

By: Ian Craig, Interim Managing Director, Children Families & Education Directorate
Leyland Ridings, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Educational Achievement

To: Children Families and Education Policy Overview Committee

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Subject: Information, Advice and Guidance, Careers Education and 14 – 19 Diplomas

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: This report provides an update on the current developments relating to 14-19 provision. The focus of this report is to give details of on-going work that involves information, advice, guidance, careers education and 14-19 Diploma implementation across the county.

1. Introduction

(1) Schools have the statutory responsibility for the delivery of Careers Education and Guidance 11-19. This should be a planned programme which from April 2008 should meet the National Quality Standards for information, advice and guidance. The DCSF has devised a non-statutory 11-19 framework that recommends learning outcomes and programme content.

(2) The role of Connexions within a School is governed by Partnership Agreements with each individual School identifying the key areas of support that should be provided. Areas for joint work can be a Careers Library, for which Connexions provide funding, or a Connexions Resource Centre within the School. Connexions through the Partnership Agreements provide targeted support for those students in danger of becoming NEETs (Not in Education or Training).

(3) The role of Kent Works is by agreement with individual Schools to provide support for Employer Engagement. This can involve the arrangement of Work Placements for students, Teacher Placements, Visits to Industry and other relevant activities. This work offers many opportunities for careers education guidance for students through both formal and informal contact with employers.

(4) The 14-24 Innovation Unit and Connexions are working together to further develop the provision for information advice and guidance and careers education in

response to the developments of the 14-19 agenda. This work is being developed through the Kent Strategic Forum and the 14-24 Innovation Unit Steering Group, where representatives of Kent LA, Connexions and Kent Works regularly meet. Through these delivery groups the following projects are underway:

2. Current Developments

(1) CEG Project: The 14-24 Innovation Unit is working with Connexions to establish information, advice and guidance Networks for each of the 9 Local Planning Forums. These will be led by 9 Leading Careers Co-ordinators funded by the 14-24 Innovation unit, and 5 INSET Champions funded by Connexions. They will develop a Kent Curriculum Framework with resources and then disseminate amongst their local Networks. The aim is to provide support for all Schools, Colleges and Work Based Learning Providers to offer Learners the right information, advice and guidance to ensure that students make the right decisions to ensure progression through their learning.

(2) Vocational Centres: Connexions have allocated Connexions Personal Advisors to the Vocational Centres developed by the 14-24 Innovation Unit. The PAs work very closely with learners, through the recruitment process for courses, and subsequently provide through the course in preparation for Progression. At Community College Whitstable this pioneering programme was recognised with a National Careers Award.

(3) Area Prospectus: The 14-24 Innovation Unit are leading developments with Connexions in producing an Area Prospectus for all Learners 14-19. At present the Kent Area Prospectus has information on all 16+ courses available in Kent and is the most successful Area Prospectus in England, measured by the use made of it by learners to view all courses and subsequently to make applications in those areas running pilots of the electronic Common Application Process. The Government in its recent update of the 14-19 Implementation Plan has set a target for all Year 11 students in 2010 to use the Common Application Process for applying for Post 16 Courses. Kent is in a very strong position to deliver on this target. At present in the 2008/09 Programme, 19,000 hits have been recorded on the site and 60% of the county are using it for applications.

The vision for the Area Prospectus is for it to be the focus for information, advice, guidance and careers education. Learners will be able to access the Area Prospectus and will then be directed to a range of information, advice, guidance and careers education resources, to support learners making their Option Choices and investigating potential Career routes. These resources could be Individual Learning Plans, multi-media career guides, access to University and Apprenticeship web-based guides, and links to Connexions PAs and school-based tutors. With these resources accessible in one place it would offer learners, with the support of appropriate adults, the opportunity to raise their aspirations.

(4) Individual Learning Plans: To support students through the 11-19 information, advice, guidance and careers education programme, 14-24 Innovation Unit and Connexions are working together to pilot electronic Individual Learning Plans. These Plans are designed to be web-based so that a learner can access them in whatever setting they are, or at times outside of the normal school day. As they are web-based they are also accessible to a range of adults working with the learner. This means that a learner can be given a more personal service and higher quality guidance as all adults will have access to the key data relating to the learner. At present pilots are starting in Gravesham

and Canterbury with Yr 7 students and in Maidstone a small pilot with Yr 5 & 6 students as part of a Transition project into Secondary Education.

(5) IAG Health Check: Connexions are working on a Quality Control programme to audit every School / College for its provision for information, advice, guidance and careers education by July 09. So far over 50 Schools have been audited. They are graded as Green / Amber / Red in terms of provision. Each school then develops an Action Plan in response to the findings. The vision is to carry out a Health Check on each Local Planning Forum to judge the provision of information, advice, guidance and careers education in the context of the new 14-19 agenda for developing the Diploma provision. Connexions also audit every School Careers Library on an annual basis to monitor the provision.

All these elements are the keystone to the successful implementation of the 14-19 Agenda. The proposed Curriculum in Kent by 2013 will have four main pathways:

1. GCSEs / A Levels
2. Diplomas
3. Apprenticeships
4. Vocational Qualifications

These will be at Levels 1, 2 & 3. Underpinning these will be the Foundation Learning Tier. Linking all Qualifications will be the Functional Skills of Numeracy, Literacy and IT. The Diploma route alone will offer 119 separate qualifications, thus for students making decisions about their Option Choices and Career Choices, the role of information, advice, guidance and careers education will be central.

3. 14-19 Diplomas

(1) Diplomas are applied learning qualifications offered in 17 lines of learning, each relating to an industry sector. They are designed to equip learners with a knowledge of the sector and of the roles and job opportunities available in it and to develop the functional and personal skills that employers look for in young people.

Diplomas are one of the 4 core pathways in the 14-19 Qualifications Framework and as such provide progression from and to GCSEs / A-levels, Apprenticeships and Vocational qualifications. Diploma learning can be combined with these other pathways.

(2) From 2013 all learners aged 14-19 will be entitled to choose to follow a course of study which could lead to a Diploma in 17 lines of learning. There is a duty on Local Authorities, Governing Bodies and Head Teachers to ensure that these courses of study are made available, although this does not apply if the LA determines that its provision would lead to disproportionate expenditure (Education and Inspections Act 2006, Clause 67).

(3) To achieve this entitlement, schools and Colleges are encouraged to develop collaborative arrangements to deliver the Diploma subjects. The 9 Local 14-19 Planning forums across Kent which bring all secondary schools and FE colleges into partnership arrangements working with Connexions, work-based learning providers and universities. At present these partnerships must apply for permission to deliver the Diplomas through an annual 'Gateway' process managed by DCSF. There have been 3 rounds of Gateway

to date (the most recent completed in November 2008) and there will be at least 1 more in 2009.

(4) Kent 14-19 partnerships have been active in applying for Diplomas and have had considerable success in their submissions. Table 1 shows the applications made and authorisation to deliver secured by each partnership area.

(5) **Recruitment to the Diploma programme:** The picture in 2008/9 in Kent broadly mirrors the national position. 155 learners are currently enrolled on to the 4 Diploma pilots. This is significantly lower than the numbers predicted in the original applications (made in 2007) and reflects the fact that in the development phase leading up to delivery, local partnerships reviewed their plans and reduced their recruitment targets to ensure a more management pilot phase.

Feedback from learners, teachers and Head Teachers indicates that in the 2008 pilots:

- Students are finding the learning very stimulating and enjoyable
- The pace is fast and can be challenging for teachers and students
- Teaching staff have found the opportunities to collaborate with colleagues from different subjects and from different institutions rewarding
- There is concern among some Head Teachers about the potential of their learners to achieve the necessary levels in the Functional skills component (which are required in order to achieve the full Diploma qualification). In other cases however there has been excellent practice in delivery FS and good outcomes for learners.

(6) **Functional Skills:** From 2010 Functional Skills in Mathematics, IT and English will be a requirement for all learners, who will need to achieve a Level 2 in the relevant function skills exam in order to receive an A*-C GCSE grade. Functional Skills have been a requirement of Diplomas from 2008 and students will not receive the full Diploma qualification unless they pass the fundamental skills element. The Diploma pilot phase is a vehicle for developing awareness and skills in teaching of FS and for disseminating best practice; training is being offered to all Kent schools, led by the Secondary Strategy team and supported by the 14-24 Innovation Unit.

(7) **Progress to Entitlement:** Kent's strategy for Diploma development is integrated within our plans for offering learners access to a broad, inclusive curriculum from which they can choose appropriate qualifications and progression routes. Our strategy has been to ensure that at least 1 consortia is delivering all of the available 14 Diplomas by 2011; this will enable us to secure experience and practice examples to share with other consortia through our networks.

All local partnerships have undertaken a mapping of all Diplomas, identifying which partners will take a lead role on each and the dates by which they need to introduce each line of learning to ensure entitlement by 2013. This local mapping shows that Manufacturing and Product Design and Environmental and Land-based Studies are likely to require county-wide planning to ensure access.

The 14-24 Innovation Unit is building capacity for the Manufacturing and Product Design and Environmental programme through its capital planning and stimulating interest in key geographical areas. Training has been offered and following Gateway 3 a particular focus will be given to supporting Ashford and Thanet in the development of this Diploma and to sharing this learning and developing capacity in the central and west of the county.

Environmental and Land-based Studies will be delivered in Ashford and Canterbury from 2009 and 2 further applications have been made for 2010 (Swale, Kent Thameside). Hadlow College are leading the work of a land-based Network to develop best practice across the county.

Table 1: Proposed rollout of diplomas in Kent

	Ashford	Canterbury	Dover, Deal and Sandwich	Gravesham	Kent Thameside	Maldstone and Malling	Shepway	Swale	Thanet	Wilmington, Hextable and Swanley	West Kent
Creative and Media	2009	2009	2009	2009		2009	2009	2010	2009	2009	2009
Construction and The Built Environment	2009	2010*	2010*	2008			2010	2010		2008	2009
IT	2010*	2010*	2009	2010*		2010*	2010*	2010*	2009	2009	2010*
Business Administration and Finance	2010*	2010*	2010*	2009		2009		2010	2009	2009	2010*
Engineering		2010*	2010*	2009		2009	2010*	2010*	2009	2009	2010*
Hospitality	2010*	2010			2009				2009		
Environmental and Land-Based Studies	2009	2009			2010*			2010*			
Hair and Beauty	2009	2010*			2009		2010*				2010*
Society, Health and Development	2009	2010*	2008	2009			2010*	2010	2008		2009
Manufacturing and Product Design	2010*								2010*		
Retail Business	2010*			2010*				2010*			
Travel and Tourism					2010*			2010*	2010*		
Public Services		2010*	2010*	2010*		2010*		2010*	2010*		
Sport and Active Leisure	2010*	2010*	2010*	2010*		2010*		2010*	2010*		2010*

2010* - Earliest possible delivery. Subject to outcomes of Gateway 3
Kent Thameside includes Gravesham and Wilmington, Hextable and Swanley.

4. Conclusion

(1) Kent learners are well placed to access a wide range of courses of their choice. The programme offered at 14-19 continues to expand and increasingly all learners will be receiving high quality impartial advice to enable them to make the right choice. Kent County Council has gained national recognition for the work.

5. Recommendations:

Members of the Children Families and Education Policy Overview Committee are asked to note the content of this progress report.

Sue Dunn
Joint Head of 14-24 Innovation Unit
01622 694923
sue.dunn@kent.gov.uk

Background Documents:
None

Other Useful Information:
None