

## Reforming 14-19 Learning Programmes and Qualifications



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## Terms of Reference

To make recommendations for:

- “a strengthened structure and content of vocational programmes, and greater coherence in learning programmes for all young people throughout their 14-19 education;
- assessment arrangements for 14-19 year olds that are appropriate to different types of course and styles of teaching and learning, with the overall amount of assessment manageable for learners and teachers alike; and
- a unified framework of qualifications that stretches the performance of learners, motivates progression and recognises different levels of achievement.”



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## Why Reform?

- A low staying on rate at both 16 and 17, placing us about 27th out of 30 OECD countries;
- A serious disengagement from learning at 14 for a significant number of students;
- A fragmented and confusing system of vocational provision;
- Insufficient stretch and challenge, particularly at the upper end of achievement;



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## Why Reform?

- Too high a proportion of 16 year olds lacking the necessary basic knowledge and skills needed for employment, and too many high attainers lacking these skills at the level needed for success in HE; and
- An assessment system which has become too burdensome for students, teachers and lecturers, and one in which the assessment methods are not always fit for purpose, nor do they provide the differentiation in performance needed by HE and employers.



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## Template of 14-19 Learning

The core: diplomas at each level share a common core designed to ensure that all young people:

- progress over time towards at least level 2 in mathematical skills, communication and ICT;
- undertake an *extended project or personal challenge*, reflecting the nature and level of their programme, and enriching their learning by encouraging them to pursue in depth an area of study which interests and motivates them. In doing so they will acquire and demonstrate a range of research, planning, analytical, critical and presentational skills required in employment and higher education;



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## Template for 14-19 Learning


- develop a range of knowledge, skills and attributes, such as self-awareness, self-management, working with others, international awareness and personal and interpersonal skills;
- participate in wider activities based on personal interest, contribution to the community as active citizens, and experience of employment; and
- undertake personal planning, review and guidance to underpin their programme, consolidate their learning and inform their choices.



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**Main learning** forms the major part of young people's diploma programmes and is selected by the learner. It will:

- ensure achievement and progression within individual subjects and areas of learning which provide a basis for entry to specific employment sectors, work-based training and HE;
- support specialised learning by providing any required or optional complementary learning; and
- enable young people to select programmes to pursue their own interests and/or to provide subject breadth and contrast with any specialist areas of study.




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### Choice and specialisation: diploma and programme types

The framework will be organised to offer a choice from:

- a range of **specialised diplomas**, designed to provide the knowledge and skills needed for entry to and successful progress in specific employment sectors and areas of further learning; and
- **open diplomas** which enable the learner to select a mixed pattern of subjects or areas of learning.



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Figure 3.1: Template for 14-19 programmes

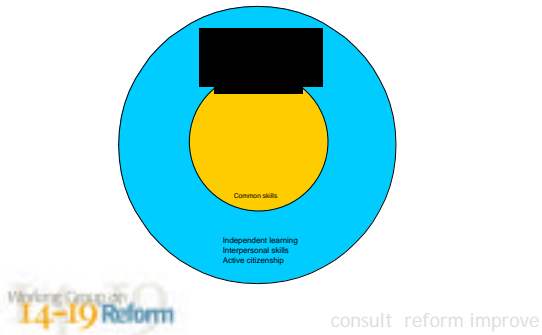


Figure 4.2: QCA Framework for sectors and subjects




- Health, public services and care
  - Science and mathematics
  - Agriculture, horticulture and animal care
  - Engineering manufacturing technologies
  - Construction, planning and the built environment
  - Information and Communication Technology
  - Retailing and commercial enterprise
  - Leisure, travel and tourism
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Figure 4.2: QCA Framework for sectors and subjects

- Arts, media and publishing
  - History, philosophy and theology
  - Social sciences
  - Languages, literature and culture
  - Education and training
  - Preparation for life and work
  - Business, administration and law
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### Advantage of the Diploma Framework

- recognition for the achievement of the whole 14-19 cohort within a single common framework which is transparent and easily understood by learners, teachers, parents, higher education (HE) and employers;
  - an inclusive ladder of progression where achievement is recognised at specific levels, but diplomas are locked onto one another so that achievement at one level builds towards achievement at the next;
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## Advantage of the Diploma Framework

- coherence, structure and relevance within all young people's 14-19 learning, which links clear choices to options for subsequent progression in learning and employment, whilst also allowing for learner choice and for movement between different routes;
- a core of learning and assured achievement for all in key components, such as communication and mathematical skills, irrespective of the route chosen;



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## Advantages of the Diploma Framework

- tackling arbitrary distinctions between, and giving recognition to, different types and modes of learning and achievement through the use of common design features, particularly the common core, prescribed volume and a single, but appropriately differentiated, assessment regime;
- 'space' for innovative learning and teaching and personal choice;



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## Advantages of the Diploma Framework

- a framework for a reduction in assessment burden (particularly external assessment);
- trustworthy qualifications of sufficient volume to deliver breadth, depth and stretch and of which the whole is greater than the sum of the parts; and
- more information about learners' achievements and their development of knowledge, skills and attributes.



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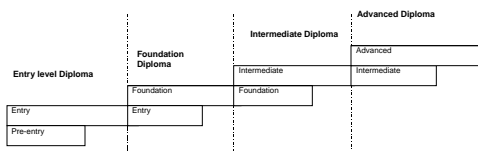
## Diploma Levels and Existing National Qualifications

Diploma Levels	Existing National Qualifications
Advanced Diplomas	Advanced Extension Award; GCE and VCE AS and A level; level 3 NVQ; equivalent qualifications
Intermediate Diplomas	GCSE at grades A*-C, intermediate GNVO, level 2 NVQ and equivalent qualifications
Foundation Diplomas	GCSE at grades D-G, Foundation GNVO, level 1 NVQ and equivalent qualifications
Entry level Diplomas	Entry level certificates



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## Interlocking Diplomas



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## An Entry Level Diploma

- provide a flexible, balanced and enriching programme of learning that promotes self-determination for the learner;
- provide a suitable level of challenge both for individuals who reach their potential within Entry level or choose to leave the diploma system at this level and for those who progress to level 1;
- promote progression both within Entry level and to level 1 and beyond;
- provide a record of the distance travelled by the learner over the course of the programme; and
- assess in ways that are appropriate to the needs of learners and the nature of the programme.



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## Components of the Transcript

- the components contributing to the diploma award, including the extended project/personal challenge;
- the scores or grades awarded for each 'graded' component;
- achievement in any additional components which extend the breadth or volume of the programme beyond the basic diploma requirements; and
- details of wider activities undertaken and personal skills developed.



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## Fitness for Purpose Assessment

- measures achievement in ways suited to the subject, level and type of learning;
- has validity, reliability and wider currency, underpinned by appropriate quality assurance;
- helps learners to extend, deepen or consolidate their knowledge, skills and understanding;



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## Fitness for Purpose Assessment

- enriches their experience through a variety of types and styles of assessment;
- provides formative feedback on their progress;
- avoids undue burden on students, teachers/tutors and awarding bodies; allows time for learning; and embraces the potential benefits of e-assessment; and
- makes appropriate use of the professional judgement of teachers/tutors.



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