

“Every employer, whatever the sector, whether a SME or FTSE 100, third sector, national or local government organisation, all of us will benefit from the quality of students who will come out of the Diploma programme.”

Sir Alan Jones of Toyota, leader of the Diploma Employer Champions Network



Foreword



The Diploma is an exciting new qualification for young people aged 14 to 19 to better prepare them for the world of work whether via college, university or directly into employment.

It has been developed with employers for employers and marks the start of a new era in English school and college education. Through an active partnership with employers, the Diploma has been designed so that students gain an in-depth understanding of how to behave and get things done in industry sectors relevant to their Diploma subject. They will develop the employability skills that all employers value and have a learning experience relevant to the modern workplace. The Diploma has been designed to help students explore potential careers in areas that interest them, but also to keep their future career options open.

The Diploma offers a welcome opportunity for employers to get involved with schools and colleges. And the equation is simple: the richer the employer involvement, the better the preparation of the Diploma student. We are confident that employers are ready to play their part: to embed employability into the curriculum through high quality work-related learning and work experience, raising students' career aspirations and opportunities. In short, to help teachers and tutors bring learning to life.

The evidence is clear: when employers get involved in education, everyone benefits. Young people find it easier to understand the purpose of their studies, schools build relationships with their local community, and employers have the opportunity to influence the career choices of the next generation workforce. The aim of this guide is to provide information on the wide range of opportunities for employers from all sectors, and of all sizes, from micro to FTSE 100, to work with schools and colleges on Diploma teaching. As the first Diploma students begin their studies in 2008/09, we wish them well and encourage all employers to consider the new opportunities open to them.



“The British Chamber of Commerce welcomes the Diploma as a qualification designed to meet employer needs.

The Diploma offers exciting new opportunities for schools and colleges to work with local Chambers to help ensure young people receive an education which prepares them well for their future employment.”

**David Frost, Director General,
British Chamber of Commerce**

ID “The new Diplomas will help to engage and motivate those discouraged by the traditional curriculum, and are built around two of directors’ key priorities for education: the development of the essential basic skills such as literacy and numeracy, and of the general employability skills so crucial for the world of work. Equally importantly, the Diploma provides a variety of ways for directors and their organisations to support learning. Indeed, employer involvement will be central to the quality and success of the Diploma. The IoD particularly welcomes this Guide for its contribution to the effort of raising awareness in the business community of the diverse opportunities to get involved.”

**Miles Templeman,
Director General, IoD**



“The FSB supports the principles of the new Diploma. The twin pillars of vocation and academia running parallel with the education system will benefit both employers and employees. We view the Diploma as a necessary step to eradicating the employability skills gap which exists in the UK.”

**Colin Willman,
Federation of Small Businesses**



“Business in the Community has long championed the involvement of business with schools and colleges, recognising and celebrating the mutual benefits which follow. The Diploma is a fantastic opportunity for employers and education to work hand in hand to inspire and prepare young people for their future working lives.”

**Nick Chambers,
Business in the Community**



“Practically focused diplomas which emphasise the key skills business needs and which equip young people with a core of basic skills have long been an aspiration of employers. CIPD welcome the Diploma as a new route to learning which engages young people and which helps us to develop the talent we need to compete in the global marketplace.”

**Jackie Orme,
Chief Executive, CIPD**



Leading Learning and Skills

“The Learning and Skills Council has throughout been committed to supporting the development of the Diploma to help with the continued and developing need for high quality, applied and practical learning to enable all young people to experience success in their 14–19 learning. It is essential that learning is undertaken as much as possible in authentic settings and through tasks that are related to realistic work. The contribution of employers is absolutely vital to this.”

**Chris Banks CBE,
Chair, LSC**



“The introduction of the Diploma is testament to the real benefits of work experience and work-related learning in the education of young people. The Diploma provides unparalleled opportunities for employers to work with schools and colleges to make a difference to young people, bringing their learning to life, raising their aspirations and understanding of the world of work. With the great majority of Diploma consortia working closely with their local education business partnerships, it has never been easier for employers to get involved.”

**Declan Swan, Chief Executive,
National Education Business Partnerships Network**



“It is now widely agreed that employer engagement is a vital dimension of the effective education and development of young people in a rapidly changing global economy. And the evidence is compelling: when done well, employer involvement benefits both parties. The Diploma is so important because it will help make that engagement deeper, richer and easier for everyone involved.”

**Andy Powell,
Chief Executive, Edge**



“The Diploma has the potential, not before time, to develop the learning and the skills of our young people in both a broader and deeper way than is currently possible. At last we will be making the direct link between learning and the application of learning – but it is up to all of us in the business community and in the general public to recognise what is happening, to encourage it and to find every way possible to make it increasingly significant.”

**Brian Stevens,
Feds**



“The Diploma represents a great opportunity for employers, schools and colleges to work together at local and national level to make the Diploma relevant, highly credible and of outstanding quality by delivering learning outcomes and meeting business needs.”

**Roger Opie,
HTI Strategic Forum Group, HTI**

The Diploma: more than just a qualification

Who better to help the workers of tomorrow than the employers of today?

Over 5,000 employers helped in its design, putting employers firmly in the driving seat to decide what young people learn.

WHAT IS IT?

The Diploma is more than just a qualification.

It is an exciting, practical and relevant learning experience for young people aged 14–19 which uses an industry-driven curriculum. It gives young people the opportunity to learn more about areas of work that interest them, widen their aspirations and explore potential careers while keeping their options open.

Practical because it prepares them for work in a way that is more adapted to business than ever before.

Relevant because it has been developed in consultation with over 5,000 employers, big, medium and small, from private, public and third sectors.

Exciting because it is building up talent for your future needs.

Best of all, it's a qualification that you can help to shape so that it truly prepares young people to work in businesses like yours.

AND WHAT IT ISN'T

It is not an Apprenticeship.

An Apprenticeship prepares someone for a particular job.

It is not vocational training, preparing someone for a specific job or industry sector.

A Diploma prepares young people for the world of work with a versatile 'toolkit' of necessary, transferable skills.

STRONG INDUSTRY SUPPORT

The Diploma has strong support from industry bodies like the British Chambers of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses, Institute of Directors and Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. And some big global brands like BT, Vodafone, Rolls-Royce, Microsoft and thousands of small firms throughout the country.

WHY IS IT NEEDED?

A good education is the key to better life chances and more and varied opportunities. The education system for 14 to 19-year-olds is being reformed to give all young people opportunities to learn in ways which motivate and engage them and, through hard work, position themselves for success in life.

For more information on the reforms go to www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/employers

The introduction of the Diplomas, developed with employers and Higher Education, will be a new choice for young people, alongside reformed A levels, GCSEs and Apprenticeships, enabling all young people to achieve the higher level of skills and knowledge needed for the 21st century.

We know employers are looking for young people who have the right attitude, knowledge and skills that make them ready for work.

The Diploma has been developed in response to this employer demand. This skills deficit is hampering business, holding back the economy and denying many young people the opportunity to gain employment.

The Diploma will open up clear routes by which employers can engage with young people. The Diploma will greatly help bridge the divide between the worlds of work and learning and ultimately bring learning to life.

HOW WILL IT BENEFIT EMPLOYERS?

The Diploma has two very significant benefits:

- **young people will enter employment, directly or via college, university or an Apprenticeship, with relevant knowledge, skills and an understanding of the world of work**
- **by getting involved, employers like you can help develop the workforce of tomorrow.**

WHY SHOULD YOU GET INVOLVED?

As an employer, you are looking for young people who can make a valuable contribution to your business.

You are being offered a great opportunity to ensure the Diploma is even more suited to your business needs. There are many ways you can get involved. There is no minimum expectation. You decide for yourself how you can best play a part.

If you're not already involved, get involved now. Some Diploma subjects are already underway but others are due to come on stream from 2009 to 2011.

But first, read on and find out more about the Diploma and the benefits to you.

If, however, you want to go straight to 'How to get involved', turn to page 16.

More about **the Diploma**

Developed with employers for employers, the Diploma is set to become one of England's three main education options alongside GCSEs/A levels and Apprenticeships. It will provide an industry and higher education endorsed route either into further and higher education or directly into employment.

Depending on their age, a young person with a Diploma could then consider taking an Apprenticeship, A levels, another Diploma, going to college or university, starting work or setting up a business.

The Diploma has been designed so that young people gain an in-depth understanding of the industry sectors relevant to their Diploma subject. They will develop those employability skills which employers seek, such as how to think creatively, problem-solve, communicate, work independently and as part of a team, and have a learning experience relevant to the modern workplace.

We live in a world in which increasing numbers of people have to work in fast-changing, inter-connected environments that involve handling complex challenges. People working in this world have to be qualified at higher levels than ever before and need to acquire and develop skills that enable them to:

- **communicate across groups of professionals**
- **identify and apply relevant knowledge in different contexts**
- **take projects through from concept to delivery.**



The Diploma will prepare young people for this world.

The Diploma has been designed to suit young people of all abilities and aspirations, offering an innovative mix of both theoretical and practical learning. Diploma students will benefit from a programme that helps them develop a range of practical and intellectual skills in a broad work-related context.

Employers have developed the Diploma in consultation with schools, colleges and higher education to give students a fully rounded education. It will combine the functional skills of English, maths and ICT with the analytical and learning skills especially valued by employers and universities, enabling students to explore potential careers in areas that interest them. At the same time the Diploma's focus on transferable skills will keep their options open.

“Young people are growing up immersed in technology and with this comes an increased expectation from employers about the skills young people should possess. The IT Diploma will change the way 14 to 19-year-olds learn about technology and help them develop the skills they need to succeed. Students will study technology in a way that is relevant to real life, and that will aid their transition from school to further education and, ultimately, to working life. IT Diplomas are a great chance for us to fuel the talent pipeline of people entering the IT profession.”

Clare Riley
Group Manager, Education
Relations, Microsoft Ltd

Preparing young people **for the future**

Each Diploma covers a group of related employment sectors. For example, the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment does not just cover construction themes, but also deals with the work of estate agencies, building services and town planning.

Available from September 2008

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

Available from September 2009

Business, Administration and Finance
Environmental and Land-based Studies
Hair and Beauty Studies
Hospitality
Manufacturing and Product Design

Available from September 2010

Public Services
Retail Business
Sport and Active Leisure
Travel and Tourism

Available from September 2011

Humanities
Languages
Science



"In order to compete in the global economy, UK companies urgently need more young people to understand technology in business. Employers of IT professionals want talented individuals with the blend of business and technology skills that enable them to work effectively at the heart of the organisation. This requires a fundamental shift in the way technology is taught at school level. The Diploma represents a significant step in the right direction."

**Andy Hill, Head of Resourcing,
Vodafone**

How the Diploma works

Each Diploma shares a common framework. All the Diplomas contain a core of *Generic Learning* that covers the communication, numeracy and ICT skills that young people need to function effectively in the workplace and in everyday life. Alongside these, all Diplomas contain the personal, learning and thinking skills such as teamwork and self-management that employers rightly value.

For each of the 17 subjects students will cover the essential skills and knowledge relevant to the Diploma of their choice. This *Principal Learning* is brought to life by involving employers in a number of different ways. At least half of what students learn in their principal learning must be applied, using real-life examples from the workplace. Work experience of at least 10 days is compulsory.

And finally, students personalise their learning experience by choosing from a range of *Additional and Specialist Learning* qualifications including GCSEs, BTECs, A levels and many NVQs.

This combination of generic, principal and additional and specialist learning means students will receive a qualification that has been designed to capture the range of skills, knowledge and attitudes that 21st-century employers and higher education institutions want. Each component will also stand as a qualification in its own right.

THE STRUCTURE OF THE DIPLOMA

Generic learning	Principal learning	Additional and specialist learning
Functional skills in English, maths and ICT	Specific learning with involvement from employers	Choice of qualifications to study: GCSE, BTEC, A Level, NVQ.
Personal, communication and analytical skills	Work experience of at least 10 days (in a block or over time)	
Project		

Designed for learners of all abilities

The Diploma has been designed for learners of all abilities and is available at three levels.

- **Foundation Diploma is equivalent to 5 GCSEs at level 1 (e.g. 5 GCSEs at grades D–G)**
- **Higher Diploma is equivalent to 7 GCSEs at level 2 (e.g. 7 GCSEs at grades A*–C)**
- **Advanced Diploma is equivalent to 3.5 A levels (level 3), there is also a Progression Diploma of a smaller size (2.5 A levels)**

Typically Diploma students will take a Higher Diploma at 14, over two years. They will still take their GCSEs in National Curriculum subjects, including maths, English and science. Diploma students will normally take an Advanced Diploma as an alternative to A levels or an Apprenticeship.

So that employers and universities can understand the level of attainment achieved by the student, he or she will receive a final grade (A*, A, B, C etc.) for their whole Diploma and a transcript listing the individual elements they have studied. The profile will also record achievement of personal, learning and thinking skills as well as the completion of work experience.

The first Diplomas will be taught in a small number of schools and colleges from September 2008, with new subjects coming on-stream over the next three years. By 2013, all 17 Diplomas will be available to every young person in England. The first Diploma students will begin studying for their Diploma in September 2008 and the first Diploma holders will be available for employment from 2010.

Employers involved with the Diploma bring learning to life

The involvement of employers in the design of the Diploma has helped to ensure there is a great opportunity for employers to work with schools and colleges to help shape young people's educational experience, benefiting employers and young people.

By involving employers in both the design of the qualification and its delivery, learning is brought to life. It shows young people the direct relevance of their classroom experience to the world of work. The more employers are involved, the richer the learning experience becomes, better motivating and preparing young people for their working lives. In this way, the Diploma will provide greater opportunity for young people to choose careers they might not traditionally go for, to offer a taster of a range of opportunities and widen their horizons.

As a result, schools and colleges across England are looking to work alongside employers of all types and sizes providing Diploma students with the latest business practices to create a dynamic and relevant learning experience reflecting the make-up of local economies. Schools and colleges have developed a menu of activities that set out the many ways that employers can support Diploma teaching (see page 16). However much, or little, time you can find, there will be a convenient, mutually beneficial way to get involved.

Over 300,000 employers already provide work experience to young people and know the way that it can help students mature in the workplace. Work experience of at least 10 days is common to all Diplomas and will be a key means of ensuring that successful Diploma students learn to adapt to modern working environments.

The Diploma means work experience is set to become more effective, as employers will know with greater confidence that the young people working for them will be interested and excited about the work they do. Around the country, thousands of employers are already getting involved with schools and colleges to support them with the teaching of the Diploma.

The Diploma Employer Champions Network brings together passionate employer supporters of the new qualification, and is led by Sir Alan Jones of Toyota. They want to make a real difference to young people. Why? Because young people are the future not only of their business, but also of the whole economy. Find out more and how to join the network at www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/decn

Members of the Diploma Employer Champions Network include:

British Gas, British Loose Leaf, the British Safety Council, Brompton Bicycles, BT, CB&I, Compass Group, F1 in Schools, Fripp Design, Gibsons Food, Hyatt, Leeds City Council, Leicester City Council, Lime Pictures, Link FM, Lovell Partnerships, Metsec, Microsoft, the Millward Partnership, Ministry of Defence, Natural England, Nottingham Playhouse, Nsure, Rolls-Royce, Rosh Engineering, RWE npower, Sembcorp, Toshiba, Urban Media and Vodafone.

“The new Diploma offers a new approach to learning for young people, giving them a valuable insight into health, social care, community justice, and children’s services. These insights will help equip them for their future – whatever they choose to do.”

Susan Goldstein, North East Strategic Health Authority

How to get **involved**

The introduction of the Diploma means that it has never been easier for employers to get involved with schools and colleges to help prepare young people for employment.

All Diplomas are offered by partnerships of schools and colleges and are known as 'consortia'. The majority of consortia work with an organisation, such as an Education Business Partnership Organisation (EBPO), which helps employers and schools work together. The consortia offering the Diploma in 2008 and 2009 and the name of the employer contact organisation can be found at www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/employercontact

In addition the National Education Business Partnership Network can help you find a good EBPO to work with www.nebpn.org

There are many ways you can get involved. There is no minimum expectation. You decide for yourself how you can best play a part. It could be just one hour a year that makes all the difference. Each Diploma consortium will offer a menu of activities including:

Work experience: each Diploma student does at least 10 days' work experience, either as a block or by the day, learning about your workplace, the expectations that you have and how their classroom-based learning relates to the real world. It is essential that all Diploma students have access to high quality work experience. Most work experience provided by schools is organised through EBPOs.

Mentoring: building structured and trusted relationships between you and young people, with you providing guidance, support and encouragement to help develop the competence and character of the learner.

Providing work problems and business materials: through the Diploma, you have the opportunity to help design realistic work-related projects, and share branded business materials, to breathe life into the curriculum generally and Diploma projects particularly.

Visits to your business: hosting work-based visits for small groups of students to help develop their understanding of the workplace.

Helping teachers understand the workplace: by you offering 'buddying' or providing work shadowing placements for teachers and tutors. This is an important means of building and maintaining the occupational knowledge of teaching professionals.

Visiting business expert: giving short talks to Diploma classes, helping young people really understand an aspect of their learning in relation to business.

Industry days: where you spend a day at a school or college taking part in an exciting activity, undertaking the challenges of business.

Contact information: providing industry knowledge and support to teachers and young people by being available to offer advice on current and emerging industry practice.

Work shadowing: giving a young person the opportunity to see a specific job in action, developing their understanding of an industry or career.

Business and Enterprise Challenges: undertaking a real business challenge with real aims and outcomes.

How Education Business Partnership Organisations can help employers to get involved with schools and colleges:

- help you to get involved in work experience – in places and in ways that are right for you
- establish and maintain partnerships between everyone – employers, schools, colleges – and match needs, interests, aspirations and opportunities
- maintain databases of employers and the work experience learning opportunities
- carry out health and safety checks and ensure that other legal requirements are met including insurance
- offer mock employer interviews, including interview preparation and interview feedback sessions
- arrange curriculum-linked industry visits
- organise projects that introduce young people (including those of primary school age) to business practices and help them acquire new skills whilst having fun
- help to monitor and evaluate work experience to identify the impact they have
- offer child protection and Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) advice and checks.

“The Diploma in Hair and Beauty Studies will help employers gain young graduates who have good communication and people skills. Instead of the two years’ experience they will have anything from four years to six years knowledge of the industry. Employers need to get on board and show their support. This new system will save them time and money and will result in finding employees who really want to be in the industry.”

**Craig Davies,
Francesco Group**

More information

For more details on the Diploma and how it is part of the educational reforms for 14 to 19-year-olds, visit www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/employers

YOU CAN

- View video online of what employers are saying and why they are getting involved
- Download or order a range of publications for the different Diploma subject areas
- Find publications on work experience
- Find basic health and safety and Criminal Records Bureau information
- Find out more on the wider 14–19 reforms

To find out more about the Diploma Employer Champions Network and how to join, visit www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/decn

To find out more about Apprenticeships visit www.apprenticeships.org.uk

The consortia offering Diplomas in 2008 and 2009 and the name of the employer contact organisation can be found by going to www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/employercontact and then clicking on your region.

You can order more copies of this guide by calling 0845 60 222 60; textphone 0845 60 555 60. Please quote reference 00733-2008BKT-EN. You can also download it at www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/employerinformation

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