

The University of Huddersfield
School of Education and Professional Development

Progression from the 14 – 19 Advanced Diploma to Higher Education

Research project final report

For West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The University of Huddersfield School of Education and Professional Development was commissioned by the West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network (WYLLN) to undertake a research and consultation project on the implementation of 14 - 19 advanced diplomas within the West Yorkshire region, with a particular focus on progression into Higher Education. WYLLN had identified a need for greater clarification, coherence and certainty around the progression into Higher Education opportunities from the newly developed advanced diplomas.

1.2 This final report presents a detailed report of the whole project, containing all findings, conclusions and recommendations, alongside an electronic version of the fully developed curriculum map showing diploma lines and progression routes. In addition, a shorter summary report of the findings of the research suitable for circulation by WYLLN to its member organisations, the 14 – 19 consortia and their school and college partners and other interested parties, has been produced.

2.0 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE PROJECT

2.1 The main aims of the project were to establish a systematic 'curriculum map' database incorporating information about the consortia offering or planning Construction and Built Environment (CBE), Creative and Media (C&M), and Society, Health and Development (SHD) advanced diploma lines across West Yorkshire, including contact details of schools/colleges, contribution to delivery, actual and projected student numbers, and information about potential and actual progression routes and agreements.

2.2 To review curriculum developments related to each diploma line and approaches to delivering Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS) and Extended Projects.

2.3 To identify existing and potential progression relationships into Higher Education from each diploma line, as well as potential barriers and levers to progression.

2.4 To support the development of progression agreements from 14 - 19 diplomas into Higher Education, including evaluating the possibility of developing a sub-regional approach.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

3.1 The methodology for the project comprised specific activities and objectives arranged into three main phases. Each phase relates to the aims and objectives described above.

3.2 Phase 1: Developing the ‘curriculum map’ database. Initial contact was made with each consortium and a telephone interview conducted to gain an overview of the structure, participation and delivery of the consortium and its partner schools and colleges. Key contacts for phase 2 of the research were also identified. A ‘consortia database’ was constructed to record the information gathered from each consortium in relation to each diploma line.

3.3 Phase 2: Review of curriculum developments related to each diploma line and approaches to delivery. A series of semi-structured interviews (face-to-face or by telephone) were conducted with a sample of key contacts from each consortium and its partner schools and colleges to gather quantitative and qualitative data relating to diploma delivery, existing progression agreements, barriers to progression and approaches to PLTS and Extended Projects. Each interview was recorded and detailed notes made for analysis.

3.4 Semi-structured interviews were also conducted with relevant Higher Education admissions tutors to gather qualitative information related to existing progression agreements, and potential barriers and levers to participation in Higher Education for each of the diploma lines. Interviews were recorded and detailed notes made for analysis as above.

3.5 The information gathered from the interviews was used to develop the ‘consortia database’ into a full ‘curriculum map’ matching 14 - 19 diploma delivery consortia and individual diploma lines with existing and potential progression routes into Higher Education.

3.6 Phase 3: Supporting the development of progression agreements. A 14 - 19 Diploma Progression Agreement event involving representatives from local consortia, their partner schools and colleges and WYLLN Higher Education institution (HEI) member organisations was held at the University of Huddersfield. This half day meeting was intended to promote and encourage the development of progression agreements as well as identifying blockages and barriers to such agreements. The potential for establishing an ongoing ‘virtual meeting space’ to act as an online ‘dating agency’ for potential progression partners was also explored by means of desk research. The project also identified opportunities for staff development in relation to the 14 - 19 diplomas and provided relevant information to inform staff development events organised by WYLLN.

3.7 The project was undertaken by a senior research fellow and managed by Dr Christine Jarvis, Dean of the School of Education and Professional Development. Dr Angela Srivastava was in post as senior research fellow from September 2008 - January 2009, and Dr Margaret Prescott from February - September 2009.

3.8 A project steering group was appointed, consisting of the project manager, researcher and staff from the School of Education and Professional Development Centre for Research into Post-Compulsory Education as well as participants from other institutions, including WYLLN staff and members, members of the 14 - 19 consortia and their partner schools and colleges, and other interested parties. Meetings of the project steering group were held on 11 December 2008, 18 May 2009 and 9 September 2009 and reports on progress on the project presented. Reports were also made to the WYLLN 14 - 19 Steering Group meetings and monthly progress reports were submitted to WYLLN on the template provided.

3.9 A number of challenges were encountered in the course of the project. There was a change of project staff, as the senior researcher initially appointed left to take up another post in January 2009 and a new member of staff was appointed. The timescale for completion of the project was also changed from 6 months full-time to 12 months half-time as initial enquiries revealed a very slow take-up of the advanced diplomas.

3.10 The information available on current approaches to delivery of the diplomas was limited as only four advanced diploma courses for the lines being studied were currently being delivered. Consortia co-ordinators in some areas initially stipulated that contacts with staff involved in delivery should be made via themselves in order to prevent teachers from being inundated with requests for information. This resulted in some information being slow or partial. Also, during the period of the research, the situation regarding the structure of some consortia and delivery of the diplomas was not fully resolved, so information collected had to be reviewed to ensure it was as accurate and up-to-date as possible.

4.0 THE 14 - 19 DIPLOMAS - GENERAL OVERVIEW

4.1 This section presents background information about the 14 - 19 diplomas in order to give a general overview of the structure and content of the new qualification. It is based on information about the diploma in ‘Overview of the Diploma’ produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and specifications for the Level 3 diploma produced by Edexcel and OCR.

4.2 The introduction of the new 14 - 19 diplomas marks a major change within education in this country. Seventeen new diploma lines are being introduced into schools and colleges from 2008 and will run alongside existing qualifications for 14 - 19 year olds to offer a new route to further and Higher Education or training and employment. The diploma lines for Construction and the Built Environment, Creative and Media, Engineering, Information Technology and Society, Health and Development were introduced in September 2008. Business, Administration and Finance, Environmental and Land-based Studies, Hair and Beauty Studies, Hospitality, and Manufacturing and Product Design will be available from September 2009, and Public Services, Retail Business, Sport and Active Leisure, and Travel and Tourism will be available from September 2010. It is intended to introduce the Humanities and Social Science, Languages and International Communication, and Science diploma lines in 2011.

4.3 The new qualification is intended to provide an innovative mix of theoretical and practical learning, developing practical and intellectual skills in a broadly work-related context. It aims to encourage learners to develop:

- a broad understanding and knowledge about a sector or a subject (called lines of learning)
- skills and attributes related to the chosen sector(s) or subject(s)
- additional knowledge and skills to complement and broaden sector- or subject-relevant learning
- specialist knowledge and skills to deepen or extend sector- or subject-relevant learning
- generic learning skills.

4.4 According to the QCA publication ‘Overview of the Diploma’ 2008, the 14 - 19 diploma will provide exciting, stretching and relevant programmes of learning for all young people, as it is designed to appeal to the most capable students preparing for Higher Education, students who can engage better with the innovative diploma approach than with existing provision and also students preparing for employment or work-based learning.

4.5 There are four levels of diploma, as follows:

- Foundation Diploma (Level 1), equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grades D – G
- Higher Diploma (Level 2), equivalent to 7 GCSEs at grades A* – C
- Progression Diploma (Level 3), equivalent to two and a half A levels at grades A* – E
- Advanced Diploma (Level 3), equivalent to three and a half A levels at grades A* – E
- An Extended Diploma is planned for introduction in 2011.

4.6 A number of organisations have produced specifications and other materials for each of the diploma lines, allowing schools and colleges a choice of awarding body. The awarding bodies currently available are:

- Advanced Creative & Media Diploma - RSL, AQA-City and Guilds, EdExcel, OCR
- Advanced Construction & Built Environment Diploma - AQA-City and Guilds, EdExcel, OCR
- Advanced Society, Health and Development Diploma - EDI, AQA-City and Guilds, EdExcel, OCR.

4.7 The Structure of the Advanced Diploma

The advanced or level 3 diploma is a two-year, full-time programme and is intended to provide the foundation to progress to higher and further education and to employment by providing sector- and subject-related principal learning. It includes an extended project to allow individuals to plan and organise their own learning and to demonstrate synthesis and other higher-level skills.

4.8 The advanced diploma aims also to provide essential personal, learning and thinking skills to progress in education, training and employment. Achievement of the qualification requires level 2 functional skills in English, mathematics and ICT. Learners can increase their knowledge and specialise in their chosen field through their choice of options offered in specialist learning and/or complementary additional learning.

4.9 The qualification requires a total of 1,080 guided learning hours (GLH) of study and comprises, for each line of learning:

- principal learning - 540 GLH, of which a minimum of 50% must be concerned with applied learning (application in work contexts)
- generic learning - 180 GLH
- additional and specialist learning - 360 GLH.

5.0 CONSORTIA ARRANGEMENTS

5.1 Delivery of the new 14 - 19 diplomas is being organised by new bodies called consortia, which comprise groupings of schools, colleges and other organisations within an area. In this section the structure of the 14 - 19 diploma consortia organisations in West Yorkshire is outlined.

5.2 BRADFORD

Bradford Confederations, the 14 - 19 diploma consortium organisation in Bradford, is divided into the Central Confederation, South Confederation and Three Valleys Confederation. Membership of each confederation is given below. Diplomas are being delivered by partnerships which cut across Confederations.

5.3 Central Confederation

Beckfoot Grammar School
 Belle Vue Boys School
 Belle Vue Girls School
 Carlton Bolling College
 Challenge College
 Feversham College
 Hanson School
 Immanuel Community College
 Laisterdyke Business and Enterprise College
 Nab Wood School
 Rhodesway School
 Salt Grammar School
 St Bede's Catholic Grammar School
 St. Joseph's Catholic College
 Bradford College
 Shipley College
 Park Lane College
 Members of West Yorkshire Learning Providers' Network (WYLP)
 Voluntary and community sector organisations

5.4 South Confederation

Buttershaw High School
 Bradford Academy
 Dixon's City Academy
 Grange Technology College
 Queensbury School
 Thornton Grammar School
 Tong School
 Wyke Manor School
 Yorkshire Martyrs' Catholic College
 Bradford College
 Members of the West Yorkshire Learning Providers' Network (WYLP)
 Voluntary and community sector organisations

5.5 Three Valleys Confederation

Bingley Grammar School
 Greenhead High School
 Ilkley Grammar School
 Oakbank School
 Parkside School
 The Holy Family Catholic School
 Bradford College
 Shipley College
 Park Lane College
 Members of the West Yorkshire Learning Providers' Network (WYLP)
 Voluntary and community sector organisations

5.6 CALDERDALE

Campus Calderdale, the 14 - 19 diploma consortium organisation in Calderdale, is divided into the Upper Valley (also called Valley) Cluster, Central Cluster (which is further sub-divided into the Central and North Halifax groups) and Lower Valley (also called District) cluster. There is also a cross-campus cluster comprising Ravenscliffe School, Kirklees College and Calderdale College, which operates across the whole of Campus Calderdale area. Membership of the clusters is as follows:

5.7 Upper Valley / Valley Cluster

Calder High School
 Ryburn Valley High School
 Todmorden High School

5.8 Central Cluster

Sowerby Bridge High School
 Halifax High at Wellesley Park
 Crossley Heath School
 St Catherine's Catholic High School
 Holy Trinity Senior School,
 North Halifax Grammar School
 Park Lane School

5.9 Lower Valley / District Cluster

Hipperholme and Lightcliffe High School and Sports College
 Raistrick High School
 The Brooksbank School Sports College
 Brighouse High School

5.10 KIRKLEES

All schools and colleges in Kirklees are members of Kirklees Collegiates, the only 14-19 diploma consortium operating in the Kirklees area. The schools, colleges and other organisations which comprise Kirklees Collegiates are:

Batley Business and Enterprise College
 Batley Girls' High School
 Birkdale High School
 Colne Valley High School
 Huddersfield New College
 Kirklees College (Dewsbury and Huddersfield Centres)
 Mark Betts Hairdressers Ltd.
 Moor End Technology College
 Rawthorpe High School
 Salendine Nook High School
 St. John Fisher Catholic High School
 The Mirfield Free Grammar School
 Westborough High School
 White Rose School of Beauty

5.11 LEEDS

Education Leeds is the diploma consortium organisation in Leeds and covers the whole local authority area. Each diploma is run as a separate entity within it, with schools and colleges coming forward when they deem themselves ready for involvement. Schools are organised geographically by area. Further Education colleges operate city-wide. Delivery of the advanced diploma will be available for all lines at city level, usually through further education providers. A more structured plan is under development to make diplomas available to all learners in the city over the next 3 years. Membership of the area groups is as follows:

5.12 East Area

Brigshaw High School
 Corpus Christi Catholic College
 David Young Community Academy
 Garforth Community College
 John Smeaton Community College
 Mount St. Mary Catholic High School
 Parkland Girls' High School
 Primrose High School
 Temple Moor High School

5.13 North East Area

Allerton Grange School
 Allerton High School
 Boston Spa School
 Cardinal Heenan Catholic High School
 Carr Manor High School
 Roundhay School
 Wetherby High School

5.14 North West Area

Abbey Grange C. of E. High School
 Benton Park School
 City of Leeds School
 Guiseley School
 Horsforth School
 Lawnswood School
 Otley Prince Henry's Grammar School
 Ralph Thoresby High School
 St Mary's Catholic Comprehensive School

5.15 South Area

Bruntcliffe High School
 Cockburn School
 Motley High School
 Rodilian School
 Royds School
 South Leeds High School
 Woodkirk High School

5.16 West Area

Crawshaw School
 Farnley Park High School
 Priesthorpe School
 Intake High School
 Pudsey Grangefield School
 Swallow Hill School

5.17 Further Education Colleges

Leeds College of Art & Design
 Leeds College of Building
 Leeds College of Technology
 Leeds Thomas Danby College
 Joseph Priestley College
 Park Lane College Leeds
 Notre Dame Catholic Sixth Form College

5.0 CONSORTIA ARRANGEMENTS

5.18 WAKEFIELD

All schools and colleges in Wakefield, together with institutions outside the area but important for progression, are members of the Wakefield Metropolitan District Diploma Consortium (WMDDC). Schools and colleges have been organised into delivery groups for each diploma line. The WMDDC members are:

Airedale High School
 Carleton Community High School
 Castleford High School & Technology College
 Featherstone Technology College
 The King's School
 Knottingley High School & Sports College
 Freeston Business & Enterprise College
 St. Wilfrid's Catholic High School
 Horbury School
 Outwood Grange College of Technology
 Wakefield City High School
 Crofton High School
 Highfield School
 Kettlethorpe High School
 Ossett Technology College
 St. Thomas a Becket Catholic Comprehensive School
 Cathedral CE (VC) - Wakefield School of the Arts
 Hemsworth Arts & Community College
 Minsthorpe Community College
 Oakfield Park School
 Wakefield District Community School
 Adult and Community Education Service
 NEW College
 Training Providers/Voluntary
 Connexions West Yorkshire
 Wakefield College
 Barnsley or Leeds City College or Leeds Building College or
 Askham Bryan College

6.0 ADVANCED DIPLOMA COURSE PROVISION

6.1 Courses Running 2008 - 9

The research found that only two consortia in West Yorkshire, Bradford Confederations and Education Leeds, were offering Creative and Media, and Construction and Built Environment advanced diploma courses in 2008 - 9. No consortia offered the SHD diploma line at level 3. (Note: Other diploma lines may have been offered by the West Yorkshire consortia but the focus of the research was the CBE, SHD and C&M advanced diploma lines only).

6.2 The research identified four advanced diploma courses for the C&M and CBE diploma lines running in West Yorkshire in 2008 - 9, a lower number than anticipated when the research was commissioned. The courses were:

- **Level 3 Creative and Media** - Two courses ran in Bradford in 2008 - 9, one delivered exclusively by Bradford College, with students drawn from partners in the Bradford Creative and Media Delivery Group. A second course was delivered by Dixon's City Academy and Bradford Academy.
- **Level 3 Creative and Media** - Leeds College of Art and Design (LCAD) and Leeds West City Learning Centre (LWCLC) co-delivered the principal learning units and extended project. Students were drawn from Farnley Park High School and Wortley School. The schools delivered generic skills and ASL options.
- **Level 3 Construction and Built Environment** - Leeds College of Building delivers all the course units. The College is a member of the Central Leeds Consortium and is in partnership with ten schools.

The research found no Level 3 Society, Health and Development courses running in West Yorkshire in 2008 - 9.

6.3-Courses Planned

The research identified ten 14 - 19 diploma courses at level 3 being planned by consortia in West Yorkshire for delivery in 2010 or 2011. The number of planned courses is lower than anticipated when the research was commissioned, but the reasons for this are as yet unclear. The planned courses are listed below, although consortia co-ordinators have been unable in some cases to provide full details of delivery arrangements as the courses are still under development. ((Note: Other diploma lines may have been offered by the West Yorkshire consortia but the focus of the research was the CBE, SHD and C&M advanced diploma lines only).

- Level 3 Construction and Built Environment diploma planned for delivery in 2010 by Bradford Confederations, to be delivered by Bradford College and partners in the Bradford Construction & Built Environment delivery group.
- Level 3 Society, Health and Development diploma planned for delivery in 2010 by Bradford Confederations, to be delivered by Belle Vue Girls School and partners in the Bradford Society, Health and Development delivery group.
- Level 3 Society, Health and Development diploma, planned for delivery in 2010 by Campus Calderdale, to be delivered by Sowerby High School and partners.
- Level 3 Creative and Media diploma planned for delivery in 2010 by Campus Calderdale, to be delivered by Calderdale College. No other delivery partners are involved.
- Level 3 Construction and Built Environment diploma, planned for delivery in 2010 by Campus Calderdale, to be delivered by Calderdale College. No other delivery partners are involved.

- Level 3 Society, Health and Development diploma, planned for delivery in 2010 by Education Leeds, to be delivered by members of the South Leeds Collaboration, namely, Joseph Priestley College, Woodkirk School and Bruntcliffe School.
- Level 3 Construction and Built Environment diploma planned for delivery in 2010 by Wakefield Metropolitan District Diploma Consortium, to be delivered by Wakefield College. (At the time of writing, Wakefield College was waiting for confirmation of Gateway 3 results from the local authority and delivery status of the course was unclear. It was thought the CBE course may be offered only at Level 2).
- Level 3 Creative and Media diploma planned for delivery in 2010 by Wakefield Metropolitan District Diploma Consortium, to be delivered by Wakefield College. (At the time of writing, Wakefield College was awaiting confirmation of Gateway 3 results from the local authority and delivery status of the course was unclear).
- Level 3 Creative and Media diploma planned for delivery in 2010 by Kirklees Collegiates, to be delivered by Kirklees College.

7.0 CURRICULUM DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

7.1 Progression from diplomas to Higher Education can be facilitated by the development of new courses to support learners in the development of skills and knowledge. Consortia co-ordinators, WYLLN sector officers, school, college and HE staff were asked for information on any curriculum development projects relating to the 14 - 19 diplomas. It was found that relatively few curriculum development projects in relation to the advanced diplomas were being undertaken in West Yorkshire, although some had been undertaken at a national level. The following projects were identified.

7.2 Level 4 Progression Module in ‘Creative Practice’

The School of Art, Design and Architecture at Huddersfield University, with Calderdale and Kirklees Colleges, has been funded by WYLLN to develop two level 4 Progression modules which will contribute to the 14 - 19 diploma. The modules in ‘Creative Practice’ and ‘Design and Production’ prepare the learner for progression into the full range of Art, Design or Architecture courses. The work has been commissioned by Campus Calderdale.

7.3 These modules are intended as a transition experience for school students in years 12 and 13 and will run alongside the extended projects in the Creative and Media and Manufacturing and Product Design diplomas to extend the students’ learning by offering opportunities to experience a Higher Education environment. The course involves 48 hours of study based at the University of Huddersfield and 72 hours of supervised learning elsewhere. Students will be encouraged to explore creative culture through a specific subject area, e.g. fashion, graphics, art, textiles, architecture or multimedia and will be introduced to a range of media design methodologies. The development of research and communication skills, including skills of independent enquiry, self-evaluation and presentation skills will also be encouraged.

7.4 Motivational Maths Project

Leeds Metropolitan University School of the Built Environment, in partnership with Leeds College of Building, Bradford College, Kirklees College, Pro Skills, Carlton Bolling College and Morley High School, has been funded by WYLLN to develop open access maths materials for use on construction courses. Mathematical issues are set and contextualised in construction environments using web technology. Video, audio and animation are used to allow students to look around and explore construction sites. Real maths problems can be opened up within the construction site. In this way it is hoped to interest students in construction and develop their mathematical skills and knowledge. The project has been supported by the Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment Development Partnership, who will be providing feedback on the materials developed. The materials will be integrated into the CBE diploma and foundation degree syllabi.

7.5 Creative and Media Summer University

Ryburn Valley High School in Calderdale held a five day Summer University for 20 students to give them an insight into work in the creative and media fields. Students were given opportunities to experience drama, digital imaging and music production in the hope that they would be encouraged to consider choosing to progress to a Creative and Media diploma course.

7.6 Construction Progression Support Module

A progression support module for the Construction and Built Environment diploma is under development by staff in the Construction section of the School of Art, Architecture and Design, University of Huddersfield. The module will develop career management, employability, and study skills, and support progression to Foundation Degrees in Construction and Architectural Technology.

7.7 Other Diploma Curriculum Development Projects

An internet search revealed a number of other curriculum development projects at national level of relevance to the diploma. The Skillset Creative and Media Diploma Development Partnership has sponsored a number of projects at the Universities of Teeside, Bournemouth and Sunderland which aim to stimulate the engagement of Higher Education with the Creative and Media diploma. More details of each project are given below. (For further details see www.skillset.org/qualifications/diploma/HE_projects).

7.8 Bridging Modules

The University of Teeside has developed a series of modules designed to help advanced Creative and Media diploma students progress into Higher Education. The modules attract 20 Level 4 credits and are intended to help students develop learning skills appropriate to Higher Education. Students build a portfolio of work that enriches their diploma activities, particularly PLTS and project work.

7.9 MA course in Creative and Media Education

A MA course in Creative and Media Education has been developed by the Centre for Excellence in Media Practice, Bournemouth University, to enhance the abilities of teachers and lecturers.

7.10 Continuous Professional Development Modules

The University of Sunderland has created a suite of CPD modules for HEIs working with diploma delivery consortia. The modules aim to support Creative and Media diploma teachers develop craft skills and vocational knowledge. Twelve modules have been produced on topics such as ‘Radio Production’, ‘Live Radio Broadcasting’, ‘Creating News Magazines and Sports Publications’ and ‘Video Production’.

8.0 DELIVERY OF THE ADVANCED DIPLOMA – CASE STUDIES

8.1 In this section case studies are presented to illustrate the three advanced diploma courses currently being delivered in West Yorkshire. These case studies present information about advanced diploma delivery models being used and highlight the perspectives and experiences of tutors currently involved in delivery. The case studies are based on interviews with a total of nine school/college tutors responsible for, and delivering, diploma courses and information from consortia co-ordinators.

8.2 During the period of the research there was only limited information available on approaches being taken to the delivery of the advanced diploma. Only four diploma courses at level 3 were running during the period of the study (2008 – 9), one in the CBE and three in the C&M diploma lines. No advanced diploma courses for the SHD diploma line were running and available for study during the period of the research. Attempts were made to contact tutors to discover plans for implementation and delivery of SHD courses but no information was available.

8.3 This case study is based on an interview with the Leeds College of Building tutor responsible for management and delivery of the course. Leeds College of Building delivers the whole course. A number of schools are involved in the consortium partnership with the College, but none are involved in delivery of Level 3 in the current year.

8.4 The current target for student numbers is 18. Students joining the course are required to have 5 GCSE grade A – C, including Maths.

8.5 Structure of Course

The L3 CBE diploma has 1080 guided learning hours, of which

- Principal Learning accounts for 540 GLH, 50% of which is applied learning
- Generic Learning and the Extended project account for 120 GLH
- Additional and Specialist Learning account for 360 GLH
- PLTS account for 60 GLH
- Work experience – minimum of 10 days.

CASE STUDY 1 – Construction and Built Environment Advanced Diploma

8.6 Principal Learning Unit Titles

Leeds College of Building have chosen to use Edexcel as the awarding body for this course and to use their course specification. The unit titles are:

- Unit 1. Design & Built Environment – Design factors
- Unit 2. Design & Built Environment – Stages in the design process
- Unit 3. Design & Built Environment – Physical and environmental
- Unit 4. Create Built Environment – Health, Safety environment
- Unit 5. Create Built Environment – Management processes
- Unit 6. Value and Use the Built Environment – Adding value to the community
- Unit 7. Value and Use the Built Environment – Protecting & Maintaining.

8.7 Course Learning Outcomes

At Advanced level the Edexcel specification for Construction Built Environment (CBE) states that learners will:

- consider the changes in style and attitude towards the built environment that have occurred over time, and the impact of political policies and priorities on design
- understand the individual stages of the design and planning processes and the principles involved in taking a design through the complete design cycle
- explore the health, safety and environmental factors that affect the design of the built environment
- understand how the natural environment can be protected and maintained during construction
- explore the construction processes used to create substructures and superstructures
- examine the role of stakeholders and the community in the development of the built environment
- understand how the fabric of buildings and structures can be protected from damage caused by elements and people.

8.8 Delivery Model

Principal learning units 1, 2, 3 and 5 are covered in year one, with the remainder in year two. The year two delivery model includes lectures, research, case studies, site visits, information, advice and guidance (IAG), guest speakers, surveys and group projects. Delivery takes place over three days (18 hours) per week over two years.

8.9 Additional and Specialist Learning (ASL) options

The college is able to offer a wide range of ASL options, tailoring the course to allow students to follow progression routes in either Civil Engineering or Construction. 360 GLH are required for ASL at level 3. In year one all students take the same ASL units at 60 credits per unit, i.e. ICT, Computer Assisted Design (CAD), Graphical Detailing and Maths. In the second year, students choose between the Construction or Civil Engineering pathways. Students on the Construction pathway have a choice of units from the BTEC Diploma in CBE. Students on the Civil Engineering pathway have a choice of units from the BTEC Certificate in Construction and Built Environment but must also do AS level Maths or OCR Engineering Maths Certificate. This is a requirement of the Institute of Civil Engineering for entry to Civil Engineering degree courses.

8.10 Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS)

The personal, learning and thinking skills developed in the level 3 CBE diploma are:

- Independent enquiry.
- Creative thinking.
- Reflective learning.
- Team working.
- Self-management.
- Effective participation.

8.11 PLTS is embedded in the delivery of the principal learning units. The focus is on the development of a reflective learner, able to critically evaluate their own learning processes. Students are encouraged to develop independent research skills, to be able to find information, research a topic, reference correctly, report their findings accurately and critically evaluate their work. The course team see the skills developed in PLTS as important preparation for progression to higher level study and employment, and as valuable in giving the student greater ownership of the learning process.

8.12 Students produce a portfolio of evidence and a PLTS Performance Indicator sheet with identified learning outcomes is used to indicate the student’s level of success, from 1 = low to 5 = high, in each skill in each unit. The tutor commented that this year’s intake of students had found PLTS difficult and had initially been resistant to the unit as it had been unfamiliar. The course team had addressed students’ initial reluctance to engage by starting with simple examples, such as exercises to find information on a topic, and gradually moving on to independent and group research projects. The tutor had used the example of planning, delivering and reviewing a lesson after observation by an examiner to introduce the concept of ‘plan, do and review’ and to show that they could be transferred to other situations in study or employment. The tutor commented,

“The problem for the diploma is that PLTS are inside everything. It is a good opportunity as you can map across, generate evidence, but it’s difficult for the students to unpick what’s required.”

8.13 Extended Projects

Project work is undertaken in year 2, although students are shown examples in year 1 and are asked to identify their topic over the summer. Although most students had not begun work on the project, one student had developed plans for a project on sustainable housing based on his work experience.

8.14 Different modes of assessment are offered for the project. Students can choose to submit a 6000 word dissertation, an investigation or field study, a performance, or an artefact. All modes of assessment require the student to produce written work including an abstract / summary, research review, discussion and analysis, conclusion and bibliography. The extended project is internally assessed by a team of three (an academic, industry representative and one other) who are involved in both marking and delivery.

CASE STUDY 1 - Construction and Built Environment Advanced Diploma

8.15 Tutors at Leeds College of Building saw the extended project work as an important vehicle for progression as it allowed development of independent enquiry and research skills. It also allowed students to focus on a topic of interest, which may be relevant to their future career.

8.16 Timetabled sessions on project management, including sessions on research methods, along with input from guest speakers and site visits, are offered in year two, but the focus is on independent work. The tutor considered that, in future, work on the project should commence in the first year as the time available for completion in year 2 was very limited. There had also been concern that detailed guidance for the CBE extended project had not been made available by the awarding body at the start of the course.

8.17 Assessment

One assessed piece of work per unit per semester is required. For units other than extended project, a range of assessment methods are used, with both internal and external assessment. The assessments for units 2, 3, 5 and 6 are written by the tutor adhering to learning outcomes and assessment foci outlined by Edexcel. Units 1, 5, and 7 are assessed via an external examination.

8.18 Work Placement

Some 70 companies are involved with LCB in providing work placement opportunities, including Bovis, Carillion and Balfour Beatty. The college gives the employer benchmarks for the principal learning units to be achieved by the student during their placement. Evidence of achievement of learning outcomes is mapped on the student's PLTS performance indicator sheet.

8.19 Tutor's Perspective

The course team were very positive and enthusiastic about the diploma course. The tutor described himself as 'very passionate' about the qualification and thought it was excellent preparation for progression to Higher Education as it developed the student's reflective and analytical skills, as well as practical skills. In contrast to the traditional A level route, he felt the diploma had the advantages of being broader, combining experience and knowledge of construction with academic study skills.

8.20 However, the level of the course and the volume of work required were felt to be higher and greater than expected, and more demanding than A-levels or the BTEC National Diploma. The tutor considered the course was possibly more appropriate to level 4 than level 3. His view was that baseline ability students (e.g. 4/5 GCSEs at grade C) would struggle. Although he described the present recruitment process as "extremely and justifiably rigorous", changes in the selection process for recruitment on to the course were being evaluated.

"The Diploma is asking a lot of students who have never done construction before. It is getting them to go straight into Unitary Development Plans, project management The scope is very wide because it is Construction AND Built Environment – they get into social, demographic issues that they haven't done before."

8.21 It was felt a more holistic approach could be taken to the delivery of the principal learning units, which had been treated in a fairly discrete way. For example, one central project could be used to generate most of the evidence needed for the internally assessed units.

8.22 The tutor had found that students did not enjoy the Functional Skills course, and, as most already had GCSE English, Maths and ICT qualifications, found little value in the course. (Only those who have done Functional Skills at school are not required to take this unit in the diploma).

8.23 In the view of the tutor, the assessment/achievement reporting process and the interaction between the Consortia, Diploma Awarding Bodies, Component Awarding Bodies, and Diploma Aggregation Service seemed overly complex. The Edexcel documentation for the project was also felt to be cumbersome and the full Edexcel specification had not been available until June 2008 and, in addition, had been modified after the course had started. The course team had investigated changing to a different awarding body but at present were continuing to use Edexcel. The tutor considered that other schools or colleges delivering the advanced diploma would need to think carefully about the management and reporting of student attainment/achievement.

CASE STUDY 2 - Creative & Media Advanced Diploma

8.24 This case study is based on an interview with the Bradford College tutor responsible for the delivery of the C&M course. Bradford College delivers all the course units. The current target for student numbers is 22 and students joining the course require a minimum of 4 GCSEs at grade C or above, including English.

8.25 Structure of the Course

The Level 3 C&M diploma has 1080 guided learning hours, of which:

- Principal Learning accounts for 540 GLH, 50% of which is applied learning
- Generic Learning and the Extended project account for 120 GLH
- Additional and Specialist Learning account for 360 GLH
- PLTS account for 60 GLH.
- Work experience - minimum of 10 days.

8.26 Principal Learning Units – Key Themes

The principal learning units for the advanced diploma in Creative and Media focus on creative and cultural expression. It is structured around a number of key themes, which are:

- Creativity in context - understanding the influence and impact of the wider historical, cultural and economic context on creative production and the activities of the creative and media sectors, processes and products and creative and commercial decisions.
- Thinking and working creatively – the development of a creative approach to the way learners think and work and development of the skills and knowledge needed to engage in imaginative activity to produce outcomes that are both original and of value.
- Principles, processes and practice - the development of skills and techniques and showing encouraging creativity, imagination and innovation in their application. Greater emphasis will also be placed on the impact and application of emerging technologies on traditional practices.
- Creative business and enterprise – this theme focuses on the development of knowledge and skills that will support future employment or self-employment in the creative and media industries.

8.27 Subject Choices

Each learner's overall programme may be constructed around one or two disciplines which will feature in all, or most of, the six principal learning units. However, there are rules governing combinations of subjects. Students must choose a minimum of four subject areas to study from the list below. A minimum of four different disciplines must be evidenced across the whole programme. At least four of the six principal learning units must contain a minimum of two disciplines. Up to two units may focus on one discipline alone. Any individual discipline may contribute to two or more units. The Bradford College diploma course focuses on Media and Arts subjects.

2D Visual Art	Creative Writing	Interactive Media
3D Visual Art	Dance	Music
Advertising	Drama	Photo Imaging
Animation	Fashion	Product Design
Audio and Radio	Film	Television
Computer Games	Footwear	Textiles
Craft	Graphic Design	Printing and Publishing from 2009

8.28 Bradford College have chosen Edexcel as the awarding body for this course and so use this course specification. The titles of the principal learning units are,:

1. Capture.
 2. Show.
 3. Interaction.
 4. Commission.
 5. Evaluation.
 6. Investigation.
- (DP021030 – Specification – Edexcel Diplomas Level 3 in Creative and Media Principal Learning – Issue 2 – March 2009)

8.29 Course Structure

The first term is given over to induction and segregated skills development. Functional Skills in Maths also delivered. Units 1 and 3 of the six principal learning units are covered in year one, with the remaining four in year two. The College also timetables 1 hour for group tutorial work per week and personal tutorials and enrichment per week. Personal tutorial entitlement is 1 x 20 minute every half term, with a drop-in session scheduled every week.

CASE STUDY 2 - Creative & Media Advanced Diploma

8.30 Functional Skills

The tutor looked for opportunities to build the development of functional skills into principal learning activities, eg. Maths in budgeting for media production work, English in blogging, written assignments and pitching to clients, IT in research work, blogging and PowerPoint design. English was delivered in year one in 1.5 hour lessons and was co-taught by a specialist English tutor. Maths and IT will be covered in year two. There are plans for both English and Maths to be delivered in year one in future.

8.3 Additional and Specialist Learning

This year students were offered the options of the BTEC National Award in Media Production or AS and A2 English Language, Art & Design or Film Studies. Most students had chosen AS and A2 level Art & Design but one student was also taking AS level Sociology. Next year there will be options to take up BTEC and A Level Performing Arts and Music.

8.32 Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills

PLTS is incorporated into activities undertaken in the principal learning units. In each unit a paper-based system was being used to record and track achievement. Tutors record after each piece of work how well they feel the student has performed in that unit. Finding examples of development of PLTS was not a problem as there were opportunities for independent enquiry and creative thinking in each piece of work students attempted and/or completed. The tutor felt that she would like to see, however, a method devised to allow students to state in more detail how they had achieved the PLTS outcomes, so giving more attention to the process of learning.

8.33 The Extended project

Work on the extended project would commence in year two of the course. Most students were expected to choose the more practical route for assessment and create an artefact. The tutor commented that the project work was intended to develop practical skills but she felt the project was, "...a bit disconnected from the rest of the diploma course – it's not done as part of the main Principal Learning."

8.34 The tutor saw the extended project as very important for progression and also as extending the college's provision as it could be offered as an alternative or addition to A level or to other level 3 courses. She recognised, however, that there may be difficulties if students had not taken the diploma principal learning units as they may not have sufficiently developed their practical skills in creative and media disciplines. The extended project was also seen as very important for progression as it offered opportunities for the development of independent research and time management skills as well as practical creative and media skills. Students could use the project to extend their skills in one area or to develop a wider range of skills. The provision of a range of assessment options was also seen as valuable.

8.35 Engaging with the Industry

The tutor had organised a number of opportunities for students to engage with the creative and media industries and gain work experience, including visits to careers fairs, industry networking opportunities, lectures from a cartoonist and a video artist, a workshop with a television production company, and work undertaken in partnership with the BBC. Students had also worked on a number of client briefs, including:

- World Aids Day film for Bradford Primary Care Trust
- Filming of Leeds Teaching Hospitals Nursing and Midwifery Conference 2009
- Healthy College brief for College Manager
- Working towards a brief for the Bradford City of Film project - 'Bradford - Through My Eyes.'

8.36 Work Experience

The work experience element of the course would take place in year two and would include one day working on a live client brief, two days with a video production crew, five days solo experience in a sector directed by the learner and two days of workshop activities with visiting practitioners. All work experience would be logged on central record and individual daily records would be completed by the learner and a work experience representative.

8.37 Tutor's Perspective

The tutor welcomed the emphasis on PLTS in the diploma. She found it encouraging to see explicit recognition of the importance of these skills and clear guidelines given for delivery and assessment within the diploma specification. She commented,

"It is nice to see PLTS defined so clearly in the specification as regards delivery and assessment. It makes explicit what a lot of tutors are probably doing already."

"I have liked the way the specification lends itself to opening their horizons. The students have been able to develop wider skills. PLTS has also been good - they have developed as independent enquirers."

8.38 However, the tutor also highlighted a number of challenges, noting particularly the level and scope of the work demanded on the course. The tutor felt that the qualification "...demands a huge amount from the student - it is basically a small number of very huge projects." Students also found work on the course difficult as their self-organisation and time management skills were not well developed at age 16. The tutor thought the course assumed a maturity and ability that she did not think many students had at that age. To address this problem the tutor was considering organising course delivery over shorter time periods and encouraging students to set short-term goals for themselves.

8.39 The tutor had also found that students had not enjoyed the functional skills units and the level and pace were thought to be inappropriate. The tutor commented,

"The standard of functional skills required is incredibly high. We have only done English this year; will do Maths & IT next year. All learners take GCSE English but they had found it difficult and it took a lot of work to get them through it. They have to do tests in grammar. Both the level and pace is difficult. And it doesn't fit in with the rest of the ethos of the course which is about treating them as creative industry professionals, able to be independent."

CASE STUDY 3 – Creative & Media Advanced Diploma

8.40 This case study is based on interviews with the two tutors responsible for the course at Leeds College of Art & Design (LCAD) and Leeds West City Learning Centre (LWCLC). LCAD and LWCLC co-deliver the course, in partnership with Farnley Park High School, West Leeds School, Wortley School.

8.41 The target student number is 16 and students will usually have done the BTEC media course in school.

8.42 Principal Learning

LCAD and LWCLC have chosen OCR as the awarding body and use this course specification. The titles of the principal learning units are:

- Unit 1. Using creative and media skills in a global context
 - Unit 2. Digital technology in the commercial world
 - Unit 3. Analysing the influence of genre
 - Unit 4. Issues – a personal response
 - Unit 5. Self-promotion – selling your ideas
 - Unit 6. Creativity in business enterprise
- (From OCR Level 3 Principal Learning in Creative and Media H808 OCR 2008)

8.43 OCR specifies a number of rules regarding the combination of principal learning units. It states that learners:

- must achieve all six units
- must evidence at least four different sector-related disciplines across the six units
- must evidence at least two disciplines within at least four units
- may focus on one sector-related discipline within a single unit, for a maximum of two units (the same discipline can be used in both units, or each unit can focus on a different discipline)
- may use the same discipline(s) in more than one unit
- may evidence disciplines anywhere in their work for any given unit. (From OCR Level 3 Principal Learning in Creative and Media H808 OCR 2008).

8.44 Delivery Model

Delivery of the principal learning units in the course is shared between LWCLC and LCAD, according to each institution's strengths. The host schools deliver generic learning (including functional skills) and ASL. 1.5 days is allocated to the principal learning and project, and half a day to ASL. All students have tutorials of 1 hour per week.

Year 1: Three principal learning units have been delivered, i.e.,
Unit 3 – Analysing the influence of genre – co-delivered by LWCLC & LCAD
Unit 4 – Issues – a personal response – delivered by LCAD
Unit 5 – Self-promotion – selling your ideas – delivered by LWCLC.

Year 2 : The three remaining principal learning units will be delivered, i.e.,

- Unit 1 – Using creative & media skills in a global context – LCAD will deliver
- Unit 6 – Creativity in business enterprise – co-delivered by LWCLC & LCAD
- Unit 2 – Digital technology in the commercial world – LWCLC will deliver.

8.45 Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills

The tutor described PLTS as the skills needed to 'explore, plan, produce and reflect', and regarded development of these skills as central to the course. PLTS is embedded in all the principal learning units. As the C&M diploma is very project-based, PLTS was embedded into each piece of project work. Students map their own achievement of PLTS in a booklet and record evidence of learning as they work on and complete each piece of work. The tutor also tracks and records achievement of PLTS learning outcomes for each student. The tutor interviewed felt the process of recording achievement was working well and that students were now taking responsibility for this.

8.46 However, it had taken time for this to happen. The tutor and students had had to devise their own 'user-friendly' method of tracking and recording achievement of PLTS at the start of the course. The 'tick-box' method devised was felt to be simple and straight-forward, but students needed to be given guidance to reflect on, and evaluate, their practice.

8.47 The Extended project

The extended project is externally assessed by OCR. LWCLC get the brief and students do the project independently. They aim to start work on projects over the summer. Students are encouraged to plan which topic they want to do and to think about project management skills. Tutors are looking at how best to prepare students for project work. The tutor starts students on the project unit at the start of year two. LWCLC has dedicated one period to introduce the project and then students have weekly tutorials. The different institutions involved can offer support to projects in different areas – LWCLC specialises in film & photography, but can offer support in any media subjects. LCAD can offer support if the project topic is more 2D Art-related, or performance based. LWCLC will try to find an industry link for student if they need this to complete the project.

8.48 Additional and specialist learning (ASL)

The partner schools deliver generic skills and ASL. For ASL units students have a choice of the A levels offered by their school, but have to take a different subject from their diploma course. LWCLC and LCAD have no input into the ASL units. The problem in the tutor's view was that if the ASL in the school was not achieved then the student would not gain accreditation for the course, despite their performance in the units delivered by LCAD and LWCLC.

8.49 Work experience

Limited information was available on work placements as these would take place in year two. One tutor noted that he felt it was difficult to organise employer engagement for work placements as few employers want to take on younger students. It was easier with older students as they are more mature and more skilled.

8.50 Tutors' Perspectives

Tutors felt the relationship between the co-delivery partners was good and that this made a vital contribution to the success of the course. The decision to split the delivery of units between partners, rather than sharing delivery within units, was seen as having been successful.

8.51 Tutors also welcomed the new curriculum and the opportunities it offered to engage and interest students. "I like the freedom of the course – it is a fresh approach. I am able to introduce students to a wide variety of media production skills."

8.52 The PLTS element of the course was also seen as valuable in developing the students as reflective learners, aware and in greater control of their own learning process. "The diploma gives ownership to the student straight away. "

8.53 A number of challenges were also noted by tutors. One tutor noted that working with three different institutions had been challenging. For example, there were no standardised procedures for risk assessments which were done differently at each institution. Decisions had had to be taken as to whose procedures should take priority. The importance of good communications in resolving such issues was noted.

8.54 CASE STUDIES – CONCLUSIONS

A number of general conclusions may be drawn from the case studies, although it should be borne in mind that these are courses in their first year of delivery and may be subsequently developed and changed.

8.55 The tutors involved were excited and enthusiastic about the advanced diploma courses and saw them delivering considerable benefits to students, particularly in the incorporation of PLTS. They felt this element of the course had the potential to allow students to develop as independent and reflective learners, and that these skills would be of considerable value in supporting progression to Higher Education.

8.56 However, concerns were expressed about the level and pace of work on both the CBE and C&M advanced diplomas. Tutors considered the level and volume of work expected were too high, as well as making too great demands on students' abilities to manage their own time and workloads.

8.57 The role of functional skills in the qualification was also problematic. Students had not enjoyed this element of the course on either of the diploma lines, and the necessity of mandatory courses in English, Maths and ICT for those students who already had a level 2 qualification in these subjects was questioned.

8.58 It seemed that all the institutions delivering the diplomas were aware of the importance of ASL in supporting progression; this was explicit, for example, in the decision of Leeds College of Building to offer common ASL options to all students in year one of the course and require A levels Maths for the Civil Engineering pathway in year two. It seemed that there was also potential for ASL to be used to extend the institution's range of provision in the case of both Bradford College and Leeds West City Learning Centre/ Leeds College of Art & Design.

8.59 However, it was not possible to explore the relationship between the ASL options and the principal learning units in any detail as, for the C&M courses, individual students were taking different ASL options and so interviews with each student would have been required. In the case of the CBE course, Leeds College of Building had decided to offer a common ASL experience to all year one students, and individual choice of ASL options would not occur until year two.

8.60 It was also not possible to draw conclusions about the extended project as work on these would not begin until year two of the course. However, the early experiences of tutors suggested that it might be advisable to consider beginning work on the project earlier in the programme in view of the limited time available in year two.

9.0 PROGRESSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

9.1 This section first outlines general issues in relation to progression from the advanced diplomas to Higher Education, then presents potential progression opportunities for each diploma line based on a process of curriculum matching. This is followed a section presenting specific progression routes from the diplomas to Higher Education courses in West Yorkshire. It should be noted that other HE opportunities are available for students willing to consider HEIs at institutions outside of West Yorkshire, including with the Open University.

9.2 When considering progression to Higher Education from the advanced diploma, a student could potentially apply to:

- courses closely related to the principal or additional and specialist elements of the diploma
- courses using generic skills developed within the diploma
- courses related to interests developed as part of the extended project
- other courses unrelated to their diploma studies with no specific entry requirements.

9.3 A central issue in relation to progression is the number of UCAS points attached to the advanced diploma. The advanced diploma is equivalent to 3 and a half A levels. UCAS has stated that the advanced diploma at A* grade (including ASL courses at A*) is worth up to 490 points. This number of UCAS points would potentially allow entry to a wide range of undergraduate courses as many have no specific entry requirements but will accept applications from candidates with a wide range of qualifications and subject specialisms so long as they have the required number of UCAS points. It is the applicant's level of achievement that is important to admission tutors.

9.4 The policies of HEIs towards the advanced diploma as an entry requirement for undergraduate courses are also important for progression from the diploma into Higher Education. The policies of individual universities and colleges towards the advanced diploma are available on the UCAS website (www.ucas.ac.uk) All the West Yorkshire HEI's have stated that they will accept the advanced diploma, but some also state that particular courses may have specific entry requirements. It is difficult, therefore, to make general statements regarding progression to Higher Education from the advanced diploma.

9.5 Potential HE Progression Opportunities from the Advanced Diplomas

As part of the research project, the curriculum of each diploma line was matched against Higher Education courses to produce lists of potential progression opportunities from each of the diploma lines. It should also be noted that these lists are not intended to be comprehensive and that diploma lines could potentially support progression to other courses, for example, in management or business studies.

9.6 Construction & Built Environment Diploma Line

Students who have completed the CBE diploma could potentially progress to the following subject areas, but it should be noted that Civil Engineering courses require AS level Maths as ASL.

Architectural Technology
 Building Studies
 Building Surveying
 Built and Natural Environment
 City and Regional Development
 Civil Engineering
 Construction
 Construction Management
 Environmental Management
 Housing Studies
 Property Management
 Quantity Surveying
 Town & Country Planning

9.7 Creative & Media Diploma Line

A wide range of courses is potentially available for progression, depending on the student's interests and specialisms and the particular skills they have developed in their diploma course. However, some animation, journalism and games courses require A level maths and / or English to be taken as ASL. Music courses may require A level music.

Advertising
 Animation
 Cultural Studies
 Design
 Design Media Make-Up
 Digital Media
 Fashion
 Film & Media
 Games Design
 Graphic Design
 Interactive Media
 Interior Design
 Journalism
 Multimedia Design
 Music Technology
 Photography
 Textiles
 Theatre / Stage Design
 TV and Broadcast Media
 Visual Arts

9.8 Society, Health and Development Diploma line

Students who have taken this diploma could potentially progress to a wide range of courses in health, the social sciences, education and social care. However, some health-related courses may require science subjects, e.g. biology, to be taken as ASL.

Childhood Studies
 Community Studies
 Complementary Therapies
 Counselling
 Criminology
 Development Studies
 Early Years
 Education
 Health and Social Care
 Health Care Professions
 Law
 Midwifery
 Nursing
 Occupational Therapy
 Physiotherapy
 Podiatry
 Psychology
 Radiography
 Social Sciences
 Social Work
 Sociology
 Speech Therapy
 Sports Psychology

9.9 Progression Agreements

Another factor which may influence progression from the diplomas to Higher Education is the existence of progression agreements between schools / colleges and HEIs. The research investigated progression relationships between 14-19 diploma deliverers and HE institutions. Diploma tutors and HEI admissions tutors were asked for details of any progression agreements / relationships from the diploma to Higher Education at their institution.

It should also be noted that the information gathered was dependent on the level of knowledge of the tutor interviewed and it may have been that not all tutors were aware of all the progression agreements / relationships which existed or were under development in their institution.

9.10 Overall, it appeared that no formal progression agreements from the 14 - 19 diplomas and HEIs in West Yorkshire had been finalised at the time of writing, although several institutions had developed progression agreements from other courses to Higher Education.

9.11 Progression Agreements in Process of Development

Two progression agreements were identified in the course of the research as being in the process of development. These were:

- Leeds College of Building and Leeds Metropolitan University School of Built Environment were in the process of developing a formal progression agreement from the CBE diploma. Leeds Metropolitan University offer BSc Hons Architectural Technology, BSc Hons Building Surveying, BSc Hons Civil Engineering Commercial Management, BSc Hons Civil Engineering, BSc Hons Construction Management, BSc Hons Project management (Construction) BSc Hons Quantity Surveying, HND Building Studies, HND Civil Engineering Studies.
- Leeds College of Art and Design was in the process of developing an internal progression agreement from the diploma to HE courses within the institution. The student is guaranteed an interview on the course of their choice at Leeds College of Art & Design. Depending on their interests and skills, students could apply to the following HE courses - BA Hons Art & Design, BA Hons Fashion, BA Hons Fine Art, BA Hons / Fd Creative Advertising, BA Hons / Fd Design for Digital Media, BA Hons / Fd Photography, BA Hons Graphic Design, BA Hons Interior Design, BA Hons Printed Textiles, and BA Hons Visual Communication.

9.12 Leeds College of Building also has informal links with Huddersfield and Bradford Universities. The University of Huddersfield offers BSc Architectural Technology, FdSc Construction, BSc Hons Construction & Project Management. The University of Bradford offers BEng Hons in Civil Engineering.

9.13 Internal progression is also possible to wide range of construction courses at Leeds College of Building, including HNC Civil Engineering, HNC / HND Building Services Engineering, Advanced Diploma in Construction, HNC Construction Studies, Foundation Degrees in Building Services, Construction Project Management, Building Services Design, Construction Operations Management, Building Services with Quantity Surveying, Quantity Surveying.

9.0 PROGRESSION TO HIGHER EDUCATION

9.14 Internal and Informal Progression Relationships

All the colleges offering or planning 14 - 19 advanced diplomas were found to have informal links with one or more Higher Education institutions. These are outlined below.

9.15 Bradford College has informal internal progression links to the following Creative and Media courses - HND / BA Hons in 3D Design, Diploma in Foundation Studies in Art & Design, BA Hons Art & Design, BA Hons Fashion Design, BA Hons Contemporary Surface Design & Textiles, BA Hons Fine Art, BA Hons Graphic Design, BA Hons Make-Up and Special Make Up Effects, Foundation Degree in Make Up Artistry, HND in Photography. External informal progression links also exist with Leeds Metropolitan University (Bradford College degrees accredited by Leeds Metropolitan University) and the course tutor is developing informal links with University of Sunderland.

9.16 Bradford College has informal internal progression links to the following Construction courses - HND courses in Construction, or Foundation Degree in Construction Management & Design (when developed). Informal links also exist with Leeds Metropolitan University and Leeds College of Building to degrees in Construction, Civil Engineering & Design Management, HND Construction. Leeds Metropolitan University accredits Bradford College degrees.

9.17 Calderdale College is planning informal internal progression links to Foundation degrees in Construction Management, 3D Architectural Interiors, Architectural Technology, when the development of these courses is completed. Informal links also exist with Leeds College of Building, Leeds Metropolitan University, the University of Bradford the University of Huddersfield, and Kirklees College. Kirklees College is developing a Foundation degree in Construction Management.

9.18 Joseph Priestley College, Leeds, at present has no internal progression links from the planned SHD advanced diploma as no Higher Education courses are offered by the college. No external formal progression agreements exist as yet. The college is considering making informal links with the University of Huddersfield, the University of Leeds, Leeds Metropolitan University and the University of York, but no courses have been identified for progression as yet by the SHD tutor.

10.0 BARRIERS AND LEVERS TO PROGRESSION

10.1 This section presents the findings of research with HEI admissions tutors for HE courses in West Yorkshire which might receive applications from diploma students. These interviews were included so that in-depth discussions could take place with a small sample of admissions tutors to try to understand the experience of engaging with the diplomas from their perspective. It was thought a qualitative study of this type would add more to the understanding of some of the challenges to progression than a large scale survey producing quantitative data. It is important to emphasise that we are not arguing that admission tutors will discriminate against applicants with the diploma and erect barriers to their progression into Higher Education. However, in situations where there is little experience or past practice to guide actions - and no tutor has yet had any experience of dealing with an application from a diploma student - unconscious assumptions may play a part in shaping decisions. For this reason, it is important to explore the perceptions and assumptions of admissions tutors to try to gain some understanding of the subjective factors which might influence their decisions and actions.

10.2 Semi-structured interviews were held, either face to face or over the telephone, with a total of 16 HEI staff with involvement in admissions to undergraduate courses, and with 4 other staff. Staff were selected from a range of courses which might attract applicants who had studied the CBE, C&M or SHD advanced diplomas. Data was gathered over the period April to July 2009 and was recorded, transcribed, coded for recurring themes and analysed.

10.3 The qualitative data gathered explored tutors' views of the advanced diploma qualification, their knowledge of its structure and content, their views of its appropriateness for the Higher Education courses for which they were responsible, and their perceptions of possible levers and barriers to the progression of diploma students into Higher Education. Tutors were also asked about any progression agreements relating to the advanced diploma that had been developed, or planned, at their institution, and for their views on the development of progression agreements, at both local and sub-regional levels.

10.4 All HEIs in West Yorkshire have general statements on the UCAS website to the effect that they will accept the 14 - 19 diploma as an entry qualification, albeit with certain provisos in the case of some courses. As admissions tutors will be receiving applications from students on advanced diploma courses from 2010, it was felt important to explore the views of this group of academic staff in more detail as their decisions may be shaped as much by their perceptions of the new qualification as by the stated policies of their institutions.

10.5 Lack of knowledge of diploma

In order for admission tutors to feel confident in making offers to applicants presenting with the advanced diploma, it is important that they feel that they have sufficient knowledge and understanding of the content and structure of the new qualification. However, a consistent theme emerging from the research was that, whilst some tutors were well-informed about the qualification, some had quite limited knowledge of the 14 - 19 advanced diplomas in general, and / or of the structure and content of the advanced diploma most relevant to their subject specialism.

10.6 A number of tutors admitted that they felt they had received insufficient, or limited, information about the advanced diploma, and some comments revealed a lack of knowledge among some tutors about the structure of the course, such as whether diploma students could take additional subjects as part of the advanced diploma, if they did projects or work experience. For example,

“We have had no information on what the diploma would cover.”
Construction tutor

“70% of (staff) will have heard of diplomas but only 1% know actually what they are.” Construction tutor

“The information that’s been passed down has been quite generic ... from a subject point of view it’s quite difficult from my point of view to get to grips with.” Music tutor

“The information we have had from government and the consortia is still very broad, not specific.” Media tutor

10.7 As one tutor admitted, this lack of knowledge would make it difficult for her to make offers to diploma applicants. “Part of it is about us not knowing enough about the rest of the course to make offers on it.” Music tutor

10.8 Even some who had some knowledge of the new qualification admitted that they felt they lacked a full understanding of the details of the core units which would be offered, and the skills which students would develop on the course. This was in contrast to other courses and qualifications, such as A levels or BTEC diplomas, where there was felt to be a good understanding of the type and level of skills that students had.

10.9 There was also uncertainty among some tutors about whether the 14 - 19 advanced diploma would attract UCAS points, and if so, how many points.

“I have never encountered it before. Does it generate UCAS points?”
“Childhood studies tutor

“What we’ve not had information about yet is how many UCAS points those diplomas will carry....nobody yet has told us what grade, you know, three and a half A levels at what sort of grade?”
Social work tutor

10.10 What information did tutors want about the diploma?
Most frequently, tutors said they wanted to know more details of the core content of the course, such as the titles of modules, so that they would know which subjects applicants would have studied and at which level. As one tutor said,

“We want to ...see what diploma applicants offer, what skills they have.” Health professions tutor

10.11 Other health and social care tutors said they would like copies of work placement reports. Several indicated that they would want to know about the topic studied for the extended project, because, as one tutor said,

“The project can show more of the student’s potential. It can give much more detail on what they did and how they did it.”
Health & Social welfare tutor

10.12 Why did admissions tutors lack information on the diplomas?

An examination of the information available on government and other websites, such as those of awarding bodies, shows a vast amount of information is available on the 14 - 19 diplomas. Much material has been produced, not only directed at learners, schools and parents, but also directed at Higher Education. Although some tutors interviewed had sought out information for themselves, others did not seem to have done so. Clearly, admissions tutors are under a great deal of pressure and some may have been too busy to seek out the information. It may be that they will obtain information when they need it, i.e. when they are faced with applications from diploma students.

10.0 BARRIERS AND LEVERS TO PROGRESSION

10.13 However, it may also be that some see the diplomas as being on the distant horizon, without immediate implications for their work. One tutor suggested this, and indicated a further possible reason for a lack of engagement with the diploma among some tutors.

“People still think it is some years away - 3 or 4 years away - and so they don’t need to worry about it. There might be a change of government anyway soon and it could be scrapped.”
Construction tutor

10.14 Perceptions of the diploma as a vocational qualification

The ways in which admissions tutor subjectively perceive different qualifications as appropriate or not for entry to Higher Education may have an influence on their decisions and actions. In this context, it is important to try to understand how tutors perceived the advanced diploma qualification. Did they see the advanced diploma as an academic qualification equivalent to A level qualifications, for example?

10.15 Around one third of tutors interviewed made statements suggesting either that they themselves perceived the advanced diploma as primarily a vocational, rather than an academic, qualification, or they thought that other admissions tutors held this view. For example,

“My understanding of the diploma is that it is supposed to be much more vocational.” Social work tutor

“Many people think the diplomas are vocational and so won’t affect them in HE.” History of Art tutor

10.16 This perception is perhaps not surprising given the limited knowledge some tutors had of the diploma’s structure and content. The comment of one tutor revealed both a lack of knowledge about the qualification and the assumption that it was a vocational qualification.

“Are they doing a lot of vocational stuff on it - what are they doing?”
Childhood studies tutor

10.17 How appropriate do admission tutors see vocational qualifications for entry to Higher Education? The answer seemed to depend on the nature of the course. One view that was expressed seemed to be that, if the diploma was a vocational qualification, it was possibly not adequate preparation for courses tutors regarded as ‘academic’. For example, one tutor said,

“Diplomas are fine for vocational degrees - as foundation degrees mostly are - but some would say not for academic degree courses.”
Social care tutor

10.18 Why were diplomas perceived as not being adequate preparation for academic courses? Possible reasons are contained in the following comments.

“The impression admission tutors have had of the diplomas is that they are for people who can’t achieve A levels....If they have a more vocational outlook or won’t achieve A levels then they might go on to do the diploma.” Health care tutor

“...it seems university tutors are very concerned diploma students might not have sufficient depth, conceptual thinking, to cope with a traditional academic degree. They do have transferable skills but some ask if this is good preparation for a traditional, academic HE route?” Social care tutor

10.19 These comments suggest that some admission tutors linked ‘vocational’ with ‘less able’ and were worried diploma students may not have the capacity for critical, abstract thought that they thought was necessary for an academic degree. This interpretation is supported by other comments suggesting that some tutors were perhaps not convinced that diploma students would have the same skills and depth of knowledge as A level students with the same number of UCAS points. Several tutors expressed this view, saying,

“But I think this may be the danger for us. Are diploma students going to come with 160 tariff points, will they have the same abilities and skills as traditional A level students with the same number of points?” Health care tutor

“The problem with the diplomas as I see it is... that you can get 160 UCAS points with quite poor results....My concern with the diploma students is that we’re going to get the lower level applicants because I think it’s easier for them to get the 160 credits. ...It’s going to be too easy for them to get the credits.” Health professions tutor

“It might be the same number of tariff points but there is not necessarily parity of knowledge.” Music tutor

10.20 What is interesting here is how admission tutors with such views might treat applications from diploma students. Might there be a temptation not to offer a place to a diploma applicant, or to ask for higher entry qualifications? It may lead some tutors to unconsciously favour applicants with qualifications with which they are more familiar. It may be that, for some admissions tutors, diploma students seem too risky. Because their abilities and skills are unknown, they might be seen as not able to cope with the course, or as likely to drop out or fail, as one music tutor suggested.

“We also don’t want to set them up to fail. My biggest worry is that a student comes and they’re not prepared and they fail.” Music tutor

10.21 In the face of such uncertainties, some tutors indicated that they would perhaps adopt a rather ‘ad-hoc’ attitude to diploma applicants. There seemed to be a view among a few tutors that they would adopt a ‘wait and see’ approach - waiting to see how many diploma students applied and what skills they brought with them. For example,

“We will accommodate diploma students if they do apply.”
Construction tutor

“I’m happy to be pragmatic about it and take each candidate on their merits.” Music tutor

10.22 Perceptions of the diploma as less appropriate for Higher Education were not universal, however. Some tutors saw the advanced diploma as perhaps better preparation for HE entry than other qualifications. For example, some tutors said,

“...it is spot on. It is better than a lot of A levels.” Social work tutor

“...it seems the diploma is better preparation than BTEC for the Foundation degree as they do get a lot of vocational experience....It looks good to me. I see a lot of positive value in it.” Social care tutor

10.23 It is interesting that these comments were from social work tutors, suggesting the vocational content of the diploma could be a positive advantage in applying to courses similarly vocational in nature.

10.24 It seems that admissions tutors may need some time to become familiar with the qualification and the skills diploma students bring with them. The first students to progress to Higher Education from diploma courses, may, therefore, have a significant impact on the chances for progression other diploma students coming later as the perceived quality of students in the first intake could influence the views of admissions tutors about this new group of applicants.

10.25 Will admissions tutor accept specific diploma lines?

An important question for the research was whether admission tutors would accept the advanced diploma as an entry qualification from HE. All admissions tutors interviewed said that they would accept the 14 - 19 advanced diploma; they varied, however, in whether they would accept students from any diploma line onto their course, or whether they thought applicants needed to have prior knowledge of the subject.

10.26 There did not seem to be a universal view here; one or two tutors admitted their institution or department had not yet decided which diplomas they would accept. Others, however, had decided and were willing to consider applicants from any diploma line,

“We would look at applicants with any diploma - we don’t specify which subjects for A level so we wouldn’t do so with the diploma.”
Health & Social welfare tutor

“We will accept any subjects for thecourse.” Health care tutor

10.27 Which aspects of the advanced diploma course did these tutors see as valuable? Some emphasised the broad conceptual basis of the course. For example:

“It looks fine - it is broad-based, a good general introduction to concepts in HE.” Media tutor

“For my course I think it’s good because it gives them a good, broad spectrum... not just from social science but also looking at the professional aspects.” Social work tutor

10.28 Others seemed to place more importance on the generic skills gained from the study of any diploma than the specific subject studied. Mostly these tutors were well informed and able to comment in detail on the content of the diploma line relevant to their course. Interestingly, tutors likely to emphasise the generic skills within the diploma and see these as good preparation for Higher Education tended to be in the health and social care / social work areas.

10.29 The generic skills which tutors particularly emphasised were independent research skills, developed particularly through the project, and reflective skills, developed through PLTS.

“I think there are wonderful things in it - if students can talk about their own work, realise their ideas, that’s good.... This would be of enormous benefit to HE. There are research skill, academic skills are in there - there is the potential for students to develop as independent learners.” History of Art tutor

“PLTS is good particularly if it is embedded well into other subjects - good preparation for HE and employment. If students are confident in their PLTS skills...they can cope more easily with HE.” Media tutor

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10.30 Other valuable generic skills mentioned included the development of critical thinking and study skills, and exposure to a variety of different modes of assessment as well as the period of work experience. For example, one tutor noted,

“One of the things that benefits students is if they’ve done some work experience and can apply what they’ve learned.”
Social work tutor

10.31 In contrast to this emphasis on the generic skills contained in the diploma, other tutors indicated that applicants to their course would need to have specific subject knowledge. Candidates would need to have studied a diploma relevant to the subject for which they wished to apply. Most construction tutors and some creative and media tutors took this view. For example,

“We would accept the level 3 creative and media diploma applicants to any of our courses.” Digital Media tutor

“The new CBE diploma should be a good feed into the HNC. We wouldn’t accept other diplomas.” Construction tutor

10.32 Admissions tutors for construction courses emphasised particularly the subject knowledge that applicants needed to have for entry to their courses. One tutor, for example, mentioned the need for students to have covered particular concepts in maths, and another stated that he would want diploma students to have covered “...the same material as in the Edexcel course.” One tutor was quite critical of the level of subject knowledge in the CBE advanced diploma, saying,

“It seems they don’t provide the underpinning knowledge for HNC. ...they need to have done the electrical content to come on the HNC Building Services (Electrical) course.” Construction tutor

10.33 Construction tutors were also more likely than tutors in the C&M and SHD diploma lines to say that applicants should have done an extended project in the subject they wished to specialise in, so emphasising more the development of subject knowledge through the project rather than the development of research skills.

10.34 There were some admissions tutors who indicated that they would probably ask for particular specialisms from diploma applicants. This was most likely to be the case for tutors on courses which might receive the C&M advanced diploma. Here tutors were interested in which disciplines students had specialised in within their diploma course. For example,

“We want details of which discipline they are doing within the Creative and Media diploma – is it fashion, printing, etc? Some options we would be interested in but not others.” History of Art tutor

10.35 Some tutors were also keen to specify certain ASL learning options which students should have taken. For example, the admissions tutor for a music degree courses indicated that applicants would need to have taken an A2 qualification in music, or specialist music qualifications, as their ASL option.

“What we’ve asked for for music is that within the diploma they still get an A2 in Music.” Music tutor

10.36 A digital media tutor said that, although he did not specify any particular options, A level Maths and English “would be useful if they were interested in animation or games.” A level History of Art was also “preferred” by one admissions tutor for this subject, and she also indicated A level Art would be “useful” for Fine Art courses.

10.37 Interestingly, whilst the C&M diploma line might be thought to emphasise skills development, admissions tutors for this line seemed more likely to require specific subject knowledge for progression into Higher Education. Several tutors noted that the C&M diploma line was very broad, with many possible options, and foresaw difficulties for admission tutors in knowing which particular creative and media disciplines candidates would have covered. One tutor noted, for example,

“...from the way the 14 - 19 diplomas were originally pitched they looked to be so ‘pick and mix’ – there was a lack of specificity. It looked as though students could do a very varied curriculum – all sorts of subjects.” Journalism tutor

10.38 Overall, the research suggests that CBE and C&M diploma students may find it more difficult to progress to Higher Education than students from other diploma lines, due to the emphasis tutors seemed to place on specific subject knowledge. This could potentially restrict their access to a range of HE courses. There might be more progression opportunities for those who had studied the SHD diploma line as admissions tutors in this area were perhaps more willing to value the generic skills developed in the diploma.

10.39 Attitudes towards progression agreements

The research also explored admissions tutors’ knowledge of the progression agreements in relation to diploma courses in existence or under development in their institutions, and their views about such agreements in general, including the possibility of developing local and sub-regional progression agreements.

10.40 Progression agreements can be defined as, “Formal detailed agreements which enable student progression from one course of study to higher level courses of study and must be agreed to, and signed by, course leaders and the institutions involved. The sender institution may be a Further Education College, Higher Education Institution, company providing work-based learning, employers’ representative body, or other provider of vocational education. The receiving institution will normally be either a Higher Education Institution or Further Education College offering Higher Education courses. Progression Agreements may make guarantees to learners of interviews, or of an offer of a place on a course. In some cases they will include additional agreements about teaching and learning activities, or about the support that is available to learners.” (From www.wylln.ac.uk)

10.41 As noted earlier in section 9, the research found that no HEIs in the study had as yet finalised formal progression agreements from the advanced diploma course to HE, to the knowledge of the admissions tutors interviewed, although some progression agreements were under development.

10.42 Lack of Knowledge of Progression Agreements

Whilst progression agreements can support progression from the diploma to Higher Education, admissions tutors are unlikely to explore the possibility of developing such agreements if they are not clear what they involve. The research found that there seemed to be a lack of knowledge of the meaning of progression agreements among some tutors and some appeared to confuse progression agreements with partnership arrangements or other relationships with universities. Some saw outreach activities with schools as a type of progression relationship. For example, one tutor commented,

“They cover a lot about progression in outreach.” Psychology tutor

10.43 Tutors’ attitudes towards the development of progression agreements

Admissions tutors’ attitudes towards the development of progression agreements were then explored in more detail. Overall, there was found to be no clear view among admission tutors on the desirability of developing progression agreements. On the one hand, there were some tutors who expressed arguments in favour of their development whilst others expressed more negative views.

10.44 One argument in favour of the development of progression agreements tended to be expressed in terms of providing the institution with students defined as ‘quality’. Several tutors used the terms ‘good’ and ‘quality’ to describe the type of student they wanted progression agreements to offer them and indicated that they might consider developing a progression agreement if they had noticed that a school or college was already sending them good students and they wanted to maintain that relationship. “If ... we could see that there was quality there and the students coming out met our requirements, we could do it.” Health professions tutor

“We have schools at the moment who send good students so it would be good to have a progression agreement with them.” Music tutor

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10.45 Others expressed the argument in terms of wider participation. For example, one tutor said,

“I’d be very happy to look at it....The reason for a progression agreement is to encourage students from non-traditional backgrounds to come to big, well known, good universities like X that they might not have otherwise thought about.” Social work tutor

10.46 However, around half of the admissions tutors interviewed expressed arguments against the development of progression agreements. Some expressed concerns about possible unfairness to other applicants, as did one tutor for a childhood studies course,

“...if we give guaranteed entry - which I imagine is what a progression agreement means I don’t think it leads to a greater fairness.” Childhood studies tutor

10.47 Others were concerned about possible restriction of student choice as they thought a progression agreement would prevent students from applying to other institutions. Others expressed concerns that a formal progression agreement could tie a college or university into an arrangement where it had to accept students from the partner institution even though the ‘quality’ of the students had fallen, possibly as a result of changes in teaching staff.

“An argument against progression agreements might be that, if the teachers change, the quality of students might not be as good.” Music tutor

10.48 Several admission tutors gave more pragmatic reasons for not developing progression agreements. For popular courses, where applications were already high, there seemed to be no need to develop agreements which could increase the number of applications further. For example, one tutor commented,

“The thing is that it is so popular we have never had to do much really to recruit because so many people want to do it.” Social work tutor

10.49 Others implied that they would be probably only be interested in developing links with institutions where there were large numbers of students who aspired to progress to Higher Education and were interested in the particular course for which the tutor was responsible. There was a sense here of some tutors weighing the effort involved in developing a progression agreement with the number of students that might result.

10.50 Finally, there was the issue of the image the HEI wished to convey. One tutor suggested that there might be a reluctance to develop progression agreements as they might be interpreted as the institution being desperate for students. As she commented, “The danger is that the university or school comes over as needing students. We want to give an image of selecting students, not recruiting. ... Admissions is all about perception, image – creating an impression of a course or a university to applicants.” Music tutor

10.51 Facilitating the Development of Progression Agreements

Admissions tutors were also asked what factors they thought would facilitate the development of progression agreements. Here a number of tutors who had been involved in the development of progression agreements which they felt had been successful mentioned the importance of involving partners from the outset, i.e. taking a collaborative approach to bids, holding regular meetings, and building on existing, informal relationships between institutions. Several thought that there needed to have been extensive previous personal contact with the schools or colleges that might be involved in order to develop knowledge about each institution’s courses. Both parties needed to be interested in making a link and maintaining it, as one tutor commented,

“It’s about keeping the relationship going so that you actually do work together in different ways - it’s not just an agreement on paper.” Social work tutor

10.52 Tutors also mentioned the importance of involving senior staff from partner organisations able to make decisions about the commitment of resources, and building on curriculum links between schools / colleges and particular Higher Education institutions.

10.53 Sub-regional progression agreements

The research also asked tutors their views on sub-regional progression agreements. A sub-regional progression agreement can be defined as a formal agreement between several sender institutions in a sub-regional area and a receiving institution. Clearly, such agreements can facilitate progression of diploma students to Higher Education as they aim to establish clear and coherent routes on to Higher Education courses.

10.54 It did not seem that many of the admissions tutors interviewed were familiar with the term as many asked what a sub-regional progression agreement would involve. Two tutors who did seem to understand the term supported the development of such an approach.

“We are in favour of progression agreements... a West Yorkshire progression agreement would be a good idea.” Media tutor

“I think they are a great idea. . . It would be good to develop these.” Social care tutor

10.55 For these staff, one of the advantages of having a sub-regional progression agreement was the greater transparency for students, as there would be some standardisation in the progression agreements developed by different institutions. Such agreements were also seen as possibly leading to greater standardisation of quality between schools. One construction tutor also mentioned that there could be advantages for colleges if there was the possibility for the ‘cross-over of students’ between institutions, or the use of courses that other institutions had developed. He also felt sub-regional progression agreements could also promote the diploma qualification by giving it more publicity.

10.56 However, a more widely-held view seemed to be that sub-regional progression agreements might be a good idea but they would be difficult to develop. Several tutors raised the issue of competition between HEI’s in this context.

“I can’t see them working as it is a competitive thing between universities...who’ll do the work for it?” Construction tutor

“A sub-regional progression agreement would be useful but getting it would be hard. Institutions are in competition with each other.” Construction tutor

10.57 Overall, it seemed that some admissions tutors would favour the development of progression agreements, at a local or sub-regional level, between the 14 – 19 diplomas and HEIs. However, more seemed to be uncertain about what such agreements would involve, or perceived them in a negative light. If this was the case, they would perhaps be unlikely to be involved in their development.

10.58 Summary

The main levers and barriers to progression to Higher Education from the advanced diplomas suggested by the interviews with HE admissions tutors were as follows.

10.59 All the admissions tutors in the study indicated that they would accept the 14 - 19 advanced diploma as an entry qualification to Higher Education. Tutors varied, however, in whether they would accept any 14 - 19 advanced diploma, seeing the generic skills developed as important, or would accept only that relevant to their HE course, seeing the acquisition of prior subject knowledge as important. Tutors likely to receive applicants from the SHD diploma line were more likely to emphasise the former, and tutors from the C&M and CBE diplomas lines, the latter.

10.60 Admissions tutors overall seemed to regard the advanced diplomas positively. The inclusion of the extended project and generic skills seen as particularly useful preparation for HE as these elements developed independent research and reflective skills.

10.61 Admissions tutors seemed less likely to emphasise, or require information about ASL options that applicants had studied than had previously been thought. There seemed to be a lack of knowledge among some admissions tutors of the core content and structure of the advanced diplomas. They wanted information from applicants about the particular discipline studied for the C&M diploma, and the topic of all students’ extended project.

10.62 Some admissions tutors seemed to perceive the diploma as primarily a vocational qualification, lacking the depth required for entry to courses they defined as ‘academic’ courses and perhaps more likely to be taken by less able students.

10.63 There was no universal acceptance among admission tutors of the desirability of developing progression agreements from the diplomas to Higher Education, and arguments were expressed both for and against such agreements at both local and sub-regional levels. There was also some confusion about the meaning of progression agreements in general.

11.0 STAFF DEVELOPMENT NEEDS

11.1 A further aim of the research was to provide information to WYLLN to inform a series of staff development events to facilitate progression from the 14 – 19 diplomas to Higher Education and the development of progression agreements.

11.2 Participants in the research were asked to suggest possible topics for staff development events. Most interviewees expressed the view that such events would be valuable, although some felt there was already sufficient information and training available on delivery of the diploma and curriculum planning.

11.3 HE admissions tutors indicated a need for detailed information on the content and structure of the advanced diplomas, including detailed information about unit content and the level of skills students would develop. Events would need to be subject-specific as events targeted at a general audience were felt to be less useful, as indicated by the following comments,

“It needs to be subject specific, targeted at particular subject specialisms.”

“Events where the diploma specific to your own course is discussed.”

“For the CBE diploma, it would be useful to know which units, subjects they will have done at school, what they will be coming to us with.”

11.4 Both HE and school / college staff thought there was a need for more information to be made available on potential progression routes and linkages between the various diploma lines and HE courses.

“Need general awareness raising for particular diploma lines with HE staff. What do degrees cover, how do they fit in with diplomas?”

“Useful to have packages of information about L3 diplomas to give to HE staff, organised by specialist subject, setting out content of (the) diploma course and the skills/knowledge/ learning experiences diploma students will have had compared to A level applicants. Needs to be academically focussed and subject specific.”

11.5 There was also a desire among admission tutors for more contact with diploma students and staff in schools and colleges to find out about their real experiences of teaching and learning on the advanced diploma and also to see examples of students’ work.

“HE needs to have more face to face contact with school and FE tutors. HE wants to understand the educational experience diploma students have had – what’s worked, what’s not worked. ... They could then build on that in the design of courses.”

“Meetings where admissions tutors could meet existing diploma students and look at their work, show them the projects they do in final year. Talk to them about their work.”

“Having students and staff talking about their experiences of teaching and learning on the advanced diploma would be invaluable.”

11.6 As much information is already available online and in printed form, it was suggested that roadshows or similar events, which could be tailored to subject specialisms, with opportunities to ask questions, might attract a wider audience, particularly if they could be delivered to staff within their own institutions, so removing the need to travel to an event. Typical comments from tutors were,

“WYLLN could do roadshows but let them come to the college, not meet in hotels.”

11.7 Details of contact names in schools and colleges were also requested in order to develop links. Open days and taster days (both in HEIs and in schools and colleges) were suggested as ways in which staff and students from different sectors could meet and begin to form relationships which might lead to progression agreements, although an online chatroom could also be useful.

“HE staff need named contacts in other sectors – who to contact in schools /colleges. Give a lead in. Making contacts, providing names of who to contact.”

“An online space where prospective students could contact and talk to staff and ask questions might be useful. It would also be good for our students on the HE course to answer questions. It could be a chatroom type link.”

11.8 School and college staff felt they needed more information from HE tutors about what was expected of students in HE to help them better prepare their students for HE entry. This included more information on the content and structure of new HE courses now available. For example,

“School /college staff need information on what degrees are available. Need learners to understand what pre-requisites they need.”

“Schools could also learn from HE about developing independent learners...getting them to feel more confident about their ability to learn independently, how to find information.”

11.9 It was also suggested that there was a need for better information, advice and guidance in schools and colleges to take account of the new diploma courses and wider opportunities available.

11.10 Overall, the research found that staff development events on the 14 – 19 diplomas could be valuable if targeted at appropriate staff and focussed on identified needs. A half day event organised by the research project, at which tutors currently delivering the advanced diplomas presented information on course content and delivery methods, attracted interest from HE admissions staff and college tutors.

12.0 POTENTIAL FOR ESTABLISHING AN ONGOING ‘VIRTUAL MEETING SPACE’

12.1 A further aim of the research, as stated in the original proposal, was to explore the potential for establishing an ongoing ‘virtual meeting space’ to act as an online ‘dating agency’ for potential progression partners. However, WYLLN had since established a social networking area on its website, thus making the original aim less relevant.

12.2 The proposal was therefore revisited and, after discussion with WYLLN, new guidelines were agreed which stated that the ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site would be visited and interviews held with relevant members of WYLLN and / or University of Huddersfield staff to produce a written report which considered and commented on -

- the ease of use of the ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site for potential partners
- the potential of the above site for hosting the 14 - 19 Advanced Diploma curriculum map database produced by the research project
- the level of technical support needed to maintain the above database on the WYLLN website
- the ways in which partners might use the above database to facilitate contact with possible progression partners
- how sustainability for the above database on the WYLLN site could be achieved.

12.3 Desk research was conducted and the WYLLN communications and marketing manager and University of Huddersfield School of Education and Professional Development educational technology specialist were interviewed. The researcher also visited and explored the ‘WYLLN Online’ site. Contact was also made with the supplier of the ‘WYLLN Online’ site at the University of Bradford.

12.4 WYLLN Online social networking website

The ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site was developed in September 2008 using a Ning platform which was customised for WYLLN’s own purposes. It is located in the Partner Zone of the WYLLN website (www.wyllan.ac.uk). According to the WYLLN communications and marketing manager, the WYLLN currently has around 1200 members, of whom around 130, approximately 13%, have joined the social networking site.

12.5 Ease of use of the ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site for potential partners

From the perspective of a potential partner possibly unfamiliar with social networking sites, the ‘WYLLN Online’ site is easy to use. A new user has to be invited to join by an existing member. They are then sent details of how to log into the site using their email address and password. This process is straightforward and would be familiar to any email user.

12.6 The site has a number of sections - Main Page, Invite, My Page, Members, Forum, Groups and Blogs - allowing members to gain and share information and participate in various activities. The Main page of the site shows a list of members, groups, forum topics, blog posts and latest activities. The page is clear and encourages users to participate in activities, such as inviting others to join, customising their personal page or adding content to a blog or discussion.

12.7 Activity on the site can take place around the content and information displayed on a member’s profile page - ‘My Page’. The profile fields available allow users to display information about their job title and work and any other information about themselves they wish to share. A comment wall allows other users to ‘talk to’ the member by posting a message. ‘My Page’ also shows latest activities, which members are now friends and which groups they have joined.

12.8 The user has some control over the information presented about themselves on their profile page as there are options allowing the user to edit the information presented. The user also has some control over the privacy settings for their page, and can restrict who can view their profile page and the content they have added. Users are also able to exercise some control over who can add comments to their blog, and can choose to be asked for their approval before comments that others have posted are published on the site. The site also informs users that certain items, including messages sent, pages or profiles viewed or invitations refused, will not be made available to others.

12.9 The sections of the site possibly most relevant to potential partners are the Forum and Groups sections. The Forum section of the site currently has postings by WYLLN members on a number of topics, allowing members to gain and share information and contribute to discussions on these issues. The Groups section of the site allows members to set up, or join, groups on specific topics of interest, such as various WYLLN Sector Groups. There is also an ‘Open Space’ group, where any member can post a topic for discussion.

12.10 Overall, the site appears easy for potential partners to use, although it may need more signposting as the location of the ‘WYLLN Online’ site at the bottom of the Partner Zone page was not immediately obvious.

12.11 The potential of the site for hosting the curriculum database

The curriculum map database produced by the 14 -19 Advanced Diploma research project could be located in the Partner Zone of the ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site, within the ‘Groups’ section. A group would need to be set up, possibly entitled ‘14 - 19 Diplomas’ and the database could be attached as an Excel document. This would allow those interested in the topic to visit the discussion group, open the database document, find the information they were interested in and make comments or contribute to a discussion with other members. Individual members of the discussion group could also invite colleagues who were not currently members to join and take part in the discussion. Such exchanges of information could facilitate the development of partnerships and progression agreements. There would not appear to be any technical issues which would prevent the ‘WYLLN Online’ site from hosting the database.

12.12 The level of technical support needed to maintain the database on the WYLLN site

There would not appear to be a need for any particular technical support to maintain the curriculum map database on the ‘WYLLN Online’ site. It is understood that WYLLN have a content management system for their website and technical support is provided by a third party supplier on a needs basis, so it may be assumed that this would also apply to the database.

12.13 The level of administrative support needed to maintain up-to-date information on the database is perhaps a more important issue. The database would need to be updated regularly to ensure it remained accurate and relevant. This would require diploma consortia co-ordinators to supply any new information to WYLLN, or whoever was responsible for maintaining the database. Updating could be done on a monthly basis, with a more extensive twice-yearly review to ensure any courses for the new academic year were included. It is understood that usual practice on social networking sites is for the member who posts information, or establishes a group, to also take responsibility for its maintenance and updating. If this were the case, there would be no need for WYLLN to undertake this role. However, in the case of the database, the 14 - 19 Advanced Diploma research project will shortly come to an end and so there will be no means of updating the information unless WYLLN took responsibility for doing so.

12.14 Ways in which partners might use the curriculum database

As explained above, the database might be hosted by the ‘WYLLN Online’ site using the Groups facility in the Partners Zone. A 14 -19 Diploma discussion group might be created and the database placed on the site as an attachment. Members might be alerted to the material in the database by posting a news item or initiating a discussion on ways for WYLLN members to of engage with the 14 – 19 diplomas on the Open Space site or on the Forum page. This could stimulate interest and serve to answer any initial questions members might have about 14 - 19 diplomas and/or progression agreements. Examples of good practice in creating and sustaining progression agreements could also be posted.

12.15 As the database includes contact details of consortia diploma co-ordinators and the schools/colleges delivering or planning advanced diplomas in West Yorkshire, HEI or school/college staff at institutions which were members of WYLLN interested in making links with schools or colleges could download information and use this to make contact with consortia and/or schools or colleges delivering the diploma. They could invite others to become members of the WYLLN social network, so expanding the number of potential partners, and could share information and take part in group discussions to identify possible progression partners. Any member could post a message on the site inviting others who were interested in making links to contact them. Others would be able to see and take part in the discussions, so allowing a number of potential partners to discuss issues together at any one time. They could also explore possible contacts on a one-to-one basis using the more traditional methods of telephone, letter or email, if they wished to do so.

12.0 POTENTIAL FOR ESTABLISHING AN ONGOING ‘VIRTUAL MEETING SPACE’

12.16 Are members likely to use an online social networking site to make links and develop progression agreements? An online social networking site offers the advantage for members of being able to contact and discuss issues with a number of members at any one time. The Groups facility allows members to contact those who already have an interest in the issue, so saving time. Others joining a discussion can see previous contributions and who has participated, which is not possible if individual emails were used. WYLLN also has a record of contacts made and interested parties, so allowing some control to be exercised over the process of development of progression agreements.

12.17 However, there are some limitations. Some potential partners may be reluctant to reveal their approaches to, or negotiations with, other possible partners publicly in a group discussion. It would also seem that the development of progression relationships requires personal contact through telephone calls and face to face meetings. It is also not clear whether all the schools, colleges and consortia delivering the diplomas are currently WYLLN partners, although they might be invited to join.

12.18 It is also the case that only around 13% of WYLLN members have currently joined the ‘WYLLN Online’ site and so posting the database on the site mean it was available only to a small group of WYLLN members, although others might be encouraged to join in the future. As access to the ‘WYLLN Online’ site is via the WYLLN website, some members might be reluctant to take the time needed to visit the site and post, or respond to, messages, particularly if they are already heavy email users.

12.19 An alternative might be for the WYLLN main website (www.wylln.ac.uk) to host the 14 - 19 diploma curriculum map database. There would appear to be no technical reasons why this could not be done and anyone visiting the WYLLN website could consult the database. This would make the information more widely available and perhaps encourage its use as an information resource as access would not be limited to those who were members of the social networking site.

12.20 However, a major disadvantage of this approach would be that WYLLN would have no way of monitoring usage of the database as there would be no record of discussions. WYLLN would have no means of knowing the number of users, their identity, potential partners involved in discussions, or the state of negotiations around any progression agreements.

12.21 Also, if posted on the WYLLN website, there would be no opportunity for users to discuss the curriculum map database as a group, although they would obviously still be able to contact and comment on it by email to other individuals in the traditional way, although they may be less inclined to do so if they had to leave the website and use email to do this.

12.22 How could sustainability for the database on the WYLLN site be achieved?

As outlined above, it would seem technically possible for either the WYLLN website or the ‘WYLLN Online’ site to host the database, although there would be a need to consider how best to maintain and update the information contained in the database.

12.23 However, there would appear to be problems in achieving sustainability for the database on either the WYLLN website or the ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site in the long term as it is understood that WYLLN as an organisation will not exist after 2011. The 14 - 19 diploma progression project managed by the School of Education and Professional Development at the University of Huddersfield will be completed by the end of September 2009 and therefore the University of Huddersfield will not be able to maintain a database and it is difficult to see which other organisation or individual might do so.

12.24 We can conclude that the potential exists for establishing an ongoing ‘virtual meeting space’ to act as an online ‘dating agency’ for potential progression partners by using the ‘WYLLN Online’ social networking site. However the potential appears limited to the short-term; it would appear to have limited potential over a longer period as sustainability for the database could not be guaranteed.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

13.1 Consortia organisations have been established in each West Yorkshire local authority area, responsible for current and planned delivery of 14 -19 diplomas in partnership with schools, colleges and other organisations. Plans for the introduction of new diploma lines have been developed, and for the extension and promotion of the existing diploma lines. It would seem that most West Yorkshire diploma consortia are introducing diploma lines at levels 1 and 2 before introducing level 3.

13.2 The pattern of provision of 14 - 19 advanced diplomas to date in West Yorkshire for the CBE, C&M diploma lines is limited, with only two consortia currently running level 3 courses. There are no advanced diploma courses in SHD currently running in West Yorkshire. It is estimated that approximately 52 students are currently taking advanced diploma courses in West Yorkshire.

13.3 The number of planned advanced diploma courses to be introduced in 2009 - 2010 is lower than expected, although the SHD diploma line will be introduced by Education Leeds, Kirklees Collegiates and Campus Calderdale. A total of ten planned courses have been identified, although it is possible that courses that are currently running will expand their student numbers. The number of applications from the advanced diploma to Higher Education over the next few years is also likely to be lower than anticipated when the research project was commissioned, due to the reduced number of advanced diploma courses planned for introduction by consortia in 2009 - 2010, although this situation may change in the future.

13.4 The research identified relatively few curriculum development projects in relation to the 14 - 19 diplomas currently being undertaken in West Yorkshire. The Motivational Maths project at Leeds Metropolitan University and a number of Progression Modules at level 4 have been developed by the University of Huddersfield to prepare school students for progression into the CBE, C&M and Manufacturing and Product Design diploma lines. These projects have had funding and support from WYLLN.

13.5 Three case studies have been presented to illustrate the delivery of the advanced diplomas in West Yorkshire and highlight the experiences of tutors on CBE and C&M courses which are currently running. The main conclusions to be drawn from the case studies are that tutors are very positive about the new qualifications and see them as offering considerable opportunities to enhance learning. The incorporation of PLTS into the diploma curriculum was seen as valuable. Tutors felt this element of the course had the potential to allow students to develop as independent and reflective learners, and that these skills would be of considerable value in supporting progression to Higher Education.

13.6 However, concerns were expressed about the level and pace of work on both the CBE and C&M advanced diplomas. Tutors considered the level expected to be too high, as well as making too great demands on students’ ability to manage their own time and workloads. The role of functional skills in the qualification was also problematic; this element of the course had not been enjoyed by students on either of the diploma lines, and the necessity of mandatory courses in English, Maths and ICT for those students who already had a level 2 qualification in these subjects is debatable.

13.7 It seemed the colleges involved in diploma delivery recognised the importance of the ASL options in supporting progression, and there was also potential for ASL to be used to extend the institution’s range of provision. However, it was not possible to explore the relationship between the ASL options and the diploma principal learning units in any detail as individual students were taking different ASL options and so interviews with each student would have been required. It was also not possible to draw conclusions about the extended projects as work on these was scheduled for the second year of the diploma course and so had not begun during the period of the research.

13.8 A major focus of the research was the clarification of opportunities for progression from the advanced diploma to Higher Education. Advanced diploma students could potentially progress to a wide range of courses as achievement of an advanced diploma at grade A* for principal, generic and additional and specialist learning, can be worth up to 490 UCAS tariff points. (See www.ucas.ac.uk)

13.9 At the time the research was conducted, no progression agreements from the advanced diploma to Higher Education had been finalised in West Yorkshire, although two progression agreements were in the process of development.

13.10 The main levers and barriers to progression to Higher Education from the advanced diplomas suggested by the interviews with admissions tutors were as follows. All the admissions tutors in the study indicated that they would accept the 14 - 19 advanced diploma as an entry qualification to Higher Education. Tutors varied, however, in whether they would accept any 14 - 19 advanced diploma, seeing the generic skills developed within the diploma course as important, or would accept only that relevant to their HE course. This latter group saw the acquisition of prior subject knowledge as important.

13.0 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

13.11 The generic skills seen as particularly useful by tutors for HE were independent research and reflective skills, suggesting that the student's performance in the extended project and PLTS is very important. Admissions tutors seemed less likely to emphasise, or require information about the ASL options students had taken, than had been thought when the research was commissioned.

13.12 However, there was limited knowledge among some admissions tutors of the core content and structure of the advanced diplomas. Some admissions tutors seemed to perceive the diploma as primarily a vocational qualification, and/or more likely to be undertaken by less able students. There was also no universal acceptance of the desirability of developing progression agreements and limited understanding of sub-regional progression agreements.

13.13 The research also identified opportunities for staff development events which could be organised by WYLLN. The main needs identified were:

- detailed information on the content and structure of the advanced diplomas, including content of units and information about the level of skills students would develop
- information on likely numbers of diploma students likely to apply to HE courses
- information/sessions tailored to subject specialisms of admissions tutors
- meetings and contact with diploma students and staff to find out about their real experiences of teaching and learning on the advanced diploma and to see examples of students' work
- details of contact names in schools and colleges in order to develop links
- school and college staff wanted more information from HE tutors about what is expected of students in HE to help them better prepare their students, including information on the content and structure of new HE courses now available.

13.14 Recommendations

On the basis of the evidence collected in the research, we would make the following recommendations in respect of facilitating progression from the 14 - 19 advanced diplomas to Higher Education.

13.15 Contact should be maintained with the diploma consortia to obtain up-to-date information on diploma lines running and planned, partners involved and their contribution, student numbers and progression relationships with HEIs.

13.16 Consideration might be given to ways to support and encourage the development and take-up of curriculum development projects which could encourage progression from level 2 and 3 diploma courses into Higher Education.

13.17 There is a need to find effective ways to provide detailed information on, and understanding of, 14 – 19 diplomas and progression for both HE and school/college tutors. There would also appear to be a need for information about the HE opportunities available to diploma students to be made available to school and college tutors.

13.18 Staff development events which could provide HE and school/college staff with opportunities to meet and make contact with staff from other institutions should be considered. Roadshows or similar events, presenting information tailored to subject specialisms and allowing question and answer sessions, may be more effective, given that much printed and online information is already available.

13.19 Consideration might be given to ways of increasing the awareness of HE admissions tutors of local and sub-regional progression agreements. Examples of good practice in the development and maintenance of progression agreements might be publicised further.

13.20 Opportunities might be offered for joint working between HEIs and schools/colleges (for example, on curriculum development projects) which could lead to the development of informal links and contacts between schools, colleges and HEIs, as these may lead to more formal relationships and agreements.

13.21 At this stage, it is not possible to state which consortia and HEIs in West Yorkshire would be prepared to enter into progression agreements for the respective diploma lines as the research has found that development of the diplomas and progression routes is, as yet, at an early stage and any attempt to make such statements would be premature. We would recommend that this issue is revisited at a later date.

13.22 There may be opportunities for the development of a sub-regional approach to progression agreements within the respective diploma lines, but, at this stage, this approach would also seem to be premature and consideration might be given to increasing awareness of progression agreements in general among school, college, consortia and HEI staff.

13.23 Finally, consideration might also be given to the further development and promotion of the 'WYLLN Online' social networking site as a virtual meeting space to host the 14 - 19 advanced diploma curriculum map database.

APPENDIX 1. CONSORTIA AND EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS CONTACTED

The following organisations were contacted in the course of the project.

Bradford College
Bradford Confederations
The University of Bradford
Calderdale and Kirklees Careers
Calderdale College
Campus Calderdale
Education Leeds
The University of Huddersfield
Joseph Priestley College, Leeds
Kirklees College
Kirklees Collegiates
Leeds City College
Leeds College of Art & Design
Leeds College of Building
Leeds College of Music
Leeds College of Technology
Leeds Metropolitan University
Leeds Trinity & All Saints College
The University of Leeds
Leeds West City Learning Centre
Park Lane College, Leeds
Thomas Danby College, Leeds
Wakefield College
Wakefield Metropolitan District Diploma Consortium
West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network

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APPENDIX 2. LIST OF ACRONYMS USED

A-level – Advanced level
AQA- Assessment and Qualifications Alliance awarding body
ASL – Additional and specialist learning
C&M – Creative and Media
CBE – Construction and Built Environment
DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families
EDI – Educational Development International awarding body
GCSE – General Certificate of School Education
GLH – Guided learning hours
HEI – Higher Educational institution
HNC- Higher National Certificate
HND- Higher National Diploma
ICT- Information and communications technology
LCAD – Leeds College of Art & Design
LWCLC – Leeds West City Learning Centre
OCR – Oxford, Cambridge and RSA awarding body
PLTS – Personal learning and thinking skills
QCA – Qualifications and Curriculum Authority
RSA – Royal Society of Arts awarding body
SEPD – School of Education and Professional Development
SHD – Society, Health and Development
UCAS – Universities and Colleges Admissions System
WYLLN – West Yorkshire Lifelong Learning Network

APPENDIX 3: USEFUL REFERENCES

UCAS
www.ucas.ac.uk / www.ucas.ac.uk/students/beforeyouapply/diplomas/14-19diplomas
Lists courses available by institution, subject and entry requirements of courses. HEI diploma statements.

DCSF
www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19
Information on content of 14 – 19 diploma and list of providers.

EDEXCEL
www.edexcel.com/migrationdocuments/Diploma
Specifications for content of diploma courses.

OCR
www.ocr.org.uk/qualifications/type/diploma
Specifications for content of diploma courses.

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (2008) 'Overview of the Diploma'

