

# FE & WBL Alerts

## WHO SHOULD READ:

Schools & Colleges

## SUBJECT:

DfE Consultation on 16 – 19 provision

## SUMMARY:

### Summary of the DfE Study programmes for 16-19 year olds

Following the proposals made in Professor Wolf's Review of Vocational Education, and the government's response which accepted the recommendations in full, the DfE has published proposals to ensure that all 16-19 year olds study *'coherent, well thought out programmes which offer them breadth and depth and do not limit their options for future study or work'*.

DfE has published a **consultation** on a new approach, planned to be introduced at the same time as a new funding formula in 2013, which has been designed to give providers *'substantially more freedom'* in designing full time course provision for students between the age of 16 and 19. The proposals include the following expectations:

- the majority of study programmes could be delivered in around 600 hours, a significant proportion of which should be contact time;
- providers should offer their full-time students coherent educational programmes which *offer 'breadth, depth and good progression opportunities'*;
- programmes for students on full-time vocational provision can include both qualification-driven and non-qualification activity;
- study programmes should not focus solely on one occupational area and should include:
  - a) one qualification of substantial size, with rigorous assessment and good progression opportunities;
  - b) English and maths for those who have not achieved GCSE A\*-C at age 16 *'It is important that providers support as many of their students as possible to achieve at least a C at GCSE as it is the GCSE that offers the best employment prospects and opportunities for progression'*;
  - c) For those who need more intensive support to move towards achieving a C grade GCSE, government recommends functional skills and free standing maths qualifications
  - d) high quality internships or other forms of experience of the workplace where appropriate;
    - government will refine its principles for good internship systems and ask Ofsted to use them to inform inspectors;
    - DfE would like to see providers able to use their programme funding to compensate employers for supporting a placement where appropriate;
    - other support activity, e.g. tutorial time, study skills, extra-curricular enrichment and, particularly for low attaining students, personal and social development; and to ensure the 16-19 study programme principles are followed, DfE proposes the following:
      - a) trusting providers to use their professional judgement and experience resulting in the best outcomes for their students, rather than auditing inputs we are. Where it is right to depart from the study programme framework for an individual learner, providers should do so;
      - b) making it an expectation of the new funding system that the 16-19 study programme principles are followed. DfE does not plan to make this a condition of funding that has to be audited;
      - c) working with Ofsted to ensure that inspectors have a good understanding of the principles of a good study programme for inspection purposes;
      - d) judge providers on their results as reported in performance tables. DfE is currently reviewing performance tables for key stage 5. These are likely to include measures of level 2 and 3 attainment (including in English and maths), progress

and destinations measures supported by data on individual qualifications and subjects;

- e) An expectation that providers will be able explain to students and parents how they have grouped courses together to create '*coherent study programmes*'; and for students studying below Level 2 and for students with learning difficulties and/or disabilities:
- f) wherever possible, providers should help students who do not already have Level 2, especially in English and maths, to achieve that. But a recognition that some young people may need to study below Level 2; and
- g) a move away from these students pursuing '*sets of small qualifications*' with greater flexibility for providers to design their own programmes which might include English and maths, personal and social development, and '*a qualification of substantial size*'.

**Suggested Action:**

As above

**Other References:**

N/A