



Department  
for Education

# **Study Programmes for 16- to 19-year- olds**

**Government response to consultation  
and plans for implementation**

**July 2012**

## **Foreword by the Secretary of State for Education Michael Gove MP**

I am delighted to recommend to you this document, arising as it does from the recommendations contained within Alison Wolf's ground breaking report on vocational education in this country. The introduction of Study Programmes represents a radical and much needed change to the way we provide education and training for young people aged 16- to 19-year-olds. It builds on excellence in the way some vocational education is already provided and represents a further and significant contribution to this Government's commitment to raise educational attainment and achievement.

Study Programmes will extend the benefits of challenging and substantial vocational qualifications enjoyed by many students taking academic programmes to those studying more vocational subjects. All young people will get the opportunity to gain the kind of qualifications and experience that employers are seeking but all too often cannot find. This also signals an expansion in the provision of work experience for those young people who would find it a valuable introduction to the workplace.

Study Programmes will be backed up by far-reaching reforms in the way post-16 education is funded, monitored and reported. The introduction of education destination measures this year and employment measures in 2013 will, for the first time, provide real choice for students and parents. Anyone will be able to judge whether attending a particular school, college or training provider is likely to offer them the best opportunity to progress.

Together these changes strip away barriers which prevent all schools, colleges and training providers from offering 16- to 19-year-olds excellence in the provision of vocational education. I am convinced that this is exactly what they want to do but cannot due to outmoded funding rules and perverse or obscure incentives. This document heralds long overdue changes needed to ensure that vocational education reflects the kind of commitment to excellence which we know is needed across our entire education system.

Michael Gove MP,  
Secretary of State for Education

## Foreword by Professor Alison Wolf

The labour market of today is very different from that of ten, let alone twenty years ago. We need to equip young people to enter it successfully and to thrive in the long term; and in too many cases we have been failing to do so. The government's new principles for Study Programmes are central to the reform of 16-19 education, and I am delighted that they are being introduced.

Post-16, students should be offered a wide range of options; but they also need coherent programmes, which stretch them and give them genuinely new skills. In my Review of Vocational Education, which I submitted to the government in 2011, I found that many of our current arrangements stood in the way of excellence rather than promoting it.

Providers were driven down a route of amassing as many formal certificates as possible, and of prioritising easy options over challenging ones. There were no incentives to think in over-arching programme terms, and no rewards for innovation.

I was particularly concerned at the way in which our system unintentionally but very powerfully dissuaded schools, colleges and other providers from offering Maths and English GCSE to the millions of young people without a C grade. Moreover, this was happening at a time when Maths and English are more important than ever before in the labour market and as a precondition for educational progression. Our system was also making it impossible for schools and colleges to develop innovative programmes involving substantial work experience, even though we know that such experience is valued enormously by employers, and is an important step to secure future employment.

The new principles for 16-19 Study Programmes, along with changes to the way in which schools, colleges and training providers are funded and their performance reviewed and reported remove important barriers to quality. They highlight the importance of maths and English, and of building programmes around substantial, well-recognised vocational qualifications. More generally, and critically, they place coherence and clear opportunities for progression at the centre of 16-19 education for every young person. They also, and rightly, make it clear that it is the government's role to enable and encourage the development of excellent programmes; but that it is education and training professionals who deliver them.

Excellent provision for the whole 16-18 age group (and those aged 19-24 with a learning difficulty assessment) cannot and should not be designed and dictated centrally. Programmes need to be developed by colleges, schools and providers, in response to the interests and ambitions of their clientele, and in response to local needs and demands. This is quite particularly true of vocational programmes which excel to the degree that local employers are closely connected and involved. I look forward to watching the post-16 sector develop high-quality and diverse programmes for this age group in the years ahead, and to a new era for vocational education.

Professor Alison Wolf,  
June 2012

# 1. Purpose

1. A public consultation on Study Programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds was completed on 4 January 2012<sup>1</sup>. The majority of respondents to the consultation welcomed the proposals and agreed with the principles presented and in particular, the emphasis on allowing schools, colleges and other training providers flexibility to tailor programmes to meet the needs of students. However the difficulties in implementing these changes with current funding and performance measures were acknowledged by a number of the respondents. A summary of the responses to the consultation is given at Annex A.
2. This document sets out the government's response to consultation and is intended to guide the rationale and quality standards for the development of 'good' Study Programmes. It should be read alongside the response to the parallel 16-19 funding formula review consultation. Schools, colleges and other providers are expected to introduce Study Programmes from September 2013 and to begin their planning from September 2012. The new approach to Study Programmes does not impact on the design of Apprenticeships because they already follow the key principles of the new approach.

# 2. Introduction

3. The consultation on Study Programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds set out proposals to ensure that from September 2013, all 16- to 19-year-olds in full time state-funded provision, including those on academic or vocational education programmes, would have the opportunity to study coherent, well thought out programmes which offer them breadth and depth and do not limit their options for future study or work.
4. The aim of Study Programmes is to maximise the potential of young people to progress onto higher education and/or skilled employment by ensuring that vocational routes to higher education and employment are seen as high quality and a genuine alternative to academic routes. This will be achieved through the following three objectives:
  - Improving the value of post-16 qualifications so that higher numbers of students achieve high-quality and valuable vocational qualifications which enable progression to higher levels of study and skilled employment;
  - Raising standards in post-16 English and mathematics so that higher numbers of students study English and mathematics (level 2) and work towards achieving GCSE A\*-C in these subjects;

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<sup>1</sup> Department for Education, Study Programmes for 16-19 year olds launch date 6 October 2011 respond by 4 January 2012

- Improving young people’s employability skills by increasing the number of students who experience the workplace and participate in other activity of value which does not necessarily lead to qualifications but enables progression into employment.
5. The consultation was based on the recommendations of the Wolf review of vocational education, published in March 2011<sup>2</sup>. Professor Wolf’s review championed vocational education as vital for the economy and providing many young people with a route into employment and further education. She also found, however, that a significant minority of young people were being offered only low-level qualifications that did not provide any real progression either in education or into employment.
  6. To address this, Professor Wolf recommended that Study Programmes should be governed by a set of general principles, namely that courses taken by 16- to 19-year-olds should:
    - not be wholly occupational and should include at least one qualification of substantial size which offers progression either into higher levels of education or into skilled employment;
    - include both qualification and non-qualification activity including, as and where appropriate, tutorial time and high quality work experience or internships;
    - include the study of English and mathematics and work towards the achievement of GCSE A\*-C for all students who do not already have these qualifications.
  7. All 16- to 19-year-olds should be engaged on programmes that offer them breadth, depth and progression into higher education, further study or skilled employment without unduly limiting the options open to them. This is already the case for most young people studying 'A' levels and vocational qualifications at that level. The Government now plans to extend this opportunity to all young people participating in post-16 education and training, benefiting around one half of all students who do not currently enjoy this opportunity.
  8. Schools and colleges, whose students follow ‘A’ level or other substantial level 3 vocational programmes focused on higher education or employment, are unlikely to need to change their programmes to fit the principles set out in this document. However the requirement for young people to work towards a grade C in English and maths, where that has not already been achieved, applies equally to young people on academic and vocational programmes. For the cohort of 16 year olds that took their GCSEs in 2007/08 17% of those who went on to study A/AS levels in 2008/09 had not already attained GCSE A\*-C in both English and Maths. Nevertheless many young people who have achieved a GCSE A\*-C grade in

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<sup>2</sup> Department for Education Review of Vocational Education - The Wolf Report, March 2011

English and maths will also benefit from continuing to study these subjects post-16.

9. Whereas an AS or A2 level qualification will take around 150 guided learning hours (GLH)<sup>3</sup>, the types of level 2 or 3 vocational qualifications which would equip a student to follow a particular trade or profession are often two or three times that size. At present, however, many students following vocational programmes are taking much smaller qualifications. At level 2 32% of enrolments in 2007/8 were for qualifications that were less than 100 guided learning hours (GLH) and at level 1 this is even higher at 41%. Courses of this size are of very limited value to students wishing to progress directly into employment.
10. It is encouraging that 77% of students taking level 2 vocational courses do progress to a level 3 course and 63% of students taking level 1 vocational courses progress to a level 2 course. This still leaves significant numbers of young people, however, taking qualifications which, without practical experience in work, offer very limited value to them in securing employment.
11. Many young people also start 16-19 education and training without the solid foundations in English and maths that will equip them for future education and employment. In 2010/11 41% of 16 year olds did not achieve GCSE A\*-C in English and 44% did not achieve GCSE A\*-C in maths. Worryingly few then went on to achieve that post-16. Of those who took their GCSEs in 2007/08, only 9% went on to achieve GCSE A\*-C in English and 8% in maths by the time they were 19.

### 3. DfE action to support the introduction of Study Programmes

12. **DfE Funding Reform** from 2013/14 will change the way post-16 funding is allocated so that we fund each institution at a standard rate for each student on roll<sup>4</sup>. Funding on a per student basis will remove barriers to the implementation of Study Programme principles identified by many respondents to the Government's consultation. Please see the 16-19 Funding Formula Review: *Funding Full Participation and Study Programmes for Young People*.
13. **Reformed 16-18 performance tables** will provide clear and easily understood measures of the achievements and progress of students attending each school or college. In future these will also capture student retention. In addition to the performance tables, new destination measures will show those who progressed to further education, higher education or employment after their Key Stage 4 or post-16 study. School and college data on GCSEs and other level 2 and 1

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<sup>3</sup> 100 guided learning hours is the equivalent of around 3 hours teaching time a week over the course of a full academic year

<sup>4</sup> With adjustments to reflect the content related costs of particular courses and with additional funding for disadvantaged students.

qualifications and those who go on to achieve English and maths GCSE having failed do so at Key Stage 4 will also be available for the first time. Annual data on A levels and other level 3 qualifications is already published.

14. **A new inspection framework** will be introduced. From September 2012 Ofsted inspections will continue to be focused on weaker providers with greater attention in inspections to observing standards of teaching, learning and assessment. From September 2013 particular attention will be paid to the quality and coherence of students' Study Programmes and their appropriateness in providing a route onto further or higher education or employment. Ofsted will be adding to their guidance in order to help inspectors to take into account the extent to which provision from September 2013 reflects individual Study Programme principles.
15. **Robust minimum standards** will be introduced. All 16-19 providers will be required to meet minimum standards of performance. Institutions which fail to meet these will face robust financial penalties, intervention and ultimately closure. The importance of students who have not achieved an A\*-C GCSE in maths and/or English by the age of 16 continuing to study these subjects is such that we also intend to introduce this as a condition of funding in the near future.
16. **A more dynamic education market** will create real choice for students and 16-19 institutions which fail to attract students, under perform against standards or inspection and fail to improve quickly enough will be subject to robust market exit criteria based on minimum standards protocol. The expansion of the Academy programme, Free Schools, University Technical Colleges, Studio Schools and the planned flexibility to enrol 14- to 16-year-olds year olds in Further Education will provide the kind of education market in which choice is maximised and high quality provision becomes the norm because of the greater competition amongst schools and colleges.

## 4. Guidance on the Design of 16-19 Study Programmes

17. Schools, colleges and other training providers will be expected to identify a member of the teaching/tutorial staff with overall responsibility for putting together and overseeing an individual student's Study Programmes.
18. Unless it can be clearly demonstrated *not* to be in the interests of the student when designing Study Programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds, schools, colleges and training providers should encourage students to:
  - progress to a level of study which is higher than their prior attainment;
  - take qualification(s) which are stretching rather than easy to pass;
  - take qualification(s) that are judged to be of good/suitable size and level of rigour that will enable genuine progression to meaningful employment, training or higher levels of education;

- achieve English and maths GCSE A\*-C or take English and maths provision that will lead to significant progress towards this if this has not already been achieved;
  - participate in value-added non-qualification activity and work experience, whenever appropriate.
19. These expectations are intended to be broad and flexible enough to meet the needs and interests of all full- and part-time students, irrespective of the field they wish to pursue or ability, including Learners with Learning Difficulties and Disabilities (LLDD)<sup>5</sup>.
20. As previously stated, most substantial academic programmes at level 3 (e.g. A level programmes) currently meet these criteria, provided the young person has already achieved a grade C in GCSE English and maths.
21. The requirement for young people to achieve – or work towards – at least a grade C in English and maths is part of a broader ambition to increase significantly the number of young people continuing to study maths post-16 by 2021. While it is not formally part of the Study Programme, schools and colleges should encourage young people to continue with their study of maths once they have achieved a level 2 qualification, in light of the value placed on mathematical ability by employers and higher education institutions.
22. Study Programmes for part-time students should adopt the same principles as full-time students on a pro-rata basis.
23. Feedback from the consultation suggested that these proposals are broadly welcomed but further clarification is needed to describe what is required of a ‘good’ Study Programme. The following section clarifies the detail concerning individual elements of 16-19 Study Programmes. **Annex B** provides examples of good practice studies and **Annex C** of a poor case study and what would be considered reasonable exceptions to Study Programme principles.
24. To support institutions in preparing for the introduction of Study Programmes in September 2013, a series of conferences with schools, colleges and training providers will be led by sector organisations in autumn 2012. These will help develop and disseminate best practice in implementing Study Programme principles as well as providing independent information, advice and guidance.

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<sup>5</sup> Study programmes apply predominantly to 16-19 year olds, but also to 19-24 year old students with a learning difficulty assessment or Educational and Health Care Plan who are still in Further Education.



## 5. Substantial Vocational Qualifications

25. Substantial vocational qualifications are widely respected and valued by employers, are seen as a passport into an occupation and should be:

**‘of sufficient size, weight and relevance to provide a nationally or locally recognised route into a trade, profession or other form of employment, or access to a university or higher education course’.**

26. Substantial vocational qualifications should consist of at least half of a student’s Study Programme. In most cases they will be at a level above the student’s prior achievement, although continued study at the same level – in a different subject or occupational area – can be justified where this is required for the student to access a particular career path.

27. The qualities of substantial vocational qualifications will vary sector by sector. Schools, colleges and training providers will be expected to satisfy themselves that the substantial vocational qualifications they offer are sufficiently robust, rigorous, relevant and command the confidence of employers and prepare young people for the workplace. It is envisaged that in the future employers and employer organisations will be increasingly involved in the development and recognition of the qualifications of greatest value to them. As Professor Wolf suggests in her report, employers are best placed to understand and evaluate vocational qualifications specific to their sector. Destination measures for individual schools and colleges will enable parents and students to judge the likelihood of the courses in enabling them to secure their chosen career path.

## 6. English and maths

28. English and maths are an essential pre-requisite for further education and employment. In future all students will be expected to take or work towards GCSE A\*-C<sup>6</sup> in English and/or maths as part of their Study Programme if they have not already achieved this (the approach in Apprenticeships is slightly different – see below for details). The type and level of English and maths studied should be able to demonstrate progression to a level higher than a student’s prior attainment. Funding conditions will enforce the inclusion of English and maths in Study Programmes.

29. Where GCSE A\*-C is not attainable within the time of the Study Programme (generally 2 years but could be 3 years), students can initially take other English or maths qualifications that would help them achieve GCSE over a longer period of time. Some students might need to continue to work towards achieving English and maths to at least grade C beyond the age of 19 where this is valued

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<sup>6</sup> This is subject to revision following future GCSE reform. The guidance will be updated to take account of the impact of GCSE reform on 16-19 Study Programmes when plans for these reforms are announced.

or set as a requirement by employers within the student's chosen field. From August 2012, adults will be funded to take GCSEs and other English and maths qualifications that support progression towards level 2.

30. A range of English and maths qualifications are currently available post-16 which include Functional Skills in English and maths at entry level, level 1 and level 2 and Free Standing Maths Qualifications (FSMQs) in maths at levels 1 and 2. These qualifications should meet the needs and abilities of the vast majority of students who might struggle to achieve immediately GCSE A\*-C, including those students with learning difficulties or disabilities.
31. Students with the most complex learning difficulties or disabilities might be better served by other types of English and maths teaching that support progression to higher levels in these subjects and prepare them for employment.
32. From September 2012, apprentices who have not yet achieved level 2 English and maths will have the opportunity to study these subjects to this level, through GCSE or Functional Skills. The statutory Specification of Apprenticeship Standards for England (SASE) sets the requirement for English and maths at a level below that of the Apprenticeship itself, so completion of an intermediate level Apprenticeship requires English and maths at level 1 only. Nevertheless, providers will be expected to ensure that the opportunity of level 2 English and maths is open to all students and to support and encourage their students to pursue this option.

## 7. Work Experience

33. Work experience, along with qualifications in maths and English, figures highly as the attribute young people most need to demonstrate in order to secure employment. In the 16-19 age group, work experience needs to meet the individual requirements of all students and these will vary depending on the type of qualifications and employment they choose. The style, content, timing, length and objectives of purposeful work experience placements will therefore need to be adapted to meet those needs.
34. Work experience is likely to be a substantial element of a Study Programme for students:
  - on vocational courses at any level, where purposeful work experience is an integral part of their qualification;
  - studying below level 2, who are not able to complete a substantial vocational qualification, where purposeful work experience is likely to be a major part of their Study Programme. These students will be taking qualifications primarily at entry level or level 1;
  - with complex and/or profound learning disabilities and disadvantage, where purposeful work experience may make up most of their Study Programme

and may be a Supported Internship. Providers, in discussion with students, need to assess what type of work experience is most suitable.

35. Students on 'standard' level 2 and level 3 programmes, including A level students, may also benefit from periods of work experience. This may be as an integral part of their Study Programme or in addition to their normal study (for example, during school and college holidays). Many students will look for such opportunities independently, although where facilities exist in schools and colleges to set up work placements for students this group should be able to make use of them. Programmes are likely to follow the following patterns:
- Purposeful work experience focused solely on a particular vocational area to contribute directly to a Study Programme.
  - Substantial, regular time in the workplace gaining vocational knowledge and /or employability skills.
  - One or two short periods of work experience to test out vocational ideas connected to future study or employment options.
36. It is important that the work experience offered to young people is substantial and purposeful, under the direction of a supervisor or other designated person in order to ensure that students obtain genuine learning experiences suited to their needs. Twenty five colleges are testing and developing innovative approaches to providing high quality work experience, which will allow young people aged 16-19 to progress academically and when entering the world of work.
37. In addition, Supported Internships are being developed as a special kind of work experience for the most disadvantaged young people, where acquiring personal and social skills may be the most important issues. A Supported Internship programme will provide a structured Study Programme, based at an employer, that is tailored to the individual needs of the young person and will equip them with the skills they need for the workplace. This will include on-the-job training, backed by expert 'job coaches' to support interns and employers, and the chance to study for relevant qualifications – where appropriate.

## 8. Non-qualification Activity

38. Non-qualification activity should be based on a tutor's or teacher's assessment of a student's needs and abilities but may include tutorials, coaching and/or mentoring or other taught courses. The aim of non-qualification activity is to improve student employability skills and enable them to participate in other activity of value which does not necessarily lead to qualifications but enables them to progress. This is particularly important for students studying at level 2 and below.

## 9. Foundation Students<sup>7</sup>

39. The Study Programme principles should apply to all students who are studying predominantly at level 1 or below, whether or not they have learning difficulties or disabilities. These principles apply for students up to the age of 25 for those with learning difficulties or disabilities. All these students should be on worthwhile Study Programmes, underpinned by high expectations, which enable them to move to an ambitious positive destination at the end of their education.<sup>8</sup>
40. The needs of this group are very wide ranging. It follows that programmes will vary considerably, including the proportion of the Study Programme focused on achieving qualifications. In a few cases, for example, where a student has profound and/or complex learning difficulties or disabilities, the Study Programme may contain no qualifications at all and either be focused on work experience or on non-qualification activity that will contribute to a young person's preparation for adult life<sup>9</sup>. In such cases, the Study Programme must still include some English and maths teaching at an appropriate level (for example, improving a student's communication skills, or improving their understanding of money).

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<sup>7</sup> Students with low levels of prior attainment who are studying predominantly at level 1 or below.

<sup>8</sup> Destination measures for special schools will be developed at a later date than those for mainstream schools and colleges, to take account of the need for them to reflect softer destinations and achievements not currently measured (e.g. independent living).

<sup>9</sup> This might include, for example, travel training, organisational skills, learning how to use public services effectively and communication skills.

## ANNEX A: Key Messages from Consultation on Study Programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds

160 responses were received to the online consultation on Study Programmes for 16- to 19-year-olds that launched on 6 October 2011 and closed on 4 January 2012. An organisational breakdown of respondents is as follows:

Other *	54
Local Authority (LAs)	28
General FE Colleges (GFEs)	23
Sixth Form Colleges (SFCs)	11
Awarding Organisations	10
Provider or Stakeholder Organisations	9
Teacher Association	8
Schools with Sixth Forms (SSFs)	6
Academies	5
Independent Private Providers (IPPs)	5
Independent Specialist Providers (ISPs)	1
Total	160

*\*Those which fell into the 'other' category included: learned bodies and societies, trade unions and associations, local authority 14-19 multi-agency partnerships, voluntary and charitable organisations, representatives of awarding organisations, university and education research centres, training providers, tertiary colleges, individuals and independent consultants.*

### Summary Responses

This section sets out a brief summary of the significant findings from consultation based on the proposals presented through consultation.

*Will the measures listed in the consultation document be sufficient to ensure that the 16-19 Study Programme principles are followed?*

Yes 23%

No 20%

Not Sure 57%

The proposals for 16-19 Study Programmes were broadly welcomed by respondents. The flexibility of the proposals was particularly welcomed as a useful approach for implementation of the Study Programme principles.

Nevertheless, the majority of respondents were 'not sure' whether the measures outlined would be sufficient to ensure that the Study Programme principles will be followed. Respondents were mostly concerned that the proposed measures offer insufficient safeguards for adherence to the Study Programme principles.

There were also calls for greater emphasis to be placed on the importance of independent (ideally face-to-face) information, advice and guidance for students to

ensure that their programme offer is coherent and genuinely meets their progression ambitions.

*How will this programme of study need to be tailored for part-time students?*

Many respondents indicated that the same Study Programme principles should apply to both full- and part-time students. There was recognition that the programme for part-time students will need to be adapted in some way e.g. on a pro-rata basis, or over a longer period of time. The majority of respondents agreed that 'flexibility' is the most important factor in being able to meet part-time students' needs, especially in the context of raising the participation age.

*How will the proposals affect different providers?*

A quarter of respondents thought that the proposals would predominantly have a greater impact on smaller providers because they do not have the same resource to deliver the breadth of the Study Programme principles. For this reason, over a fifth of respondents suggested that collaboration or partnership working between smaller and larger providers would be important in ensuring that smaller providers are able to deliver the range and breadth of the Study Programme principles.

Respondents mainly agreed that the proposals would have a smaller impact on FE colleges or schools and colleges with sixth forms. However, some specialist providers for students studying below level 2 and providers set in rural locations might find it challenging to provide the full breadth of the Study Programme principles.

*In line with the ambition for all to be studying maths post-16 in the next decade, we would be interested to know what you feel could be done to encourage more young people who have already achieved GCSE A\*-C to study maths. What would this provision look like?*

There was almost full support for the proposal to continue the study of mathematics to level 2 for those students who failed to achieve it at Key Stage 4, with a mixed response to the proposal that study in mathematics should continue beyond the GCSE A\*-C goal aged 16+.

#### Post-16 level 3 maths provision

Most respondents recognised that alternative 'bridging' qualifications between GCSE and AS/A level maths are required for the proposed continuation of post-16 mathematics for students who have already achieved GCSE A\*-C at the age of 16. A number of alternative qualifications were suggested, the most popular being level 3 Functional Skills and Free Standing Maths Qualifications (FSMQs). Other respondents suggested that the content should be relevant to the student's main Study Programme and progression pathways.

#### Post-16 level 2 maths provision

The majority of respondents argued that an alternative range of maths qualifications to the GCSE should be recognised for students who failed to achieve A\*-C maths at the age of 16. These respondents were mostly concerned that if GCSE is a compulsory

requirement, these students will enter a negative cycle of re-sitting and failing the exam. Suggested examples of alternative mathematics qualifications to the GCSE included Functional Skills and FSMQs. There were some proposals to (re)introduce a modular GCSE qualification for Adults or develop a “Functional GCSE”.

Other suggestions include developing a strategy to communicate the importance of further study of maths as a way of motivating students to want to study maths beyond 16 rather than feeling forced to do so combined with a further campaign to try to overcome the ‘negative’ perception of maths and numeracy in society as a whole.

*What can we do to simplify areas where colleges/employers have particular concerns offering students opportunities in the workplace, e.g. insurance, health and safety?*

About half of respondents called for greater simplification of the current process and regulatory requirements surrounding work experience as a way of encouraging employers to offer students opportunities in the workplace, for example by introducing centralised guidance or management system to carry out the required employer checks. This contrasted with a small number of respondents who favoured a reduction in the amount of bureaucratic requirements e.g. by removing Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) or health and safety checks. Respondents felt strongly that employer requirements should not be reduced or simplified at the expense of student welfare or safety.

*What more can we do to remove barriers to providing high quality internships?*

Respondents generally agreed that incentives, particularly financial incentives, should be offered to employers to remove barriers and encourage more employers to provide internships. Improved employer engagement and better coordination of work placement opportunities were also mentioned as possible ways of removing barriers. However, a quarter of respondents stated that equality and diversity issues need to be fully considered in light of this proposal, particularly to ensure equality of access to work placement opportunities. Some suggestions were also made about the components that might lead to ‘high quality’ internships. For example, a structured programme of work, project-based, and agreed objectives.

*Study Programmes for students studying below level 2 and students with Learning Difficulties and/or Disabilities (Foundation level)*

A number of respondents pointed out the general lack of detail in the consultation document surrounding Foundation level programmes for students studying below level 2. Requests were made for further consideration to be given to this cohort of students. The impact of the proposals on equality and diversity issues was also highlighted as an area that should lead to the publication of an Equality Impact Assessment.

## **ANNEX B: Example Case Studies**

### **Soraya is taking a level 3 BTEC in Children's Care Learning and Development plus a GCSE in maths**

Soraya, aged 18, wants to work with children. Prior to starting the Study Programme, she achieved 4 GCSEs at Grade C, not including maths.

She is taking a two-year level 3 BTEC which combines theoretical study in college with a range of work experience placements. It prepares her to work with children and their families. Soraya is studying growth and development; learning in the early years; play and learning; research skills and professional practice. On this course, she works in both small and large groups at college for at least 20 hours a week and independently for 6 hours a week, learning to research relevant material using computers, journals and books. She undertakes a two week work placement and two four week work placements in three different settings as part of the course.

Assignments include essays, reports and presentations assessed by the teaching tutors. Soraya will also create a portfolio covering the observations and activities she carried out in her placements. She hopes to gain her GCSE qualification in maths which is assessed by external examination.

This programme would meet the Study Programme requirements.

### **Sharnie taking a level 2 Professional Chef's Diploma with English and maths GCSEs**

Sharnie, aged 17, wants to work towards a career in the hospitality industry, or an advanced level qualification, having achieved a level 1 Award before enrolling on to this Study Programme.

As part of her City and Guilds Diploma in Professional Cookery course, she attends timetabled lessons and undertakes practical activities cooking food serving customers. Working in the kitchens for two days a week enables her to learn to cook, meat and poultry, fish, sauces, stocks and vegetables, and cover theory units on health and safety, kitchen operations and work place skills. Each skill takes two weeks to practice and assessments take place throughout the course. Alongside studies in food preparation, Sharnie also studies the level 2 Diploma in Professional Food and Beverage Service by working in a training restaurant at lunchtime and some evenings once or twice a week where she can enhance skills acquired at level 1 including silver service. At other times she is in class studying healthier food, special diets and aspects of the catering industry. In addition to this level 2 diploma, Sharnie is re-taking her English and maths GCSEs to upgrade her D grades into C grades within one year.

Successful completion of the course will lead her to the City and Guilds NVQ level 3 Advanced Professional Cookery, or level 3 Diploma in Hospitality or employment at a qualified operational level. This course is coherent and meets Study Programme requirements with appropriate progression.



## **Annex C: An example of a case study which does not meet Study Programme principles and an indication of reasonable exceptions**

**Adam, aged 17, left school without any GCSEs. He is undecided about his career and is taking a mix of low-level (level 1) vocational qualifications.**

Adam attends a college for four days a week and is on a one year full-time course. He follows a series of taster vocational courses to gain practical hands-on experience in a variety of sectors (non-qualification activity) as well as a number of level 1 Certificates.

He has a rolling programme of taster vocational courses in construction, motor vehicle maintenance, cookery and business (six weeks per vocation for one morning a week). In the afternoons, Adam is studying for a Sports Leaders UK Award in Sports Leadership at level 1.

Alongside this course, he is studying for the IFS level 1 Foundation Certificate in Personal Finance (30 hours), the level 1 BTEC Award in Healthy Eating (10 hours), TCL level 1 Award in The Arts (60 hours) and a Certificate of Competence in Safe Manual Handling (10 hours). Adam will also be enrolled on a level 1 Award for Progression and a level 1 Certificate in Employment Skills.

On successful completion of the course Adam intends to progress to a full-time Vocational diploma at level 1 when he is 18.

Adam's course does not meet Study Programme requirements. It lacks a substantial vocational qualification and is not coherent. We would expect this student to be studying for English and maths qualifications and to have a substantive amount of time experiencing the world of work on an employer's premises to provide him with the best opportunity to secure employment in the future.

A student, such as Adam, might be encouraged to progress laterally from one level of study to the same level in a different field from the one they have already achieved in certain instances. If he decided he wishes to specialise in a certain sector (e.g. plumbing) and needs to start at the same level he has already achieved in order to reach the required level of knowledge and understanding (in this case another Level 1 qualification) that will enable him to successfully progress to higher levels of study at a later stage then that would be acceptable.

Adam might be encouraged to take alternative English and maths qualifications to GCSE (e.g. Functional Skills or FSMQs) and aim to achieve GCSE A\*-C over a longer period of time as he is not immediately able to achieve GCSE qualifications. He may be at risk of repeatedly failing the English and maths exams if he is not offered alternatives. Similarly, students who may never achieve GCSE A\*-C due to, for example, complex learning disabilities or difficulties should reasonably be excepted from this element of the Study Programme.



# Department for Education

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