

14-19 DIPLOMAS

David Yeomans

Post-14 Research Group



14-19 Diplomas

- **Provide some basic information about the Diplomas**
- **Review some of the main issues involved in their introduction**
- **Suggest some of the ways in which you may be involved in them**

What they have said about Diplomas:

.....the most radical educational development taking place probably anywhere in the world.

Secretary of State Alan Johnson, 2006.

If Diplomas are successfully introduced and are delivering the mix that employers and universities value, they could become the qualification of choice for young people.

Secretary of State Ed Balls, 2007.

The Government has invested virtually everything in the power of these qualifications to transform 14-19 education and training and they constituted its main response to the Tomlinson Report.

Hodgson & Spours, 2008.



14-19 Diplomas

Things could go horribly wrong, particularly as we are keeping A Levels and GCSEs

Secretary of State Alan Johnson, 2007.

It seems as if the Diploma programme is trying to be all things to all people. (.....) But in going for an all-embracing framework it seems that there is a serious risk of necessary specificity being lost.

Smithers & Robinson, 2008.

Learning for young people will lead to qualifications from one of four routes:

- * **Apprenticeships – with an entitlement to a place by 2013 for all 16 year olds suitably qualified**
- * **Foundation Learning Tier – with an entitlement by 2010 to study one of the progression pathways**
- * **General Qualifications, e.g. GCSEs and A levels**
- * **Diplomas – with an entitlement by 2013 for all 14–16 year olds to the first 14 Diplomas and for 16–18 years to all 17 Diplomas**

14-19 Diplomas



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Phase 1 – 2008	Phase 2 - 2009	Phase 3 - 2010	Phase 4 - 2011
Construction and the Built Environment	Business, Administration and Finance	Public Services Retail Business	Humanities and Social Sciences
Creative and Media	Environmental and Land-based Studies	Sport and Active Leisure	Languages and International Communication
Engineering	Hair and Beauty Studies	Travel and Tourism	Science (Advanced Diploma, 2012)
IT			
Society, Health and Development	Hospitality Manufacturing and Product Design		

Levels of Diplomas

Foundation Diploma (level 1)

Equivalent to 5 GCSEs at grades D - G

Higher Diploma (level 2)

Equivalent to 7 GCSEs at grades A* - C

Advanced Diploma (level 3)

Equivalent to 3.5 A-levels

Components of Diplomas

Principal learning

- sector- and subject-related learning

Principal learning focuses in particular on developing and applying the knowledge and skills that are relevant to the line of learning. At each level a minimum of 50 per cent must be concerned with the application of knowledge and skills through tasks, problems and situations that are related to work in that sector or subject area.

Generic learning

- functional skills in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT)
- personal, learning and thinking skills (PLTS)
- work experience (minimum of 10 days)
- a project offering the chance to show breadth and independence of learning.

Additional and specialist learning

- supports choice and progression within a coherent whole programme
- enables the learner to specialise and/or take up relevant complementary learning
- consists of qualifications chosen by the learner from the Diploma catalogues
- provides opportunities to meet particular needs
- may exceed the GLH requirement by up to 50 per cent for an individual qualification listed within the Diploma catalogues
- may include some national curriculum key stage 4 entitlement areas at levels 1 and 2
- may include qualifications from a higher level (such as level 4 qualifications) from higher education.



14-19 Diplomas

Teaching and learning within the Diploma

Applied learning is the development of knowledge, skills and understanding through settings or scenarios that relate to the sector. It enables learners to develop skills and understanding in a variety of contexts with teachers, other learners and individuals from outside the classroom.

High-quality applied learning is likely to include:

- interaction with professionals
- learning activities linked to professional job roles
- real investigation and active enquiry
- learning through doing
- interaction with other learners through group work
- learning in different contexts.

In order for applied learning to fulfil its potential, it also needs to be:

- experiential – learners are fully aware of the purpose of each activity, learn from the way they approach it and can apply that learning to other contexts
- contextualised – learners can see the relevance of their tasks and activities to the work of the sector
- personalised – all learners' needs and aspirations are met. (QCA,2009) http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_22207.aspx

Collaborative Delivery

Schools, colleges and training providers will need to collaborate, because no single institution will be able to provide them all on its own.

(White Paper 14-19 Education and Skills)

A total of 314 consortia (groups of schools, colleges and training providers) have been approved to offer Diploma courses from September 2010

(14-19 Website, 2009)

Issues arising from the introduction of the Diplomas

1. Problems of middle-track qualifications
2. What sort of learning is involved in Diplomas?
3. Who takes the Diplomas?
4. Exchange and use value
5. Collaborative delivery



14-19 Diplomas

Academic

Full-time

Collection of single subjects

Mainly at level 3

A-level qualifications

Largely taken in schools and sixth form colleges

Mainly leading to progression to higher education

Diploma

Full-time

Complete programmes

Level 1 – Level 3

Principal learning +
Generic + ASL

Taken in schools and colleges – provided through partnerships

Progression to work and higher education (level 3)

Occupational

Part-time

Complete programmes

Entry – Level 3
Wide range of qualifications

Employers and training providers

Full-time salaried employment

- **Living in the shadows of GCSEs and A-levels**
- **Parity of esteem – Holy Grail or red herring?**
- **Academic drift**
- **Historical parallels with earlier middle-track qualifications**

What sort of learning is involved in Diplomas?

Academic
Learning

*knowledge,
skills and
understanding
that are more
theoretical and
context-free*

Applied
Learning

*knowledge,
skills and
understanding
through
settings or
scenarios that
relate to a
sector*

Vocational
Learning

*knowledge,
skills and
understanding
that relate to a
(more
specific?)
sector*

Occupational
Learning

*knowledge,
skills and
understanding
that relate to
specific jobs*

Who takes the Diplomas?

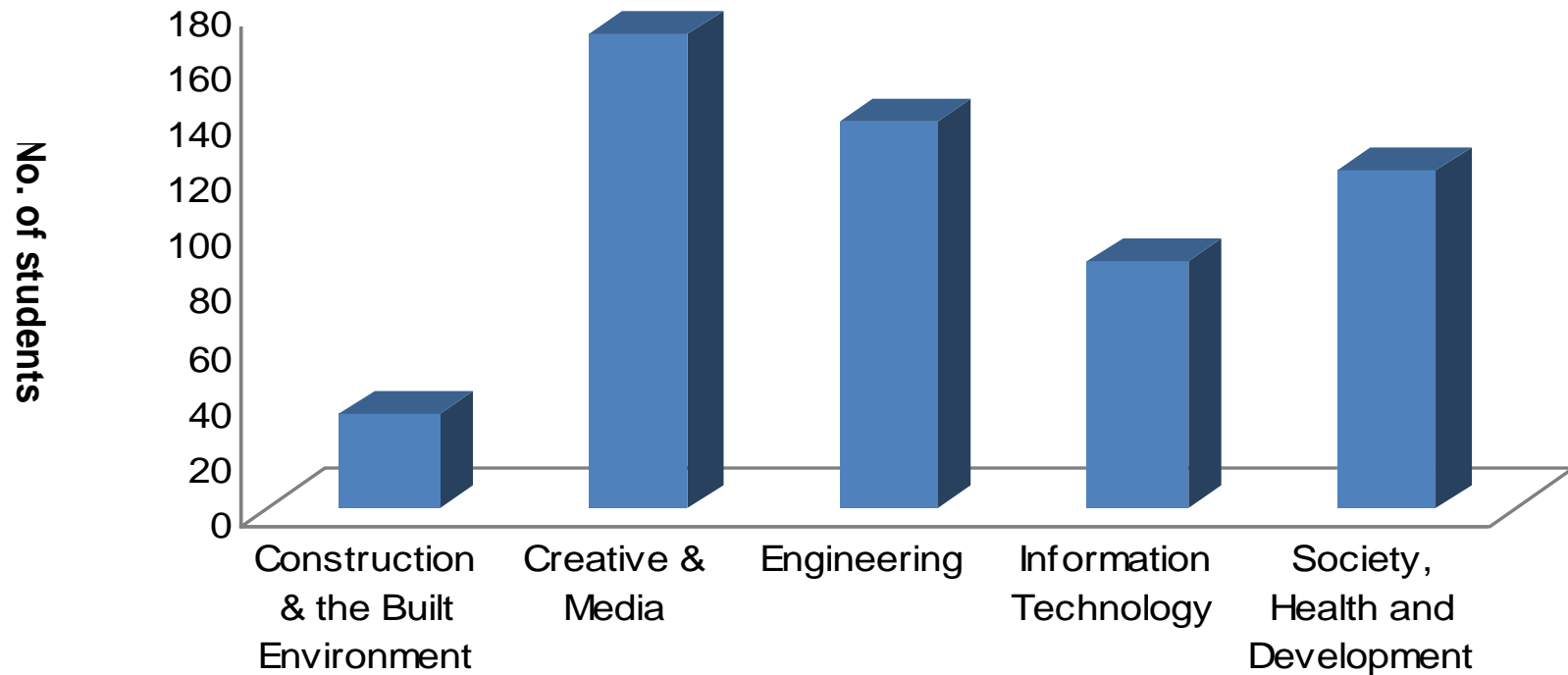
Qualifications gain much of their identity from the groups of learners who take them. Therefore:

How will Diplomas be perceived by students and parents?

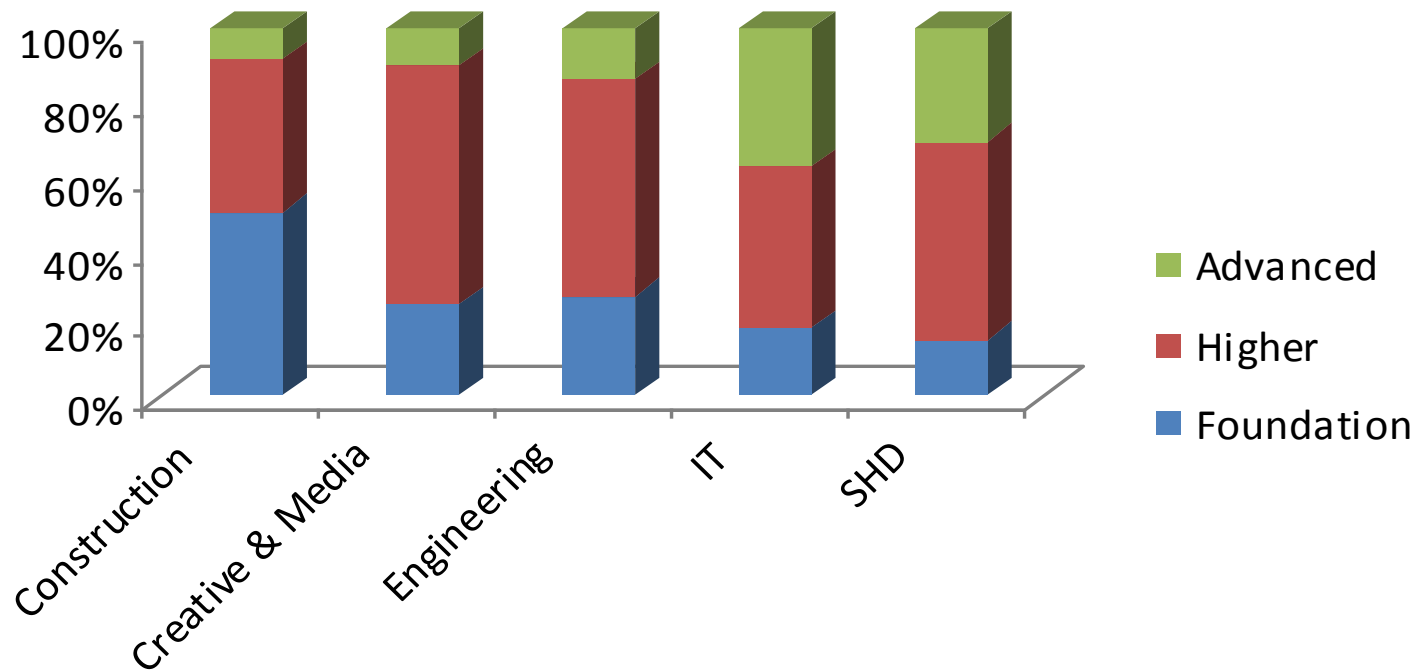
How will they be marketed by schools and partnerships?

What Information, Advice and Guidance will students receive about Diplomas?

Diploma participation by area



Diploma provision by area and level

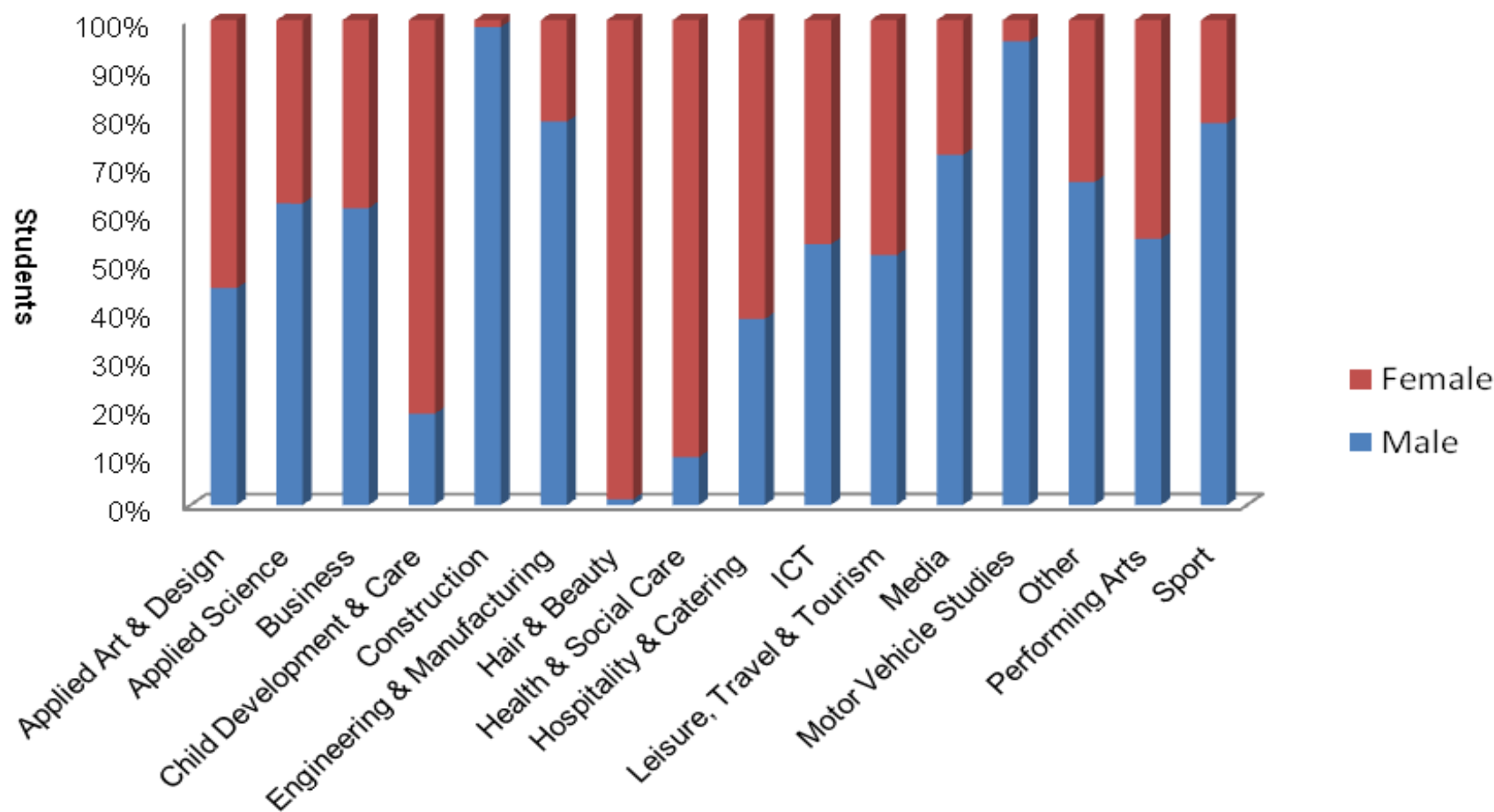


14-19 Diplomas



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Gender participation Y10



Exchange and use value

What doors will achievement of the Diploma qualification open - with higher education, further education, employers? (Exchange value)

How well will the Diploma experience equip students for further education, higher education and work? (Use value)

Collaborative delivery

Is this sustainable in the face of:

Shifts in national and/or local policies?

Movement of key people within local partnerships?

Practical factors including timetabling, transport, funding, exchange of information, time for joint planning, etc.

Implications for newly qualified teachers

You might be involved as:

A member of a school and/or department deciding whether and how to become involved in Diplomas

A form tutor and/or subject teacher advising students on Diplomas

A subject teacher involved in planning and/or teaching on a Diploma course or contributing to generic learning.



14-19 Diplomas

References

Higham, J. & Yeomans, D. (2009) *The Evaluation of the Applied Learning Specialist Schools Programme: Final Report*. (London, SSAT)

Hodgson, A. & Spours, K. (2008) *Education & Training 14-19: Curriculum, Qualifications & Organization* (London, Sage).

Smithers, A. & Robinson, P. (2008) *The Diploma: A Disaster Waiting to Happen?* (Buckingham, University of Buckingham).

Websites

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/14-19/index.cfm?go=site.home&sid=3&pid=224&ctype=None&ptype=Contents>

http://www.qca.org.uk/qca_5396.aspx

<http://yp.direct.gov.uk/diplomas/>