

The 14 – 19 Diploma



The 14-19 Diploma is a new qualification in England designed to provide young people between the ages of 14-19 with the skills and knowledge needed for work.

The 14 – 19 Diploma is a new qualification in England which has been designed by employers and education professionals to guarantee the skills and personal qualities that young people, business and universities value and need. They are an alternative to the traditional GCSE or A level qualifications and will run in parallel to GCSE/A level and Apprenticeships. The Diploma will be delivered mainly in schools, working in partnership with Further Education colleges and employers wherever a specialised learning environment is needed.

There will be 14 Diplomas in total, five to be launched in 2008, followed by a further five in 2009 with the final four being launched in 2010. All Diplomas will require a student to achieve a minimum standard in English, Maths and ICT, complete an extended project and undertake a minimum of 10 days work experience.

Two Diplomas are of particular interest to Higher Educational Institutions admitting students to degrees in Materials: the Engineering Diploma (starting in Sept 2008) and the Manufacturing and Product Design Diploma (starting in Sept 2009).

The Diplomas, each taken as a two-year full-time course, will be offered at three levels:

- *Level 1 Foundation Diploma* (ages 14-16) comparable to a programme of four to five GCSEs at grade D to G;
- *Level 2 Higher Diploma* (ages 14-16 or 16-18) comparable to a programme of five to six GCSEs at grade A* to C;
- *Level 3 Advanced Diploma* (ages 16-18) comparable to a programme of three GCE A levels. A subset award comparable to two A Levels will also be available and known as the *Progression Diploma*. The level 3 Diploma is also designed as a standalone qualification: students do not have to have completed levels 1 or 2. Progression to Higher or Further Education is possible from level 3.

A Diploma contains three key areas of learning: *Principal Learning* – the essential curriculum relating to the main theme of the Diploma; *Generic Learning* – the essential skills in preparation for successful employment, training and further study (including Maths, English and ICT); *Additional and Specialist Learning* – a choice from a range of learning options selected by employers as being beneficial to work.

The topics within the *Principal Learning* of the Engineering Diploma have been agreed, and detailed syllabuses are available from Awarding Bodies¹. Topics within the Engineering Diploma include an introduction to Engineering Materials, and the selection and application of Engineering Materials. The topics within the *Principal Learning* of the Manufacturing and Product Design Diploma are still under discussion although each level of the Diploma is expected to include a topic on Materials Science².

¹ http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_13483.aspx

² http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_16903.aspx

How can we help?

UKCME can help by:

- Putting you in contact with schools or colleges who are currently offering Diplomas;
- Running an awareness-raising workshop in your Department, Faculty, School or College.

Contact Us:

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Resources

- Background to the new Diploma, including the *14-19 Education and Skills* White Paper (2005) in which the Diploma was initiated (prompted by the Tomlinson Report) is available at <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/14-19educationandskills/>
- A guide to understanding the new Diplomas can be found at the UCAS website (<http://www.ucas.com/students/beforeyouapply/diplomas/14-19diplomas/>) with links to more in-depth information on each of the individual Diplomas.
- *Directgov*, the Government's website on Public Services, provides information for teachers, employers and parents on a variety of topics from general information to where to study a Diploma. This is available at <http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas/>



Higher Education Academy Resources

- The HEA's Engineering Subject Centre, who have supported the development of the Mathematics module for the Engineering Diploma, provide some useful information on their website on both the Engineering Diploma (at <http://www.engsc.ac.uk/nef/news/1419diploma.asp>) and the Manufacturing and Product Design Diploma (at <http://www.engsc.ac.uk/an/ssc/ManDiploma.asp>)