Department for Education

Multiply

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Technical Guidance (England)

July 2023

Contents

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Introduction

1. This document sets out the technical details for local allocations of Multiply funding in England.

2. The provisional funding allocations available on the Multiply web page are the maximum amount available to each local area over the three-year funding period (22/23 – 24/25) and not necessarily the amount each area will be paid.

3. You should read this document together with the Multiply prospectus available on the Multiply web page.

Allocations

4. In England, Multiply local allocations are worth up to £270m over the period 2022-25. Multiply funding will be distributed to the Greater London Authority, all Mayoral Combined Authorities, and upper tier / unitary authorities outside of these areas in England.

5. **Provisional** maximum allocations to local areas in England for Multiply, over the three years of the programme, are available on the Multiply web page.

6. Local spending profiles are agreed when investment plans are assessed and approved.

7. Allocation statements are not legally binding. They do not create any legal obligation against the Secretary of State for Education.

8. As this is a three-year programme, we expect local authorities to ensure that there are suitable legacy arrangements in place for interventions funded through Multiply.

Allocations methodology

9. The key objective of the Multiply allocation methodology is to ensure funding is targeted towards areas with the greatest skills need. That means allocations are determined by three key factors: local authority skills level, total population size and an area cost uplift**.**

10. **Local authority skills level**: We looked at the proportion of the 16-64 population without Level 3+ qualifications – using the data published by DfE on Local Authority Skills Levels - as a measure of the overall skill level in each upper tier local authority. This aligns with the data used to identify the lowest skilled areas for the skills and training mission in the Levelling Up White Paper. Note that this is not based on maths qualifications specifically - we do not have data available on the level of maths qualifications held across the adult population, hence we use this measure of overall skill levels.

11. Data is based on Annual Population Survey (APS) data[1] where a three-year average was taken to account for sampling variability, which generally increases with smaller

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[1] Local authority skills levels (publishing.service.gov.uk)

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sample sizes. Data is available for 2020 but the survey was impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic[1], so the 2017-19 is used for robustness.

12. Data is not available for the Isles of Scilly, here we assume the proportion of the working age (16-64) population qualified to Level 3 is equivalent to that observed in Cornwall. Isles of Scilly and Cornwall are treated as one upper tier local authority in this modelling and receive one combined allocation quantity.

13. **Population**: Poor numeracy is a national issue, and all regions and local authorities regardless of skills performance have individuals with poor numeracy skills. Weighting the allocation based on population ensures each local area gets a sufficient scale of funding to meet the needs of their local authority. In the modelling, these two factors are taken together to provide an estimate of the 19-65 population without a level 3 qualification.

14. This is based on ONS mid-year 2020 population estimates[2] which are the most up to date population estimates at the time of setting allocation amounts.

15. **Area cost uplift:** The area cost uplift reflects the higher cost of delivering training provision in some parts of the country, such as London and the South East.

16. This is based on 2021-22 area cost uplift factors[3]. These are the most up to date area cost uplift factors available at the time of setting allocation amounts and have been aggregated to local authority level. If required the uplift factor is between 1.01 and 1.20, otherwise we default the factor to 1. The uplifts are at district level, so they have been aggregated to upper tier. Where districts within upper tier authorities have different values the most commonly occurring value has been chosen. Multiply area cost uplift methodology is in line with ESFA 'formula-funded' AEB provision.

Payments

17. The Department will provide funding for Multiply as a Section 31 ringfenced grant under the Local Government Act 2003. The purpose of the grant is to support the Government's Multiply programme and deliver targeted interventions that support improvements in adult (19+) numeracy up to and including Level 2 provision, as set out in the Multiply prospectus for England. Funding must only be used to deliver Multiply interventions agreed with local areas in accordance with approved investment plans.

18. Payments will be made on a profile across the financial year. This means allocations will be paid in instalments. Details such as frequency are confirmed through your Grant Determination letter.

19. Payments in Year 1 (FY2022-23) were based on predicted spend outlined by each local area in their investment plans, up to a maximum of a local area's indicative

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[1] Coronavirus and its impact on the Labour Force Survey - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[2] Population estimates - Office for National Statistics (ons.gov.uk)

[3] Funding Rates and Formula (publishing.service.gov.uk)

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allocation for Year 1. In Year 1 payments were made in September/October once the local investment plan was assessed and approved.

20. In Years 2 (FY2023-24) and 3 (FY2024-25) Multiply payments may be subject to adjustments in year. Updated investment plans, including spending profiles, will need to be submitted and approved at the start of each financial year. First payments will then be processed in April, subject to signed grant documentation being received. Performance against projected spend profiles, and the outcomes and outputs in line with indicators set out below and detailed in local areas' investment plans will be reviewed throughout the year, with performance management discussions taking place when necessary. Discussions will be held with areas with large underspends against projected spend profiles to assess the feasibility of spending the remaining funding.

21. At year end the Department will recover any net underspend below 100% of the total ring-fenced grant provided in that financial year, by off-setting against future payments to the Authority. Following the end of Year 3, we expect any net underspend below 100% of the total ring-fenced grant provided in that financial year to be returned to the department.

22. In the event that the Department is unable to transfer the funding by the agreed dates, it will notify the local authorities as a matter of urgency.

23. Overspends will not be transferred into future years. Funding must be claimed in the year the expenditure occurred. Local Areas may be able to apply for more funding in Years 2 and 3, but this will be subject to approval and affordability.

24. The Multiply grant is for delivery of provision with some discretion to spend on administration to allow this to operate effectively. This should not displace current funding streams and we have no expectation of match funding.

Procurement and sub-contracting

25. Local authorities may wish to use a mix of competitions for grant funding (which is the default approach set out in Cabinet Office Grants Standards), procurement, commission or deliver some activity through in-house teams. Each local authority should seek advice from their own internal procurement teams as to the procurement rules the authority should be following for all expenditure.

26. ESFA sub-contracting arrangements do not apply to Multiply. Authorities must ensure they are aware of the supply chain and undertake the relevant checks to ensure compliance with procurement legislation. The information should also be retained on file should it be required by the Department or for audit or evaluation purposes throughout the lifetime of Multiply.

27. If areas decide to subcontract, they should ensure that Multiply provision is value for money, including ensuring any contractor overheads and admin costs are appropriate; this should be captured as a cost under each intervention.

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28. Authorities should ensure appropriate due diligence is in place to establish which providers and / or organisations will deliver Multiply funding, establishing value for money, complying with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015 and the local authorities own internal procurement policy, as appropriate, as well as day-to-day monitoring of performance.

29. Spotlight, the government's online automated due-diligence tool, complements existing pre- and post-award checks and highlights areas of risk to inform grant-making decisions. Further information is available [here](#).

Assurance and Grant Management

30. A Grant Determination Letter, accompanied by a Memorandum of Understanding, setting out Fund requirements and obligations, will be issued annually – in September in Year 1, and in April for Years 2 and 3 of the programme.

31. The local authority is permitted to spend this grant solely for the purposes of the Multiply programme: to improve adult (19+) numeracy up to and including Level 2 provision. Whilst you may choose how to spend the money in order to best meet local need, we expect local authorities to draw down from the menu of interventions set out in the Multiply prospectus for England.

32. Interventions funded through Multiply must not displace, replace and / or duplicate any existing adult numeracy provision, such as activity funded through the existing Adult Education Budget statutory entitlement for maths qualifications.

33. Common indicators must be used to measure key outcomes and outputs that local areas are expected to achieve against Multiply's overall success measures as outlined in the prospectus. These indicators are set out below and should be detailed in each area's investment plan, including updated investment plans for Years 2 and 3. Local authorities will submit monitoring and performance data (as detailed in Annex A), to enable performance review against these agreed indicators and make decisions on future payments.

34. In Year 1, where local authorities incurred administrative and preparatory costs prior to the sign off of their investment plan, they were able to claim Multiply funding to cover these costs.

35. We require funding to be ringfenced for Multiply purposes in the relevant financial year by the local authority. Pursuant to section 31(4) of the Local Government Act 2003, the Secretary of State determines that the grant will be paid subject to the conditions in the grant determination letter and Local Authorities should comply with the [National Local Growth Assurance Framework](#).

36. Local authorities will be required to submit an end of year statement of expenditure validated by S151 accounting officers (or equivalent) as well as quarterly forecasts of spend in Years 2 and 3. DfE will review this financial information, alongside monitoring and performance data and have performance discussions in Year 2 and 3 as needed.

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37. Local authorities that have under-delivered at mid-year point could receive a reduced amount for the second half of the year. Funding could then be re-deployed to meet the wider aims of Multiply. That could include re-deploying to local areas that are on track and are performing well, towards building capability, or to specific cohorts of learners.

38. Local authorities will also be required to submit an assurance statement at the financial year end to confirm spend was used wholly for the purposes for which it was given.

39. The local authority will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place for the receipt and disbursement of Multiply funding. That includes ensuring appropriate due diligence is in place to establish which providers and / or organisations will deliver Multiply funding, complying with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015, as appropriate; as well as day-to-day monitoring of performance.

40. There are some costs that cannot be covered through Multiply funding. Please see the UKSPF prospectus for a list of these costs.

41. All expenditure reported by Authorities through this Grant will be subject to assurance checks throughout the financial year. Assurance will be undertaken on receipt of the quarterly reporting form and will comprise of financial evidence checks against stated expenditure, and eligibility checks of learner data submitted via the ILR. Authorities will be required to provide a transaction list for further testing if selected, as part of the assurance process.

Eligible Expenditure

42. Eligible expenditure is expenditure for activity that has been delivered in the relevant financial year, whether this has been paid for or accrued, on the understanding that the Department or NAO could select these items in testing and would need to see evidence of delivery.

43. Further details on eligible expenditure are set out in the relevant Grant Determination letter for individual financial years.

Reporting and Data Collection

44. Local authorities will be responsible for submitting quarterly progress reports against agreed output indicators to the Department through a digital form.

45. In Years 2 and 3 quarterly progress reports, statements of expenditure and learner information captured through the ILR will be used to assess spend and progress and determine the quantum of future payments to be made to each area in year.

46. At the end of the 2024-25 financial year, areas must submit a final progress report and record of expenditure. As this is a three-year programme we expect local authorities to ensure that there are suitable legacy arrangements in place for interventions funded through Multiply. There is no commitment of future funding for

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Multiply beyond the 2024-25 financial year. The Department will discuss legacy arrangements with authorities in due course.

47. Multiply learners who participate in substantive Multiply learning provision should be recorded through the Individualised Learner Record (ILR), either through regulated or non-regulated learning aims. Definitions of substantive learning and other terms have been circulated and will be [on the Multiply web page.](#)

48. People who participate in engagement or outreach-focussed events, or who express interest in Multiply will not need to be recorded in the (ILR) unless/until they participate in substantive provision. Local areas should include the number of people attending such engagement/outreach events in quarterly reporting and should, wherever possible ensure providers capture the name, date of birth and postcode of those engaging in this way with Multiply.

49. Authorities are responsible for submitting data to the ILR and will do so for any Multiply provision that they deliver directly, as they do already for other funding streams. They will also be responsible for ensuring that any existing providers they use to deliver Multiply accurately and effectively capture learner data and submit ILR data where appropriate.

50. For broader monitoring and quality reporting purposes, local areas are responsible as grant holders for gathering data from their providers and partners and sharing this with the Department. Quarterly reporting data and ILR data for Multiply will be captured in an interactive dashboard so that both the Department and local areas can understand the reach and shape of Multiply in their areas.

51. The Department have engaged Kantar and the Institute of Fiscal Studies to undertake an evaluation of the Multiply programme against the national success measures set out in the prospectus. As part of this, information will be sought from a sample of learners, teachers, providers and employers. In relation to any such activity, local authorities will be expected to provide all reasonable assistance, respond to all reasonable requests, and provide any information reasonably required.

52. Annex A provides more details about the different types of information that will be sought, from whom and what it will be used for as part of the Multiply programme evaluation.

53. To support local areas that wish to boost sample sizes to gather robust results on groups of particular local interest, the national evaluation team will share, on request, the numbers of anticipated and achieved survey responses, plus the survey questions. The Department will also explore with the independent evaluation contractor how, within data protection regulations, it might be possible to support local authorities in identifying and approaching individuals for further research in a way that aligns with national evaluation sampling activity.

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Fund Indicators

54. Each local area must use common indicators, to measure outputs and outcomes. This ensures that we can compare similar interventions in different places, and undertake and synthesise evaluation activities.

55. Indicators for Multiply, based on the overarching success criteria for the Fund, are set out below. These should be used by local authorities as a guide when drafting local investment plans. We expect local areas to evidence improvements in functional numeracy, rather than purely participation in Multiply interventions. We will continue to refine these indicators through engagement with local areas over the course of the programme and will advise of any changes to indicators in future years.

56. Outcomes:

    a. Increased number of adults achieving maths qualifications up to, and including, Level 2.

    b. Increased number of adults participating in maths qualifications and courses up to, and including, Level 2.

    c. Increased number of adults participating, acquiring and evidencing skills through non-qualification provision, or towards a qualification, including online learning.

    d. Improved labour market outcomes.

    e. Increased adult numeracy (by supporting learners to improve their understanding and use of maths in their daily lives, at home and at work).

57. Outputs

    a. Number of people engaging with Multiply funded outreach focussed provision.

    b. Number of people participating in Multiply funded substantive learning provision. Through the ILR this will be broken down by ethnicity, sex/gender, age and disability to enable Public Sector Equality Duty monitoring

    c. Number of different types of Multiply funded provision.

    d. Number of initiatives developed in collaboration with employers.

    e. Number of initiatives developed in collaboration with community groups.

    f. Number of initiatives leading to a numeracy qualification.

Data Retention and Data Protection

58. As set out in the grant agreement between DfE and Local Areas, Local Areas are independent data controllers for data they collect. Some of this data is critical for the evaluation of the programme, namely:

    a. contact details for Multiply providers and employers

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b. learner data for non-substantive provision (name, DOB and postcode)
c. substantive learner data for providers that are not yet registered with the ILR.

59. This data will be retained by DfE for up to 7 years; this is so the success of the Multiply Programme can be evaluated.

60. For the purposes of the evaluation, the Department will act as the data controller and Kantar Public the data processor. Kantar Public will use personal data from the ILR in order to construct samples and recruit learners for quantitative and qualitative research, and collect additional personal data from research participants including demographic and protected characteristics. Under the Data Sharing Agreement with Kantar, destruction of data will take place 12 months after the approval of the final research reports (no later than 30/06/2026). In line with GDPR, the DfE may retain anonymised data indefinitely.

61. DfE and Kantar Public will set up data collection mechanisms to obtain information from Local Areas (e.g. secure online forms, encrypted file transfer) throughout programme delivery. As data controllers, Local Areas are responsible for their own compliance with Data Protection Legislation, including ensuring that they have a lawful basis for their Processing and sharing of Personal Data with the DfE and its evaluation contractors.

62. Each Authority will permit access to any records, data and information collected by it in relation to Multiply ('Records') by the Department and any persons, including other crown bodies and auditors (including third party auditors acting on the Department's instructions) and evaluators to inspect such Records on reasonable notice. This may include taking copies of such Records and sharing the same with other government agencies.

Learner eligibility

63. The age criteria for Multiply is the same as the Adult Education Budget (AEB). Learners must be aged 19 or older at the start of the Multiply intervention. 16–18-year-olds not in Education, Employment or Training (NEET) are currently not eligible for Multiply but there is opportunity to address this group through wider UKSPF people and skills funding available from 2024-25.

64. Multiply will be subject to the same residency eligibility criteria as the Adult Education Budget (AEB) (https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/adult-education-budget-aeb-funding-rules-2022-to-2023). In line with these rules, individuals will usually be eligible for Multiply funding if they have been ordinarily resident in the UK for at least the previous three years on the first day of learning.

65. It is the responsibility of the local authority to ensure an individual is eligible for Multiply provision. We expect local areas to use their professional judgement in deciding when to ask prospective learners for proof of residency.

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66. Multiply is targeted at those adults who do not yet have a Level 2 maths qualification because we know that learners achieving a Level 2 maths qualification saw their wages increase by on average 13.7% and were 10% more likely to be in work after seven years, compared to those who do not. As with other funding streams, local areas will want to assure themselves that they are maintaining learner records to evidence this eligibility in line with local assurance frameworks.

67. Restart customers are only eligible for Multiply if the Restart provision does not contain any form of numeracy upskilling. This is to prevent duplication of funding. The Authority will be expected to have clarified and recorded the position on duplication of funding should it be required for audit purposes.

Non-learning spend

68. While we expect the majority of Multiply funding to be spent directly on Multiply interventions that best support learners across England, we recognise that it will require some non-learning spend to deliver the programme.

69. Administrative Expenditure: Local authorities will be permitted to use up to a maximum of 10% of their Multiply funding allocation for administrative expenditure in Years 1 and 2 of the programme, that should cover costs not directly linked to a specific intervention. These could be referred to as 'indirect costs' but must be specific to Multiply. For example, these may include development of the investment plan, procurement, contract management, data collection and monitoring and evaluation. Local authorities may begin to spend at risk from April 2022. The 10% administration allowance should not be used to fund existing administrative costs / overheads such as existing resource, building costs, utilities etc.

70. The percentage of funding permitted for use on administrative expenditure will be reviewed by the Department for Education ahead of Year 3 and may be subject to change. You must document your process for managing your administration costs over the current funding year and record, report and retain evidence on spending for each of the categories. We expect local authorities to carefully consider their administrative spending and ensure the amount is appropriate, reasonable and justifiable. If they do not require the full 10% a smaller amount should be used, with the balance being used to deliver Multiply interventions.

71. Direct admin costs that are inherent to the delivery of a specific Multiply intervention can be funded through the intervention line. These can include but are not limited to: signposting /advertising the specific intervention, materials/equipment for delivery of the intervention, specific multiply new tutor /teaching costs including training, intervention guidance, certificates/awards, supplier delivery costs.

72. Spending on workforce capacity building must directly support the delivery of local areas' Multiply interventions and this should be clearly set out in investment plans under each relevant intervention. Further guidance is available in the prospectus on workforce capacity building for Multiply.

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73. Further guidance will be issued to local areas regarding Ofsted involvement in Years 2 and 3 of Multiply.

Branding and publicity

74. We expect that local authorities and project deliverers use the appropriate Multiply and Skills for Life branding, where applicable – including print and publications, through to digital and electronic materials – including for any preparatory activity linked to Multiply.

Public Sector Equalities Duty

75. All local areas and providers directly delivering Multiply interventions will be required to consider the public sector equalities duty and have equality policies and implementation plans as well as processes in place for learners to raise any issues or complaints about unfair practices or treatment. Much of this will be available through existing provision and can be applied or used for Multiply.

Support available

76. We recognise that some local areas may require support to deliver Multiply.

77. We will hold regular engagement events throughout the three years of the programme with local authorities and Mayoral Combined Authorities to answer questions on Multiply and support you to deliver the aims of the programme.

78. We will facilitate peer-to-peer networks to share good practice and provide links to sector experts, employers, and providers. In Year3 we will also share initial learning from randomised controlled trials as that becomes available.

79. Please notify us of any current or emerging operational or financial risks, or issues, and any contingency measures put in place. This will help us determine the level of support we may provide.

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Annex A: Overview of Multiply data collection approaches

Purpose for data collection	Details	Data vehicle and owner
Performance monitoring This data provides the bulk of the monitoring and performance data for the Multiply programme and will be used by both the DfE team and local commissioners to inform and report on overall programme delivery. Over time, this data will also be matched with information on employment and earnings (e.g. in the Longitudinal Education Outcomes database) in order to track the impact on labour market outcomes on Multiply learners versus a control group. This analysis will also be fed back to local areas.	Areas are required to submit quarterly reports in order to monitor delivery progress against agreed outputs as per grant determination letters. Core monitoring information about each person participating in substantive learning through Multiply will be collected via the ILR. Basic personal data - name, date of birth and postcode - should be collected, where possible, for those engaging in outreach-focussed Multiply provision.	Quarterly reports, through a digital form, to be submitted by local areas Local areas are responsible for ensuring learner data is submitted via the ESFA Individualised Learner Record (ILR). Local areas are responsible for ensuring that basic data for those engaging is being captured where possible.

Financial monitoring This data will be used to monitor spend, to inform assurance activity and future payments.	Areas are required to submit quarterly reports that capture spend to date as per their grant determination letters, and S151 validated spend reports and forecasts at mid-year in years 2 and 3 that provide an accurate record of how money has been spent in line with Multiply's aims. These will be used to help determine whether they are on track with delivery and to inform performance management conversations.	Quarterly reports, through a digital form, to be submitted by local areas
Learner progress Data will be used to measure learner progress over the course of a Multiply intervention and understand how much of this progress is sustained after the intervention has ceased.	A specialist independent supplier will undertake pre and post assessment activity with a random sample of learners during Year 2 and Year 3 of the programme.	Independent supplier to collect this data, working directly with providers.
Impact and process evaluation Information collected will be used in both the process and impact evaluation of the Multiply programme. Information on sample sizes for the national evaluation programme is still being worked through but it is our intention to collect	Surveys of a randomly selected sample of learners, teachers, employers and providers in each year of the programme, to gather information on satisfaction with different aspects of Multiply, what was liked/disliked, suggestions to improve etc. Specific survey questions, plus some follow up qualitative interviews, with:	Surveys, with some follow up interviews, led by Kantar and the Institute for Fiscal Studies (Multiply programme evaluator)

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representative data for each of the local areas in each year of the programme. Anonymised raw data tables with survey responses from these learners will be provided to local areas. However, it will not be possible to achieve representative responses across learner subgroups, employers and teachers in every delivery area. To support local areas to boost sample sizes to gather robust results on groups of particular local interest as part of local evaluation plans, the national evaluation team will share, on request, the numbers of anticipated and achieved survey responses, plus the survey questions. We are also exploring, within data protection regulations, how we might be able to support local areas in identifying and approaching individuals for further research to support local follow up work.	• Learners, with questions on how they found out about Multiply, their satisfaction with the programme, their confidence with and the use of maths in everyday life, attitudes towards learning, perceived numeracy skills, barriers to learning and, where relevant, job satisfaction, thoughts on maths in terms of career progressions etc. Follow up interviews, including with learners who dropped out to understand reasons and what might re-engage them Employers, with questions on reported skills gaps, expected and perceived benefits of the Multiply programme etc • Teachers, with questions about their teaching experience and qualifications, confidence in teaching maths, views on learners' barriers to learning, views on effective approaches to learner engagement, preferences on receiving information on what works in teaching adult numeracy • Providers, with questions on the number of adult learning courses run in a local area through Multiply; number of courses developed in collaboration with employers; number of people referred by partners onto upskill courses and the number of different cohorts participating, e.g. learners in prison, parents etc	
Value for Money evaluation Information will help understand Multiply cash flows in delivery areas and help the	Value for money case studies with a randomly selected sample of providers to understand the details of how services are	Provider case studies, led by Kantar and the Institute for Fiscal

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evaluation team derive the mean costs per learner per type of intervention, which will be important in deriving the cost:benefit ratio of the programme. The case studies will also provide researchers with some assurance on the completeness of ILR data entry.	commissioned, data collection and monitoring and relationship to AEB delivery.	Studies (Multiply programme evaluator)

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