

The Diploma

Bringing your learning to life

“The Diploma is a great addition to the wide range of qualifications already on offer. It will give students the opportunity to gain practical knowledge and experience, which they can use in the next stage of their development; be that university, college or work.”

Deborah Anderson,
Connexions Personal Adviser

What are the benefits of doing The Diploma?

These are just some of the advantages of taking a Diploma:

- » The Diploma will give you a head start in the competitive employment market.
- » You'll get a valuable insight into one of the UK's main employment sectors – without committing yourself.
- » The Diploma allows you to go on to university or get a job. The choice is yours.
- » The Diploma gives you the knowledge and skills that employers and universities are looking for.

What Diplomas are available?

The first five Diplomas will be taught in schools and colleges starting in September 2008. Another five will be introduced in September 2009 (Environmental and Land-based Studies, Business Administration and Finance, Manufacturing and Product Design, Hospitality and Catering, and Hair and Beauty). The final four will begin in September 2010 (Travel and Tourism, Public Services, Sport and Leisure, and Retail).

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You can also order more copies by calling 0845 60 222 60; textphone 0845 60 555 60. Please quote reference 00729-2007LEF-EN

For more information about Diplomas, see www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas

You should also talk to your teachers, Careers Adviser or Connexions personal advisor.

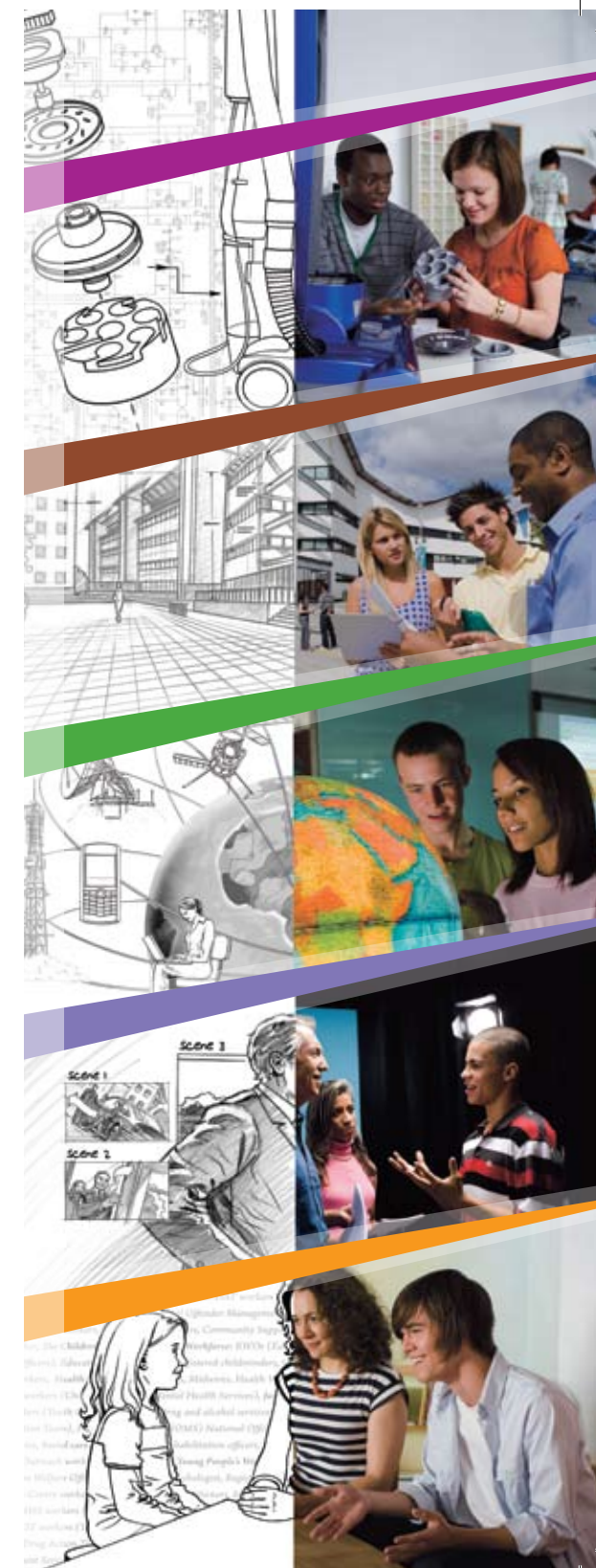
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department for
children, schools and families



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Young Person's Guide – Year 11



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► In Year 11, you begin to make some important choices about your future. In September there will be a new qualification: the Diploma. This is an alternative to the traditional GCSE/A level route, but one which keeps just as many options open for you. It could lead to further study, or to a job. Diplomas are not replacing GCSEs and A levels, but give you a different option, and you can take GCSEs or A levels alongside them.

The Diploma is a qualification based around work rather than traditional subjects and you will have opportunities to experience different styles of learning in different environments, with an emphasis on practical activities.

You need a whole range of skills in life, as well as academic qualifications. The new Diploma will help you to develop skills and experience that employers and universities really value. These will include teamwork and creative thinking. Plus it will improve your level of English, maths and ICT. In fact, it will give you the skills you need to start a career, or to go to university.

► Which Diplomas can I choose from?

In 2008 there will be five Diploma subject areas to choose from:

- » Construction and the Built Environment
- » Creative and Media
- » Engineering
- » Information Technology
- » Society, Health and Development

Initially, selected schools and colleges will be teaching some or all of the Diploma courses but they will become more widely available every year.

► What will I study in my Diploma?

The Diploma combines compulsory and optional subjects.

Compulsory courses in your Diploma cover the main things you need to know about your chosen employment sector. For example, in an Engineering Diploma there are three principal learning themes:

- » The engineering world
- » Engineering technology
- » The engineering future

You will do English, maths and ICT unless you have already achieved these at the right level.

You can choose from a range of **other courses** too. You may want to deepen your knowledge of your chosen Diploma subject by taking a more specialist course. For example, if you're studying for a Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment you might choose to take a course in Surveying. Or you could broaden your study programme, by taking a language or science.

During your two-year course, you will spend at least 10 days in the workplace. You also need to complete a project, to explore a topic of interest to you in more depth and demonstrate that you have understood what you have learned. And, you'll develop skills like creative thinking and self-management, which will be valuable to you in the future.

► How does The Diploma fit in with other qualifications?

The Diploma is not replacing existing programmes like A levels, NVQs and Apprenticeships. It is another option for you to consider. You can do a Diploma instead of A levels, or you can incorporate GCSEs or A levels into your Diploma. You can go from a Higher Diploma to A levels or an Apprenticeship and from GCSEs to an Advanced Diploma.



► What Qualification will I get at the end of it?

If you have taken an Advanced Diploma, this will take about the same time to do as three A levels. If you have taken a Progression Diploma this will take about the same time to do as two A levels. If you have taken a Higher Diploma, this will take about the same time to do as five or six GCSEs. If you have taken a Foundation Diploma this will take about the same time to do as four or five GCSEs.

► I haven't done a Foundation or Higher Diploma. Can I still do an Advanced Diploma or Progression Diploma?

Yes, you don't need to have completed a Foundation Diploma to do a Higher or Advanced or Progression level Diploma.

► How long does it take to do a Diploma?

An Advanced Diploma course will normally take two years; a Higher or Foundation Diploma course may take

less than this if you are doing it aged 16 or over. Diplomas are made up of different parts so it is possible to build up towards a complete Diploma at your own pace, particularly if you are working as well.

► Where will I study my Diploma?

Schools and colleges are working together to make sure that you get the best facilities and teachers in your area. You are likely to study your Diploma partly at college or school, and partly in a work environment.

► Will the Diploma help me get a good job?

The Diploma was developed with employers, to help students get the skills, knowledge and experience they need to do well at work. Employers know that a Diploma student has the hands-on, work-related skills they need.

► Will I be able to get into university with the Diploma?

The Advanced Diploma will be broadly equivalent to three A levels. So when you're applying to college or university, if you have a Diploma they know you should have the kind of knowledge

and skills they are looking for, both for relevant degree subjects and for higher level study more generally.

► What is the difference between Diplomas and Apprenticeships?

Apprenticeships are for people who know the career they want to pursue. They provide training for specific jobs. Taking a Diploma will give you an insight into a particular industry sector, alongside a fully rounded education. So if you take an Engineering Diploma, for example, you can choose from a wide range of areas across related industries or something in a completely different area. Your Diploma will give you the skills that other employers and universities are looking for.

► What can I do if I'm worried about how I will pay for further study?

If you are worried about being short of cash for your studies after 16, there is help. The Education Maintenance Allowance (EMA) can help you finance your final years of learning. To find out more, visit ema.direct.gov.uk/ema.html

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