

14–19: Vocational Learning Support Programme



department for
education and skills

14–19 an overview



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an overview

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Foreword

Busy colleagues, both managers and front-line practitioners, have little time to spare to keep abreast of the latest developments in government policy – particularly over the finer details of complex reforms. Yet it is important that they have an overview of policy, as they will have the responsibility for delivery at some point. Having a working knowledge of the rationale and working principles involved will help improve their practice, and ultimately also the outcomes for young people and wider beneficiaries. The government’s agenda for the 14–19 phase of education is a prime example.

The aim of this publication therefore is to explain the 14–19 reforms in as accessible and straightforward a manner as possible – without diluting the content too much. *14–19: an introduction* offers an overview of all the current policy initiatives, and plots the timeline of the reforms. It also signposts other sources of useful information should you wish to pursue a lead. We hope it aids your understanding of the important changes on the way.

Besides introducing the policy, we have added a section on the help, materials and other support available from the Learning and Skills Network (LSN) to ease the way into the new developments. We hope you will take advantage of this programme and look forward to hearing from you. Visit our website ([www.vocationallearning.org.uk/14–19](http://www.vocationallearning.org.uk/14-19)) for more information.

Alan Goulbourne
Executive Manager
Vocational Learning
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Purpose

This publication provides an overview of the policy and plans, over recent years and up to the date of publication, for 14–19 education and training reform, and gives details of the timescale for the introduction of change and the support framework that is available. The document is intended for all those involved with the planning, preparation and delivery of the 14–19 programme of reform. The timetable for introducing the reforms is summarised in Annex A.

Background

The 14–19 programme of reform aims to develop a continuous phase of education and training for all young people aged 14 to 19 years old.

For practitioners, the programme of reform is about creating a national entitlement where all young people have an individual learning route until they are 19 years old. For employers, it is about providing young people with appropriate skills. And for young people, it is about a system of education and training of increased quality, where they have more choice and say in their future and are more motivated to stay in education and training after age 16.

The 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper (DfES 2005a) and the Skills White Paper in March 2005 (DfES 2005d) proposed reforms to 14–19 education and training, underlining the need to create an education curriculum and infrastructure that better serves the needs of all learners, and those of employers.

As a result, the *14–19 education and skills implementation plan*, published in December 2005 (DfES 2005b), set out an action plan and timetable to develop a system to realise these reforms and bring education and training in England in line with international competition. To achieve this, the government plans to:

- increase attainment by age 19 at Level 2 and Level 3 – at Level 2 (equivalent to five GCSEs at A*–C grade) from 67% in 2004 to at least 70% in 2006, and by a further 2% by 2008;
- increase, from those starting Apprenticeships, the number of young people completing these to 75% by 2007/08, compared with 2002/03;
- increase the number of young people participating in education at age 17 from 75% in 2006 to 90% by 2015;
- and reduce the proportion of young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs) by 2% by 2010.

This publication guides the reader through this programme of reform using the following headings:

- the new national entitlement for 14–19 year olds;
- delivering the national entitlement;
- 14–19 partnerships;
- funding and infrastructure development;
- the Prospectus and information, advice and guidance;
- and the 14–19: Programme of Support for Delivery of Change on the Ground, from LSN.

However, it is important to remember that the 14–19 reforms sit within a context of other important initiatives and these are also referred to in this document. They are:

- *Every child matters* (Treasury 2003) and the Protection of Children Act 1999;
- the curriculum reforms at 11–14 at Key Stage 3 (KS3);
- the Aimhigher initiative to help achieve the 50% target for young people participating in some form of higher education, and post-19 changes such as foundation degrees;
- other Key Stage 4 (KS4) changes such as personal, learning and thinking skills or enterprise education;
- the proposed Qualifications and Credit Framework, or QCF, which is designed to recognise a wider range of learner achievements than the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) – please note that this was originally called the Framework for Achievement (FfA), until the start of the tests and trials period in summer 2006;
- the schools White Paper *Higher standards, better schools for all* (DfES 2005c), which outlines plans to create an education system where choice is paramount;
- and the consultation on the Green Paper *Youth matters* (DfES 2005e) as it affects information, advice and guidance.

Information about the proposed Qualifications and Credit Framework (previously the Framework for Achievement) can be found on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) website (www.qca.org.uk).

Electronic copies of *Higher standards, better schools for all*, and *Every child matters* and *Youth matters* can be downloaded from the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) website (www.dfes.gov.uk), as can other key documents mentioned above, such as the White Papers and Implementation Plan.

The new national entitlement for 14–19 year olds

As part of its programme of reform, the government proposes to introduce a new national entitlement that provides every young person with the opportunity to:

- learn the basic functional skills;
- and receive a sufficiently broad education to enable them to progress to further learning or into meaningful employment.

Under the national entitlement, young people will continue to study the core and foundation subjects of the National Curriculum, but from the age of 14 onwards they will be able to pursue various options, including new specialised Diplomas, and a new General Diploma that recognises achievement at GCSE level.

Whichever route young people choose, they will be expected to achieve functional skills in the use of English, maths and information communications technology (ICT) in a range of practical settings.

The entitlement at 14–16

Every young person will:

- study National Curriculum core subjects – English, maths and science;
- study National Curriculum foundation subjects – ICT, physical education (PE) and citizenship;
- study work-related learning and enterprise;
- have religious education;
- have education about sex, drugs, alcohol and tobacco;
- and have careers education.

The choices available will include all 14 specialised Diplomas, plus at least one course in:

- the arts;
- design and technology;
- the humanities;
- and modern foreign languages.

Learners will have the opportunity to take a course in all four of these areas, if they wish to.

The core as a whole will take up about half of the available curriculum time and whatever choices young people make will take up the remaining time. Schools, in partnership with colleges and work-based learning providers, will be responsible for ensuring all 14–16 year olds on their roll have access to the full entitlement. More information on 14-19 partnerships can be found on pages 15 and 16 .

The entitlement at 16–19

16–19 year olds will be entitled to study towards any one of the 14 specialised Diplomas. In addition, there will be an entitlement to study functional English, functional maths and functional ICT to age 19, until learners achieve at least Level 2. This may be part of a Diploma programme, within an Apprenticeship or a general programme, or separately.

The Prospectus

In order to ensure that young people know what is on offer to them in their area, local authorities and their relevant local LSC will make a Prospectus available, setting out the courses and programmes that each school, college and other provider in the area offer to young people.

Prospectuses will be published from autumn 2006, and from autumn 2007 they will include specialised Diplomas, where they are on offer. Young people will use the Prospectus with parents, teachers and advisers to make choices about the courses they want to take. Each Prospectus will be linked to a single national website.

A guidance document on the Prospectus was finalised and published in August 2006 and is available at: www.dfes.gov.uk.

Information, advice and guidance (IAG)

The new national entitlement will bring greater choice for young people. It is important that they should be given sufficient information, advice and guidance so that they are aware of all the options available to them, to help them make the right choice. Many of the 14–19 Pathfinders have been piloting ways to improve information available for young people. This has taken two forms:

- mapping vocational pathways, so there is clear progression from the choice at 14 through to 19;
- and putting the information into more user-friendly formats, such as DVD.

Primary responsibility for commissioning information, advice and guidance is expected to be devolved from Connexions via local authorities to schools and colleges in partnerships with Children's Trusts. It is envisaged that this devolution of responsibility will happen progressively until 2008.

Delivering the new national entitlement

A number of reforms will be introduced into the 14–19 education system over the next 10 years to deliver the new national entitlement:

- changes will be made to improve results at Key Stage 3;
- achieving functional skills will become a vital part of a good education;
- a 14–16 Re-engagement Programme will help refocus disengaged young people;
- Personal, Learning, and Thinking Skills, along with Enterprise Education, will become a part of the curriculum;
- a General Diploma and 14 specialised Diplomas will be developed and introduced;
- and changes to the General Certificate of Education (GCE) at A-level will be piloted.

The government expects this programme of reforms to produce a 14–19 education system that will be better tailored to meet individual student choices and needs – and to encourage young people to continue in learning until at least the age of 18.

Changes to Key Stage 3

The first step in delivering the range of qualification and curriculum reforms at Key Stage 4 is to ensure that young people at Key Stage 3 (that is, the 11–14 phase of education) possess a stronger base of knowledge and skills. By the age of 14, young people need to possess a sound grounding in functional skills, a broad general education and an enthusiasm for learning in order to take advantage of the increased choices available to them between the ages of 14 and 19.

The DfES aims to have more young people achieve National Curriculum Level 5 in English, maths, science and ICT, and to provide the opportunity for all young people to be stretched to achieve across all subjects. To accomplish this, core and foundation subjects will remain but the coherence of the curriculum will be reviewed to ensure that problems are identified and remedied.

The level of prescription in the KS3 curriculum will be reduced, so that there is space to enable those who have fallen behind before the start of secondary school to catch up, and to enable others to progress more quickly. Schools will be expected to focus systematically on those who arrive from primary school without reaching Key Stage 2 literacy and numeracy standards.

A new online test of ICT skills and models of moderated teacher assessment in other compulsory subjects will be introduced. Achievement across the curriculum will be recorded in a 'Pupil Profile' to emphasise the importance of achievement to pupils and their parents.

Students will need to be supported and guided to tailor their education to meet their individual needs. Year 9 and specialist careers staff in English secondary schools, and Personal Advisers in the Connexions Service who help students choose KS4 courses and plan their individual progression, can find more information on this support in three publications on aspects of information, advice and guidance matters for the 14–19 phase from LSN (see: www.vocationallearning.org.uk/14-19).

Functional skills

At the heart of the reform is the expectation that every young person will learn the basic functional skills. These are the core elements of English, maths and ICT, which provide an individual with the essential knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to operate confidently, effectively and independently in life and at work.

The government envisages that individuals of any age who possess these skills will be better able to participate and progress in education, training and employment as well as to develop and secure the broader range of aptitudes, attitudes and behaviours enabling them to make a positive contribution to the communities in which they live and work.

Functional skills are being developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA). A draft set of standards for the three skills elements were produced in early 2006 with an initial focus on Levels 1 and 2. These draft standards and assessment regime are being trialled with a selection of providers in the 2006/07 academic year. Refinements are expected, based on these trials.

From 2006/07 onwards, schools, colleges and training providers will be helped to prepare for the introduction of functional skills through a programme of professional development, building on the lessons from existing good practice in GCSE, Key Skills and Skills for Life. QCA will also involve regulatory bodies in Wales, Northern Ireland and Scotland throughout this process.

The new functional skills will be embedded into GCSEs from late 2007. Awarding bodies will provide specifications to schools and colleges by September 2008 for revised English and ICT GCSEs, and by September 2009 for the revised GCSE maths.

Schools and colleges will introduce these revised GCSEs in English and ICT, which include functional skills, in September 2009. They will introduce the revised GCSE in maths including functional skills in September 2010.

The DfES definition of the three functional skills is given in Figure 1. Information on developing and delivering functional skills is available at: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19 and at: www.qca.org.uk

Figure 1 Definition of functional skills

English Each individual is confident and capable when using the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing and is able to communicate effectively, adapting to a range of audiences and contexts. This will include being able to explain information clearly and succinctly in speech and writing, expressing a point of view reasonably and persuasively, using ICT to communicate effectively.

Maths Each individual has sufficient understanding of a range of mathematical concepts and is able to know how and when to use them. For example, they will have the confidence and capability to use maths to solve problems embedded in increasingly complex settings and to use a range of tools, including ICT as appropriate.

ICT Each individual is confident and capable when using ICT systems and tools to meet a variety of needs in a range of contexts. For example they will use ICT to find, select and bring together relevant information and use ICT to develop, interpret and exchange information, for a purpose.

Source: Department for Education and Skills

Personal, learning and thinking skills

As well as learning functional skills, there is a wider set of skills that the government wants all young people to develop, no matter which route they follow. Employers have been particularly concerned to see improvements to wider 'employability skills', and many of those involved in higher education seek improved study skills from students.

The government plans to respond to these demands through these 14-19 reforms, including strengthening the Apprenticeship programme and Enterprise Education.

Specialised Diplomas

Key to the reforms are the new specialised Diplomas designed to offer all 14–19 year olds different ways of learning, and a route which can take young people into higher education (HE) and skilled employment. They will be available at Levels 1, 2 and 3 in 14 sector areas or ‘lines’.

These 5 subjects will first be taught in September 2008:

- construction and the built environment;
- creative and media;
- engineering;
- health and social care;
- and ICT.

These 5 subjects will first be taught in September 2009:

- business administration and finance;
- hair and beauty;
- land-based and environment;
- manufacturing;
- and hospitality and catering.

These 4 subjects will first be taught in September 2010:

- public services;
- retail;
- sport and leisure;
- and travel and tourism.;

Specialised Diplomas will ensure that young people have:

- a recognised and valued qualification;
- opportunities to experience different styles of learning, and to learn in different settings;
- the skills and knowledge they need to progress into employment, training and further or higher education;
- and the opportunity to make informed choices about what kind of work they want to do.

Specialised Diplomas are being developed by multi-agency Diploma Development Partnerships (DDPs) led by the relevant Sector Skills Councils as representatives of employers, with members including higher education and education professionals.

The DDPs will make sure that the content of the Diplomas meets the needs of employers and higher education – including a requirement to succeed in achieving functional English, maths and ICT. Awarding bodies will work with DDPs as they turn the content into qualifications, and QCA will set the standards and approve the Diplomas. Other key national partners will support schools, colleges and training providers to prepare to teach them.

To attain a specialised Diploma, a young person will have to achieve in three areas:

- **generic learning**, consisting of functional skills, and personal, employability, learning and thinking skills;
- **principal learning**, covering sector-related skills and knowledge, 50% of which should focus on developing practical skills used in the workplace and delivered in a work-related learning environment;
- **and additional/specialist learning**, allowing young people to choose from a range of employer-endorsed options.

The structure of the Diploma will ensure that young people can progress from one level to the next, on completion. Diplomas will also provide sufficiently broad learning to enable young people to progress to general qualifications or other diplomas at the next level. They will be designed to provide clear progression routes and to fit within the curriculum, as follows.

- A **Level 1 Diploma** will occupy a little under half the available curriculum time over the 2 years of Key Stage 4. This leaves room at KS 4 for National Curriculum core and foundation subjects.
- A **Level 2 Diploma** will occupy a little more than half the available curriculum time over the 2 years of Key Stage 4. This provides for a substantial programme of learning as well as allowing time for additional learning outside the specialised Diploma.
- A **Level 3 Diploma** will occupy curriculum time broadly equivalent to that of three A-levels. This will demand more learning time but will still leave additional time for study outside the specialised Diploma for those who wish it.

By 2015, it is expected that every young person in a school or college will be entitled and able to pursue any one of the specialised Diploma courses at an appropriate level for them, wherever they are in the country.

General (GCSE) Diploma

The government expects more young people to achieve five A*–C grade GCSEs including English and maths, and in 2011 will introduce a new General (GCSE) Diploma to recognise those who achieve this standard. In order to achieve a Level 2 Diploma, young people must achieve Level 2 (GCSE) in functional English and maths. The General Diploma is currently under development.

Enterprise Education

While not a qualification in itself, enterprise education is now a mandatory part of the curriculum at Key Stage 4. It is closely linked to work-related learning. There has been a programme of innovation through Enterprise Pathfinder schools, and Enterprise Advisers have been appointed in Education Business Partnerships (EBPs) to support the national roll-out in 2005 of enterprise education as part of the KS 4 curriculum. It is important that this is not a separate initiative, but is linked into the wider efforts on employability learning.

More information on implementing enterprise education in schools is available at: www.teachernet.gov.uk/teachingandlearning/14to19/ks4/enterpriseeducation

Enterprise education is related to the introduction of the Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills Framework developed by QCA.

Apprenticeships

Apprenticeships are a distinctive and recognised form of training, providing a strong, employment-based route for developing industry-recognised skills. Since 1997, there has been a significant growth in the number of apprentices and the government target, that (by 2005) at least 28% of 16–21 year olds should start an Apprenticeship for the first time, has been met.

Apprenticeships are distinctive because they provide work-based preparation for a particular occupation, while the new specialised Diplomas provide learning based on specific sectors. Apprenticeships are designed for a particular occupation, and include learning and assessment in occupational competence. There are three types of Apprenticeships.

- **Young Apprenticeships** These are a valuable addition to the range of vocational options at Key Stage 4. They are provided and managed by local partnerships of schools, colleges, training providers, business education link organisations and employers. Young people aged 14–16 spend Years 10 and 11 on the programme and pursue vocationally-related Level 2 qualifications, including 50 days of practical learning in work placements.
- **Apprenticeships** Individuals work for at least 12 months at their own pace towards NVQ Level 2 and possibly a higher qualification. This provides the skills needed for the relevant career option and provides entry to Advanced Apprenticeships.
- **Advanced Apprenticeships** Individuals work towards NVQ Level 3 and 4 in some occupational areas. To take part in this programme, participants should ideally have five GCSEs (at grade C or above), or have completed an Apprenticeship.

Pre-Apprenticeship offers are available to those young people who have potential, but are not yet ready or able to enter an Apprenticeship, or may be currently disengaged or disenfranchised from learning. The offer is based on the Entry to Employment programme.

There is great variation between occupational sectors in the design and nature of Apprenticeship frameworks. This is different from specialised Diplomas, which are the same design at Levels 1, 2 and 3.

There will be clear progression routes from specialised Diplomas into Apprenticeships and vice versa, but each remains distinct and the Apprenticeship is not required to fit within the specialised Diploma framework.

More information on Apprenticeships is available at: www.apprenticeships.org.uk; for more information on how Apprenticeships relate to the 14–19 reforms, visit: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19

General Certificate of Secondary Education

The government wants to make sure that young people who do not choose to pursue a specialised Diploma programme at Key Stage 4 can still pursue some applied options. Eight vocational subjects are currently available at General Certificate of Secondary Education (GCSE). These are:

- Applied Art and Design
- Applied Business
- Engineering
- Health and Social Care
- Applied ICT
- Leisure and Tourism
- Manufacturing
- and Applied Science.

Work is under way to expand this range. A new GCSE in Agriculture, Land and Environment became available to teach from September 2006. Pilots in GCSE Applied Performing Arts and Applied French began in September 2004 and GCSE Applied PE began in September 2005. From September 2008, there will be GCSEs in Construction and the Built Environment, and Hospitality and Catering. It is expected that all these subjects will be available for teaching by September 2009.

General Certificate of Education (GCE) A-level

The government intends that whatever route young people are on, they will be challenged to achieve their best. At Key Stage 3, this includes greater space in the curriculum to allow those who have fallen behind before the start of secondary school to catch up and enables others to progress more quickly.

At Key Stage 4, it includes more opportunities to accelerate and to take advanced-level qualifications. At A-level, the emphasis is on the need for a wider range of questions. From September 2006, QCA is trialling different options, which will:

- not affect the existing A-level standard;
- be accessible to all young people who can benefit, regardless of the institution in which they study;
- and provide the additional differentiation sought by higher education.

These trials will be evaluated and the conclusions incorporated into A-levels from September 2008 and also within specialised Diplomas (which may include A-levels), so that at advanced level all young people, whether they have taken a specialised Diploma or general qualifications, will have had the opportunity to demonstrate their capabilities.

To accompany this, a new extended project at Level 3 will be introduced from September 2008. It will represent a single piece of work, showing a high degree of planning, preparation, research and autonomous working. QCA has advised that:

- the project must be distinct from A-level coursework units;
- and a common framework should apply to the stand-alone version for A-level students and to the extended project within Level 3 specialised Diplomas.

It is recommended that the extended project be completed in the second year of Level 3 full-time study. The skills tested by the extended project are more likely to have been developed in this year, as students mature.

14–16 Re-engagement Programme

As well as developing reforms to help young people learn the basic functional skills, it is important that young people of all abilities have a route through which they can learn, develop and prepare themselves for life. Sometimes, the best way for a young person to do this is to take qualifications at Entry Level or Level 1. They can then use this as a springboard for moving on to higher level study and achievement. By taking longer, they can achieve more.

For some young people, particularly some of those with learning difficulties or disabilities, reaching that level is a major achievement in itself and deserves recognition. The government's 14–16 Re-engagement Programme tackles the problem of engaging young people and is aimed at those who are lower achieving, at risk of disengagement, and/or are likely to benefit from a work-focused programme.

The content of the programme focuses on vocational development and experience, personal and social development, and catching up on basic and key skills. Participants will be expected to continue with the Key Stage 4 statutory curriculum alongside the scheme.

The foundation learning tier is part of these reforms and will meet the needs of these young people and ensure they get recognition for their achievements. It will include a range of provision below Level 2, backed by simple planning and funding mechanisms. A phased roll-out will commence from September 2007.

Higher education modules

The 2005 Education Act allows for limited courses of higher education (HE) to be provided in schools (colleges can already do this). Such modules can be used to give young people the opportunity to study in greater breadth and/or depth. HE modules will develop independent learning skills that will help them prepare for entry to HE.

Linked to foundation degrees, these are an important element of the Aimhigher initiative, details of which can be found at: www.aimhigher.ac.uk

The new entitlement means that all 14–19 year olds will have the opportunity to pursue any of the 14 specialised Diplomas. While an individual school does not have to provide all 14 Diplomas itself, it must ensure a young person has access to the full entitlement. To achieve this, schools, colleges and training providers will need to develop and maintain effective working partnerships where they can work together to decide how best to deliver the entitlement, with each institute playing to its strengths.

The 14–19 Gateway

In order to do this, schools, colleges, and other providers, working in partnership, will be required to go through the 14–19 Gateway. The Gateway process will assess consortia and identify those best equipped to secure the necessary awarding body approval to deliver the Diplomas as of 2008.

The Gateway will also help providers identify whether they are ready for and capable of delivering the Diplomas to the high standard required. The process will also identify where providers need to develop, either for delivery in 2008 or in subsequent years, and how they can be supported, to meet the required standard. This process will apply only in England; regional panels of experts led by each region's Government Office Director for Children and Learners will assess bids in early 2007.

Guidance about the Diploma Gateway was published in October 2006, and provides information for those partnerships who wish to offer one or more of the first five Diploma lines in September 2008.

Successful partnerships

Apart from the statutory requirements outlined in *Every child matters* (Treasury 2003) and the Protection of Children Act 1999, there is no intention to prescribe the form that partnerships should take. Evidence suggests that successful partnerships should consider:

- creating a clearly-defined vision and purpose, with a shared understanding of longer-term goals that build on more effective working relationships;
- joint planning and action to achieve attainable goals and objectives;
- some sharing of resources, risks and rewards;
- mutual respect for all partner organisations;

- open and frequent communications, and establishing formal and informal links;
- flexible and coordinated provision that meets the needs of the learner, while also taking into account the needs of partners;
- and effective, open monitoring and evaluation.

Successful partnerships should build on existing examples of good practice, which include:

- **Young Apprenticeships**, managed by partnerships of schools, colleges and work-based learning providers to ensure that the 50 days of work-related learning is delivered towards their vocational qualification;
- the **Increased Flexibility Programme**, launched in September 2002, in which schools, colleges and work-based learning providers work together so that students aged 14–16 can spend one day or more of their ‘school’ week in a college or other setting to have the opportunity to work towards a vocational qualification;
- **14–19 Pathfinders and 14–19 Area Wide Inspections**, which prompted local authorities and local Learning and Skills Councils (LSCs) to set up partnership structures in many parts of the country;
- **and the report ‘Every child matters’ and the Protection of Children Act 1999**, which placed a statutory duty on the local authority to set up a partnership (often referred to as a Children’s Trust) with a corresponding duty on others, such as the LSC, to be members of these partnerships.

More information on successful partnerships can be found in *Effective partnerships for providing and managing Young Apprenticeship programmes* (LSDA 2005).

Partnerships should be comprehensive, covering not only schools, colleges and work-based learning providers but also local authorities and local LSCs, Connexions Services and local deliverers of information, advice and guidance, and business education links. They should:

- **be able to operate at county, city or borough level** or other areas, perhaps also taking a sub-borough format to deliver appropriate 14–19 education and training for a particular area;
- **involve curriculum managers in schools, colleges and other providers**, having responsibility for ensuring the national entitlement is delivered within the provider timetable and scheduling the time when students attend providers outside school;
- **and connect to networks of employer bodies**, which are usually run by sectors and can be vital in providing work-related experiences.

A possible framework for partnership is outlined in Figure 2.

The responsibilities of different local partners are set out in the Education Bill, which was introduced in February 2006.

More information on partnership working can be found in *Partnerships that work* (DfES/LSDA 2005), which is downloadable from:

www.vocationallearning.org.uk

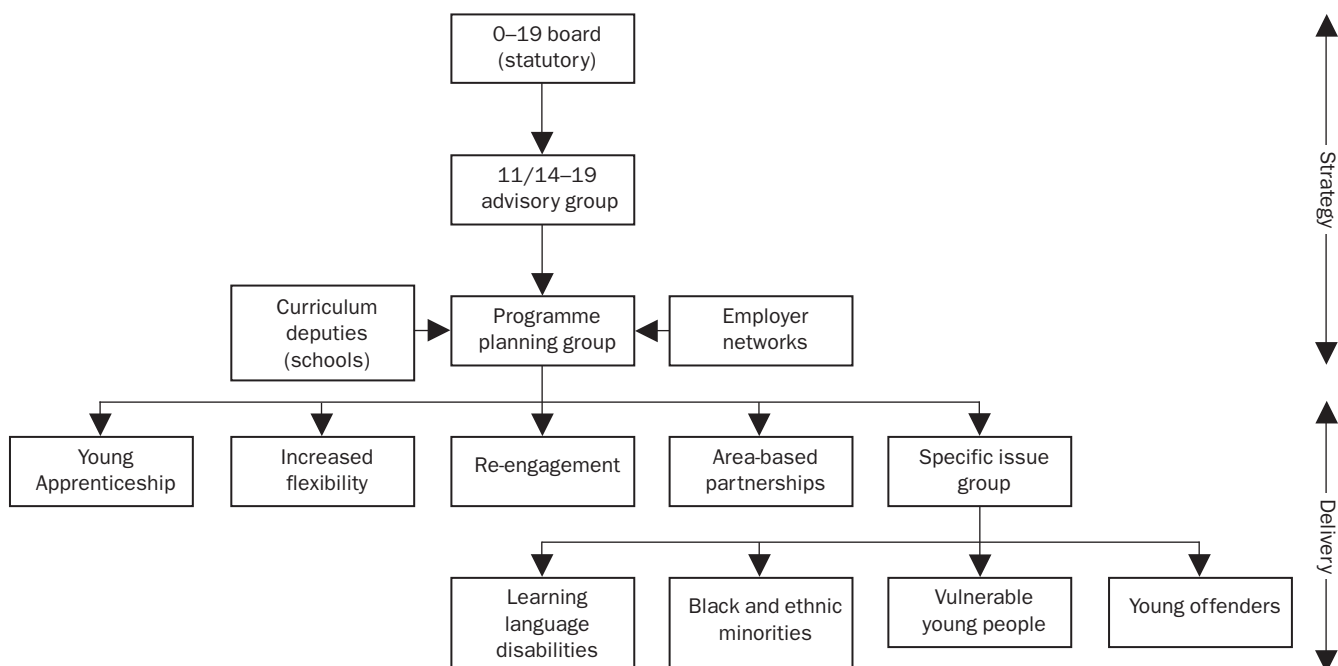
Supporting partnerships

To promote widespread partnership working, the DfES has invited a number of successful partnerships to host structured learning visits. This way, other partnerships can learn from the best about what has been done, apply the lessons (in an adapted form) to their own area and prepare for the introduction of specialised Diplomas in 2008.

In addition, the Diploma Development Partnerships will develop networks linking schools and colleges to support workforce development in all 14 specialised Diploma lines. Centres of Vocational Excellence, vocational specialist schools and skills academies will establish networks in the first five specialised Diploma lines by 2007.

For more information on how your institution or area could get involved in a learning network, visit the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust website at: www.specialistschools.org.uk or the Quality Improvement Agency website at: www.qia.org.uk

Figure 2 Possible framework for partnership working



Funding and infrastructure development

Funding

Funding for 14–19 activity is likely to move over time from separate and discrete pots of money to mainstream funding, to which all schools and colleges will have access, allowing them to plan the delivery of the qualification and curriculum reforms on the basis of funding certainty.

An important step in this direction was taken when the new **Dedicated Schools Grant** (DSG) was announced in December 2005. This gave a guaranteed minimum increase in core funding of 3.4% per pupil for secondary schools in 2006/07, with a further minimum guaranteed increase for all schools of 3.7% in 2007/08.

This funding settlement will help schools and local authorities deliver the reforms set out in the 14–19 Education and Skills White Paper (DfES 2005a), and in particular provide support for more practical learning options for pupils aged 14–16.

Local authorities and schools will decide whether an amount is held by the local authority to act as a central purchaser of provision (which schools then access), or whether all the funding is delegated to schools for them to buy in the additional provision themselves. More information on the DSG can be found at: www.teachernet.gov.uk

A **flexible funding pot** is available from 2006/07, bringing together current discrete pots of money. It will be held locally, and so help 14–19 partnerships implement reforms most effectively.

In addition, for two years from 2006/07, there will be pilots of locally pooled 14–19 budgets combining the flexible funding pot and other sources, to examine how a pooled budget can be used most effectively to contribute to delivery. More information on the flexible funding pot can be found at: www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19

Alongside these developments, a further round of Young Apprenticeship pilots and a fifth cohort of the Increased Flexibility Programme started in autumn 2006.

For some post-16 learners who qualify through a means test, the **Education Maintenance Allowance** (EMA) is a payment of £10, £20 or £30 per week intended to help with the day-to-day costs – such as travel, books and equipment – of staying on at school or college after Key Stage 4. EMAs are paid directly into a bank account, and are available during term for any academic or vocational course (up to Level 3) that involves at least 12 hours of guided learning a week. Payments are dependent on meeting the agreed terms of an EMA contract with the provider, covering progress and commitment to learning. More information on EMAs is available at: www.dfes.gov.uk/financialhelp/ema

Infrastructure development

In order to ensure that there is sufficient provision of the right type to deliver the 14–19 entitlement, there have been, and will continue to be, significant developments in the context of education and training providers, including Building Schools for the Future (BSF), vocational specialist schools, new sixth forms, 16–19 academies, Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) and National Skills Academies.

Building Schools for the Future

Building Schools for the Future (BSF) is the biggest single government investment in improving school buildings for over 50 years. The aim is to rebuild or renew every secondary school in England over a 10–15-year period. A number of local authorities are receiving funding for the Building Schools for the Future programme. Plans need to demonstrate that they will make a contribution to implementing 14–19 reform. For more information visit the Building Schools for the Future website at: www.bsf.gov.uk

The LSC has a parallel capital programme for colleges over the next few years, which will have a clear connection to 14–19 provision.

Vocational specialist schools

By 2008, there will be 200 new vocational specialist schools, which will work with Centres of Vocational Excellence and skills academies to develop vocational provision across the curriculum, and work with and support other schools locally to do so. The first 40 vocational specialist schools became operational in the spring term of 2006. For more information, go to the Specialist Schools and Academies Trust website at: www.specialistschools.org.uk

New sixth forms

Funding to support high-performing 11–16 schools to establish a sixth form will prioritise those schools that have or are developing a vocational specialism. Download the guidance from: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/specialistschools

16–19 academies

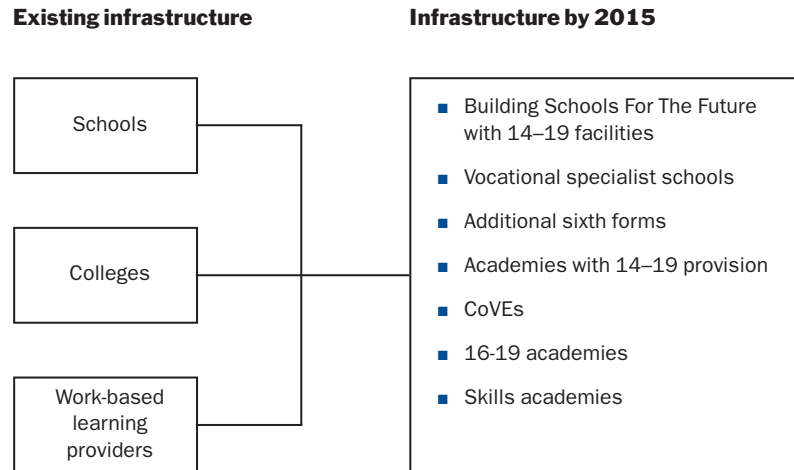
These academies, which combine FE governance and academy management and sponsorship, will contribute to the local 14–19 offer, including through developing high-quality specialised Diploma provision. More information on 16–19 academies is available at: www.standards.dfes.gov.uk/academies

Centres of Vocational Excellence

Centres of Vocational Excellence (CoVEs) are specialist providers of vocational learning which bring together colleges and other providers, employers and the wider community. There were already some 400 CoVEs established across the country by March 2006. They focus on delivering skills at Level 3 to enable the delivery of high-quality, specialist provision across vocational areas. Working with learning and skills providers, business and industry, as well as community groups, CoVEs support LSC-funded providers to deliver vocational provision across a range of new and traditional occupations. They aim to produce appropriately qualified and skilled workers with excellent employment and career prospects, which meet the needs of the economy. For more information about how to get involved in a local CoVE, go to the CoVEs website at: www.cove.lsc.gov.uk

National Skills Academies

It is important that employers help create the right provision, so that young people are equipped with the right skills for the future. Twelve new employer-led National Skills Academies will be established by 2008. These are centres of expertise in a specific vocational area. 14–19 year olds will be able to study there or, if they are studying at another institution, they may be able to use the academies' expertise. Alongside the Fashion Retail Academy which opened in autumn 2006, another three National Skills Academies have been launched, in financial services, construction and manufacturing (a fourth, in food and drink manufacturing was expected to be launched soon after these). Other bids have been accepted into the process for approval, including ones for the nuclear industry, the chemicals industry, the hospitality sector and the creative and cultural industries. For more information, see the National Skills Academy Prospectus: <http://www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/nsaprospectus>

Figure 3 Developing the delivery infrastructure: an overview

LSN 14–19: Programme of Support for Delivery of Change on the Ground

Professional development is key to the success of the 14–19 reforms. The 14–19: Programme of Support for Delivery of Change on the Ground (14–19: PSDCG) is a new initiative designed to provide schools and colleges with the help they need to deliver the new national entitlement.

LSN has put together a comprehensive support package, which will draw on good practice established by the 14–19 Pathfinder and Increased Flexibility programmes, as well as the 14–19 *education and skills implementation plan* (DfES 2005b).

Working closely with DfES and LSC, the programme has been designed to:

- help improve delivery in the classroom and workplace;
- support collaborative working;
- help broaden curriculum provision;
- promote inclusive provision;
- and support the involvement of employers.

The programme became available from March 2006 and its support is free of charge.

Get involved in local 14–19 networks

Local networks are at the heart of the 14–19 support programme. LSN has established 100 new networks to help practitioners share good practice, develop resources and try out new approaches in teaching, training and learning. They focus on the need to broaden the curriculum offer for the whole 14–19 phase – from functional skills, through Apprenticeships, to vocational qualifications and preparing for the new specialised Diplomas. Some funding will be made available to each network to help them take this work forward. LSN expect to publish the best of the high-quality outputs from the local networks on our website.

If you would like to get involved in a network that is local to you, please go to our website: www.vocationallearning.co.uk/14-19, or contact the regional teams (see Annex B).

Training and consultancy provision

The overall aim of delivery is to help schools, colleges and training providers improve current provision as well as prepare for the forthcoming changes. Free half- and full-day training is available on a range of topics to schools, colleges and sixth forms in the public sector in England and can be given individually or to groups. Schools and colleges should discuss their needs with the regional team (details below).

The programme offers a range of 29 topics, grouped under four distinct strands.

Strand A In-house consultancy and training provision

This menu of topics is aimed at managers and teachers to help improve teaching and learning, raise attainment and other aspects. Ranging from management of vocational courses through e-learning in the curriculum, work-based learning and applied A-levels, it is also able to offer bespoke training for those with specific needs.

Strand B Promoting equality and diversity

Effective strategies for embedding equality and diversity were dealt with in a series of nine regional introductory seminars in 2006. Follow-up consultancy was available.

Strand C Information, advice and guidance

High-quality training on information, advice and guidance is available from LSN. Choose from four modules covering: guidance skills for staff; organisation of careers education and guidance in schools and colleges; and options and progression at both 14+ and 16+.

Strand D Support for strategic planning

There is a choice of four topics to help managers and teachers in schools and colleges plan ahead, in relation to: quality management; the new inspection framework; learning and assessment; and transition arrangements from schools to colleges.

LSN also offers bespoke packages of consultancy across the four strands.

New publications about 14–19

LSN is producing new high-quality publications to support this programme. All available free-of-charge, they are designed to support practitioners and management alike with the 14–19 roll-out. Forthcoming publications include:

- *14–19: Strategic Planning Handbooks*, a series of publications that managers can call on when planning, implementing and reviewing 14–19 strategy;
- *Equal opportunities and diversity 14–19: strategies and case studies*, which summarises strategies to make 14–19 education and training more inclusive and is supported by case studies of recent good practice;
- and *14–19: information and advice and guidance*, which provides useful information for practitioners about IAG across the whole of the 14–19 phase.

See: [www.vocationallearning.org.uk/14–19](http://www.vocationallearning.org.uk/14-19) for the complete list.

For other LSN publications in this field, see Annex D

Programme support

LSN's regional teams work with local LSCs and local authorities to help coordinate and meet local priorities. They are the first point of contact for those who want to discuss any aspect of the programme or arrange training. Their details can be found in Annex B.

For information on any training, consultancy or support the programme offers, LSN has established a telephone helpline on: 0870 872 8080. Alternatively, queries can be e-mailed to: 14-19training@LSNeducation.org.uk.

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DfES (2005a). *14–19 education and skills*. Cm 6476. Norwich: HMSO.

DfES (2005b). *14–19 education and skills implementation plan*. London: Department for Education and Skills, December.

DfES (2005c). *Higher standards, better schools for all: more choice for parents and pupils*. Cm 6677. Norwich: HMSO.

DfES (2005d). *Skills: getting on in business, getting on at work*. Cm 6483. Norwich: HMSO.

DfES (2005e). *Youth matters*. Green Paper. Department for Education and Skills, July, www.dfes.gov.uk/publications/youth

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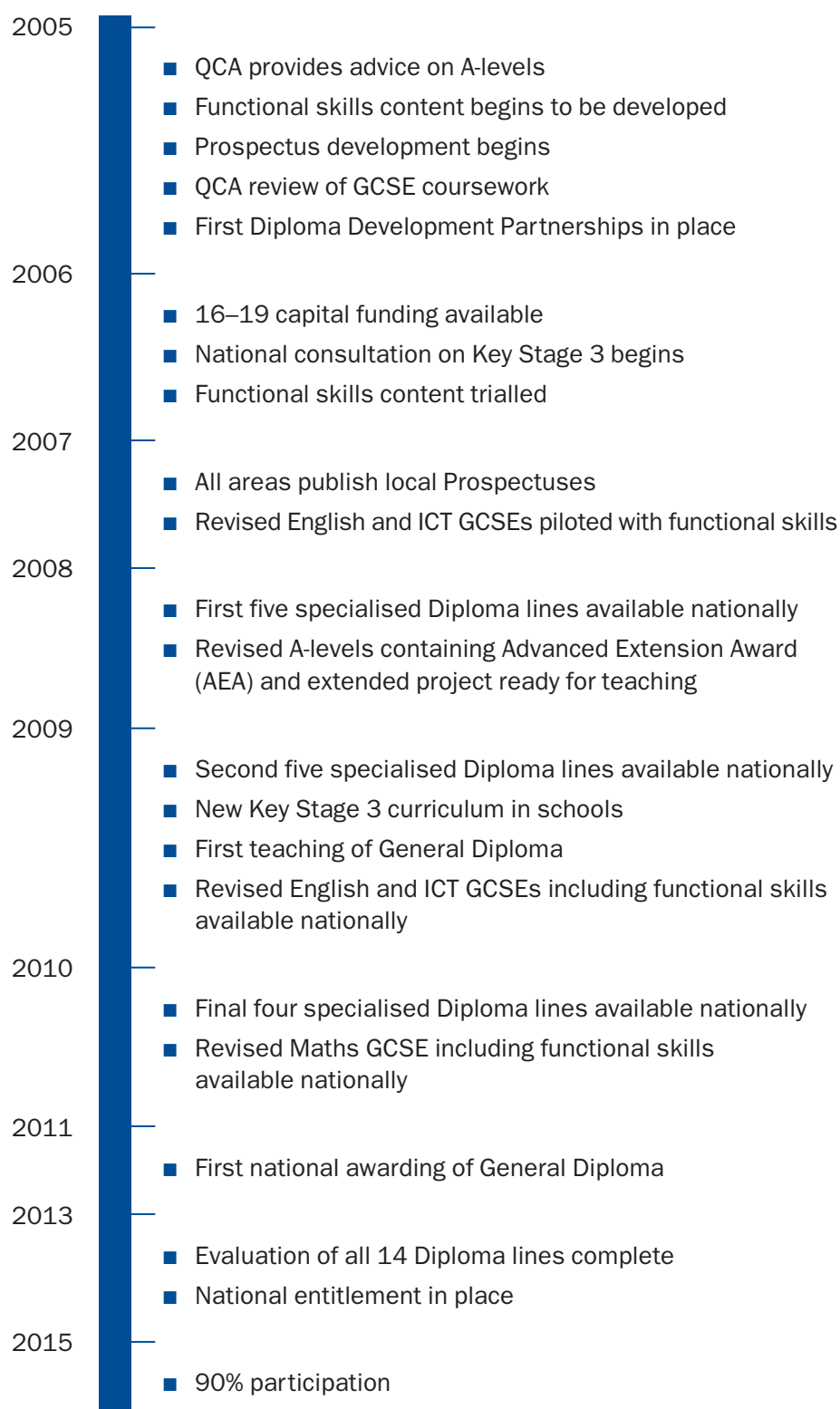
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QCA (2003). *Changes to the Key Stage 4: guidance for implementation from September 2004*. London: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

QCA (2005). *Key Stage 3 review – factsheet* (available via website, www.qca.org.uk).

Treasury (2003). *Every child matters*. Cm 5860. Norwich: HMSO.

Annex A Timeline for reform



Annex B Learning and skills development agency: Regional activity coordinators: contact details

East Midlands region

RAC Jim Nash
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South West region

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Mobile 07855 456557
E-mail susan@sfreeston.wanadoo.co.uk

West Midlands region

RAC Gerry Denston
Tel 01922 493588
E-mail gdenston@aol.com

Yorkshire and Humberside region

RAC Sharon Moore
Tel 0113 2192107
Mobile 07971 676801
E-mail sharon.moore97@ntlworld.com

Annex C Useful websites

www.aimhigher.ac.uk

information for Years 9–11 about going into higher education

www.apprenticeships.org.uk

information about apprenticeships at all levels

www.bsf.gov.uk

information about Building Schools for the Future

www.centresforexcellence.org.uk

information on supporting 14–19 reform

www.connexions-direct.com

information and advice on careers, work, learning, money, free time and so on

www.cove.lsc.gov.uk

LSC website on CoVEs

www.dfes.gov.uk

Department for Learning and Skills website

[www.dfes.gov.uk/14–19](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/14-19)

updates and information on 14–19 learning

www.dfes.gov.uk/go4itnow

information on becoming a teacher in schools

www.lsc.gov.uk

Learning and Skills Council website

www.lsn.org.uk

Learning and Skills Network website

www.ncsl.gov.uk

information on supporting 14–19 reform

[www.qca.org.uk/14–19](http://www.qca.org.uk/14-19)

updates and information on 14–19 curriculum

www.specialistschools.org.uk

information on vocational specialist schools

www.ssda.org.uk

Sector Skills Development Agency website, with links to individual Sector Skills Councils

www.standards.dfes.gov.uk

DfES website on raising standards

www.teachernet.gov.uk

DfES resource to support the education profession

www.vocationallearning.org.uk

LSDA website on vocational learning

Annex D Further reading

Duckett I and Moore S (2005). *Just like real work: a work-related curriculum for 16–19 year olds*. Learning and Skills Development Agency.

Duckett I and Stanley J (2006). *Work Related Learning: supporting the delivery of change on the ground 14–19*. Learning and Skills Development Agency.

Jones CA and Duckett I (2004). *Tutorials and target- setting in the effective delivery of vocational A-levels*. Learning and Skills Development Agency.

Jones CA (2005). *Assessment for Learning*. Learning and Skills Development Agency

Jones CA and Duckett I (2005). *Putting learning at the centre of the new A-levels*. Learning and Skills Development Agency.

Jones CA (2005). *Preparing for inspection: an evaluation from LSDA*. Learning and Skills Development Agency.

14–19: Vocational Learning Support Programme

