

NORTH YORKSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Young People Overview & Scrutiny Committee – 1st May 2009

Diploma update

Purpose of this report is to update Committee Members on developments to improve training and employment opportunities for 16-19 year olds

Diploma roll out in North Yorkshire is at a key point in its development.

Schools and colleges have to apply to the DCSF to lead on the delivery of a diploma, accessed via an annual 'Gateway' bidding process. This year (2008-09) only one Diploma has been offered in North Yorkshire; the Creative and Media Diploma is running in the Ryedale area. However Gateways 1 and 2 have resulted in 14 Diploma lines being offered from September 2009. Gateway 3 results were published this April and will lead to another 14 Diplomas being available in 2010. These results are shown in the table 'Diploma roll out to 2011'.

Preparation for these courses has been supported via the work of the six 14-19 North Yorkshire consortia. There is a great deal of progress to report upon, including the following areas:-

- **Diploma Development Groups (DDGs)** are ensuring that planning for first teaching of Diplomas in September 2009 is well advanced, with local DDGs working on detailed planning
- **Employer Engagement** is a key component of the new Diplomas and is being actively supported and developed through the work of 2 Employer Engagement Co-ordinators, who are liaising directly with the DDGs
- **Workforce Development (WFD)** Each consortium has a WFD plan, ranging from overall staff awareness raising to individual support and development for Diploma teachers. A county conference for practitioners was held on March 13th
- **Information Advice and Guidance.** A range of excellent Taster sessions, Diploma evenings and 'Roadshow' events have been held in most consortia
- **Toolkit for Collaborative Working** (Quality Assurance protocols). This extensive piece of work is now nearly complete, and is designed to ensure high quality delivery of Diplomas across all consortia.
- **Timelines and 'Health Checks'**. Consortia have continued to work towards Diploma delivery and have been subject to a series of 'Health Checks' to both assess and aid readiness for Diploma delivery in September 2009.

However despite the work and success itemised above, it is clear that take up at all levels of the Diploma is low, especially at Level 3 where take up is likely to be minimal.

Whilst the reasons for this expected low take up vary from consortium to consortium, there are strong common factors present. These factors were identified in reports to the 14-19 Strategic Commissioning Group in November 2008 and again in March 2009. The main factors are listed below

1. Changes in school leaderships since the original bids were submitted (18 or 30 months previously) have in some cases altered commitment to Diploma delivery.
2. Some schools and colleges are facing significant new challenges, including going into an Ofsted category of Special Measures, or the National Challenge, causing them to withdraw from partnership provision and new curriculum development
3. Financial pressures appear to be impacting particularly on those schools that have traditionally engaged in partnership provision. As such many schools are cutting back on long standing non Diploma provision for this September. Even despite Diploma funding rates as high as £1250 per pupil, schools are still concerned that funding may not cover costs, and that future funding is not guaranteed.
4. Many schools and governing bodies have a fear of becoming a 'net exporter' of large numbers of students, leading to perceived serious internal curriculum and staffing pressures. This potentially impacts most on small rural schools. As currently 50% of the new Diploma starts are being offered by Colleges or Work Based Learning providers, this may well be a factor in recruitment to those courses
5. Although named in original bids as access partners (i.e. providing learners), several schools are now withdrawing from this 'commitment' citing inability to align timetables with the agreed consortium curriculum model. This has had two effects. Firstly, not all learners can access the Diploma without affecting their access to teaching of the core subjects; and secondly, even where learners are opting for Diplomas, they can only access them if there is a 'complete and discrete' cohort e.g. 12 plus learners for a particular Diploma
6. Many of our schools are still reluctant to lead or to offer the Diploma, and in some cases even engage with the agenda. There has been a variable commitment to advertising Diploma courses.

There is now a need to plan for an improved learner uptake allied to the expected future growth of Diplomas (via the success of the Gateway 3 outcomes). To ensure this development proceeds smoothly, a clear set of recommendations have been endorsed and will be acted upon throughout the county. These include:-

1. For Gateway 3, a clearer 'contractual' relationship between Gateway bids and schools when identifying future cohorts of Diploma learners
2. A clear understanding that development funding for Diplomas will be clawed back if schools do not deliver in the relevant year
3. Partners in Gateway 3 bids agree to a timeline for preparation and development from Gateway bid application through to delivery in September 2010
4. All schools to work towards creating a curriculum that allows **all** young people to access available Diplomas, as well as any other future partnership courses in their area, by September 2010. Whilst this may be done in many ways, this will normally mean consideration of a 'Core and Options' blocking model (see extract below from the DCSF publication '14-19 Reform: The Next Steps' - October 2008)
 'We will increasingly expect institutions to consider and agree a common curriculum framework, and subsequently compatible timetables that maximise the opportunities available to each young person, according to

- their circumstances. For example, many consortia are finding that creating a common timetable for two days a week facilitates delivery of Diplomas'.
5. All consortia to agree this year for September 2009 start (as a minimum) a common day across their consortia for Diploma delivery for both Year 10 and Year 11. The intention is that this be extended into common county days to allow for internal (North Yorkshire), cross border and consortia collaborative working.
 6. County Quality Assurance Protocols for Collaborative Working have been developed and must be used to ensure consistency and reduce variability across consortia.

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Background documents: None

Diploma Roll Out to 2011 as at April 2009

Consortia	Diplomas 2008 and 2009	Diplomas 2010	Diplomas 2011**
Craven	Construction &BE Engineering Environment &LB	Business A&F Hair and Beauty Hopitality &C Society H&D Travel and Tourism	Sport &AL
Hambleton and Richmondshire	Construction &BE Hair and Beauty	Environment &LB Hospitality &C Manufacturing &PD	ICT
Harrogate	Creative &M ICT Hospitality &C Society H&D	Construction Environment &LB Hair and Beauty Sport &AL	
Coast	Creative &M	Engineering	Society, H &D Sport and AL
Ryedale	Creative &M (2008) Engineering	Environment &LB Hair and Beauty	
Selby	Construction &BE Creative &M	Hair and Beauty ICT	Engineering

** Please note that additional Diploma lines can and will be added, under the direction of the LA, via the Gateway 4 process in November 2009 for start in September 2011