

► What are the benefits of doing The Diploma?

These are just some of the advantages of taking a Diploma:

- » As well as learning in the classroom, you may also study some days at college and spend time on work experience.
- » The Diploma allows you to go on to further study, and then on to college or university – or into a job and training.
- » The Diploma gives you the knowledge and skills that employers and universities are looking for without committing yourself to a career in a particular area.

“The Diploma is a great addition to the wide range of qualifications already on offer. It will give students the opportunity to gain practical knowledge and experience, which they can use in the next stage of their development; be that university, college or work.”

Deborah Anderson,
Connexions Personal Adviser

You should also talk to your teachers, Careers Adviser or Connexions personal adviser.

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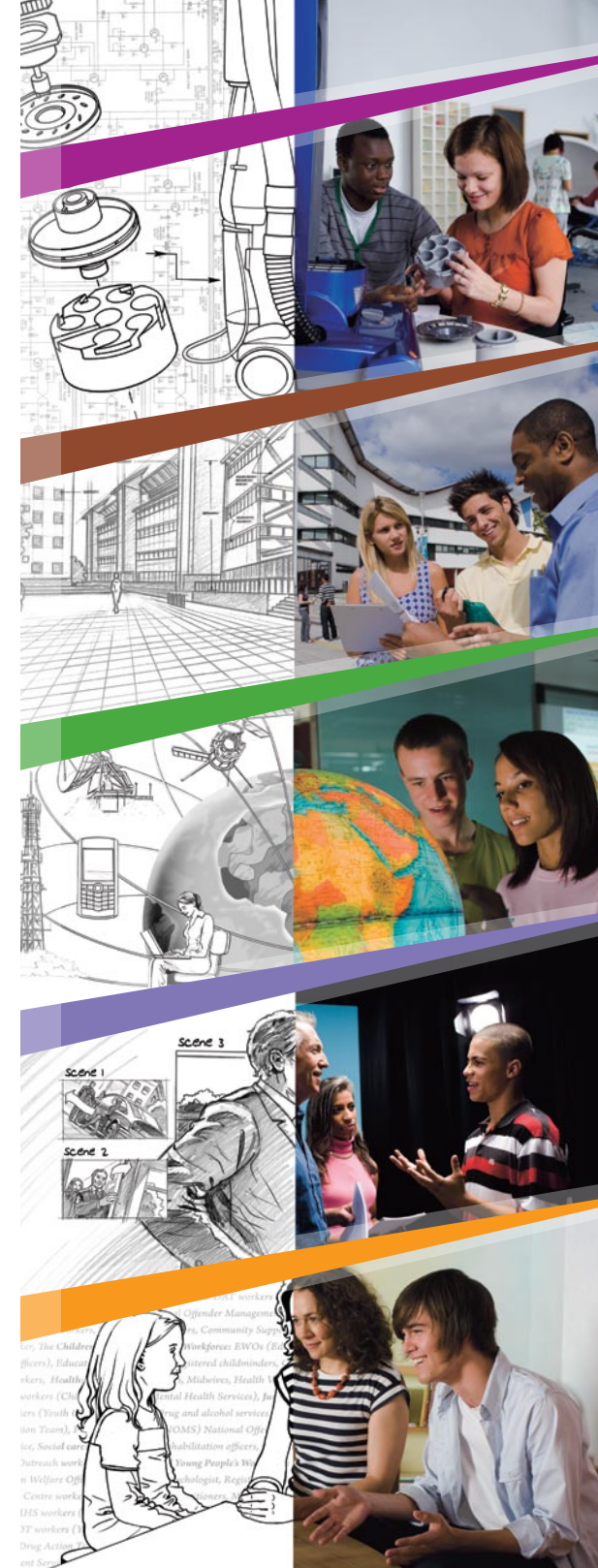
department for
children, schools and families



The Diploma

Bringing
your
learning
to life

Young Person's Guide – Year 9



▶ In Year 9 you start to make choices about what you study next. In September there is a new qualification: the Diploma. This is an alternative to the traditional GCSE route, but one which keeps just as many options open. It could lead to further study, or to a job and training. Diplomas are not replacing GCSEs and A levels, but give you a different option, and you can take some GCSEs or A levels as well.

The Diploma is a qualification based around work rather than traditional subjects and you will have opportunities to experience different styles of learning in different environments, with an emphasis on practical activities.

You need a whole range of skills in life, as well as academic achievement. The Diploma helps you to develop skills and experience that employers, universities and colleges really value. These skills will include teamwork and creative thinking. You'll also develop your English, maths and ICT abilities, and study other national curriculum subjects.

▶ Which Diplomas can I choose from?

In 2008 there will be five Diploma subject areas to choose from:

- » Construction and the Built Environment
- » Creative and Media
- » Engineering
- » Information Technology
- » Society, Health and Development

There are more subjects being introduced in 2009, so once you've completed your Diploma, you could go on to do a Higher or Advanced Diploma in the same, or a different subject area. Or you could go on to A levels or other courses.

Initially, selected schools and colleges will be teaching some or all of the Diploma courses but they will become more widely available every year.

▶ What will I study in my Diploma?

The Diploma combines compulsory elements and optional subjects.

Compulsory courses in your Diploma cover the main things you'll need to know about your chosen sector.

For example, in an Engineering Diploma there are three principal learning themes:

- » The engineering world
- » Engineering technology
- » The engineering future

You will do English, maths and ICT, but these will overlap with what you will be covering in these subjects even if you don't choose a Diploma.

In addition, you will choose from a range of optional subjects. For example, if you're studying for a Diploma in Construction and the Built Environment you could take a more specialist course in Surveying, or Community Management and Regeneration. Or you could choose a more traditional subject like a language or a science.

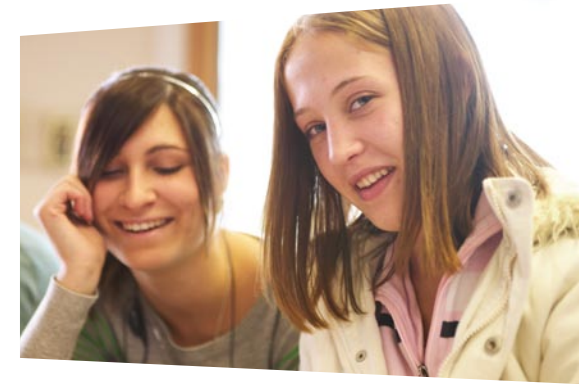
You will get the chance to spend at least 10 days working with an employer, developing these skills, and experiencing what work is like from the inside.

▶ What qualification will I get at the end of it?

When you have finished your Diploma, you will receive either a Higher Diploma (which takes broadly the same time to do as five or six GCSEs) or a Foundation Diploma (which takes broadly the same time to do as four or five GCSEs).

▶ What could I do next?

There are lots of options. After doing a Foundation or Higher Diploma you could go on to take a Diploma at the next level, either in the same subject, or you could change to another area. You could also go on to do GCSEs, A levels or another qualification. You might decide instead



to go on to do an Apprenticeship, or start a job. Your career adviser can help you make the right choice.

▶ Will the Diploma help me get a good job?

The Diploma was developed with employers, to help students get the skills, knowledge and experience they need to do well. Employers know that a Diploma student has the range of skills they are looking for.

▶ Will I be able to get into university with the Diploma?

Taking a Diploma can be the first step towards college or university. If you go on to do an Advanced Diploma, universities will regard it as broadly equivalent to three A levels.