

14-19 Reform



Leading Diploma administration

Nuts and Bolts series

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Introduction

What is this guide?

This is one of a series of guides to support the delivery of Diplomas. It looks at the administrative processes and tasks needed to deliver Diplomas successfully and explains the roles and responsibilities of those involved.

This guide gives an overview of how to monitor administration, provides an action plan and useful resources and includes a real life example of how a college is implementing Diplomas.

Please note that this guide complements other Diploma administration guidance that has been issued by the Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA). Some of this guidance is referenced throughout.

Who is it for?

This guide is primarily for leaders in consortia, schools, colleges and other education institutions.

It may also be useful for exams office personnel, those involved in assessment such as lead and domain assessors, curriculum leads, line of learning leads and functional skills teachers.

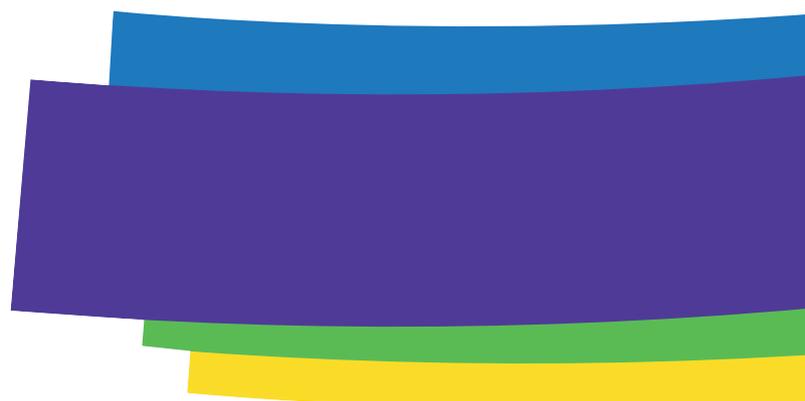
Bear in mind that even if you have only small numbers of Diploma students in your institutions, you need to know the key tasks in administering and awarding Diplomas.

What other guides are available?

Other guides in the Nuts and Bolts series are available from www.diploma-support.org/nutsandboltsguides.

Share good practice

If you are aware of good practice or experience on Diploma administration or other aspects of consortium work that you would like to share, please feed this through your local consortium adviser. Their contact details can be found at <http://lmdp.14-19support.org/consortiumadvisers>. You can also join discussions on www.diploma-support.org.



Diploma administration

What is Diploma administration?

Diploma administration is the term for all the procedural tasks which need to be completed before a student can claim their Diploma.

Diploma administration works differently from GCSE and GCE administration. The Diploma is a composite qualification, made up of several components, and involves a significant element of internal assessment. Therefore, you need to make sure that each component is valid and that, together, they make up a whole Diploma.

Don't underestimate the work involved in Diploma administration, particularly in terms of allocating time for communication between the various people involved across the consortium.

What are the key tasks?

There are a number of important administrative steps that you will need to take:

■ **Open a learner account**

Get a Unique Learner Number (ULN) for each of your students. Then use this to open a learner account for each student on the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS). This needs to happen in the first term of study.

You can do this through the Learner Registration Service at www.miap.gov.uk/products/lrs.

■ **Make sure that each component qualification can be awarded**

Identify the component qualifications for each student. Inform the component awarding bodies of these, so that they can provide the necessary information, support and quality assurance to make sure that each element is awarded. This needs to happen at the beginning of the course.

■ **Validate the Diploma programme**

Check that the component qualifications your students plan to take add up to a complete Diploma. This is known as validating the Diploma programmes.

You can do this by using the Diploma validator – QCDA's web-based tool. When you enter a student's intended programme of study, it checks the Diploma catalogues to see if the planned programme meets the requirements for a Diploma award. Find it at www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomavalidator.

■ **Make a plan for assessing Diplomas**

Plan the assessment of component qualifications so that results are available when students need to claim their Diploma. Even though the Diploma can be claimed at any time, students may need results by a certain date if they are hoping to progress to higher or further education or another qualification.

■ Check every student's previous qualifications

Find out whether your students have already completed a qualification that could count towards their overall Diploma, such as functional skills or additional and specialist learning. You will then need to add any previous qualifications to the DAS by 30 April in the first year of Diploma study.

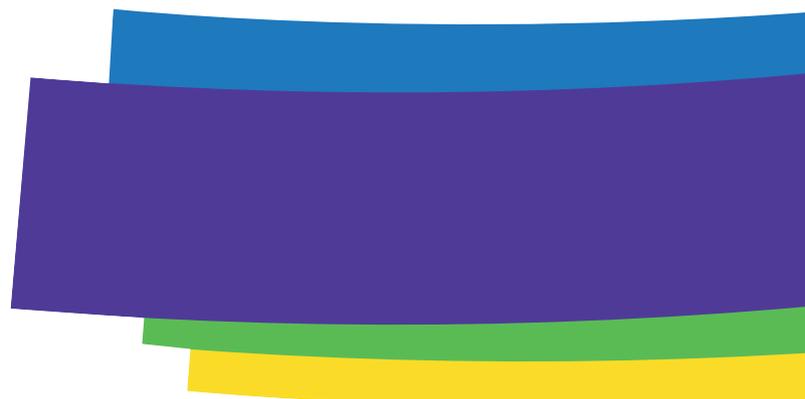
■ Complete a study plan

Generate a Diploma learner study plan. QCDA provides a template that, once completed, gives you a full overview of a student's Diploma. You can either add details of a programme yourself, for example planned dates and locations for every qualification unit. Or you can have it partially completed by importing a programme of study that has been validated and downloaded from the Diploma validator. Find the template for the plan at www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomaresources.

Some of these tasks can be completed by exams office personnel, but most require communication between your exams offices and the people making decisions about Diploma teaching and assessment. It is important that your consortium establishes clear internal communication channels to make sure that everyone involved knows their role and responsibilities. See page 6 for more detailed information about roles and responsibilities.

Why is Diploma administration important?

It is easy to think of administration as something that happens elsewhere and does not need leadership involvement. However, the consequences of poorly planned and executed administration can be serious. You could, for example, discover too late that a crucial step has been missed, or that your students have taken an invalid combination of additional and specialist learning. Never assume that someone else is doing a task – always check who is taking responsibility.



Roles and responsibilities

Your consortium, school or college has a range of important responsibilities associated with the administrative tasks. No individual person in your consortium, school or college can complete all these tasks.

Exams office personnel are vital to the successful administration of the Diploma. They have a key role in managing student data, making sure that students are entered for the right exams, correcting form errors and making enquiries. However, exams office personnel will also need to work with line of learning leads, curriculum planners and assessors across your consortium, school or college. To do this effectively, they will need strong support from senior leaders.

The roles and responsibilities detailed in this section are for guidance only. You can decide how best to manage Diploma administration within your consortium, school or college. However you decide to operate, you need to make sure that a named individual is responsible for each task. QCDA has produced a useful checklist, *Administering the Diploma: Key task checklist*, to help you (see 'Useful publications' in the 'Further resources' section for more information).

The responsibilities of national organisations and awarding bodies are listed at the end of this section.

Consortium leads or local authority 14-19 leads

As a consortium lead or 14-19 lead, you are responsible for co-ordinating Diploma delivery across the consortium. To make sure that all people involved are collaborating effectively, you need to carry out the following activities:

■ **Appoint an accountable officer to manage the Diploma**

Work with the schools and colleges in your consortium to identify an accountable officer in each centre – such as a senior leader who is responsible for curriculum planning. This person will be in charge of managing each student's programme of study from end to end. They will have to make sure that no crucial steps have been missed, and that students are taking a valid combination of components (see page 4 for more information about validating a Diploma).

■ **Agree a consortium-wide exam policy with school or college leaders**

Work with school and college leaders to agree a consortium-wide exam policy. The policy should set out:

- timescales for assessments
- specification and awarding body selection
- information sharing
- registration and entries
- access arrangements
- finance
- results.

The QCDA Consortium exam policy generator can help you with this process – it is available from www.qcda.gov.uk/cepg.

■ **Record roles and responsibilities of everyone involved**

Make sure that everyone knows what the students' home school or college is responsible for and what your allocated assessment centres need to do – particularly regarding making entries for examinations. You need to make sure this is written down and communicated to all involved (see page 16 for more information about this).

■ **Inform and consult exams office personnel about important decisions**

Keep all exams office personnel informed of key decisions, and consult them on decisions that may affect administration. It may be a good idea to meet regularly with exams office personnel and include them in Diploma planning meetings.

■ **Make sure that administration meetings are held regularly**

Ask curriculum leads, lead and domain Diploma assessors, line of learning leads and exams office personnel to meet regularly to make sure that:

- all aspects of Diploma administration are being covered
- deadlines are understood
- all parties are clear who is responsible for each task.

■ **Propose meetings between exams office personnel and assessors**

Encourage school or college leaders to provide time for meetings between exams office personnel and assessors across the consortium.

School or college leaders

As a school or college leader, you may not be directly involved in Diploma teaching. However, as the students' home school or college is responsible for the majority of administrative tasks, you need to make sure that these are completed.

You also need to bear in mind that if you are hosting the assessment of specific Diploma elements, you have additional administrative responsibilities.

It is important that you take a lead and carry out the following activities:

■ **Meet with other leaders across your consortium to agree responsibilities**

Together with the consortium lead and other school or college leaders in your consortium, you need to agree roles and responsibilities at consortium level and within your own school or college. Any decisions will then need to be communicated to your staff.

■ **Delegate key tasks**

Familiarise yourself with the key administrative tasks (found on page 4) and make sure that every task has an owner and is completed on time.

■ **Involve exams office personnel**

Make sure that your exams office personnel are involved when planning programmes of study and assessment timescales with curriculum and assessment colleagues so that administrative deadlines are taken into account.

Keep all exams office personnel informed of key decisions, and consult them on decisions that may affect administration. It may be a good idea to meet regularly with exams office personnel and include them in Diploma planning meetings.

■ **Keep up to date with systems across the consortium**

Make sure you know what systems are in place across your consortium regarding:

- sharing of data on attendance, assessment and so on
- safeguarding (if students are travelling to learn).

■ **Inform your staff of relevant parts of the exam policy**

Familiarise yourself with the consortium-wide exam policy, and pass on relevant information to your staff.

■ **Encourage exams office personnel and assessors to complete training**

Enable and encourage exams office personnel and assessors to access any training and support that is available through QCDA, your awarding bodies and the Examination Officers' Association.

■ **Understand how Diplomas are awarded**

Familiarise yourself with how the points are awarded for Diplomas in Achievement and Attainment Tables – they are available on www.qcda.gov.uk/15536.aspx.

Exams office personnel

Examination administration forms a major part of Diploma administration, but exams office personnel should not work in isolation. They should be encouraged to attend Diploma planning meetings so that they fully understand how Diplomas are composed, what their requirements are and where to get more information.

Exams office personnel will need to carry out the following activities:

■ **Contact the relevant Diploma awarding body**

Find out what the Diploma awarding body (DAB) needs the school or college to do as early as possible.

■ **Meet with other Diploma staff**

Meet regularly with others in the school, college or consortium involved in Diploma delivery, particularly curriculum and assessment staff. These meetings are for:

- defining clear roles and responsibilities
- explaining what is needed to meet administrative deadlines

- helping to generate a consortium-wide exam policy.

- **Establish processes on sharing information**

Together with other exams offices across the consortium, agree processes for sharing information about students who might be assessed outside their home school or college.

- **Validate every student's Diploma programme**

Together with curriculum colleagues and line of learning leads, make sure that every Diploma student has a valid programme of study (see page 4 for more information about this).

- **Create a learner study plan**

Together with curriculum colleagues, create a Diploma learner study plan that provides a complete overview of each student's Diploma (see page 5 for more information about this). These plans will need to be shared with the schools or colleges where students will be assessed.

- **Open a learner account on the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS)**

Get a Unique Learner Number (ULN) and open a learner account for each student (see page 4 for more information about this).

- **Check and update students' previous qualifications**

Liaise with the awarding bodies to validate any previous qualifications and update the DAS (see page 5 for more information).

- **Register component qualifications**

Register students' component qualifications (including principal learning) with the component awarding bodies.

- **Check progress and results**

Use the DAS to monitor students' progress and check that results are up to date.

- **Decide when Diplomas will be claimed**

Work with line of learning leads, curriculum staff and assessors to identify the date when each student is likely to claim their Diploma. Then use the DAS and set an 'intention to claim' by March of that year.

- **Get involved in training**

Access training and support on Diploma administration provided by QCDA and awarding bodies. It is also a good idea to get involved in exams office networks and peer-to-peer support, sharing experiences with others.

The full guidance on the role of the exams office in Diploma administration can be found in *Administering the Diploma: The essential guide for the exams office* (see

‘Useful publications’ in the ‘Further resources’ section for more information).

Curriculum personnel

The primary role of curriculum staff is to plan the curriculum within their own school or college. However, they will also need to work with other curriculum and exams office colleagues in other schools or colleges in the consortium to make sure Diploma students have access to the appropriate component qualifications, like functional skills and a choice of additional and specialist learning (ASL). A common timetable across the consortium will help here.

Curriculum staff will need to understand the composition of the Diploma, especially the ASL component. They should also work with functional skills practitioners on embedding functional skills within principal learning.

Curriculum personnel should work with others to:

■ **Create a delivery plan**

Work with line of learning leads, exams office personnel and other curriculum staff across the consortium to make sure that students can follow a valid programme of study for the Diploma within the curriculum. Then create a detailed delivery plan detailing how all processes (including assessment) will be completed within the awarding body deadlines.

■ **Clarify roles and responsibilities**

Be part of discussions clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different staff in the school or college and across the consortium.

■ **Validate ASL options**

Together with line of learning leads, establish what ASL is valid in each Diploma line of learning, and make sure that a range of ASL options is incorporated into the curriculum. The Diploma catalogues, including the ASL, can be found for each line at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx#10696.

■ **Create a learner study plan**

Together with exams office personnel colleagues, create a Diploma learner study plan that provides a complete overview of each student’s Diploma (see page 5 for more information about this). These plans will need to be shared with the schools or colleges where students will be assessed.

■ **Validate every student’s Diploma programme**

Together with exams office personnel and line of learning leads, make sure that every Diploma student has a valid programme of study (see page 4 for more information about this).

Line of learning leads

Line of learning leads are mainly responsible for principal learning and need to work with the functional skills lead to embed functional skills in principal learning.

However, they also need to understand the composition of the Diploma as a whole (including valid additional and specialist learning, or ASL) and should always look to maximise specialist learning opportunities.

Line of learning leads should work with others to:

■ Create a delivery plan

Work with line of curriculum leads and exams office personnel across the consortium to make sure that students can follow a valid programme of study for the Diploma within the curriculum. Then create a detailed delivery plan detailing how all processes (including assessment) will be completed within the awarding body deadlines.

■ Clarify roles and responsibilities

Be part of discussions clarifying the roles and responsibilities of different staff in the school or college and across the consortium.

■ Validate ASL options

Together with line of curriculum staff, establish what ASL is valid in each Diploma line of learning, and make sure that a range of ASL options is incorporated into the curriculum. The Diploma catalogues, including the ASL, can be found for each line at www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx#10696.

■ Get a complete list of Diploma students

Obtain a list of students taking that Diploma line of learning (including their ULN) from the exams office personnel across your consortium.

■ Validate every student's Diploma programme

Together with exams office personnel and line of learning leads, make sure that every Diploma student has a valid programme of study (see page 4 for more information about this). Although the home centre is ultimately responsible for its students, it may look to line of learning leads to provide advice on the ASL relevant to that Diploma line of learning.

Functional skills leads and practitioners

Although your consortium, school or college may not have a formal functional skills lead, it is important that someone takes responsibility for co-ordinating the delivery of functional skills. They will need to work closely with:

- line of learning leads to embed functional skills in principal learning
- curriculum leads to embed functional skills in other qualification routes.

Functional skills leads have responsibility to:

- **Clarify roles and responsibilities for functional skills administration**

Contact exams office personnel to clarify roles and responsibilities for functional skills administration. QCDA's *Functional skills toolkit* might be helpful – find it at <http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/25486.aspx>.

- **Confirm awarding body and assessment details for functional skills**

Choose a functional skills awarding body for the school or college, and confirm assessment details. Then communicate these to exams office personnel, curriculum leads and other relevant staff across the consortium.

- **Confirm functional skills qualifications**

Together with line of learning leads and exams office personnel, make sure that students are entered for their functional skills qualifications at the correct level. Also make sure that there is appropriate time for these to be aggregated into the Diploma.

- **Get training and support**

Access training and support from the Functional Skills Support Programme at www.fssupport.org.

Domain and lead assessors

Assessors have a key role in quality assuring internal assessment across your consortium – either within an individual Diploma line of learning (domain assessors) or across all lines of learning (lead assessors).

Assessors usually carry out their role alongside their main job, which might be line of learning lead or head of quality assurance.

Domain and lead assessors need to carry out the following tasks:

- **Understand how assessment works**

Understand the rules regarding assessment of different units or components of the Diploma.

■ **Meet with other Diploma staff**

Meet regularly with exams office personnel and any other assessors to:

- define clear roles and responsibilities (establishing, for example, who is taking responsibility for submitting results of internal assessment to awarding bodies)
- make sure that all aspects of Diploma administration and assessment are covered
- generate a consortium-wide exam policy.

■ **Make everyone aware of administrative deadlines**

Work with exams office personnel across the consortium to make sure that everyone is aware of administrative deadlines.

■ **Get training and support**

Access available assessor support and training provided by QCDA and awarding bodies.

National organisations and awarding bodies

Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency

The Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency (QCDA) has the following role:

- to supply training for exams office personnel
- to provide advice, guidance and support through its Centre Support Team – for example, by advising on how to prepare for working with an awarding body, how to organise your processes and how to use the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS).

Please note that the QCDA Centre Support Team cannot help you with questions that relate to individual awarding bodies' requirements and procedures. For those, you should contact your awarding body directly.

Department for Children, Schools and Families

The Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) is the government department that sets the policy on Diplomas and sponsors QCDA to develop them. It oversees the Diploma Gateway process and provides support for implementation.

Examination Officers' Association

The Examination Officers' Association (EOA) is the professional body for exams office personnel. It provides support through training, sharing good practice and networks.

Ofqual

Ofqual is the regulator of qualifications, exams and tests in England. It safeguards the credibility of the qualifications system by:

- monitoring awarding bodies
- making sure that qualifications are accessible to students
- ensuring the quality of marking.

Diploma awarding bodies

Diploma awarding bodies (DABs) award and certificate whole Diploma qualifications for the lines of learning for which they are recognised, once the award has been aggregated by the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS). They provide you with information and guidance on the award through their websites, customer service teams and training.

Once your Diploma application has been approved through the Diploma Gateway, you may select your DAB, register learners with it and eventually claim Diploma awards, all via the DAS.

A DAB has to offer and award one or more constituent qualifications that can contribute to the lines of learning for which it is recognised. Therefore all Diploma awarding bodies are also recognised as component awarding bodies.

Component awarding bodies

Component awarding bodies (CABs) offer the constituent qualifications that contribute to the Diploma and approve and support you in delivering them.

You may have several different CABs depending on the awarding bodies you have chosen for your principal learning, project, functional skills and additional and specialist learning components.

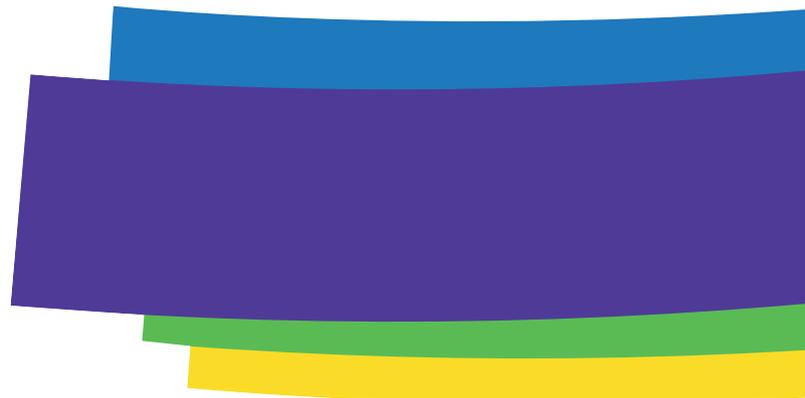
You will need to make sure your school or college has been approved by your selected CABs to deliver the component qualification(s). The CAB will then support you by:

- helping you understand how to secure the assessment and award of a qualification. This will include communicating the administrative tasks leading up to awarding a qualification and the results being entered onto the DAS
- externally quality assuring you and your data submissions to ensure validity, accuracy, completeness and timeliness. This includes verifying the student details referenced by the ULN, as far as they refer to the CAB

- verifying the relevant prior achievement of Diploma students for the constituent qualifications it offers and updating the DAS within ten days of verifying a prior learning request
- supplying results data to the DAS within ten days of qualifications being awarded
- investigating cases of missing results that you highlight, where the student and their qualification are known on the DAS and to the CAB
- clarifying the timescales and requirements for enquiries or appeals, and handling them.

CABs will provide you with advice, guidance and support on the above topics through their normal channels of support.

CABs may also support you on curriculum-related issues, including providing guidance on curriculum planning and ensuring standards.



Key challenge and how to meet it

Making sure that the home centre and assessment (or learning) centre know their responsibilities

Your Diploma students may be travelling to another school, college or work-based learning provider for their Diploma teaching or assessment. So it is important that all centres understand and agree their individual responsibilities with each other.

QCDA's Consortium Centre Planner contains detailed advice on who should own individual tasks. It provides a template for agreeing roles and responsibilities (see 'Further resources' for more information about this).

The home centre's responsibilities

The home school or college is responsible for the following activities:

- obtaining unique learner numbers (ULNs) and opening learner accounts for all students on the Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS)
- registering students with a Diploma awarding body (DAB)
- creating a Diploma learner study plan for every Diploma student and sharing these with the learning or assessment centres
- securely sharing a list of students with the assessment centres (by line of learning and level)
- capturing students' prior achievement and getting this approved by the relevant component awarding bodies (CABs)

- making any necessary transport or access arrangements
- arranging logistics for timetabled, externally marked exams
- making claims for students who require special consideration
- managing enquiries about results
- monitoring learner accounts and informing students of any updates
- determining whether to set the intention to claim (ITC) in the DAS. Your school or college should have a policy concerning this
- using the DAS to claim the Diploma from the DAB in line with your centre or consortium policy.

The assessment (or learning) centre's responsibilities

The assessment (or learning) centre is responsible for the following activities:

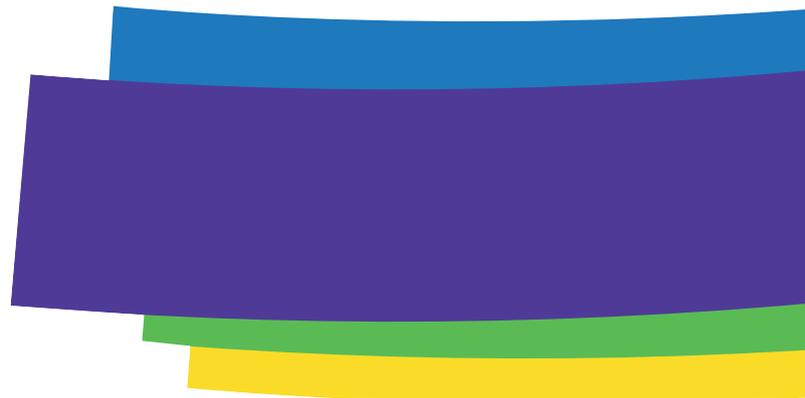
- finding out details about the qualifications – for example, the awarding body, specifications, units and likely assessment dates. Then providing an assessment plan based on these details to all home schools and colleges
- managing administration for internally assessed units
- arranging logistics for on-demand externally marked exams

- making claims for students who require special consideration
- managing enquiries about results.

Responsibilities to be agreed

All centres should discuss and agree who is responsible for the following tasks:

- making sure that each student has a valid programme of study for the Diploma. In most cases the line of learning lead will specify who is responsible for this, rather than the exams office
- registering learners for principal learning if the awarding body requires it
- advising other schools or colleges about results when they are received from CABs
- reconciling awarding body fees and invoices
- confirming personal learning and thinking skills and work experience
- updating learner accounts in the DAS.



Successful Diploma administration in Islington

City and Islington College (CIC) is a member of Islington's 14-19 Partnership, a partnership which also comprises all Islington schools and a work-based learning provider.

CIC started teaching the Creative and Media and the Society, Health and Development Diplomas in September 2008. A year later, the college introduced three new Diploma lines in Business Administration and Finance, Hair and Beauty Studies and Environment and Land-based Studies. This case study outlines the factors that were important in delivering these Diplomas successfully.

Across the consortium

The 14-19 Partnership set up a number of forums to help with administrative tasks:

- a diploma Practitioner Working Group that meets every two months
- a Collaborative Delivery Group that includes curriculum leaders from all centres
- an Examinations Officer Group to discuss and define roles and responsibilities. The group is lead by a QCDA representative and includes exams office personnel from CIC and other schools with Diploma learners
- a Secondary Strategy Board that considers the local authority's overall range of 14-19 provision and the strategy for the planning and implementation of the Diploma programme.

The 14–19 Partnership has also:

- appointed a Communications Officer who helps to facilitate communications between the wide range of stakeholders and partners engaged in the Diploma programme
- commissioned a Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) 'health check' for each line to identify areas where more focus is needed and to help to spread good practice.

Within the college

At CIC, a cross-college Diploma group has been set up for strategic and operational planning. The group meets every two months and consists of teachers, line of learning leads, domain assessors, deputy directors (with Diploma line responsibilities) and members of the senior management team.

The majority of meetings are scheduled at set times, so the timetables of staff attending meetings are kept clear for these sessions.

Key outcomes to date include:

- agreeing the roles and responsibilities across the partnership about liaising with awarding bodies, agreeing schemes of work, information sharing, monitoring attendance and registering learners
- working towards a common timetable across the partnership, with key stage 4 Diplomas being delivered twice a week for the two respective year groups
- a partnership-wide examinations policy on quality assurance and monitoring processes
- opportunities to share good practice and develop an understanding of Diplomas in centres not currently accessing Diplomas
- using Professional Development Days to run bespoke, line-specific training provided by other organisations, for example QCDA
- developing good relationships with the QCDA Support Team and awarding bodies through the Examinations Officer Group.

Action plan

The following actions can help you to administer Diplomas successfully:

1. Appoint one person to be responsible for the entire administrative process from start to finish. Specific tasks can be delegated, but someone needs to be responsible for overseeing the whole process.
2. Check that every student is following a valid programme of study by using the QCDA Diploma validator tool – <http://diplomavalidator.qcda.gov.uk>.
3. Create Diploma learner study plans to provide a definitive overview of all the components of a learner's Diploma, for easy reference by the students, their advisers, parents, tutors and exams office personnel – www.qcda.gov.uk/.
4. Develop a detailed delivery plan that enables all processes and programmes of study to be completed within awarding body deadlines. You will need to make sure that component qualifications are available on time for the student's intended claim date.
5. Agree a consortium-wide exam policy (QCDA has an exam policy generator available at www.qcda.gov.uk/cepg).

Further resources

Useful organisations

- **Department for Children, Schools and Families**
www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19
- **Examination Officers' Association**
www.examofficers.org.uk
- **Ofqual**
www.ofqual.gov.uk
- **Qualifications and Curriculum Development Agency**
www.qcda.gov.uk

Useful tools and services

■ **Learner Registration Service**

This is an internet-based service that generates a Unique Learner Number (ULN) for every student in education and training in the UK. The ULN allows people to build a lifelong record of their learning participation and achievements, which they can access and share.

www.miap.gov.uk/products/lrs

■ **Diploma Aggregation Service**

The Diploma Aggregation Service (DAS) is a central system for administering Diplomas.

It is used by centres and awarding bodies involved in delivering the Diploma to share data and record a student's progress towards a Diploma award. It also aggregates results, determines whether the Diploma can be awarded and produces a trial grade.

www.qcda.gov.uk/19061.aspx

■ **Diploma catalogue**

This catalogue of constituent qualifications includes additional and specialist learning. It also lists the combinations of qualifications that are valid and can be used to achieve the Diploma.

www.accreditedqualifications.org.uk/DiplomaCatalogueSelection.aspx#10696

■ **Diploma learner study plan**

This produces a complete overview of a student's Diploma. It is based on a programme of study that has been checked for validity using the Diploma validator and lets you add details of the programme, such as planned dates and locations for every qualification unit.

www.qcda.gov.uk/26741.aspx

■ **Diploma Support**

This website provides useful Diploma materials and is regularly updated. It also offers professional development training and support that is available to help you prepare for Diploma delivery – for example, free core workshops, IAG support and bespoke training.

www.diploma-support.org

■ **Diploma validator**

This is a web-based tool that schools and colleges can use to check that each of their students has a valid programme of study.

www.qcda.gov.uk/diplomavalidator

Useful publications

■ **Administering the Diploma: The essential guide for the exams office**

This guide supports exams office personnel to administer the Diploma.

www.qcda.gov.uk/26750.aspx

■ **Administering the Diploma: Key task checklist**

This is a useful checklist of tasks and key dates.

www.qcda.gov.uk/26750.aspx

■ **Consortium Centre Planner**

QCDA has produced a useful checklist that contains detailed advice on who should own individual tasks and a template for agreeing roles and responsibilities.

www.qcda.gov.uk/26747.aspx

■ **Delivering the Diploma: A guide to managing internal assessment**

A guide for senior staff in Diploma consortia about the key part of Diplomas: internal assessment.

www.qcda.gov.uk/25781.aspx

■ **Diploma aggregation service: Reference guide for centres**

This guides helps exams office personnel prepare for delivering the Diploma for the first time.

www.qcda.gov.uk/21796.aspx

■ **Diploma aggregation service: Quick guide**

This guide covers the routine tasks involved in setting up the Diploma aggregation system and administering accounts for learners enrolled on one Diploma programme.

http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/DAS_quick_guide_-_spring_2009_FINAL.pdf

■ **Diploma curriculum guidance**

QCDA's web based guidance on curriculum planning is available across the Phase 1 lines of learning and includes information on relevant key themes and processes, range and content, and curriculum opportunities.

www.qcda.gov.uk/13949.aspx

■ **Functional skills toolkit**

This online toolkit is for exams office personnel managing and administering qualifications and consists of a number of downloadable resources.

<http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/25486.aspx>

■ **Getting ready for the Diploma: The essential guide for the exams office**

This guide is, along with QCDA's regional Diploma events, the most comprehensive collection of advice and guidance available to date for exams office personnel in Diploma consortia. It is designed to help exams office personnel get ready for managing assessment and administration of the Diploma.

http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk/libraryAssets/media/Getting_ready_for_the_Diploma-the_essential_guide_for_the_exams_office.pdf

■ **Regulatory arrangements for component and Diploma awarding bodies: Recognition criteria and operating rules**

This publication includes the requirements for recording and aggregating qualification results, as well as the key aspects of how awarding bodies will work with centres. It establishes the principles and regulatory outcomes for the Diploma, and also provides awarding bodies with the flexibility to apply the principles in their own contexts.

www.ofqual.gov.uk/1963.aspx

Useful programmes

■ **Managing Information Across Partners**

The Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP) programme streamlines the collection, handling and sharing of information on learning and achievement for education and training organisations.

www.miap.gov.uk

Networks

■ **Line of learning networks**

Teaching practitioners can join their line of learning network.

www.diploma-support.org

■ **Functional skills network**

Functional skills staff can join the functional skills network.

www.fssupport.org

Training and support

- **For Diploma leaders and managers**

Talk to your consortium adviser about your specific needs:

<http://lmdp.14-19support.org>

- **For Diploma teachers, curriculum personnel and workforce planners**

For details of bespoke training packages:

www.diploma-support.org

- **For functional skills staff**

For details of training and events:

www.fssupport.org

- **For exams office personnel, and lead and domain assessors**

Download support materials and book training places:

<http://testsandexams.qcda.gov.uk>

Glossary

14-19 partnership

A local partnership bringing together schools, colleges, training providers, employers and Information, Advice and Guidance (IAG) services that are involved in 14-19 delivery. It is usually co-ordinated by the local authority.

Aggregation

The adding together of achievement across the components and units of a qualification. This results in a measure of achievement for the qualification as a whole. Aggregation may require a weighting of each element according to the intended contribution to the whole Diploma.

Assessment centre

Any centre in a consortium hosting an internal or external assessment for Diploma students.

Awarding

The process through which students' results or grades are determined on the basis of available evidence.

Centre

A school, college or other education institution, for example a pupil referral unit, secure unit or prison.

Centre support officers (CSOs)

CSOs are QCDA staff who provide in-centre support for exams office personnel. They promote good practice in assessment

administration, provide communication between centres and QCDA, and help exams office personnel introduce changes to assessment administration according to qualification developments.

Component awarding body or organisation (CAB)

An awarding body or organisation offering constituent qualifications for the Diploma, such as principal learning, extended project, functional skills or additional and specialist learning qualifications.

Components of the Diploma

Diplomas are made up of constituent qualifications that are organised in terms of the following three components:

- principal learning
- generic learning
- additional and specialist learning.

Composite qualification

A qualification consisting of a number of constituent accredited qualifications.

Consortium

A group of schools, colleges and other organisations (including employers and training providers) working together locally to offer a Diploma line of learning. Each consortium is approved through the Department for Children, Schools and Families Diploma Gateway process.

Constituent qualifications

Accredited qualifications that make up the different components of the Diploma.

Curriculum planner or lead

Person responsible for managing the curriculum within a school or college.

Diploma awarding body or organisation (DAB)

An awarding body or organisation that awards the overall Diploma qualification, issuing a transcript and certificate.

Diploma Centre Progress Review

Diploma Centre Progress Reviews, conducted by QCDA, took place in every Diploma centre during the autumn term of 2009. The reviews measured progress against a series of tasks that are critical in Diploma delivery and suggested how to overcome pitfalls.

Domain assessor

A person who has responsibility within a consortium for overseeing all aspects of internal assessment carried out on the principal learning and project components for a particular Diploma line of learning.

Exams officers or exams office personnel

Staff who are responsible for administering exams in schools and colleges.

Home centre

The centre where a student is enrolled or registered. This centre will have overall responsibility for the student's Diploma and their learner account on the Diploma Aggregation Service.

Intention to claim

A mechanism by which a student can state their intention to claim a Diploma once the final constituent qualification results have been received.

Lead assessor

A person who has responsibility within a consortium for overseeing all aspects of internal assessment carried out for the principal learning and project components of all Diploma lines of learning offered.

Learner account

Indicates participation on a Diploma line of learning in the Diploma Aggregation Service. It acts as the repository for results data for an individual student, recording line of learning, qualification, level and grade. It is managed and monitored by a centre on behalf of a student or by a Diploma awarding body on behalf of a centre. Students do not have direct access to their learner account.

Prior achievements

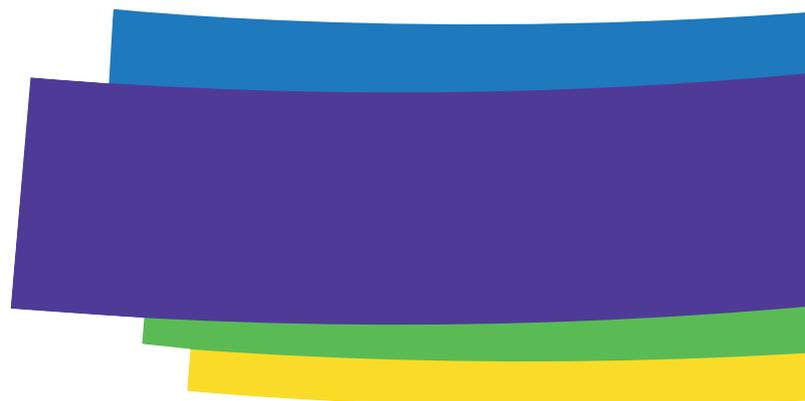
These are constituent qualifications that are included in the Diploma catalogue (or a previous version of the Diploma catalogue) and were achieved by a student after 1 January 2005. They may be included in and count towards the Diploma qualification.

Rules of combination

Automatic rules (applied through the Diploma catalogues) that define which qualifications can make up a full Diploma qualification.

Unique Learner Number (ULN)

The unique number that identifies a learner, supported by Managing Information Across Partners (MIAP) and the Learner Registration Service.





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