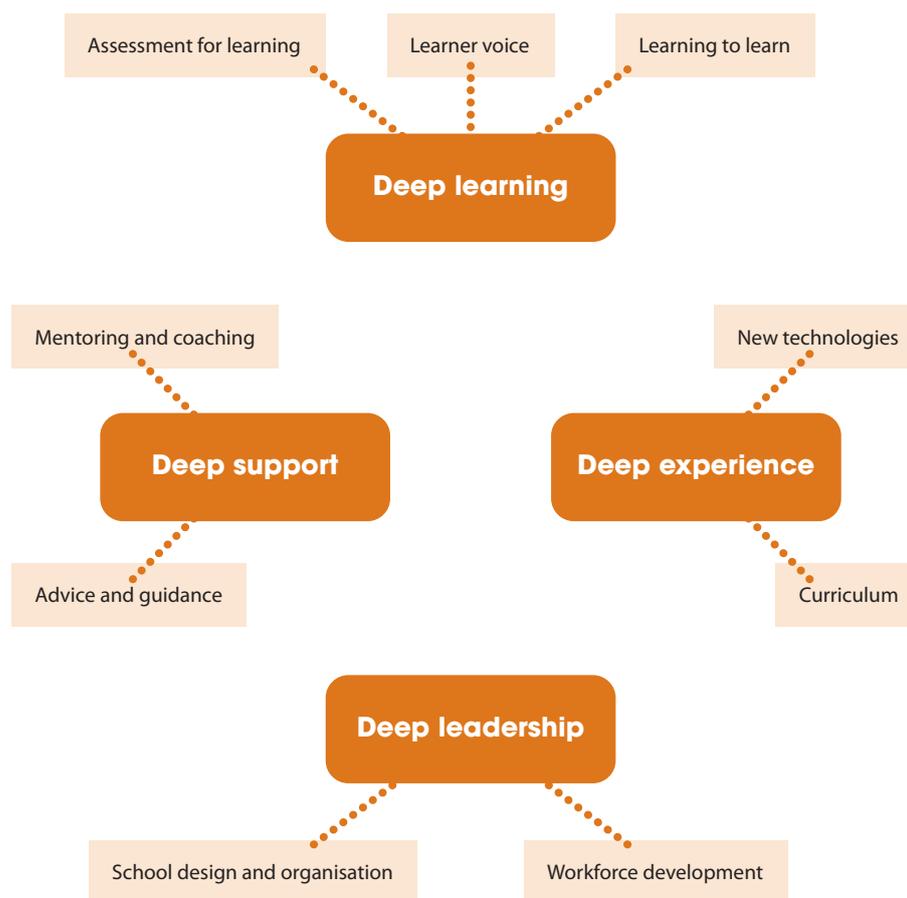


Figure 7.1: The relationships between the four deeps and the nine gateways.

Deep learning

The first 'deep' is deep learning. Learner commitment to deep learning lies at the heart of personalisation. While learner performance in national tests, examinations and qualifications is accepted, learning cannot be limited to these. There must also be wider educational purposes and learner outcomes. It is essential that schools and colleges prepare learners for the modern world of work, in which being a lifelong learner will be paramount. The Diploma is constructed entirely around these 21st-century skills.

Deep learning is best developed through the following three gateways of the personalising learning agenda (those through which learners acquire the generic skills of learning):

Generic learning skills

Assessment

- ❖ learner voice (through which learners articulate their needs)
- ❖ assessment for learning (see section 3.1, page 57)
- ❖ learning to learn (through which assessment is used to improve learning, not just record achievement).

The Diplomas offer great potential for deep learning. Through integrating personal, learning and thinking skills within the curriculum, learners develop skills and qualities required for the world of work. The additional and specialist learning components of Diplomas allow learners to choose the learning that is best matched to their personal goals. Personalised learning aims to put the

learners at the centre of their education, and additional and specialist learning supports this philosophy, because it offers learners true choice and a way of getting their voices heard.



Personalised learning is all about the individual.

Deep experience

The second 'deep' is deep experience. Deep learning fails to occur with some learners because their life in the classroom falls short of a deep experience that engages them in their learning and education. You will know these learners from your own experience. Learner engagement is key to better relationships between practitioners and learners. The end result is learners who possess independence, responsibility, confidence and maturity.

The innovative and inclusive nature of the Diploma should enable learners to engage fully in their learning. Making the best use of new technologies will also be a part of this engagement.

Deep support

A new level of support is needed for learners, practitioners, colleges and schools and other providers if personalised learning is to become a reality. Deep learning and deep experience within personalisation demand deep support for learners. This new level of support far surpasses anything that has been provided to date, and will need to be a rather different type. Traditionally, support came in the form of advice and guidance, or mentoring and coaching (both identified as gateways in the Hargreaves model). While these do still have a role, 'deep



support' goes further and requires a reassessment of the way learners are currently supported in schools and colleges.

Another aspect of deep support concerns the organisations involved. The delivery of the Diplomas demands a partnership approach with other schools, colleges and employers. The members of the consortium must support one another, as well as supporting learners, to realise their potential and succeed. This also leads on to the fourth 'deep'.

Working collaboratively



Deep leadership

A new type of leadership is needed if personalised learning is to be successfully resourced and implemented in a school or college. The above three deeps cannot be developed by conventional approaches to leadership. Deep leadership is the capacity to achieve the full personalisation of learning by:

- ❖ exploiting each of the nine gateways to the full
- ❖ exploring the interactions between them
- ❖ going beyond them into deep learning, deep experience and deep support.

Deep leadership is not a new theory of leadership. However, the concept helps to explain what is needed in addition to the basic stages of the nine gateways, in order to achieve the pioneering stage of transformation through personalisation.

The delivery of the Diplomas demands strong and enthusiastic leadership and management. Workforce reforms and support are important elements, and managers should support practitioners in any identified continuing professional development (see section 2.5, page 47).

Reflective practice



In March 2008, Ed Balls, Secretary of State for Children, Schools and Families, stated that 'To compete with other countries we need a world-class workforce with great practitioners and a premium on great teaching that inspires pupils every day. Our aim is that every teacher, over time, should have the new Masters in Teaching and Learning. It will raise the status of teachers and ensure that they get the recognition that they deserve.'

Exemplar: The 'deeps' in practice through the Diplomas



Deep learning

Travis is 15 years old and studying for the Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance. He is thoroughly enjoying this programme of learning – his career goal is to own his own accountancy company. Through the additional and specialist learning component of the Diploma he has been able to choose other qualifications that suit his needs and this has meant he has really engaged with the curriculum. Through the personal, learning and thinking skills, Travis is developing a diverse range of skills that not only enhance his study skills but also increase

continued

his employability. He is currently completing his Foundation project and through this as well as the rest of the curriculum feels that he is developing the skills and knowledge he will need to succeed in his dream of owning his own company.

Deep experience

Travis is basing his Foundation project on the company he attended for his work experience as part of the Diploma. This has meant he has a real understanding both of how organisations work and of the real work environment. The applied learning within the Diploma offers Travis a good insight into the business sector.

Deep support

The Diploma that Travis is studying for is delivered by a partnership. He receives support from all those who deliver the Diploma, as well as from a business mentor.

Deep leadership

The management and leadership team in Travis's consortium work closely together to ensure the nine gateways model is realised where possible. A broad, innovative curriculum is offered to learners at the end of Year 9 as part of their options. Learners receive clear, consistent advice and guidance throughout this period of transition and choice, and then throughout the course of the Diploma. Assessment is varied, so that it suits a wide range of learners.

Staff delivering the Diplomas are fully supported and have attended training events and workshops, and all have their own vocational mentors.



Information, advice and guidance



Reflective learning

Personalised learning and individual learning styles

A learning style is the way in which an individual experiences the world and how that individual processes and integrates new information. Learning styles group the ways in which people learn.

Some people may find that they have a dominant style of learning, with far less use of the other styles. Others may find that they use different styles in different circumstances. Learning styles are not fixed – people can develop less frequently used styles, or further develop styles that they already use well.

Using multiple learning styles and **multiple intelligences** for learning is a relatively new approach. Traditional forms of education use:

- ❖ mainly linguistic and logical teaching methods
- ❖ a limited range of learning and teaching techniques
- ❖ classroom and book-based teaching

Multiple intelligences

An educational theory, first developed by Howard Gardner, that describes an array of different kinds of 'intelligences' exhibited by human beings. Gardner suggests that each person manifests varying levels of these different intelligences, and thus has a unique 'cognitive profile'.

- ❖ repetition
- ❖ pressured examinations for reinforcement and review.

The above suits only those with a certain learning style – those without it will not do well.

Reflective activity: Matching methods to styles

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ Do your learners fidget in their chairs?
- ❖ Do they regularly ask to leave the class?
- ❖ Do you find your weekly group discussions seem to turn into a dialogue between the same two individuals?
- ❖ Do your class hand-outs leave the classroom as paper aeroplanes or are they left behind?

If you have answered yes to any of these questions it is possible you are not using teaching methods to suit some learners' learning style.

The Diplomas offer a great opportunity for you to use a variety of teaching and learning methods in different environments (such as in simulations, or on workplace visits). By recognising and understanding your learners' learning styles, you can use techniques to better engage them and ensure their success. Table 7.1 describes the various learner styles and for each gives an example of how your delivery of the Diploma could meet the needs of that style of learner.

Learning style	Learners' preferred type of study	Matched Diploma delivery
Visual (spatial)	Use of pictures, images and spatial understanding	Make use of videos, diagrams, film clips and photographs (such as on the Foundation, Higher or extended project)
Aural (auditory-musical)	Use of sound and music	Aural learners respond well to the spoken word and hence group discussions are important (important for the 'effective participators' PLTS)
Verbal (linguistic)	Use of words, both speech and writing	Traditional teaching methods support this (for example, PowerPoint® presentations, handouts) but more emphasis on learner involvement includes role plays, learners performing presentations and improving oral communication skills. This can link into functional skills for English
Physical (kinaesthetic)	Use of the body, hands and sense of touch	Role plays support this learning style, as do hands-on tasks and activities. Links and partnerships with employers are important to support this aspect

continued

Learning style	Learners' preferred type of study	Matched Diploma delivery
Logical (mathematical)	Use of logic, reasoning and systems	This links closely with functional skills for mathematics and you can support, embed and enhance this in your Diploma line's principal learning
Social (interpersonal)	Learning in groups or with other people	The Diplomas offer many opportunities for group work and activities. If you encourage group work, this will develop the 'team workers' PLTS, which is required for many jobs
Solitary (intrapersonal)	Working alone and self-study	Learners need to acquire the skill of working alone and individual tasks should be set. The 'independent enquirers' PLTS supports this learning style

Table 7.1: The seven learning styles, with examples of practice for Diploma delivery.

Reflective activity: Personalising learning through learning styles

Ensuring personalised learning through careful attention to learners' individual learning styles gives you the chance to make lessons interesting, different and engaging for all, including yourself.

Think of the last lesson you delivered.

- ❖ What did you do to meet visual learners' needs?
- ❖ If you did this session again, what else could you do to meet their needs?
- ❖ What did you do to meet kinaesthetic learners' needs?
- ❖ If you did this session again, what else could you do to meet their needs?

How additional and specialist learning fits in with personalised learning

The additional and specialist learning (ASL) component of the Diplomas allows learners to choose an option that complements their Diploma line's principal learning.

For example, a learner taking the Diploma in Business, Administration and Finance may choose to take a qualification related to the sectors – for example, Accounting – as they have already decided on their career pathway.

Additional and specialist learning:

- ❖ supports learner choice and ensures flexibility
- ❖ allows for progression within a coherent programme

- ❖ provides opportunities to meet learners' particular needs, interests and aspirations.

To achieve the Diploma, learners have to complete a specified amount of additional and specialist learning at the appropriate level. Learners must select from qualifications at the same level as or one higher than the Diploma they are taking. For example, a learner taking a Foundation Diploma can have additional and specialist learning at Level 1 or Level 2. For those on an Advanced Diploma, a learner may choose additional and specialist learning including A-levels.

Below are the minimum numbers of hours additional and specialist learning comprises at each level.

- ❖ Foundation level: 120 guided learning hours.
- ❖ Higher level: 180 guided learning hours.
- ❖ Advanced level: 360 guided learning hours.

Learners will be able to tailor their programmes to their own interests and career choices. Qualifications can be chosen from the wide range available in the **National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ)** at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk (see also section 4.3, page 116). This lists the qualifications that have been proposed by an awarding body and accepted by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Learners can choose additional or complementary qualifications to study. Usually, these will be from the **National Qualifications Framework (NQF)**. Alternatively, they may wish to specialise by selecting a sector-related qualification; however, only accredited qualifications can be selected.

Additional and specialist learning can include:

- ❖ qualifications that enable learners to explore a related sector, and may include GCSEs and A-levels
- ❖ subjects from the four National Curriculum 'entitlement areas' (arts subjects, design and technology, humanities and modern foreign languages)
- ❖ subjects that relate to individual needs, interests and aspirations.

While it is vitally important that you give the relevant information, advice and guidance (see section 6) when you discuss with learners their choice of additional and specialist learning, the learner voice is also, of course, very important.

National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ)

Website that contains details of all qualifications that are accredited by the qualification regulators in England (Ofqual), Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA).



National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Helps learners make informed decisions on the qualifications they want to pursue, by comparing the 'levels' of different qualifications and identifying clear progression routes to their chosen career.

Information, advice and guidance





Exemplar: Choices of additional and specialist learning

Asif is studying for the Diploma in Engineering and his aim is to work in Italy one day. For his additional and specialist learning he has therefore chosen to study GCSE Italian.

Beth is studying for the Advanced Diploma in Society, Health and Development and her career aim is to manage her own private residential care home. For her additional and specialist learning she has therefore chosen to take an A-level in Business Studies.

Rebecca is also studying for the Diploma in Engineering and her career aim is to work as a business manager in the engineering industry. She has therefore chosen a GCSE in Business Studies as part of her additional and specialist learning.

Stanley is studying for the Diploma in Creative and Media and is unsure what he wants to do in the future. He has therefore chosen something different from his Diploma topic, to give him an idea of other subjects and sectors, and has decided to study PE GCSE as part of his additional and specialist learning.

Take it further

National strategies to raise standards

The new Diplomas are set to raise standards, attainment and achievement in education.

Education should be about finding success in every young person. Raising standards does not simply concern performance in examinations. It should also relate to the quality and relevance of the education young people receive and the range of opportunities they are offered that will allow them to succeed in the world of work.

In schools, the central government policy framework to raise standards in education includes:

- ❖ the Ofsted inspection system
- ❖ the National Curriculum
- ❖ testing and 'league tables' (achievement and attainment tables)
- ❖ workforce remodelling
- ❖ increased regulation of training
- ❖ the introduction of school improvement targets
- ❖ the numeracy, literacy and key stage 3 strategies.

Over the years there has been increased central government control over education but increased autonomy for schools, with greater partnership working on a local level.

In colleges, literacy and numeracy skills underpin all other areas of achievement and are crucial to raising standards. Improved and expanded provision for literacy, numeracy and English for speakers of other languages (ESOL) is vital to address the tasks set for colleges by the government's Success for All literacy programme (DfES, 2002). The government's Skills for Life strategy for improving adults' literacy and numeracy is also important, not only to the Diplomas but also to the wider government goals for social inclusion, raised achievement and improved economic competitiveness (see www.dfes.gov.uk/readwriteplus). Functional mathematics and English in the Diplomas are key components of raising standards.



The Learning and Skills Council (2001) has stated that well-qualified and skilled staff are essential for excellence in education. Colleges are committed to ensuring and supporting teaching staff through gaining accredited teaching qualifications such as the Preparing to Teach in the Lifelong Learning Sector (PTLLS) and the Diploma in Teaching in the Lifelong Learning Sector (DTLLS).

Other initiatives and developments to raise standards and achievements have included Excellence in Cities (EiC) and specialist school status. Specialist schools will be key partners in supporting schools, colleges and other providers in the delivery of the Diploma line relevant to their specialism. Raising standards across secondary schools means sharing expertise from every source.

The principles of collaboration and partnership promoted by the Diplomas are at the heart of the government's vision for a new specialist system to transform secondary schools. By working together, all schools, colleges and other providers can offer more opportunities for learners and staff, share best practice and provide more choice.



The new schools programme will provide a motivating learning environment.

Reflective activity: Leadership, standards and personalised learning

Strong leadership and management are key to raising standards and ensuring personalised learning.

- ❖ Who in your organisation is ready to undertake the work involved in the nine gateways model (see page 239) of personalised learning for the Diploma?
- ❖ Who is ready to 'think big' about the learner voice?
- ❖ What background preparation is needed?

The Diplomas will raise standards in schools, colleges and other providers by:

- ❖ increasing the rate of progress made by learners
- ❖ removing the variation in standards within and between schools, as schools will be working more closely together and with other providers
- ❖ closing the gap between the performance of boys and girls

- ❖ helping less able learners to achieve more
- ❖ giving more challenging work to more able learners
- ❖ enriching the school experience for learners who otherwise find school unrewarding.

Problem solving and raising standards

Problem-solving activities or investigations are a natural part of personalised learning and a means of raising standards. They:

- ❖ are effective (natural) strategies for learning
- ❖ are active approaches to learning
- ❖ give learners responsibility for their own learning.



Exemplar: Geography problem-solving day for key stage 4 pupils

In Berkshire, 150 learners in Year 10 had the opportunity to take part in the annual 'geography problem-solving day' organised by the local Education Business Partnership. The groups of learners, from ten local secondary schools, were split into non-peer groups after listening to a briefing on the day and were then transported to a number of company sites to spend the day working on geography-based projects.

All seven local companies involved use geographical skills and knowledge in some way in their business and staff from the companies had worked before the event with practitioners from the schools to devise realistic but manageable scenarios for the learners to work on. These included designing a layout for the local agricultural show, investigating the issue of water quality on a local river, the implications of pedestrianisation of the high street, and how to ensure heavy-goods vehicles could reverse safely in busy streets.

The day gave the learners a unique opportunity to experience working with learners from other schools and allowed them to develop many personal skills, including problem solving and communication, as well as a better understanding of how a curriculum subject influences local business. The event ended with each group of learners giving a short presentation on their project for the day.

The benefits for the schools included:

- ❖ raising standards of achievement
- ❖ improving learner motivation and attendance
- ❖ preparing young people for the world of work
- ❖ enhancing delivery of the National Curriculum
- ❖ delivery of key skills.

continued

The benefits for the local companies included:

- ❖ developing partnerships with the local education sector
- ❖ staff development
- ❖ increasing knowledge of the education sector
- ❖ directly inputting to the National Curriculum
- ❖ promotion of the business sector.

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ How could such a problem-solving day support Diploma delivery?
- ❖ What personal, learning and thinking skills could be covered by such an activity?

7.3 Developing and contributing to an individual learning plan

Information, advice and guidance



Individual learning plan (ILP)

A way for individual learners to set personal targets and record achievements. Choice and clear, consistent advice and guidance are centrally important.

An **individual learning plan (ILP)** is a way for a learner to set personal targets and record their achievements. It can help them take control of their future, by reminding them of what they have achieved and enjoyed, and to keep on track towards their goals. Creating an individual learning plan can help learners develop more confidence to tackle new things, become more employable and get more out of life.

Individual learning plans were first outlined by the government in the document *14–19: Opportunity and Excellence* (DfES, 2003), alongside increased vocational options and greater flexibility in the key stage 4 curriculum. Individual learning plans are also important because of developments following the White Paper *14–19 Education and Skills* (DfES, 2005a). An individual learning plan becomes important with the greater flexibility and choice for learners at key stage 4, and especially with the increasing range of progression routes from age 16, which includes the Diploma.

An individual learning plan is a plan for education and learning across the whole of the 14–19 age range. The plan is owned by the learner, who is supported through tutorials and one-to-one help to take responsibility for what they put into the plan, and for researching and updating it in light of learning experiences. Year 9 is often the time when learners start to construct their individual learning plan, though this reflects the point at which decisions about options are taken. Where schools have introduced this choice at Year 8, the plan would be started at that point. Learners are encouraged to consider the full range of learning options when putting together their plan, and to revise it annually.

A completed individual learning plan should include:

- ❖ results of assessments
- ❖ the learner's long-term goals
- ❖ the goals of the programme to be followed, cross-referenced to the national standards or core curriculum
- ❖ any other goals that the learner wishes to achieve, both social and personal
- ❖ targets and dates for meeting goals
- ❖ a programme of dated progress reviews
- ❖ space to record achievement of targets and any developments
- ❖ signatures of learner and practitioner.



An individual learning plan supports personalised learning.

Reflective activity: Individual learning plans

Think about the individual learning plans you currently use and the new Diplomas, then ask yourself the following questions.

- ❖ How do I currently collaborate with colleagues to monitor individual learning plans?
- ❖ What changes, amendments or additions will need to be made? (For example, how could an individual learning plan tie in with a learner's Foundation, Higher or extended project objectives?)

Purpose of the plan

An individual learning plan:

- ❖ is owned by the learner
- ❖ records the progress and achievement of a young person up to the age of 14 (this could, for example, include results from the Standard Assessment Tests at key stages 2 and 3 and likely key stage 4 outcomes)
- ❖ identifies choices at key stage 4 (including entitlement subjects, Diploma choice and possibly ideas for work experience and additional and specialist learning)
- ❖ establishes broad learning and career goals for the whole of the 14–19 phase
- ❖ provides the basis for ongoing monitoring and review of progress throughout the 14–19 phase

14–19 pathfinders

Partnerships set up to test local collaborative delivery (within existing structures) of 14–19 education and training in a range of settings. Pathfinders have been the key means of identifying and spreading good practice and are informing the national development of 14–19 education and training.

- ❖ helps learners take control of their future by reminding them what they have achieved and keeping them focused on attaining their goals
- ❖ helps you engage with your learners and better understand their needs.

The transfer of information between pre-16 and post-16 institutions has always been difficult, but in one **14–19 pathfinder** they are working on an electronic version of an individual learning plan that young people could take with them between sites within a consortium.

Advice and guidance

There are no rules regarding who should take the lead on the process of supporting learners to initiate or revise their individual learning plans, but the overall lead should usually be taken by a member of the senior management team. However, a wide range of people in schools, colleges and other providers can be involved in the process, for example:

- ❖ practitioners
- ❖ information, advice and guidance (IAG) specialists
- ❖ careers co-ordinators
- ❖ learning mentors.

This will take considerable co-ordination, which could be challenging for practitioners, as time will need to be found, both for training staff and for reviews with young people. In the case of the Diplomas, for which a collaborative approach to delivery is necessary, all the consortium partners, including employers, will need to be involved. They also need to be aware of each learner's individual learning plan and personal goals and targets, to ensure personalised learning and that learners are supported.

Working collaboratively



Exemplar: Robert's individual learning plan



Robert is in Year 10 at St Joseph's High School. In Year 9 he chose the Foundation Diploma in Creative and Media. The Diploma is delivered on a Monday and Tuesday in collaboration with four other schools, the further education college, the university and two local employers.

Robert's school helped him to develop his individual learning plan and he has shared the document with all relevant delivery partners to ensure they can support his personal targets and goals. Robert will formally review his plan with support from his school twice a year, to ensure he is meeting his objectives and succeeding. Any concerns, issues or changes will be identified and the partners informed.

- ❖ Why is it important that all partners involved in teaching Robert are aware of his personal learning goals?
- ❖ Why is it important to review the individual learning plan during the course of an academic year?
- ❖ What concerns or issues do you think can arise to affect a learner's goals?
- ❖ How can an individual learning plan assist in raising standards in education?

Suggested practice: Helping learners make the most of their individual learning plans

- ❖ Ensure that each learner has an individual learning plan, based on an initial assessment.
- ❖ Provide opportunities for learners to acquire the skills they need to plan their learning, knowledge and understanding of progression routes and career entry requirements, and time to reflect on their experiences and update their plans.
- ❖ The plan should map the route to the achievement of the learner's goals, for example, staying on in education or gaining sustainable employment.
- ❖ Involve the learner in creating the learning plan.
- ❖ Ensure that you understand the reasons for the contents of the plan.
- ❖ The targets within the plan should be achievable, clear and measurable.
- ❖ Use the plan as a working document by checking progress against it. Where necessary, it should be amended, with the learner's involvement.
- ❖ The plan should contain more detail for short-term goals and achievements, but should at least outline the longer-term aims.
- ❖ Use the individual learning plan to record how any additional support required, identified by initial assessment, is to be provided.

Reflective activity: Learners' individual learning plans

- ❖ Does each learner have an individual learning plan?
- ❖ Is each plan different, reflecting each learner's initial assessment and goals?
- ❖ How have learners been involved in writing their individual learning plans?
- ❖ Are targets achievable, clear and measurable?
- ❖ Is the learning plan used as a working document?
- ❖ To what extent do learners take responsibility for managing their own learning and recording this in their individual learning plan?

The paperwork

Examples of the forms used to record a learner's individual learning plan are presented in Figures 7.2 to 7.7.

Initial assessment

Name: _____ Date of interview: _____

Initial assessment results

English	Reading		Level:
	Spelling		Level:
	Punctuation		Level:
	Speaking		Level:
	Listening		Level:
mathematics	Score		Level:
Date of assessment: / /			

Notes on interview and initial assessment:

--

Oral communication notes:

--

Individual support needs/requirements:

--

Learning style information:

--

Total number of learning hours for duration of ILP	hours
English	hours
mathematics	hours
ESOL	hours

Figure 7.2: An example of an initial assessment form, to be completed with the learner before the individual learning plan (ILP) is filled in.

Individual learning plan			
Long-term goals			
Short-term goals			
Targets			
	By date	Specific skills curriculum reference(s)	Achieved
Signatures:			
Learner: _____		Practitioner: _____	
Start date: _____		Date of next review: _____	

Figure 7.3: An example of a form on which to record the individual learning plan, completed by learner and practitioner working together.

Target 1			
Date	Activity	Resources	Complete

Target 2			
Date	Activity	Resources	Complete

Target 3			
Date	Activity	Resources	Complete

Target 4			
Date	Activity	Resources	Complete

Figure 7.4: The individual learning plan should naturally lead on to the devising of a learning programme. This should be recorded and the paperwork should be kept with the plan. The example programme shown goes as far as four targets (that is, courses of study), but in practice there will be more.

Date	Work done	Learner's comments

Figure 7.5: An example of a form used to document the learner's record of work experience undertaken. This would be complemented by a more comprehensive work experience diary.

Review

Date of review: _____

Achievements (look back at your targets and short-term goals)

How do you feel about your progress? Use this space to record other achievements and/or ways in which you have used new skills outside the course.

What do you need to work on next? (Include results of further diagnostic assessment)

Targets	By date	Specific skills curriculum reference(s)	Achieved

Signatures:

Learner: _____ Practitioner: _____

Start date: _____ Date of next review: _____

Figure 7.6: An example of a form used to record the review, with the learner, of the individual learning plan.

End-of-course review	
<i>To be completed at the end of the course</i>	
What do you feel you have gained from this course?	
Accreditation	
Achievement of targets and goals	
Evidence	
Next steps	
Signed	
Learner: _____	Practitioner: _____
Start date: _____	

Figure 7.7: Form for recording the end-of-course review (part of the process for individual learning plans).

Maslow's hierarchy of needs

Individual learning plans not only ensure that learners are involved in planning their education and future but also motivate and help learners to realise their true potential. Abraham Maslow (1954) proposed a hierarchy of human needs, which is often depicted as a pyramid (Figure 7.8) consisting of levels. The four lower levels are grouped as 'deficiency needs', while the upper levels are termed 'growth needs'. Deficiency needs must be met first. These are:

- ❖ survival/physiological needs
- ❖ safety and security
- ❖ love and belonging (social needs)
- ❖ self-esteem.

Once these are met, people are driven to meet their growth needs (psychological needs):

- ❖ self-actualisation
- ❖ self-transcendence.

These needs come into focus only when the lower needs in the pyramid are satisfied.

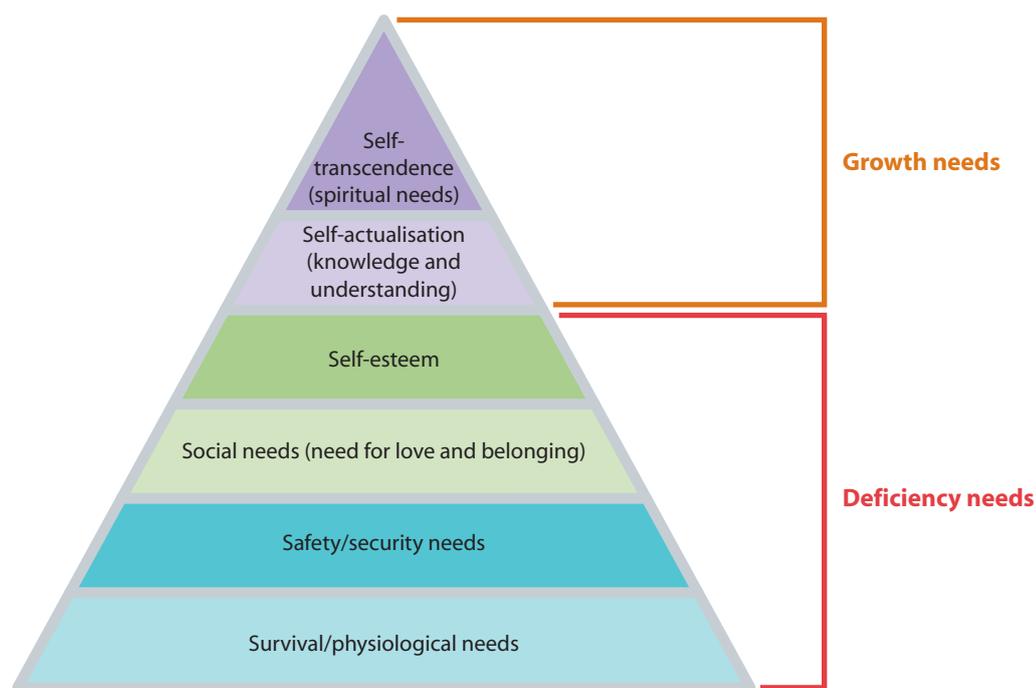


Figure 7.8: Maslow's hierarchy of needs.

According to Maslow's theory, needs that are lower in the hierarchy must be at least partially met before a person will try to satisfy higher-level needs. Thus, although ultimately your goal will be to aid learners in self-actualising (becoming all that they have the potential to be), they must first meet the deficiency needs.

Effective delivery of the Diplomas and personalised learning tie in well with self-actualisation. Maslow (1954) wrote that self-actualising people:

- ❖ embrace the facts and realities of the world (including themselves) rather than denying or avoiding them. This is fundamental to any process of education
- ❖ are spontaneous in their ideas and actions. The personal, learning and thinking skills in the Diploma will support this
- ❖ are creative. Creative teaching methods and tasks that will engage learners and support the development of their creative abilities are key
- ❖ are interested in solving problems (which often includes the problems of others). The Diplomas offer much potential for learners to develop problem-solving skills

- ❖ feel a closeness to other people and generally appreciate life. Teamwork through the Diplomas and the concept of collaborative working (see section 7) will ensure that learners develop social skills
- ❖ have a system of morality that is fully internalised and independent of external authority. Learners must feel they truly are at the centre of their learning. Additional and specialist learning will allow learners to choose their learning such that it is tailored to their needs. They will appreciate and respect the educational system knowing it is tailored to their individual needs.

Reflective activity: ILPs and Maslow

Using Maslow's hierarchy as a guide, within your local Diploma Partnership team, create an ILP for a Diploma learner that covers the aspects discussed above.

- ❖ How have you addressed the deficiency needs?
- ❖ How have you addressed the growth needs?



Every Child Matters

The Every Child Matters programme (www.everychildmatters.gov.uk) is a new approach to the well-being of children and young people from birth to age 19.

The organisations involved in providing services to children are teaming up in new ways to protect children and young people from harm and help them achieve what they want in life. Furthermore, children and young people will have far more say about issues that affect them individually and collectively.

Every local authority will be working with its partners, through children's trusts, to find out what works best for children and young people in its area and to act on that information. Inspectors of local areas will listen especially to the views of children and young people themselves.

Every Child Matters states that every single child should have the support to:

- ❖ be healthy
- ❖ stay safe
- ❖ enjoy and achieve
- ❖ make a positive contribution
- ❖ achieve economic well-being.

These five outcomes need to be at the heart of everything a school does and should be reinforced through every aspect of its curriculum. All schools, colleges and training providers also have a duty to promote equality of opportunity in the areas of ethnicity, disability and gender. They should also not discriminate on the grounds of age, sexual orientation or religion and belief.

In developing your Diploma provision and individual learning plans, it is important to comply with all legal equalities requirements and Every Child

Matters. This will ensure that all learners can access the opportunities offered by the Diploma.

Centres will need to tailor their equalities provision to local needs and make best use of their resources. You may find the following websites helpful in your planning:

- ❖ Department for Children, Schools and Families: www.dcsf.gov.uk
- ❖ Training and Development Agency for Schools: www.tda.gov.uk
- ❖ Specialist Schools and Academies Trust: www.specialistschools.org.uk
- ❖ Every Child Matters: www.qca.org.uk/qca_15299.aspx
- ❖ Equality and Human Rights Commission: www.equalityhumanrights.com



Exemplar: The Children's Plan

The Children's Plan is the implementation strategy for Every Child Matters.

The Children's Plan, announced on 11 December 2007, is a ten-year strategy to make England the best place in the world for children and young people to grow up. Developed through consultation with the public and experts, it places families at the heart of everything we do.

The plan is built on the fact that young people spend only one-fifth of their childhood at school, and that they learn best when their families support and encourage them and when they are experiencing positive activities outside the school day. It sets out a series of ambitions for all areas of children's lives.

- ❖ At age 5, 90% of children will be developing well across all areas of the early years foundation stages.
- ❖ At age 11, 95% of children will have reached expected levels in literacy and numeracy.
- ❖ At age 19, 90% will have achieved the equivalent of five good GCSEs.
- ❖ At age 19, the majority of children will be ready for higher education with at least 6 out of 10 children achieving the equivalent of A-levels.
- ❖ Child poverty will be halved by 2010 and eradicated by 2020.
- ❖ There will be clear improvements in child health, with the proportion of overweight children reduced to 2000 levels.
- ❖ The number of first-time young offenders will be reduced so that by 2020 the number receiving a conviction, reprimand or final warning for a recordable offence has fallen by a quarter.

These ambitions will be achieved with the help of a wide range of specific policies, drawing upon £850 million of investment (some new and some already announced), many of which will have an impact on Every Child Matters.

The DCSF website contains a press notice summarising the new policies, as well as more detailed information on all aspects of the plan and a version of the Children's Plan aimed at practitioners, with versions for parents and young people to follow shortly. It also contains information on implementing the Children's Plan.

Source: www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/strategy/childrensplan

Take it further

Ideally, each learner will have one individual learning plan to cover their learning throughout the Diploma. This would track the learner's progress on and between programmes and providers. As the Diploma is to be delivered through consortia, there will be many providers and employers involved and therefore a unified model for the learning plan will need to be agreed, one that meets everyone's needs. If a unified model is not found, learners may end up with several different learning plans. However, as long as these have been designed to supplement or complement one another, this can work well, as, together, all will form the basis of the learner's overall plan.

The different kinds of learning plan that a Diploma learner may use include:

- ❖ an overall individual learning plan, managed by the school or college
- ❖ an individual learning plan for additional and specialist learning provided by another provider or employer
- ❖ an individual learning plan for functional mathematics and English. For functional skills, all learners need to have targets matched to the national standards. You can find information and support on functional skills at the Functional Skills Support Programme at www.lseducation.org.uk/functionalskills
- ❖ an individual learning plan for additional learning support (if needed). Additional learning support should be recorded on the main plan
- ❖ a group individual learning plan, as the Diplomas offer the opportunity for group and teamwork – on the Foundation, Higher or extended project, for example.



As stated in section 2, co-ordination of more than one individual learning plan is necessary to ensure that the Diploma learner has a holistic experience.

Reflective activity: Individual learning plans

- ❖ Is each individual learning plan fit for purpose?
- ❖ Is a common format used wherever possible?
- ❖ Are the individual learning plans that might be used by a single learner complementary and clearly cross-referenced?
- ❖ What is the expectation of the learner's involvement in managing this range of individual learning plans?
- ❖ Is there a joint review process where colleagues can share the experience of using different formats and learn from one another? If not, how could your consortium create one and what sort of format do you think it might need to take?

7.4 Ensuring progress towards fulfilling potential

Deep support is required for personalised learning. Learners on the Diplomas will require clear and consistent advice and guidance throughout the duration of the curriculum, as well as supportive mentoring. Diploma delivery requires partnership with other schools, colleges and employers. The members of your consortium should support one another as well as learners to realise their potential and succeed.



Evidence and information

Evidence is needed to show that:

- ❖ each learner is making progress towards their aspirations
- ❖ new learning is occurring and is being sustained
- ❖ there is an extension in the learner's range of experiences.

This should be concrete information that is collected over time. That evidence (information) is then used to plan the next stages of the learner's programme, as well as to recognise the learner's achievements at the end of a course of study.

Reflective activity: Evidence and information

How can you make effective use of the information gathered about a learner's progress and achievements and support that learner in moving on?

According to the QCA website (www.qca.org.uk/qca_8378.aspx), you should ask yourself a series of questions regarding the learner's aspirations and goals.

Aspirations

Questions to ask include the following.

- ❖ How will I gather relevant information that has meaning for the learner as well as others?
- ❖ How will I use this information to monitor the learner's progress and plan the next steps?
- ❖ How can I best prepare and support the learner in moving on to the next stage in their lives?
- ❖ How can I ensure that at the next stage the learner continues to be supported in realising their aspirations and future lifestyle?
- ❖ What information will the learner need to take with them?
- ❖ What information have I got that other service providers need to support this person in achieving their aspirations and making a smooth transition to the next phase of their lives?

Questions to think about include the following.

- ❖ Am I using a range of assessment methods to gather information about this learner's progress?
- ❖ Will the information lead directly to improvements in teaching and learning?
- ❖ What information and support will the learner's family or carers need as they move on?
- ❖ How can I best work with the IAG specialist adviser to ensure that the learner's requirements are met?

continued

Goals

Questions to ask include the following.

- ❖ How will I track and record the learner's progress against the goals?
- ❖ How do I use this information to plan teaching and lead to improvements in teaching and learning?
- ❖ How will I recognise when the learner has achieved the relevant targets?
- ❖ How will other people recognise the learner's achievements?
- ❖ How will the learner recognise when they are starting to fulfil their goals? What form will this recognition take?

Questions to think about include the following.

- ❖ How do I involve others in contributing to the collection of information?
- ❖ Does the learner understand the link between achieving their targets and moving towards their goal?
- ❖ How is the learner involved in monitoring their own progress?
- ❖ Does the monitoring link clearly to the targets and aspirations?
- ❖ How do I use this information to change or modify the content, methods or learning environment?
- ❖ Does the learner receive any form of accreditation?
- ❖ Is this the most appropriate and valued form of accreditation or are there any other forms available?
- ❖ Have I ensured that curriculum planning continues to be guided by the learner's aspirations and requirements as well as by the demands of the accredited course?

Methods to monitor progress

There are many ways to collect evidence of progress, including:

- ❖ individual learning plans (for example, how they plan to achieve their personal, learning and thinking skills)
- ❖ performance targets (for example, are they on track with their Foundation, Higher or extended project objectives?)
- ❖ progress reviews (for example, do they have any concerns about how they are getting on with their functional skills?)
- ❖ learner logs (for example, how are they finding their additional and specialist learning?).

All these methods can improve and enhance learner motivation and aid both learner and teacher reflection.

Take it further

How does Maslow's hierarchy of needs affect learner performance and learning in the classroom?

If learners' basic needs are not met, their performance will suffer. The advent of free breakfast and lunch programmes was a direct result of such considerations. These measures address part of the first tier of Maslow's theory: physiological needs. Addressing basic physiological needs is still a key concern in today's classroom. Lack of proper nutrition, poor personal hygiene and insufficient amounts of sleep affect many children and young people. These basic needs must be met before the learner can reach the next level.

A structured and safe classroom is essential for learner growth and progression, as it provides psychological safety for the learner. By having clearly defined and established processes, procedures, rules and practices, and explaining these to learners, you eliminate their fear of the unknown. Learners gain more control of their environment simply by being aware of what is going to happen before it happens.

A safe environment is not limited to physical parameters: learners must feel safe in the classroom not only physically, but emotionally and psychologically as well. Learners should feel free to take risks – such as answering a question or sharing thoughts without concern for ridicule or teasing by other learners. They must feel a degree of safety in all aspects of the classroom and school environment before they can progress to the next level in Maslow's hierarchy – 'social needs', the need for belonging and love.

Once these needs are met, the learner may then move to the next level – self-actualisation (the need to know and understand). It is at this level that the learner is most receptive to learning. The challenge is to help the learner to reach this level.

How you can help learners move up Maslow's hierarchy

Each learner brings their own unique background to the classroom. A learner's readiness to learn is not dependent upon existing knowledge and skills, and you will need to develop a relationship with the learner in order to determine their current level of readiness. Once determined, an agreed strategy should be developed to address current needs as well as the needs in the next level. This strategy can be documented – for example, on the individual learning plan.

Although many issues relating to learner progress in Maslow's hierarchy originate outside the school environment, as a practitioner you are in a position to influence learner outcomes. However, to change outcomes you should first assess the whole person. This means looking not only at the learner's knowledge of material but, more importantly, the learner's readiness levels, based on Maslow's theory and obstacles to learning. Only when you address both these issues will learning be maximised, as in the exemplar.



Exemplar: Maximising learning

Isobel is a learner in Year 11 studying the Diploma in Society, Health and Development. She is also a young carer for her mother, who has multiple sclerosis. In her individual learning plan Isobel has highlighted that she struggles with literacy but really needs to pass her GCSE in English to progress on to her career goal. Isobel realises that she lacks time after school to complete some of her work.

Working with the school and supported by all her practitioners across the curriculum, Isobel now has an action plan to address this and through differentiation she is now able to complete tasks on time and is working at a level more suitable for her. She is more confident now and feels she is doing well.

7.5 Mentoring and pastoral support



Through the new Diplomas and personalised learning, you as a practitioner, as well as other members of the education community, will increasingly take on roles as mentors. Mentoring initiatives can make a significant contribution to the overall strategies for supporting learners.

'The impact that any individual has on our lives cannot easily be measured. But the benefits of having a mentor ... someone who has given freely of his or her own time, can last a lifetime.'

Ivan Lewis, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Young People and Adult Skills, May 2002

There are three main types of mentoring in education (see also Table 2.4, page 43). These are:

- ❖ peer mentoring
- ❖ learner mentoring
- ❖ business mentoring.

A mentor can support a mentee by:

- ❖ listening
- ❖ discussing relevant issues
- ❖ exploring problems (for example, if a less experienced practitioner needs guidance on how to help their learners capture a record of their personal, learning and thinking skills achievement)
- ❖ helping with planning, homework and revision
- ❖ giving an awareness of the world of work (particularly important for Diplomas in terms of applied learning and practitioner industry placements)
- ❖ being available for support
- ❖ helping with other specific needs.

Mentoring programmes are beneficial to all learners but can be especially useful for particular groups, such as learners from ethnic minority backgrounds and those who have special educational needs. More generally, they are likely to prove advantageous for learners who may be at risk of under-achievement for a variety of reasons, such as:

- ❖ lack of motivation
- ❖ lack of family support
- ❖ a disadvantaged family home life with no history of higher education
- ❖ lack of self-esteem
- ❖ lack of practitioner expertise in a particular topic area or area of career interest.

Peer mentoring

Peer mentoring takes place usually between an older, more experienced learner and a new or younger learner. For example, a child moving from primary to secondary school may be assigned a peer mentor, who can support the transition and help with adapting and settling in.

❖ *How often do peer mentors and mentees meet?*

Common practice is once a month but this varies according to the programme, aims and objectives, and also individual learners.

❖ *What skills does a learner require to become a peer mentor?*

Learners should be sensible, confident, sociable and reliable.

❖ *How can peer mentoring support Diploma delivery?*

Peer mentors on a certain Diploma line of learning can mentor those on the same line of learning but below them in school/college years. Peer mentoring may also be useful in supporting the Foundation, Higher or extended project.



Exemplar: Peer mentoring pilot

The Mentoring and Befriending Foundation (MBF) is the national strategic body for practitioners and organisations working in mentoring and befriending. It was contracted by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) to establish a high-quality, formal and sustainable peer mentoring scheme in 180 secondary schools in England. A pilot project managed by MBF performed very well in its first year of operation, in 180 secondary schools. Training, support documentation and the support agents were well received. Mentors and mentees responded positively to their experience and schools reported a number of beneficial outcomes.

Source: Parsons *et al.* (2008).

Excellence in Cities (EiC)

A government programme that ran from 1999 to 2006, aimed at raising the achievements of learners in deprived urban and rural areas. (See www.standards.dcsf.gov.uk/sie/eic)

Learning mentors

Learning mentors originated as one of the three main strands of the **Excellence in Cities** (EiC) programme. They work largely in primary and secondary education settings, providing a complementary service to teachers and other staff. They are:

- ❖ salaried staff who work with school and college learners to help them address barriers to learning
- ❖ a bridge across academic and pastoral support roles, with the aim of ensuring that individual learners engage more effectively in learning and achieve appropriately
- ❖ a key ingredient in the programmes of many schools and colleges for improving the achievement levels of learners.

Learning mentors are now established as an important new occupational group through the National Occupational Standards for Learning, Development and

Support Services for Children, Young People and Those Who Care for Them (see www.dcsf.gov.uk/childrenandfamilies/nos.shtml). These standards are underpinned by 'functional maps', which specifically describe the different roles covered.



According to Ofsted (2003, page 46) 'Learning mentors are having a significant effect on the attendance, behaviour, self-esteem and progress of the pupils they support... [they have been] the most successful and highly valued strand of the EiC programme... In 95% of the survey schools, inspectors judged that the mentoring programme made a positive contribution to the mainstream provision of the school as a whole, and had a beneficial effect on the behaviour of individual pupils and on their ability to learn and make progress.'

The specific activities that learning mentors undertake vary widely. Table 7.2 gives some typical examples.

Role of mentor	Nature and purpose of mentor's activity
Transfer of information	Promotes speedy and effective transfer of learner information from primary to secondary schools in order to smooth transition.
Assessment	Participates in the assessment of learners in order to identify those needing extra help (for example, those who need extra support on their functional skills).
Support	Draws up and implements an action plan for each learner who needs particular support (except where the learner is already subject to an individually tailored plan, in which case the mentor may contribute to reviews and work towards objectives in the plan). Maintains regular contact with families/carers of learners receiving support, and encourages positive family involvement in the learner's learning.
Signposting	Builds up a full knowledge of the range of support available for learners. Acts as a single point of contact for accessing specialist support (for example, probation service, IAG specialist service, social services, out-of-school study support) and a range of community-based and business-based programmes. Liaises with post-16 personal advisers to identify key stage 4 learners at risk of dropping out and ensures they have an identified programme of post-compulsory training and education.
Working with voluntary mentors	Works closely with local community and business mentors, and takes an active role in co-ordinating and supporting the work of voluntary mentors working with learners both in and out of school (for example, on the work experience aspect of the Diploma), so the learner's needs are met in an integrated and focused way.

Table 7.2: Activities undertaken by learning mentors.



Exemplar: Practitioners as learning mentors

Some schools and colleges use teaching staff as mentors. In one school, each member of staff is allocated a small number of learners from each of the five year groups. They then act as a mentor for those learners for the entire period they are at the school. The mentors see each of their learners at least twice a term. The school teaching day finishes 25 minutes early each Thursday to enable the mentoring sessions to take place. Each week the mentors meet with the learners from one particular year group (while the learners from the other year groups go home early).

The mentors give guidance at Year 9 for key stage 4 options, preparation and debriefing of work experience in Year 10, and guidance in Year 11 for post-16 options, in addition to their wider role of supporting learners.

Business mentors

Employers are an intrinsic part of the Diploma partnerships. Employers will be:

- ❖ contributing to delivery
- ❖ providing work experience
- ❖ working with education partners to plan future curriculum delivery.

Employers also play an important role as business mentors. For example, an employer could:

- ❖ mentor learners who are interested in their sector or area of work and provide information, advice and guidance
- ❖ support learners through their Foundation, Higher or extended projects where these are related to the employer's business area.

Information, advice and guidance



Exemplar: Business mentors

Established in 1996, the Hackney Schools Mentoring Programme is the largest mentoring scheme operating in the London Borough of Hackney. Each year approximately 500 learners are matched to 300 mentors, in both one-to-one and group relationships.

The programme links 14- and 15-year-olds in Hackney with working adults. The main objectives are to:

- ❖ increase their self-confidence
- ❖ give them experience of the working world
- ❖ improve their academic performance
- ❖ raise their aspirations.

The individual attention shown to learners by their mentors confirms that their ideas are important and helps them to identify the skills and abilities that can lead to success later in life.



continued

How does it work?

- ❖ The scheme is open to all learners in Year 10 in Hackney and is entirely voluntary.
- ❖ Learners travel after school to meet their mentors.
- ❖ Each mentor is asked to commit to at least one academic year of the programme (September to July).
- ❖ Mentoring sessions take place, ideally, once per fortnight, at the mentor's place of work and last for between one and one and a half hours.
- ❖ Mentors receive initial training, followed by regular support sessions, advice and feedback.



Exemplar: Camden Education Business Partnership

Camden Education Business Partnership runs a range of mentoring programmes for secondary school learners: face-to-face, e-mentoring and group mentoring.

Since 2003, volunteers from a leading City law firm, Nabarro Nathanson, have been (face-to-face) mentoring a group of 19 learners in Year 10 from a local school. The school chose learners for whom it was felt that supportive intervention would enable them to reach their full potential. Mentors attended an initial training session and then a structured matching session at which they met their mentees. With ongoing support from the Partnership, the mentors will continue through to the learners taking their GCSEs.

Learners have benefited by:

- ❖ having an opportunity to relate to an adult role model
- ❖ getting support with their learning (including course work)
- ❖ becoming familiar with the world of work
- ❖ greatly increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

The mentors have:

- ❖ improved their listening skills
- ❖ gained a knowledge of the problems facing young people
- ❖ had the satisfaction of being able to offer help and support.

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ How could the schemes above support Diploma delivery?
- ❖ How could the schemes support the achievement and delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills?



Mentoring can take place in a workplace setting.

Guidelines for mentoring

- ❖ Mentoring programmes need good co-ordination and the time and resources to enable that to happen.
- ❖ Clear objectives are important from the outset – to enable effective relationships to develop and to evaluate success.
- ❖ Mentors and mentees need to understand their respective roles and to be supported to review the relationship and progress made.
- ❖ A good mentor needs good listening skills and the abilities to relate, to be supportive and non-judgemental, to be confident about the development of the relationship and to know if and when to call in specialist help (for example, asking careers staff to offer more targeted information, advice and guidance on progression routes for learners).
- ❖ Good training can enable both mentors and mentees to get the most out of the relationship.
- ❖ All mentoring programmes should have an evaluation process built into them. This needs to be considered right at the start of the programme, when objectives are set. Effective evaluation provides information that can be used to make programmes more effective in the future.

Reflective activity: Mentoring

Think about the following questions.

- ❖ Do you have and already use mentors in your area?
- ❖ If so, will these support Diploma delivery, and how?
- ❖ If not, who will take the responsibility to engage employers and nominate mentors?
- ❖ What sectors do you need to target to engage mentors?

Take it further

Volunteer mentoring

The DCSF aims to promote volunteer mentoring and to stimulate high-quality mentoring opportunities for school-age children and young people, particularly peer mentoring. The Green Paper *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005c) proposed an expansion of the opportunities for peer mentoring.

Volunteer mentoring relationships can often be more effective for young people because mentors do not have any authority vested in them, other than that derived from their own life experience. They often come from the same background as the young person needing support and are therefore perceived as being from the 'real world'. This is especially true of peer mentors.

Statutory issues with non-school mentors

Schools and colleges should consider suitable vetting procedures whenever adults (non-school staff) become involved in mentoring activities on or off school/college premises. The statutory child protection guidance introduced under the Children Act 2004 gave governing bodies a responsibility for making sure appropriate checks are carried out on new staff and volunteers. However, that guidance also leaves discretion with the head teacher about which volunteers should be **CRB** and **List 99** checked. It does, nonetheless, apply to adult mentors and other business people who work regularly with learners over a period of time. The basics of child protection should be included in mentor training and should form part of mentee briefing. Further legal guidance on business mentoring and e-mentoring can be found in the publication *Work-Related Learning and the Law* (DfES, 2006).

CRB

The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) conducts criminal record checks on potential employees on behalf of organisations and recruiters throughout England and Wales. The CRB was established under the Police Act 1997 following public concern about the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It was found that the British police forces did not have adequate capability or resources to routinely process and fulfil the large number of criminal record checks requested in a timely fashion, so a dedicated agency was set up to administer this function.

List 99

Information held under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (previously, but still widely referred to as, List 99). The database, which is maintained by the DCSF, contains details (such as names and dates of births) of individuals who are banned from working with children in an educational setting.

Exemplar: Career champions/ambassadors

Career champions or ambassadors are another way to support learners on an educational programme. The University Hospital of North Staffordshire operates a Career Champions scheme that consists of staff from various disciplines. These staff support 14–19 activity in various ways – from being guest speakers in schools to supervising learners on work experience.



7.6 Ensuring a safe and equitable learning environment

Improving the learning environment can help remove barriers to learning and provide models for encouraging high expectations for every learner. The learning environment encompasses, among other aspects:

- ❖ the physical environment
- ❖ emotional safety
- ❖ learner grouping.



A search of the DCSF website (www.dcsf.gov.uk) produces links to the separate issues of virtual learning environments, school premises and healthy school initiatives.

The document *Positive Behaviour and the Learning Environment* (DfES, 2005) considers how educators can develop the learning environment, which can be said to consist of four factors:

- ❖ physical – the layout of the school and classroom, the facilities and the resources learners use
- ❖ relationships – how people in the school or college behave towards each other, care about and look after one another
- ❖ structures and expectations – the expectations you and your colleagues hold about learners' behaviour, and the learning environment rules and routines
- ❖ language and communication – the way that relationships, structures and expectations are manifested through verbal and non-verbal communication.



The physical learning environment.

Reflective activity: The learning environment

Think of a learner you teach who often does not engage or participate in activities as much as you would expect or want.

- ❖ What factors in society and community which form part of that learner's environment do you think influence their behaviour?
- ❖ What family factors may be affecting them?
- ❖ What aspects of the school/college or classroom environment may be affecting them?
- ❖ Is there anything in the micro-environment (where the learner actually sits in the classroom and with whom) that is influencing their behaviour?
- ❖ How do you think the unique, engaging nature of the Diploma might affect this learner? For example, you could consider the effect of classroom simulations and industry visits.

Although you and other staff may not always be able to influence the wider environment of society, community and family, you can make a significant difference to children's behaviour for learning by paying attention to those parts of the environment that are under your control. You can also help learners to understand that they are able to make choices about their behaviour: there may be one set of expectations in the community or family but it is possible to choose different ways of behaving which conform to expectations in other environments.

Classroom management

Absolutely key to successful behaviour management is the practitioner–learner relationship. When you get to know learners, you:

- ❖ become aware of their triggers – the things that upset them and can cause problems in class. Preventing behavioural problems is much easier than dealing with them when they are occurring
- ❖ find out what they enjoy, what they like doing and what their interests are. With this information you have the power to make lessons instantly appealing and your conversations with them stimulating
- ❖ show them they are valued as people. Once they learn this, their ability to take an active role in other positive relationships is improved; they fit in better and so are less likely to get into serious trouble and less likely to spoil lessons.

Through delivery of the Diplomas you will get to know your learners more – through personalising their learning, by giving them choice through additional and specialist learning, through monitoring of their individual learning plans and their development of personal, learning and thinking skills.

Within your consortium, you might like to think about the approaches you could take to classroom management and discuss different strategies that work for different individuals. Sharing good practice between consortium members will be an additional tool to help you incorporate best practice.



Exemplar: Classroom management

Cramlington Learning Village is a large and highly successful 11–18 comprehensive school of 2300 students in the north east of England. They have developed innovative learning spaces throughout the school that are having a big impact on behaviour and learning.

The first rooms they tackled were in what used to be an old social block for students, made up of four large rooms around a central area. They wanted to create a learning environment for their new learning to learn course. This course aimed to epitomise great learning and form a basis for a model of teaching and learning throughout the school.

First, they gutted and stripped the large rooms, each about 85 square metres, put down carpet and painted the walls. Next they put eight round tables, each for four students, around the edge of every room, leaving a large space in the middle of the classroom where students could gather for reviewing learning and other large group activities.

They placed laptops on sliding draws underneath the tables, two to a table, giving students access to ICT when they needed it, but ensuring that it didn't get in the way.

They put colourful floor cushions in a corner of each room where students would sometimes chose to work on the floor with big sheets of paper. They also bought soft furniture for the large breakout area in the middle of the four rooms. This was to be used by all four classrooms as a space where students could rehearse presentations or form discussion groups in a different environment.

The year 9 students who used these rooms absolutely loved them. Pastoral managers reported lower incidents of disruption when students were taught in these classrooms and teachers were able to pioneer an approach of collaborative learning, while students appreciated the choices they had about how and where they worked.

They have since expanded this model, and with some modifications, made it the basis for classrooms in the new Junior Learning Village which houses 750 year 7 and 8 students. They have built on the idea of larger learning spaces and now also have an open-plan science learning plaza adjoining a two-storey temperate bio-dome (or living laboratory) in which 85 students are taught as one group by four science teachers. There is also a Knowledge Café which combines a learning resource area with a canteen.

Reflective activity: The classroom environment

Imagine that, while you have you have been away from the classroom, a miracle has taken place and the perfect classroom environment has been created. You are unaware that this has happened until you enter the classroom.

- ❖ What do you see?
- ❖ How is the classroom arranged?
- ❖ How are the learners reacting?
- ❖ How do you feel?

Now think about what can be done or changed to make this a reality.

Take it further

A safe and equitable learning environment in the classroom has been achieved when learners perceive that they are:

- ❖ safe from physical and emotional harm
- ❖ free from discrimination, criticism or ridicule by their peers and practitioners
- ❖ free from intimidation and humiliation
- ❖ free to take the risk of answering a question, even if they are unsure of the answer
- ❖ valued and accepted for who they are
- ❖ engaged in challenging but achievable tasks
- ❖ full of the potential to succeed at learning.

Unfortunately, some learners experience threats (external or internal) to their well-being, self-esteem and consequently learning. Learners may experience fear of failure, ridicule, humiliation and rejection, which become barriers to experiencing safe learning. These fears can affect involvement in learning activities, motivation and self-esteem. By nurturing safe learning you can positively influence learner motivation and self-esteem.

Safe learning is characterised by:

- ❖ a safe learning climate
- ❖ safe learning relationships
- ❖ safe learning opportunities.

How can you ensure a safe learning climate, relationships and opportunities for your learners?



Differentiation helps you to challenge and stretch all your learners at their own level.

Nurturing safe relationships requires practitioners to respect their learners. Positive relationships are built when you:

- ❖ create rapport with your learners
- ❖ promote the rights and values of learners
- ❖ discover how different learners learn
- ❖ express the value of learners' contributions.

As part of this process, greater awareness of the language you use when communicating with learners is essential.

Differentiated learning is also important as it:

- ❖ offers a strong chance of success and challenge at an appropriate skill level
- ❖ promotes the possibility of learners starting work within a 'comfort zone' and moving into learning within a 'stretch zone', without venturing into the 'overwhelm zone'.

Differentiation in task, style of teaching and learning opportunities is vital.

Reflective activity: Differentiation

- ❖ How do the Diplomas support differentiation in the classroom?
- ❖ Does the additional and specialist learning component of the new Diplomas enhance or hinder differentiation?

7.7 Assessment, information, advice and guidance, and generic learning skills in personalised learning

Assessment for learning

Assessment for learning means using evidence and feedback to identify where learners are in their learning, what they need to do next and how best to achieve this. In practice, this involves:

- ❖ obtaining clear evidence about how to drive up individual attainment
- ❖ understanding between you and your learners on what they need to improve on
- ❖ agreement on the steps needed to promote sound learning and progress.

There is evidence that assessment for learning improves learner progress over both the short and the medium term and raises standards in the longer term (see section 3.1, page 57).

Assessment for learning is different from other ongoing assessment. It:

- ❖ involves more than marking and feeding back grades to learners
- ❖ involves identifying the next steps for learning, as well as having a clear understanding of the errors learners make and the difficulties they experience
- ❖ is very closely linked to personalised learning, as it takes into account the individual – in particular, where they are in their learning – and assists in setting individual learner goals and individual learning plans.

Assessment *for* learning (summative assessment) can be contrasted with assessment *of* learning (formative assessment) (see section 3, pages 55–6). In brief, the benefits of assessment for learning are that it:

- ❖ can sharpen the focus of teaching and better direct it to meet learner needs
- ❖ helps learners develop into active learners and take responsibility for their progress
- ❖ promotes confidence that all learners can improve their achievements
- ❖ involves learners in self-assessment.

To do this, it needs to be routine and familiar to learners.

Generic skills

Generic skills within the context of the Diploma comprise both personal, learning and thinking skills and functional skills (see page 145). Personalised learning will also apply to the teaching of these skills, to maximise learners' achievements.





Information, advice and guidance

To support personalised learning, the provision of information, advice and guidance needs to be focused on the learner's needs and 'owned' by the learner. It also needs to be impartial, confidential and accessible. How this is done is spelled out in section 6.1 (see page 203).

Information, advice and guidance form a key component of individual learning plans. In that context (and in learner reviews more generally), there are some points of good practice to observe.

- ❖ Enough time should be allocated for the development and review of individual learning plans, as well as for careers and curriculum advice and guidance.
- ❖ You should have the opportunity to undertake training in the effective use of individual learning plans so that there is an understanding that the plans are an integral part of a learner's journey and should be visited regularly.
- ❖ There should be clear guidelines on how individual learning plans are to be used, so that there is consistency across the consortium and to ensure that you are confident in their use.

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8 Appendix

8.1 Skills review

Background to the Diploma: the drive to enhance the skills profile of young people

The need for employability and enhanced personal skills

Nationally there is a drive to offer young people greater choice, coherence and quality within the 14–19 phase of education. All young people are entitled to expect excellent provision that:

- ❖ responds to their needs
- ❖ enables them to progress in their learning
- ❖ prepares them for the modern workplace.

The 14–19 curriculum is currently under reform; these developments are set out in the *14–19 Education and Skills Implementation Plan* (DfES, 2005a). This document details how the government aims to implement new sets of 14–19 education and skills curricula and qualifications, and how this will create a system truly built around the needs and aspirations of each young person. The government's aim is to establish 'a system of 14–19 education matching the best anywhere; a system where all young people have opportunities to learn in ways which motivate and stretch them and through hard work qualify themselves for success in life; one where educational opportunity and chances in life do not depend on accident of birth, but are uniformly available to all young people.' (DfES, 2005a, page 4)

The White Paper *14–19 Education and Skills* (DfES, 2005b) set out the policy proposals for changing both qualifications and the curriculum. Shortly after this White Paper was published, a Green Paper, *Youth Matters* (DfES, 2005c), and another White Paper, *Higher Standards, Better Schools for All* (DfES, 2005d), set out how services for young people and the schools system would be reformed to achieve the same ends.

The Leitch Review of Skills

In 2004, the government commissioned Lord Sandy Leitch to undertake an independent review of the UK's long-term needs in relation to the skills of its workforce. The review sought to identify:

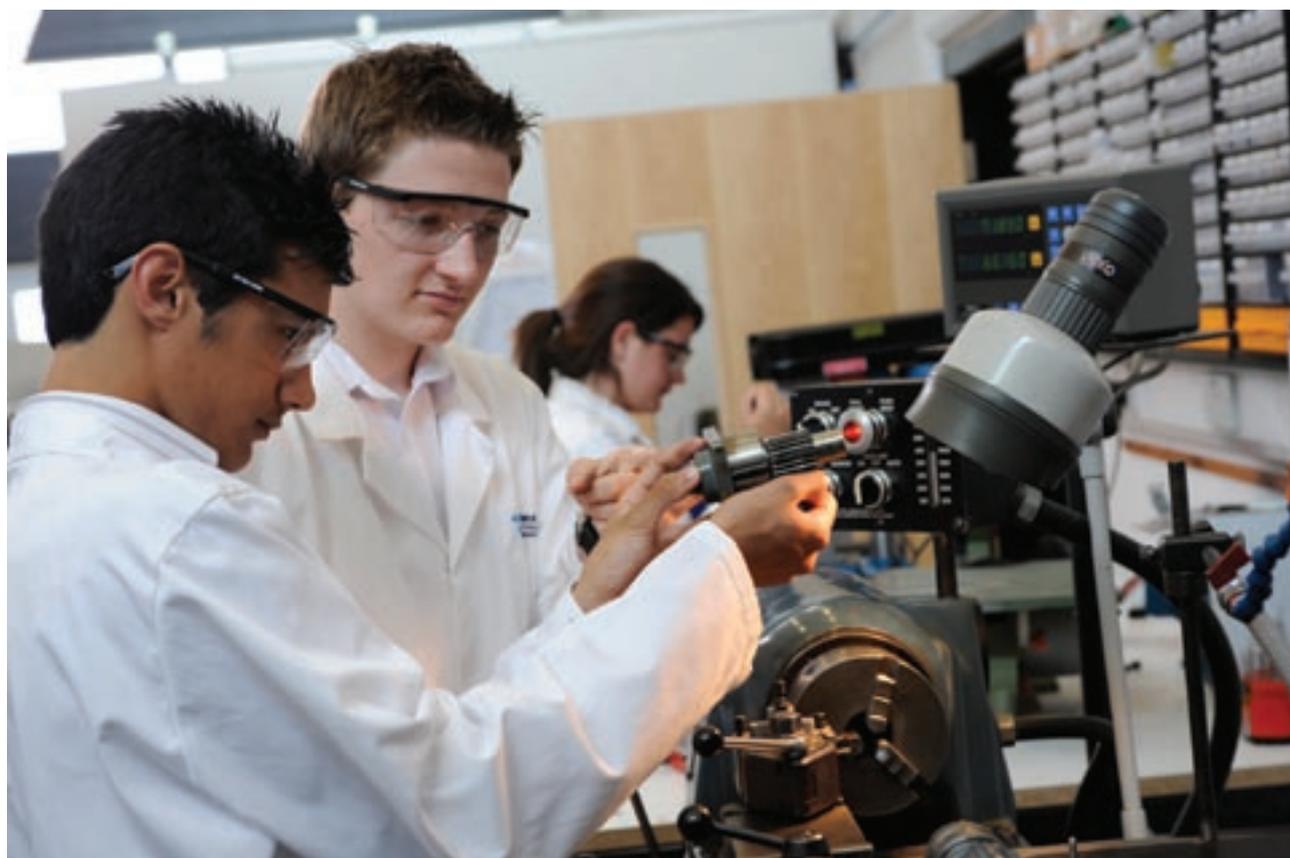
- ❖ the UK's optimal skills mix for 2020 to maximise economic growth, productivity and social justice
- ❖ the balance of responsibility for achieving that skills profile
- ❖ the policy framework required to support it.

The final report of the Leitch Review of Skills, *Prosperity for All in the Global Economy – World Class Skills*, was published in December 2006. Much of the thinking behind the Diploma has been clarified by the contents of this important document.

The report sets out a compelling vision for the UK. It shows that the UK must urgently raise achievements at all levels and recommends that it commits to becoming a world leader in skills by 2020. This means doubling attainment at most levels of skill. Responsibility for achieving these ambitions must be shared between government, employers and individuals. Lord Leitch predicts that by 2020 people will need skills at Level 3 in 65 per cent of jobs and so there is an impetus to get young people in training and further education, to ensure the country's economic success in the future (Leitch Review of Skills, 2006).

Learning needs to be engaging and personalised, and this has been addressed by the educational reforms mentioned above, but also employers need to engage with learners at the earliest opportunity through a variety of ways – work experience being one – to raise their aspirations and to support the progression and development of the workforce.

Having read and worked through the materials in this resource, you will have seen the relevance of Lord Leitch's report to the key components of the Diploma and how the Leitch vision has in no small part become the vision of those people committed to making the Diploma a reality.



Improving skills will improve the country's economic performance.

8.2 Achievement and attainment tables

The components of the different levels of Diploma contribute differently to the points awarded to a school or college for the purposes of the achievement and attainment tables (AATs), formerly known as performance or league tables.

Foundation and Higher Diplomas (Levels 1 and 2)

Foundation and Higher Diploma AAT points exclude functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills, because these are delivered and recognised in achievement and attainment table points through the key stage 4 curriculum.

This means that for the Foundation Diploma (Table 8.1), the formula for AAT points is derived from 420 of the total 600 guided learning hours published in the Diploma structures and standards document (available on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) website, www.qca.org.uk), since the functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills comprise 180 guided learning hours at this level.

The AAT points for the Higher Diploma (Table 8.2) are based on 660 of the total 800 guided learning hours (GLH) for the course, since the functional skills and personal, learning and thinking skills comprise 140 guided learning hours at this level.

Foundation Diploma	Number of guided learning hours	Diploma grade and equivalent AAT points		
		B	A	A*
Principal learning	240	57	84	102
Foundation project	60	9.5	14	17
Additional and specialist learning	120	19	28	34
Total	420	85.5	126	153
Comparison with GCSE:		F–G	E	D
5 GCSEs at Level 1 (grades D–G)	415–504	80–110	140	170

Table 8.1: AAT points for the Foundation Diploma.

Higher Diploma	Number of guided learning hours	Diploma grade and equivalent AAT points			
		C	B	A	A*
Principal learning	420	200	230	260	290
Higher project	60	20	23	26	29
Additional and specialist learning	180	80	92	104	116
Total	660	300	345	390	435
Comparison with GCSE:		C	B	A	A*
7 GCSEs at Level 2 (grades A*–C)	595–684	280	322	364	406

Table 8.2: AAT points for the Higher Diploma.

Advanced Diploma (Level 3)

At Level 3, the curriculum context does not already include provision for the delivery of personal, learning and thinking skills, functional skills or applied learning, which are all essential for the achievement of the Advanced Diploma. For Level 3 learners who have not achieved the functional skills or personal, learning and thinking skills, this needs to be included in the curriculum model for achievement.

If not already achieved, functional skills will need to be 'taught' in the early stages of the Diploma and, along with work experience, will require a significant amount of directed time (see Table 8.3 below). Therefore, the functional skills, work experience and personal, learning and thinking skills are included within the AAT point calculations. There are no proxies for functional skills. As already mentioned, the principal source of information on functional skills is the Functional Skills Support Programme, which you can access at www.lsneducation.org.uk/functionalskills



This means that although the published figure of 1080 guided learning hours for the Advanced Diploma is still valid, the AAT points for the qualification are based on 1305 guided learning hours. This takes into account functional skills and work experience, which together come to 225 guided learning hours.

Advanced Diploma	Number of guided learning hours	Diploma grade and equivalent AAT points					
		E	D	C	B	A	A*
Principal learning	540	225	270	315	360	405	450
Extended project	120	45	54	63	72	81	90
Additional and specialist learning	360	150	180	210	240	270	300
Functional skills	135	69	69	69	69	69	69
Personal, learning and thinking skills	60	30	36	42	48	54	60
Work experience	90 [†]	63	63	63	63	63	63
Total	1305	582	672	762	852	942	1032
Comparison with GCE A-level:		E	D	C	B	A	A*
3.5 GCE A-levels A*-E	1200	525	630	735	840	945	1050

Table 8.3: AAT points for the Advanced Diploma.

[†]Note that the number of guided learning hours for work experience has been calculated on the basis of ten eight-hour working days plus ten hours for preparation, reporting and evaluation. Non-school providers will have different ways of timetabling and will incorporate work experience in ways appropriate to them.

Glossary

These definitions are taken from the QCA publication *The Diploma: an overview of the qualification*.

14–19 pathfinders	Partnerships set up to test local collaborative delivery (within existing structures) of 14–19 education and training in a range of settings. Pathfinders have been the key means of identifying and spreading good practice and are informing the national development of 14–19 education and training.
Additional and specialist learning	Qualifications that learners choose to include in their Diploma. Additional and specialist learning must provide high-quality breadth and/or depth of curriculum experience, without duplication of principal learning. It must have a solid evidence-base of progression opportunities for learners who want to move into immediate employment with training, or into full-time further and/or higher education.
Advanced Apprenticeships	A scheme aimed at people aged 16–24, which involves working and training with an employer, and studying for other qualifications with a learning provider. Advanced Apprenticeships lead to a National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) at Level 3, as well as key skills and a Technical Certificate.
Apprenticeships	High-quality work-based training programmes for those who want to develop their future prospect and career. They are open to everyone living in England and not currently in full-time education. Entry requirements are flexible and not dependent on academic qualifications. Practical skills and interest in the chosen area of work are key to successful entry to an apprenticeship programme.
Becta	The government's lead agency for information and communication technology (ICT) in education.
Compensation	The extent to which high performance in one element of an assessment can balance lower performance in another. This idea recognises that it is the learner's overall attainment rather than individual elements that is significant.
Component awarding bodies	The bodies responsible for ensuring that, when a learner has achieved a component of a Diploma, the results are forwarded to the Diploma awarding body to give the learner an overall final grade.
Criminal Records Bureau (CRB)	The Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) conducts criminal record checks on potential employees on behalf of organisations and recruiters throughout England and Wales. The CRB was established under the Police Act 1997 following public concern about the safety of children, young people and vulnerable adults. It was found that the British police forces did not have adequate capability or resources to routinely process and fulfil the large number of criminal record checks requested in a timely fashion, so a dedicated agency was set up to administer this function.
Diploma catalogue	Accessed via the National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ), the catalogue identifies the combinations of qualifications that are allowed as part of a Diploma package and those that are 'barred' due to the overlap in content.

Education Business Partnerships	These bodies are known by different names in different areas. Also known as education business link services (EBLs) or business in education partnerships (BEPs), Education Business Partnerships seek to establish sustained links between educational institutions and businesses in each area. There is a national umbrella organisation for them: the National Education Business Partnership Network (NEBPN) (www.nebpn.org).
Enterprise capability	The ability to handle uncertainty and respond positively to change, to create and implement new ideas and ways of doing things, to make reasonable risk/reward assessments and act upon them in one's personal and working life. It can be described as: innovation, risk management, a 'can do' attitude and the drive to make ideas happen.
Excellence in Cities (EiC)	A government programme that ran from 1999 to 2006, aimed at raising the achievements of pupils in deprived urban and rural areas (see www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/sie/eic).
Experiential learning	A process that stresses the central role of experience in learning related to the world of work. Learners reflect on their experience, draw out and articulate lessons learned (generalise), and then apply their learning to new situations or activities. The learner's subjective experience is of critical importance in the learning process.
Foundation Learning Tier	Reforms to provision at Entry and Level 1, known as the Foundation Learning Tier (FLT) will be implemented from September 2008. Clear routes called progression pathways will be available for learners working below Level 2 to enable them to achieve combinations of qualifications at Entry Level and Level 1 that will prepare them for Level 2 and beyond. Progression pathways will transform the learning experience and increase opportunities for these learners. It will also enable progression into the Diploma at the appropriate level.
Gateway 2	The 2007/08 application process carried out by each consortium seeking approval to offer Diplomas in 2009. (Gateway 1 was the 2006/07 application process carried out by each consortium seeking approval to offer Diplomas in 2008.)
Generic learning	Generic learning enables students to develop and apply the skills and knowledge necessary for learning, employment and personal development. The generic learning component of the Diploma is made up of the following constituent parts: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ functional skills ❖ personal, learning and thinking skills ❖ a project ❖ work experience. Experiential learning, planning and reviewing play a central role in the Diploma.
Guided learning hours	The number of hours of teacher-supervised or teacher-directed study time required to teach the qualification or a unit of the qualification.
Individual learning plan	A way for individual learners to set personal targets and record achievements. Choice and clear, consistent advice and guidance are centrally important.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG)**Information**

Accurate, objective, up-to-date facts and data about personal and lifestyle issues, learning and career opportunities, and progression routes and choices, as well as about where to find further help and advice.

Advice

Activities that help young people to gather, understand and interpret information and apply it to their own situation.

Guidance

Impartial specialist support that helps young people to understand themselves and their needs, confront barriers, resolve conflicts, develop new perspectives and make progress towards their goals.

Key Stage 4 Engagement Programme

This initiative offers a motivating and engaging route for 14- to 16-year-olds who are finding it difficult to progress within the current curriculum and who may be disaffected and disengaged with the programmes available within school.

Learning Visits Programme

Learning visits are offered by those consortia considered to be advanced in the process of delivering Diplomas. Other consortia can make a learning visit to a consortium to find out how problems with, say, timetable/curriculum modelling, transport and collaboration have been overcome.

Lines of learning

The subject areas/disciplines in which Diplomas are offered.

List 99

Information held under section 142 of the Education Act 2002 (previously, but still widely referred to as, List 99). The database, which is maintained by the DCSF, contains details (such as names and dates of births) of individuals who are banned from working with children in an educational setting.

Multiple intelligences

An educational theory, first developed by Howard Gardner, that describes an array of different kinds of 'intelligences' exhibited by human beings. Gardner suggests that each person manifests varying levels of these different intelligences, and thus has a unique 'cognitive profile'.

National Database of Accredited Qualifications (NDAQ)

Website (www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk) that contains details of all qualifications that are accredited by the qualification regulators in England (Ofqual), Wales (DCELLS) and Northern Ireland (CCEA).

National Qualifications Framework (NQF)

Helps learners make informed decisions on the qualifications they want to pursue, by comparing the 'levels' of different qualifications and identifying clear progression routes to their chosen career.

Principal learning

Principal learning is sector-related, predominantly applied in character and consists of knowledge, understanding, skills and attitudes that support progress through the line of learning into the sectors and subjects concerned. Opportunities to develop and apply generic skills are also integrated into principal learning.

Regional development agencies

Government-sponsored public bodies that aim to improve the quality of life and economic prosperity in the English regions. There are nine agencies in England: East Midlands Development Agency; East of England Development Agency; London Development Agency; One North East; Northwest Regional Development Agency; South West of England Development Agency; South East England Development Agency; Advantage West Midlands; and Yorkshire Forward.

See www.nwda.co.uk/who-we-are/role-of-rdas.aspx

Sector Skills Councils (SSCs)	Employer-led, independent organisations, each covering a specific sector; there are 25 across the UK. Their four key goals are: to reduce skills gaps and shortages; to improve productivity, business and public service performance; to increase opportunities to boost the skills and productivity throughout the sector's workforce; to improve learning supply, including apprenticeships, higher education and national occupational standards.
The September Guarantee	The guarantee that, by the end of September in any year, an offer of a place in learning will be made to all young people completing compulsory education. The guarantee was implemented nationally in 2007 and is being extended to 17-year-olds in 2008 to give those who enrol on one-year or short courses, or who leave the activity they chose when leaving school, further opportunities to engage in learning.
Trident	An organisation that supports young people in preparing for life outside the classroom, through improving employability and enterprise skills. Trident is now a part of the awarding body Edexcel.
Unitary authority	Unitary authorities cover towns or cities that are large enough to be independent of county or regional administration. Examples include Blackburn and Darwen, Swindon and Thurrock.
Universities and Colleges Admission Service (UCAS)	The UK central organisation through which applications are processed for entry to full-time first degrees. Learners who wish to progress to higher education must apply through the UCAS system.
Work experience	Work experience provides opportunities for learning about skills and personal qualities, careers, roles and structures that exist within a workplace or company. Learners gain insights into and experience of personal responsibilities, competencies, key skills and tasks within a workplace. Where well structured, work experience helps young people understand the functions of different people at work and the range of opportunities within a company. It gives insights into the relevance to working life of subjects and raises awareness of enterprise and entrepreneurial activity.
Young Apprenticeships	<p>The Young Apprenticeship programme enables pupils at Key Stage 4 to take vocational qualifications in industry sectors from engineering to health and social care.</p> <p>Young Apprenticeships are provided through partnerships between schools, colleges, training providers and employers. The LSC funds the provision by up to £6,000 for each student for the duration of their Apprenticeship.</p> <p>Pupils undertaking Young Apprenticeships benefit from spending up to two days a week in the workplace with an employer, training provider or college. This is on top of subjects in the core national curriculum, which are protected so that pupils still have access to a balanced curriculum and a broad set of options.</p> <p>The Young Apprenticeship programme will see pupils gaining industry-specific qualifications (such as NVQs) at Level 2. This gives them a platform from which they can progress to post-16 Apprenticeships, if they wish.</p>
Young Enterprise UK	An organisation formed in the early 1960s to assist young people in the development of skills and knowledge required for setting up and running their own businesses. Activities include project work, voluntary work and team building.

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