



Diplomas

Information for young people and their families in the **West Cumbria** area





What's so exciting about Diplomas?

- They are a brand new type of qualification designed to bring your learning to life.
- They will be delivered by local schools and colleges with an excellent record for new applied learning.
- They will appeal to all styles of learning.
- They will encourage you to build on your interests and talents.

From September 2009 young people in the West Cumbria area will have the chance to study for a Diploma. This booklet tells you more about these exciting new options...



And what's different about Diplomas?

- They have been designed by teachers and employers together.
- Each Diploma is linked to a broad employment sector.
- If you do a Diploma at any of the three levels (see next page), you will be developing skills that match what employers are looking for.
- Diplomas combine applied and theoretical learning – in other words you'll be testing out how things you learn about in the classroom apply in the workplace.
- They are flexible qualifications – if you start a Diploma course you may want to go on to the next Diploma level, or you can change 'pathway' and go on to 'A-levels' or an apprenticeship or a job. It's your choice where it will lead.
- As part of a Diploma course, you will carry out an extended project – a chance to plan and organise your own learning, and do some independent research – highly valued by universities and employers.
- Diplomas will let you learn in a different environment – for example, at a local college or another school.



Diplomas are being introduced gradually in selected areas over the next few years

Within a few years, Diplomas will be available to all young people covering:

Business, Administration and Finance	Languages
Construction and the Built Environment	*Manufacturing and Product Design
*Creative and Media	Public Services
*Engineering	Retail Business
Environmental and Land-based Studies	Science
Hair and Beauty	Society, Health and Development
Hospitality	Sport and Active Leisure
Humanities	Travel and Tourism
Information Technology	

*Diploma lines will be offered in West Cumbria from 2009



What will a Diploma involve?

Principal Learning

This is the compulsory part – the heart of each Diploma. This provides you with the knowledge, understanding and skills for a particular employment sector – for example, Engineering or Creative and Media.

Generic Learning

This part is the learning that all students need:

- Functional Skills in Maths, English and ICT.
- Personal, Learning and Thinking Skills for independent enquiry, creative thinking, team working and self-management needed in the world of employment.
- An Extended Project – the chance to investigate in-depth a topic or issue of your own choice.
- Work Experience – a minimum of 10 days.

English, Maths, Science and IT will continue to be taught as part of your curriculum.

Additional/Specialist Learning

This part of the Diploma offers you choice, depth and flexibility. You will be able to choose from a wide range

of different options. Some of these will allow you to specialise in your particular Diploma sector. Others will let you broaden your learning by choosing something different, such as a language or an additional science. This part of the Diploma might include GCSEs, A-levels and other existing qualifications, as well as specially designed units.



What level Diploma can I study?

Diplomas offer a fully rounded education and will give you the skills, knowledge and understanding you need to move on to further or higher education and work. They will be available at three levels, each offering its own graded award (A*–C):

Foundation: Equivalent in size to 5 GCSEs at grades D–G

Higher: Equivalent in size to 7 GCSEs at grade A*–C

Advanced: Equivalent in size to 3.5 A-Levels (420 UCAS tariff points)



Who offers access to Diplomas?

By working together, West Cumbria's schools, colleges and training providers are committed to offering you the widest possible curriculum choice.

Further details of how and where Diplomas will be delivered will be available during the autumn term 2008.

Your school and your Connexions Personal Adviser will keep you informed about all the options open to you in the West Cumbria area.



What do employers think?

Diplomas have been designed to help young people learn and practice the skills that employers value most. Many national and local employers have been involved in developing Diploma courses.

"The 14–19 Diploma will enable young people to develop both creativity and business understanding. The confidence and transferable skills they acquire will mean that they can be successful in whatever career pathway they choose in the future. We look forward to working with West Cumbria 14–19 Partnership to make the Diploma a great success".

Patric Gilchrist
Executive Director, Theatre by the Lake

"Many of GEN II's partner companies and customers of all sizes struggle to recruit young people who have the right skills, attitudes, behaviours and overall readiness to enter the workplace. The new Diploma will provide exciting new opportunities for young people to study and learn in a much more flexible and challenging way, that is focused on meeting the needs of employers and that will prepare them well for their future employment and careers".

Mike Smith
Managing Director, GEN II Engineering and Technology Training Ltd



What do universities think?

Taking a Diploma could be the first step towards college or university. It will give you the research and analytical skills you need to succeed on a degree course. If you do an Advanced Diploma, universities will regard it as equivalent to three and a half A-levels.

“We welcome the Diploma as a means of expanding the opportunities for potential students from a broader mix of backgrounds and educational experiences to progress to higher education. We recognise the importance of the aims of the diploma in encouraging students to apply academic learning in a practical context; in tailoring the curriculum to the needs of the student; and in attempting both to stimulate the low achiever and stretch the brightest”.

Dr Wendy Piatt
Director General of the Russell Group of Universities

You can see for yourself what every university has to say about the Diploma on the UCAS website (www.ucas.ac.uk).

Here is a selection of comments:

“The University of Manchester welcomes the introduction of the level 3 Advanced Diploma”.

“Loughborough University is pleased to accept the Advanced Diploma for entry to most of its undergraduate degree programmes”.

“Liverpool John Moores University welcomes the new Advanced Diploma qualification and is keen to work with students who are undertaking it”.

“Diplomas are designed to broaden young peoples horizons and give them a wider range of options including entry to universities”.
Vice Chancellor, The University of Cumbria





Which Diploma should I choose?

Creative and Media

The Diploma in Creative and Media allows you to learn valuable skills in different situations. You'll learn about the key themes in creativity and how to think and work creatively. This includes seeing a project through from start to finish, identifying an audience and their needs and learning about the business side of the creative and media industries.

With a Diploma you can progress into further or higher education, training or future employment within or outside the creative and media industries. **(Available at 16+ in 2009).**

Engineering

The Diploma in Engineering opens up the ideas and concepts behind engineering and how they impact the modern world. You'll be introduced to key engineering principles such as design, materials, electronic systems, maintenance and manufacturing.

You'll also get lots of practical experience and study what makes innovations successful, how new materials contribute to design and how to develop and launch new ideas. **(Available 14+ and 16+ in 2009).**

Manufacturing and Product Design

The Diploma in Manufacturing and Product Design will give you an insight into the fascinating business of manufacturing, one of the largest and most diverse sectors in the UK. It will encourage you to find creative, technical and business solutions and equip you with the skills and knowledge necessary to contribute to the Government's commitment to keep the UK at the forefront of global manufacturing. **(Available 14+ and 16+ in 2009).**

Remember: All Diplomas will give you a qualification that could lead to college, university or work... You choose.



How can I find out more?

Visit...

Year 9 Skills Fair at Sellafield Visitors' Centre, 26–28 November 2008. Schools are taking students to this exciting event which will introduce all the career sectors and their lines of learning. *(Details from your school).*

Year 11 'Futures4Me' post-16 options evenings
26 November: Whitehaven Civic Hall.

3 December: Moorclose Sports Centre, Workington
(Details from Connexions Cumbria and your school).

Talk...

to your Connexions Cumbria Personal Adviser for impartial information, advice and guidance. *(Contact them at school, at your local Connexions Centre or freephone 0800 435709).*

Click...

on www.direct.gov.uk/diplomas



Or read more about each Diploma at:

Creative and Media

www.creativeandmediadiploma.org

Engineering

www.engineeringdiploma.com

Manufacturing and Product Design

www.manufacturingdiploma.co.uk





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